



Ashwin celebrates with captain Kohli and Rahane after taking the wicket of Bairstow

India crush England

CLINCH TEST SERIES 3-1

Seal final spot in World Test Championship

AHMEDABAD

INDIA have crushed England inside three days of the fourth test to seal their series 3-1 as spinners Ravichandran Ashwin and Axar Patel took five wickets each.

Ashwin bowled Dan Lawrence for 50 as England were bowled out for 135 on Saturday to complete an emphatic innings and 25 run victory at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

Virat Kohli's India bounced back from an opening defeat to win three in a row and book their meeting with New Zealand in the World Test Championship at Lord's in June.

It was another failure for Joe Root's England, who suffered a drubbing after their two-day loss in the third



Test of a series dominated by the spinning wickets. Ashwin led the series bowling chart with 32 wickets followed by Patel, who played one game fewer, on 27. England spinner Jack Leach was third with 18 scalps.

This win was set up by wicketkeeper-batsman Rishabh Pant, who made 101 on day two, and Washington Sundar, who hit an unbeaten 96 as India made a commanding 365. Pant scored his third Test ton in a 113-run stand with Sundar to lift India from a precarious 146-6 in response to England's first innings total of 205.

Sundar kept up the attack as the final three wickets fell on Saturday morning but ran out of partners and remained four shy of his century. England lost early and regular wickets to go down tamely in 54.5 overs. Ashwin struck twice on successive balls to send back Zak Crawley for five and Jonny Bairstow for nought. **Continued on Page 4**

DELHI TO HAVE ITS OWN SCHOOL EDU BOARD

Will cover nearly 2,700 city schools: CM Kejriwal

**PURNA SINGH
NEW DELHI**

DELHI Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday announced the formation of a separate school board for nearly 2,700 schools in the city.

Addressing a digital press conference after the Cabinet meeting, the Chief Minister informed that in the beginning, 21-22 State government schools will be affiliated to the Delhi Board of School Education (DBSE) and in the next four-five years all the schools



will be brought under it.

There are around 1,000 Delhi government schools and about 1,700 private schools, most of them affiliated to the CBSE, in the city. The new Board will have a

governing body headed by the Education minister of the Delhi government and an executive body headed by a chief executive officer, Kejriwal said. The DBSE will be aimed at imparting such education that prepares "fiercely patriotic" and self-dependent students who serve the society and the country in a selfless manner, he said.

The Board will bring in best international practices and high-end techniques in school education. It will impart education as per the aptitude of the students, he added.

Centre rushes high-level teams to Maha, Punjab

To assess Covid situation amid spike in cases

NEW DELHI

AS Maharashtra and Punjab continue to see an upsurge in daily Covid-19 cases, the Centre has despatched high-level multi-disciplinary public health teams, the Union Health Ministry said on Saturday.

The teams are being deployed to assist the State health departments in Covid-19 surveillance, control and containment measures. The high-level team to Maharashtra will be led by Health Ministry's P Ravindran while the public health team to Punjab will be led by National Centre for Disease Control director S K Singh.

At present, there are 6,661 active coronavirus cases in Punjab and 90,055 cases in Maharashtra according to the

Union Health Ministry's data.

The Central teams will first visit the Covid-19 hotspot areas in Punjab and Maharashtra and ascertain reasons for the increase in cases. Based on their assessment, they will brief the Health chief secretary/secretary and will also suggest remedial measures which can be undertaken by state authorities to control the situation. The Central teams will also share a detailed report with the states for further follow-up action.



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TEST, TRACK, TREAT

Centre to states, UTs with high Covid case load

NEW DELHI: The Union government has asked states and union territories witnessing surge in new Covid-19 cases and high active caseload to continue with the strategy of "test, track and treat" that had yielded rich dividends at

the height of the pandemic and accelerate vaccination for priority population groups in districts reporting higher infections on mission mode.

Continued on Page 4



Dalai Lama turns down offer to get vaccine jab at home, goes to dispensary



Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama receives the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine, at Zonal Hospital in Dharamshala on Saturday

DHARAMSHALA

THE 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, 85, who lives at McLeodganj, was given the shot at Zonal Hospital, Dharamshala, on Saturday morning.

Earlier, the district health authorities had planned to vaccinate the Dalai Lama at his home after the Indian government permitted provisions to inoculate the spiritual leader along with his core staff at his residence.

"However, His Holiness said he would take the in-

jection at the place where the common people were being inoculated," said Kangra deputy commissioner Rakesh Kumar Prajapati. "It was his decision. We were arranging to vaccinate him at his home," he added.

Escorted by his security and staff, the Dalai Lama arrived at the hospital in Dharamshala at 7am in a motorcade. His followers lined the streets from McLeodganj to the Zonal Hospital to catch a glimpse of their spiritual leader and seek his blessings.

Chinese hackers hit 30K US organisations in new attack

WASHINGTON

IN yet another big cyber-attack after SolarWinds, at least 30,000 organisations across the US, including government and commercial firms have been hacked by China-based threat actors who used Microsoft's Exchange Server software to enter their networks.

According to KrebsOnSecurity, the China-based espionage group exploited four vulnerabilities in Microsoft Exchange Server email software.

The vulnerabilities allowed hackers to gain access

to email accounts, and also gave them the ability to install malware, according to Microsoft which reported about the China-based threat actors but did not reveal the scale at which tens



of thousands of organisations have been hit.

Two cybersecurity experts who have briefed US national security advisors on the attack told KrebsOnSecurity the Chinese hacking

group seized control over "hundreds of thousands" of Microsoft Exchange Servers worldwide.

Exchange Server is primarily used by business customers. Microsoft has released several security updates to fix the vulnerabilities, advising its customers to install those immediately.

Earlier this week, Microsoft warned its customers against a new sophisticated nation-state cyber-attack that has its origin in China and is primarily targeting on-premises 'Exchange Server' software of the tech giant. **Continued on Page 4**



Mars rover Perseverance goes for a 'spin'

WASHINGTON

THE Mars rover Perseverance has successfully conducted its first test drive on the Red Planet, the US space agency NASA said on Friday. The six-wheeled rover travelled about 6.5 meters (21.3 feet) in 33 minutes on Thursday, NASA said. It drove four meters forward, turned in place 150 degrees to the left, and then backed up 2.5 meters, leaving tire tracks in the Martian dust.

"This was our first chance to 'kick the tires' and take Perseverance out for a spin," said Anaïs Zarifian, Perseverance mobility test bed engineer at



Mars rover Perseverance has successfully conducted its first test drive on the Red Planet

NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. Zarifian said

the test drive went "incredibly well" and represented a "huge milestone

for the mission and the mobility team." "We're going to do some longer drives," she added. "This is just the beginning."

NASA engineers said they were studying possible routes for longer rover voyages on the surface of Mars. A slightly longer trip was planned for Friday, and perhaps another Saturday if all goes well, NASA said. The rover can cover 200 meters per Martian day, which is slightly longer than a day on Earth. And it goes five times faster than Curiosity, its predecessor, which is still functioning eight years after landing on Mars.

Continued on Page 4

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TS BJP
congratulates
State Governor

HYDERABAD

TELANGANA State BJP chief Spokesperson K Krishna Saagar Rao congratulated State Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan for being chosen for the prestigious ‘Top-20 Global Women of Excellence-2021.’ In a statement here on Saturday, he extended the greetings to the Governor on behalf of the Telangana BJP State unit.

He said that the international award is being presented by US Congressman Danny K Davis leading the Multi-Ethnic Advisory Task Force, Illinois, USA. Dr Tamilisai has added value to society through her relentless efforts in fighting for women’s rights, gender equality and women empowerment, Rao said. He said that the BJP wishes the Governor of Puducherry and Telangana Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan many such recognitions and eventful milestones in the future.

Staff told to
focus on effective
communication

HANS NEWS SERVICE
RAMAGUNDAM

THE National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), Ramagundam has organised a one-day communication workshop for senior executives through virtual mode on Saturday. Delivering the keynote address, Sunil Kumar, Chief General Manager (Ramagundam & Telangana) underlined the importance of effective communication which is the building block of successful organisation. Echoing a similar view, Head of Human Resources department Vijaya Lakshmi in her welcome address said that in a competitive world, with the explosion of information and changing media scenario, the importance of communication has further multiplied.

P K Laad, GM (TS) and Shri Prasenjit Pal, GM (Project) were present during the opening session. In the morning session, TS Sudhir, an independent columnist and political analyst spoke on Media Relations in Changing World, M Gopalakrishna, IAS (Retd.) delivered lecture on Leadership Communication.

In the afternoon session, Dr Anjuman Borah, Assistant professor of Journalism at Tezpur University spoke on the significance of Effective Communication in Organisations followed by lecture on Media Relations in Changing World with thrust on Print and Social Media by Joe A Scaria, a senior journalist.

Earlier, speaking on the occasion, C Elbert, DGM (Corporate Communication), SRHQ stressed on the importance of internal and external communication with major thrust on media engagement. Senior employees from Ramagundam and Telangana project attended the programme in large numbers.

‘BJP contributed immensely
to Warangal development’



Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy addressing a meeting in Warangal on Saturday. BJP candidate Gujjula Premender Reddy is seen standing next to him

HANS NEWS SERVICE
WARANGAL

THE State government led by Telangana Rashtra Samithi has been foisting false cases against the Bharatiya Janata Party cadres to lessen the winning chances of the saffron party in the ensuing elections to Warangal-Khammam-Nalgonda Graduates Council seat, alleged Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy.

Addressing a meeting here on Saturday, he said that people were unhappy with K Chandrashekar Rao’s government and it was visible in the Dubbaka bypoll and Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) elections.

“Though the TRS had pumped in Rs 1,000 crore to win the GHMC elections, people’s mandate had gone in favour of

BJP leaders learnt lies in
WhatsApp university: KTR

The TRS leader continues his tirade against the BJP leaders on various issues

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE TRS working president KT Rama Rao on Saturday said that while the TRS leaders have studied in Osmania and Kakatiya Universities, the BJP leaders have learnt lies in the ‘Whatsapp university’.

Lashing out at the BJP leaders in the meeting of students’ wing TRSV at Telangana Bhavan, the TRS working president asked the opposition party leaders not to test the patience of the activists. ‘Some are talking against our Chief Minister. Do not take our silence as our weakness. The weapon hanging on a wall remains silent, but its value is known at an appropriate time. No



one should underestimate the silence of K Chandrashekar Rao. We will teach a lesson to the buffoons,” said KTR.

The TRS leader continued his

tirade against the BJP leaders on various issues. When we demand justice for Telangana, the BJP leaders bring up India-Pakistan issue and when we question, they say we are doing it for

dharma, said KTR.

Mocking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he asked, “We talk of providing employment opportunities, but Modi talks about ‘Pakodi’. Modi ki baat karodon me aur kaam pakodi me hoti hai. Modi has brought a package of Rs 20 lakh crore... has this package reached to anyone.”

The TRS leader talked about the growth of the party during the last two decades. He said that at a time when Telangana issue was at backstage, TRS chief KCR took up the issue. “There was no media, money and man power then. Despite several difficulties, KCR launched TRS and achieved Telangana. TRS is successful in unseating Chief Ministers of other parties,” KTR added.

Centre did not
sanction any edu
institution in TS: KTR

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD



MUNICIPAL Administration Minister KT Rama Rao alleged that despite numerous requests from the Telangana government, the Centre did not sanction a single educational institution in the State. The Minister on Saturday took to twitter to accuse the Centre for the same

Rao said that during the last six years the Centre gave nothing to Telangana. “No new IIMs, IITs, IISERs, IITs, NIDs or Medical Colleges were launched in Telangana. If this isn’t discrimination, then what is?” asked Rao.

Reading out the names of central educational institu-

tions Rao said that “They are seven IIMS’, seven IITs, two IISER (Indian Institute of Science Education and Research), 16 IIITs, four NIDs (National Institute of Design), 157 Medical Colleges and 84 Navodaya in India but none in Telangana. “Even the promised Tribal University AP Reorganisation Act is not given,” fumed Rao.

Ex-cricketer impersonates
as KTR PA, arrested

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

A 26-year-old Andhra Ranji cricketer from Srikakulam district B Nagaraju, who posed as the Personal Assistant of IT Minister and cheated several entities and collected Rs 39 lakhs, has been arrested by the City Task Force police, on Saturday.

The Hyderabad City Commissioner Anjani Kumar said that the former cricketer was apprehended following complaints of cheating corporate entities by posing himself as personal assistant to the Minister KT Rama Rao. Police seized Rs 10 lakh and a mobile phone from the accused.

Police officials informed that Nagaraju is a habitual fraudster and was targeting businessmen

● ‘Nagaraju is a habitual fraudster and was targeting businessmen from IT industry making calls and demanding huge amounts’

from IT industry making calls and demanding huge amounts. Anjani Kumar said, “The accused called businessmen, colleges and corporate hospitals and realtors saying that the IT Minister is going to be sworn in as Telangana’s Chief Minister and money is required for the swearing in ceremony and for giving advertisements.”

Nagaraju who holds the Guinness Book of World Records for

batting in the nets for 82 hours was arrested when he contacted a corporate hospital and demanded money over mobile phone. This is not for the first time. He was also arrested in November last year in some fraud case. Several fraud cases were registered against him in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, the commissioner added.

However, Nagaraju was a good cricketer and played for the U-14 Visakhapatnam team in 2006 and also got selected for the Andhra Ranji team in 2014, in which he marked excellent performance well. For his good batting skills, donors came forward to help him financially. Later, he turned habitual for easy earnings and started cheating people and was jailed for many times.

Ponguleti asks TN people
to vote for BJP-NDA

HANS NEWS SERVICE
CHENNAI

FORMER MLC and BJP National co-in charge for Tamil Nadu, Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy appealed voters to extend their support to the candidates of the BJP and NDA in the ensuing Tamil Nadu State Assembly elections. The BJP senior leader on Saturday urged people of the State to defeat the DMK and Congress alliance partners for the all-round development of Tamil Nadu and the country under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The BJP senior leader participated in the ‘Vetri Kodi Endhi Velvom Thamizhagam Yatra’ (Vijaya Sankalpa Yatra) at Chepauk Triplicane, along with Khushbu Sundar, Tamil Nadu State BJP general secretary KT Raghavan, District BJP president Vijayanand, Satish and others. They participated in the three-km long padayatra and addressed public meetings.



Former MLC and BJP national co-in charge for Tamil Nadu, Ponguleti Sudhakar Reddy along with Khushbu Sundar taking part in padayatra in Tamil Nadu on Saturday

Prostitution
racket busted

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

A prostitution racket was busted by the Kukatpally Police on Friday. Three persons were arrested in this regard.

Based on a complaint the police raided a house in an apartment at Vivekanandanagar Colony where prostitution was going on.

The police informed that the accused Charan Raju took a flat on rent in the apartment and hired two young women for the business. He asked the women to approach people through calls and WhatsApp.

The arrested were identified as Charan Raju, Vitulu Lakshmareddy and Bhusha Ramesh. The police seized Rs 3,000 cash and cell phones from them.

Police bust MLM scam, 24 arrested

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Cyberabad busted a multilevel marketing scheme operated by a company called Indus Viva and arrested 24 persons on Saturday for cheating customers to the tune of Rs 1,500 crore. The accused were identified as, Abhilash Thomas, CEO, Prem Kumar, COO, Subramanyam, Director, Imadullah Shariff, VP of Operations, CK Sujid, Noor Mohammed, M Venkatesh, Maale Ranga Reddy, K Srinivasulu, N Ashok Reddy, KCS Sharma, S Shesha Rao, G Ramakrishna, N Pavan Kumar, R Suresh, M Hariprasad, B Suryanarayana, B Upender, B Srinivas Reddy, K



MLM scam arrested persons

Balasaradhi, B Soujanya all were distributors and promoters.

Cyberabad Police Commissioner, VC Sajjanar, said that the firm was operating from Bangalore and had cheated more than 10 lakh people by promising them heavy returns if they bring in

more customers. He also said that the gang was running the multilevel marketing scheme illegally and had lured the public through promoters and agents promising high returns on investments. The public were asked to make an investment of Rs 12,500 to become

a member. “The company gave different ranks like Star Distributor (Star, Star-250 and Star-500), Ruby executive, Pearl executive, Emerald executive, Sapphire executive, Executive diamond, Executive blue diamond and Black diamond ambassador to its members. However the issue came to light, when the Gachibowli police received a complaint from a victim who stated that he had paid Rs 12, 500 to join as a member and did not receive any benefits. When the victim contacted his promoter, Hari Prasad, he was instructed that he has to keep on adding members vertically to receive the benefits. The victim then realised that he was cheated and filed a police complaint,” stated Sajjanar.

Govt ready to amend new agri laws; oppn playing politics: Tomar

NEW DELHI

AGRICULTURE Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Saturday said the government is ready to amend three new farm laws to respect the sentiments of protesting farmers, even as he attacked opposition parties for doing politics on this issue at the cost of agriculture economy and by hurting farmers' interest.

Addressing the 5th national convention of Agrivision here, the Union minister said the government has held 11 rounds of talks with farmer unions and has even offered to amend these laws.

Thousands of farmers, mainly from Punjab, Haryana and Western Uttar Pradesh, are protesting at Delhi borders for over three months, seeking a repeal of these three legislations and a legal guarantee of the minimum support price (MSP).

Eleven rounds of talks between the Centre and 41 protesting farmer unions have so far remained deadlocked. The government has offered concessions including suspension of the legislations for 12-18 months and setting up a joint panel to find solutions, but the unions have rejected. Tomar said the government has passed these three laws to boost investment in the farm sector and give freedom to farmers to sell their produce wherever they want and at price determined by them.

The laws, which were passed by Parliament in September last year,



Farmers during 'Kisan Ekta Morcha' to mark the 100th day of the ongoing protests against the new farm reform laws, at KMP Expressway near Kundli in Haryana on Saturday

would also enable to grow those crops that can fetch more prices in the market, he added. Referring to the ongoing farmers' agitation, Tomar wondered how this agitation was going to benefit farmers. "Main ye manta hoon, loktantra mein asahmati ka apna sthan hai, virodh ka bhi apna sthan hai, math-hed ke bhi apne mahatva hai. Lekin kya virodh is keemat par kiya jaana chahiye, jo desh ka nuksan kare (There is a place for disagreement

in democracy and so is for opposition and difference of opinion, but should there be any opposition that can harm the nation)," he said.

No one is ready to talk on how these protests can be in the interest of farmers, the minister said. Tomar regretted that farmer unions as well as the Opposition parties have failed to point out faults in provisions of these laws.

"Loktantra hai toh rajneeti karne ki swatantra sabko hai. Lekin

kya kisan ko markar rajneeti ki jayegi, kisan ka ahit karke rajneeti ki jaayegi, desh ke krishi ki arthvy-bastha ko tilanjali dekar apne man-soobon ko pura kiya jayega, is par nischit roop se naye phidi ko vichar karne ki zaroorat hai (Everyone is free to have any political view in democracy, but the new generation must think, should there be

any politics by sacrificing farmers or by hurting farmers' interest or at the cost of the agriculture economy)," he asked.

Tomar stressed that the government's proposal to amend laws does not mean that there were any deficiencies in these reform laws. He said the government has made a proposal to amend these laws as farmers continue to be the face of this ongoing protest. Stating that the Centre under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to farmers' welfare, Tomar said the government's priority is to uphold farmers respect and therefore, it is ready to make amendments in the laws. The minister said there are always an opposition to big reforms, but people do accept changes if the intention and policies are correct.

The Supreme Court had on January 12 stayed the implementation of the three contentious farm laws for two months and asked the committee to submit a report after consulting the stakeholders. The three laws are -- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement On Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020 and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020. (PTI)

IN A DIFFERENT WORLD



A boy sleeps in a stranded car as farmers block the KMP Expressway near Duhai to mark the 100th day of their ongoing agitation against Centre's farm reform laws, in Ghaziabad on Saturday

'Border tensions reflect growing Chinese aggression'

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON

THE current India-China border tensions reflect a disturbing trend of growing Chinese aggression and assertion in the region and toward allies and partners of the United States, President Joe Biden's pick for top Pentagon policy job, Colin Kahl, has told lawmakers.

In his submission to the members of the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing for Defence Under Secretary for Policy, Kahl, however, expressed the US resolve to stand by its allies and partners.

"The India-China border tensions reflect a concerning trend of growing aggressiveness and assertiveness by China in the region, including toward allies and partners of the United States," said Kahl.

"We will, however, continue to stand by our allies and partners and support their ongoing efforts to deescalate the situation. If confirmed, I will continue to monitor the situation closely as both parties work toward a peaceful resolution," he said, in his written answers to the questions for his confirmation hearing.

The past decade has seen promising trends in the US-India defence trade and technology relationship, he said, adding if confirmed, he will work to sustain these trends, including through a focus on major procurements and high-end technology.

Responding to a question on India, Kahl said if confirmed, he would continue to operationalise India's status as a "Major Defence Partner" by positioning the US and Indian militaries to co-operate more closely to advance shared interests in the Indo-Pacific region.

"To this end, I would support efforts to strengthen interoperability, expand bilateral and multilateral security co-operation across the region and deepen defence trade and technology sharing," he said.

He added that he would also leverage regular senior-level bilateral and multilateral engagements with likeminded partners to bolster the relationship.

"To continue elevating the US-India partnership, I would prioritise a few promising areas of cooperation. These include deepening information-sharing



and mutual logistics operations, growing our defence trade and technology relationship, and expanding high-end cooperation in the maritime domain, including in the Indian Ocean region and southeast Asia," Kahl said.

"Importantly, I would also seek to expand multilateral cooperation with like-minded partners in the region, including through the Quad, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) mechanisms, and other regional engagements," he added.

Responding to questions from Senators during his confirmation hearing on Thursday, Kahl said the biggest opportunity is the growing concern and recognition that a more assertive China has produced.

"That is, I think that a lot of our allies and partners are nervous. Frankly, I think that the pandemic and China's early cover-up of the pandemic, and some of its heavy ended, wolf warrior diplomacies during the pandemic have also created opportunities for us to lean in with countries who are increasingly worried about Beijing," he said.

"I could not agree with you more about the importance of emphasising our alliances and our partnerships. It is one of the biggest asymmetric advantages that the United States has. No other global power has a network of allies and partners that we have. And if I'm confirmed, a huge part of my job

will be in nurturing those relationships," he added.

The United States has enormous opportunities in the Indo-Pacific, he said.

"I think that the last administration made some important strides in this area, as did the Obama administration. I think we have opportunities to work not just with our treaty allies like Japan and South Korea and Australia and the Philippines, but with countries like Singapore and Vietnam and others in ASEAN. And I think there are growing opportunities with India. So, I actually think this is an area where we have an enormous possibility," Kahl said.

Senator Jack Reed, Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee said the US must take a long term approach to strategic competition with China, a challenge Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin has appropriately described as the pacing threat for the Department of Defense. "Competing effectively with China requires that we develop new technologies to rival China's advancements in new operational concepts to ensure the desired effect against Chinese aggression," he said.

According to Kahl, China is the only country in the world that can challenge the United States systematically that is in the economic domain, the technological domain, the military domain, and frankly, in shaping international order more broadly. (PTI)

Harish Rawat pulls auto-rickshaw with rope to protest fuel prices

DEHRADUN

FORMER Uttarakhand chief minister Harish Rawat on Saturday pulled an auto-rickshaw with a rope from the Congress Bhawan here to Gandhi Park in protest against the hike in prices of fuel and LPG cylinder.

A large number of supporters followed the Congress leader up to Gandhi Park. After reaching Gandhi Park, Rawat addressed the gathering with a LPG cylinder on his shoulder. "In the past three months, the price



of LPG cylinders had shot up by Rs 250 while the prices of petrol and diesel have seen an unprecedented rise. The Centre has earned Rs 21 lakh crore in the past six years out of petroleum products alone. No one knows where all that money went. The economy lies in a shambles," Rawat said addressing the gathering. He asked party workers not to rest and go from village to village, creating awareness among people until diesel, petrol and LPG cylinder prices come down. (PTI)

Vehicle near Ambani's house

Autopsy report reserves opinion on cause of Hiren's death

MUMBAI

THE viscera of Mansukh Hiren, who was in possession of the vehicle that was later found with explosives outside the residence of industrialist Mukesh Ambani, has been sent to the forensic lab for analysis, police said on Saturday. The autopsy report of Hiren (46), who was found dead in a creek in neighbouring Thane on Friday morning, reserved the opinion on the cause of death, officials said. Hiren's body was fished out of the creek along the Mumbra-Reti Bunder road hours after his family registered a complaint about his disappearance with Thane police.

The autopsy report received on Saturday mentioned that there were no visible external injuries, a police official said. "The viscera has been preserved and sent for chemical analysis to the forensic sciences laboratory at Kalina in Mumbai," he said, adding that drowning was suspected to be the cause of death. After obtaining the autopsy report, senior police officials visited Hiren's residence in Naulpada in Thane and convinced his family members to take possession of the body, said Deputy Commissioner of Police Avinash Ambure. The family had said earlier it would not take the body for last rites until autopsy report was available.

A team of the Maharashtra's Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) which has taken over the probe of the entire matter, visited the spot where Hiren's body was found. As per Thane Police, Hiren, who was in vehicle spare business, left his shop around 8.30 pm on Thursday in an autorickshaw and since then his phone was switched off. His family then lodged missing person complaint. Hiren's Scorpio with 20 gelatin sticks inside was found near 'Antilia', Ambani's multi-storey residence in South Mumbai, on February 25. Police had said it had been stolen from Airoli-Mulund Bridge on February 18.

Hiren had said in the state-

ment recorded by police that when he was on the way from his shop in Thane to Crawford Market in south Mumbai for some work on February 17, the steering got jammed. He left the car on service road in Vikhroli and took a cab, he said. After finishing work, he met a friend and returned to Thane in his car, he told police. The next day he found that the Scorpio was missing and lodged a police complaint, Hiren had told the media.

Speaking in the Legislative Assembly on Friday, BJP leader and Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis pointed out that Mumbai police commissioner's office is close to Crawford Market. "He met a person at Crawford Market. Who is that person? The vehicle owner lives in Thane and the police official who was the first to reach the spot (near Ambani's house) also lives in Thane," Fadnavis said, seeking an NIA probe.

While the police had maintained that Hiren owned the SUV, the matter got more murky on Friday when Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said in the Assembly that he was not the owner. The real owner had handed it over to Hiren for some interior work, Deshmukh said, while announcing that the probe will be transferred to the ATS.

On Saturday, Maharashtra BJP president Chandrakant Patil alleged that suspicious death of Hiren looked like a murder, and questioned the "seriousness of the probe". Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut said the matter should not be politicised, but the truth must be found to protect the Sena-NCP-Congress government's image and prestige.

As to who parked the vehicle near RIL chairman Ambani's house in the early hours of February 25, the investigators have not said anything yet. Police said that CCTV footage showed that the person who drove it there left in another vehicle, an Innova, which is yet to be traced. (PTI)

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Qr code

THE SPECIAL DAY FOR WOMEN IS HERE...

Come March 8, the women across globe including India would be celebrating the "International Women's Day" which of course would mark events exclusively for women. For working women India (excluding daily wages and domestic helps) it would be a special day when many would participate in get together restaurants and hotels who would of course attract with special discounts etc.

Many such groups will be seen in the same colour dress without realising that even on such special days women are not allowed to be free to pick up their choice of dress instead in name solidarity one persons from the group dominates others what colour or dress others should wear on that day.

Of course for the home makers, it would be like any other day unless they are part of pot and kitty clubs. Once the day gets over, then it's time for women to wait for next year. Is one day enough for empowerment of women when the cutting across parties from PM to Opposition leaders all would talk and praise "Nari Shakti" etc. While wishing all the women all the very best on the eve of "Women's Day", I have following message for the women

Homemakers: You are an epitome of sacrifice for the sake of other family members of the household. This should not mean you cannot be on your own and pursue what you wanted to do, if you had not been a homemaker. Don't feel sorry to be a homemaker because you have ample opportunity to make the children more disciplined in their daily routine as you are already leading by example. In fact you are the one



helping the nation to present a disciplined next generation. Don't spend your time gossiping about the others instead share your knowledge and get more out of their knowledge.

Educators: As women you have opted to take up challenges which men cannot even think of developing the children and make them ready to face the future. Your profession is more important than the President, PM and others who could not have become what they are today without you. It is therefore important to turn to the staff (if there is one), a place for sharing ideas and getting the same for self-improvement and that the new generation you are creating. It is important to discourage the habit of speaking about fellow teachers on the way they are teaching or behaving with the school head and other influential people in management. It is such disunity among you would get exploited by those who are heading the institutions and the management. So, treat

the staff room as a gossip room. Stay united and if you cannot support and help you colleagues, keep away from talking about others.

Other professionals: As women working in office irrespective of private or government, please do not undermine your colleagues by their looks or dressing as god has not given you a rear view mirror to see and observe who is saying what etc. In fact, being women you have to stand with them to face male chauvinism which has become a norm in the present day office. Needless to say, it is your envy and ego that get exploited by males who attempt to pitch one against the other. Those in government have an important role to make our society corruption free. Don't ape the male colleagues and join them in what they are doing to make that extra money from those who come with their grievances who most often happen to be women in distress. Be bold and unitedly speak against the male

involved taking bribes who in turn are the seed of corruption being turned into a way of life.

Politicians: The women voters who with hope and dream give their precious votes to represent them. It is your paramount duty to sincerely work for them instead of using the power to further your own political career. Don't act and behave like to male politicians or become their stooge and sole spokesperson of your leader and party head. Whether you belong to ruling or opposition, don't attempt to defend the atrocities committed by male members. After all it's the women and only women can help each other. So treat the women voters much above the party which you represent and don't look like a party and leaders are above anything else.

My apologies to all women as ideally such a message should have come from a woman and hope you all would take the message with good spirit.

— N Nagarajan, Hyderabad

PAST AND PRESENT

A blind date with Lady Luck

H NARAYANAN

IT was a hot, humid afternoon when I was driving past the Meenambakkam airport on my way towards the outskirts of Chennai with my spouse and Mani, my nephew in the backseat that the sight of several vehicles parked alongside the stretch of the national highway drew my quick attention. As I decelerated and had a closer look at it I could notice brand new currency notes of various denominations, some sliding leeward, a few others rolling across the road with the men at the wheels running behind them and quickly pocketing them.

Opening the door then and there Mani pursued a few of them and shoved them into his trouser pocket that happened to be only of lower denominations like tens and fifties albeit that there were some hundred and five hundred rupee notes as well skimming fast across and along the road, outrunning him. Daring not to flirt with the peril of racing across the highway the boy, all of 18, traced his steps back to the car appearing chagrined and blaming his bad luck. My wife concurred with my supposition that the wads of spic and span currency notes probably carried that way a short while ago by a vehicle might have dropped unbeknown to those travelling in it.

On another occasion while driving along a national highway a tad before the peak hour on a manic Monday morning to the private engineering college (where I was a lecturer post my retirement from Air Force), I sighted what looked like a tipper truck lying careened on the road median. Soon stopping my car I observed a few motorists, riders of two-wheelers, pedestrians and others from nearby shops and lanes rushing towards it carrying big bags, baskets and



whatever big containers they could get their hands on, filling them with the ripe mangoes lying scattered all around and moving out.

As I lowered the window glasses a wee bit, I enjoyed relishing the sweet smell of the hybrid variety of the delicious fruit wafting past my nostrils. Under the nose of the driver of the heavy vehicle who was standing afar, hands on hips and watching in despair the broad daylight heist, the entire contents of the lorry were emptied out within flat fifteen minutes.

Driving on a short stretch of a crazy paving at an outskirt area of Chennai I found people

burstling around a huge petrol tanker carrying plastic buckets, tubs and what not and filling them up. Their source of collection of fuel was its profuse leak from a side of the tank resting on a jag jutting from a boulder lying beside the road. I stayed gormlessly in the car and kept merely watching the scene, a handful of empty containers lying in the boot of my car notwithstanding.

I began driving my way ahead musing to myself, "How much I would have stood to benefit, had I availed those golden opportunities. Back at home it hit me that when lady luck came knocking at my door, I failed to embrace her.



Hyderabad has been discriminated against

Bengaluru has been adjudged the most liveable city in India according to the Ease of Living Index issued by the Ministry of Housing and Urban affairs. Pune, Ahmedabad, Chennai and Surat flow the IT capital in that order. Hyderabad has been adjudged as the 24th.

Garden city is ahead of Hyderabad in certain aspects. But Hyderabad is not that inferior to have been at the 24th ranking. There seems to be no yardstick applied in offering the ranking. Bengaluru traffic is chaotic and cannot be described in words. The civic problems such as proper drainage, garbage disposal and above all pollution still is common in the IT city.

Also Bangalore is a costly city. The high house rent and high prices of essential commodities makes the life of a common man difficult. Though well planned, it has more parks which provides breathing space for the public. In the early days Hyderabad did not see planned development. There was indiscriminate construction of concrete building in all the available places in the twin cities a decade or two ago. But now everything has changed. Development is done according to plans adhering all the norms and formalities. Cities have water bodies. Good city roads, parks, corporation facilities and not alarming pollution. Hyderabad is not behind.

So, it is my opinion that the entire system of awarding of ranking lacks norms or yardsticks. Under the smart city programme every city is improving fast. So too Hyderabad. Hyderabad is in way inferior to Bengaluru or Chennai. It does not lag behind in any aspect. It is developing rapidly. It stands better than other cities ranked. So Hyderabad getting the 24th position rings illogical.

— Sravana Ramachandran, Chennai



My lockdown takeaway

NAGA SAI SAKETH VEMPALLI

In India, everything was going on smoothly until the month of February 2020. At the same time, in most parts of the world, Covid-19 virus was spreading like wildfire, with more fatalities reported daily. In the month of March 2020, exactly a year ago, in India too Coronavirus virus cases started to follow an upward curve. In the third week of March 2020 the Government of India decided to impose lockdown and various State governments started to follow the central government decision including Telangana.

The world came to virtual standstill as far as movements of people were concerned and we have never witnessed and

experienced this kind of situation ever before. Most of the government and private sector organisations switched to Work from Home (WFH) mode and students of the education sector opted for online education. The most affected sector, by this unforeseen pandemic, was the people who are below the poverty line and who earn their bread and butter through daily wage earnings. Even though they were getting some relief in the form of food grains and some cash announcements from the government of Telangana, it was not entirely sufficient to overcome their hunger.

At this stage I decided to help the construction workers who lost their daily employment. With the help of my friends I

formed a group called 'Sankalp', a COVID-19 relief program, the motto of which is to help the needy. We briefed about our initiative to our parents and friends and immediately donations started to pour in. We have prepared 'Grocery Kits' consisting of Rice, oil, dal, salt etc. We have distributed the same to vast sections of construction workers in Bachupally, Sithafalmandi and Warasiguda areas. When we handed over the grocery kits to the needy persons I could see the 'spark' in their eyes which I can cherish through rest of my life.

(The author is pursuing M Tech in Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay)

BRAVO, LITTLE MASTER!

Old warhorse Sunil Gavaskar completing 50 years of his Test debut on March 6 is a special milestone. Old-timers will recall his stirring exploits in his maiden series against the Gary Sobers-led Caribbean side in 1971 when he scored a record 774 runs, including a double hundred and three centuries, which have stood the test of time. In his distinguished career, the "Little Master" never wore a helmet while standing up to the dreaded speed merchants such as Jeff Thomson, Malcolm Marshall and Michael Holding.

— N J Ravi Chander, Bengaluru



Provide internet in AP govt schools

The Government of Andhra Pradesh introduced Integrated Mid-day Meal Scheme app and Students Attendance app with a good intention to collect information from the ground level to know how many students attended to school and how many of them had taken meal due to this corona pandemic and instructed the Headmasters of all schools to upload the details every day in the apps.

There is no doubt that it's a good gesture but at the same time the Government has to provide sufficient number of devices to capture the data every day with good speed of internet facility. Internet data charges for the biometric devices are not being paid by the Government. These Biometric devices are being connected with the hotspot of the mobiles of the teachers and Headmasters.

Without providing all the facilities, it demanded the Headmasters to complete the task on their own rescue and struggle. The Headmasters of all schools in the state are facing the low speed of internet in their mobile phones as most of the schools are located in remote rural areas and wasting their valuable teaching time every day to complete these tasks. Without thinking the ground level problems and their solutions, Memos were issued to



thousands of Headmasters in the state for not completing the work and asked to give explanation in three working days.

The School Management Committees have been observing everyday what the teachers and Headmasters are doing with mobile phones a lot of time by keeping aside their teaching schedule and the completion of syllabus has become a question mark for the teachers and getting bad impression from the parents at the same time. Besides these, completion of Nadu Nedu works responsibility has been kept on the shoulders of the Headmasters with deadline.

The Government has to provide internet facility with good speed at every school point to avoid these lapses immediately and non-teaching duties should not be given to teaching community to provide quality education to our children and can fulfil the dreams of the parents.

— Narasimha Charyulu Gomatam, Markapur Mandal, Prakasam district

MODI'S LOVE FOR TAMIL LANGUAGE, A POLITICAL STUNT

According to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Tamil language is beautiful and it is the world's oldest language. Modi made this remark during his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' address in Hindi in response to a query from a lady in Hyderabad. Praising the Tamil language, Modi said, "It is such a beautiful language, which is popular all over the world. Many people have told me a lot about the quality of Tamil literature and depth of the poems written in it. India is a land of many languages, which symbolizes our culture and pride." Historically speaking, Tamil language is recognized as the oldest language in the world and it is the oldest language of the Dravidian family. This language had a presence even around 5,000 years ago. At present, this language is spoken in India, Sri



Lanka, Singapore and Malaysia; and it is spoken by more than 8 crore people.

Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi has now confessed that he could not learn this language ear-

lier and he considers it his shortcoming on his part for not learning it. Such a statement has indeed

pleased the Tamil world especially when it is the time of election there. So, a statement pleasing the Tamilians from the Prime Minister at this time is to be taken with a pinch of salt. However, it is true that Tamil language is one of the oldest languages in the world and some of the historians even say that Tamil is older than Sanskrit and some say Sanskrit is the oldest language.

Anyway, all European languages seem inspired by Sanskrit and universities and educational institutions spread across the world consider Sanskrit as the most ancient language. It is believed that all the languages of the world have originated from Sanskrit at different points of times. At present, Sanskrit has become a language of worship and ritual instead of the language of speech.

Tamil language is the official language of Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. It is also official language in Sri Lanka and Singapore and has significant number of speakers in Mauritius, Fiji and South Africa. In 2004, Tamil was declared a classical language of India. Prime Minister Narendra Modi knows the real mantra of politics and the statement that he loves Tamil is also viewed as part of his political tactics because Tamil Nadu is a region where Dravidian feelings are run and any attempt by the non-Dravidian political parties to usurp power will have to bite the dust.

So, Modi's statement is nothing but a ploy to win the hearts of Tamil people. How far this appealing tactic will fetch good results for BJP remains to be seen.

— T K Nandan, Kochi

Shield yourself from Covid with three-layered masks: Experts

VIVEK SINGH CHAUHAN

WHILE buying a new face mask to protect yourself against Covid-19 infection, make sure you go for a three-layered mask as it is more effective than single or double-layered alternatives, health experts emphasised on Saturday.

According to the experts, additional layers in the mask may help us protect against SARS-CoV-2 by not letting the virus-laden contagious droplets or particles pass through the mask.

"Covid-19 is mainly spread through respiratory droplets that are made when someone who has contracted the virus through coughing, sneezing etc," Navneet Sood, Pulmonary Consultant, Dharamshila Narayana Superspeciality Hospital, told IANS.

"As we know that the layers of a mask helps in increasing its filtration power, it becomes crucial to wear a three-layered mask, so that we can protect ourselves from getting infected or infecting people around us," Sood added.

A team of researchers, including, Saptarshi Basu of the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru and Abhishek Saha from University of California - San Diego have shown, in a study, that three-layered surgical masks are most effective at stopping large droplets from a cough or sneeze from getting atomised into smaller droplets.

These large cough droplets can penetrate through the single or double layered masks and atomise to much smaller droplets, which is particularly crucial since these smaller droplets (often called aerosols) are able to linger in the air for longer periods of time.

"While it is expected that large solid particles in the 500-600-micron range should be stopped by a single-layer mask with average pore size of 30 micron, we are showing that this is not the case for liquid droplets," said Saha.

"If these larger respiratory droplets have enough velocity, which happens for coughs or sneezes, when they land on a single-layer of this material it gets dispersed and squeezed through the smaller pores in the mask," he added.

For the study, published in the journal Science Advances, the team used a droplet generator and a high-speed time-lapse camera.

According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), while selecting a mask one should always go for masks -- with two or more layers of

washable, breathable fabric, that completely cover your nose and mouth, that fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps.

"One should know that not all fabrics make for an effective mask. Also, some fabrics don't suit some skin types and how they are woven is another factor," said Shiba Kalyan Biswal, Consultant, Pulmonary and Sleep Medicine, Narayana Hospital, Gurugram.

"One should opt for masks with small pores as it may protect more against the virus by not helping virus-laden droplets or particles to pass through. After buying maintaining their cleanliness is also a key factor," Biswal added.

The health experts have also warned that we need to be more careful as cases of new Covid strains are gradually rising in the country.

They have expressed a number of possibilities which could be because of the lax attitude of people towards following the Covid protocols or likeability of "mutations and new strains" causing the surge, as has been studied by the laboratories involved in the Covid detection across the country.

Various studies cited that a variant of SARS-CoV-2 that emerged in the UK -- B.1.1.7 -- in November 2020 is more transmissible than pre-existing variants and will lead to a large resurgence of Covid-19 cases.

The Union Health Ministry on Friday said that a total of 16,838 new cases of Covid-19 in the last one day pushed the tally to 1,11,73,761, and 113 died.

The Ministry also informed that 7,61,834 samples were tested on Thursday. The cumulative tests done by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) so far stands at 21,99,40,742.

So far, 1,80,05,503 doses of corona vaccine have been administered in the country since the drive began on January 16 after approval for 'Covishield' and 'Covaxin'.



Global Encyclopaedia on Ramayana to be published in 200 volumes

THE Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh is going to give a unique gift to Ram devotees across the world. The first edition of the Global Encyclopaedia of the Ramayana is ready for publication. Chief minister Yogi Adityanath will release the historical edition on the occasion of Janaki Navami on Saturday.

The version of the Global Encyclopaedia of the Ramayana, prepared by the Ayodhya Research Institute, will also be launched as an e-book.

The first edition of the Encyclopaedia will be released in the English language. A month later, the first edition in Hindi and Tamil languages will be published.

The Uttar Pradesh Department of Culture, in collaboration with the Ministry of External Affairs, is involved in this mega project by combining the tangible and intangible legacy of the Ramayana from 205 countries of the world.

For this, a workshop was organised by the department which included 70 scholars from West Bengal, Assam, Kerala, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Tripura, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Delhi.

According to Shishir, Director of Culture, Uttar Pradesh, there is a plan to publish the Ramayana Encyclopaedia in 200 volumes. For this, the Ayodhya Research Institute has set up a board of editors and advisors around the country and the world. The first edition has been designed by the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur.

The publication of Ramayana will also be released in Oriya, Malayalam, Urdu and Assamese languages along with the first edition of the Global Ramayan Encyclopaedia. Also, the oldest and authentic book about Ayodhya, 'Ayodhya Mahatma' will be released in the English language to expand it globally.

It was in May 2018, that the chief minister had directed to conduct a survey and publication of all the Ramayana sites of the world at the review meeting of Ayodhya Research Institute, Ayodhya.

Globally, evidence of the Ramayana's tangible heritage, architecture, sculpture and painting is found in countries around the world including Pakistan, Iran, Iraq and Europe since about 5000 years ago.

According to the scholars, almost all countries of Europe accepted Ram as their first ancestor. Scholars claim that 'Ram Takht' was received in Gandhara region in 2500 BC and many villages in Gandhar have their names on Ram and Sita. Taxila is named after the elder son of Bharat, Taksh.

The entire Gandhara region of Pakistan is rich in Ramayana culture. According to scholars, there is evidence of a Ramayana civilisation in Italy before the Roman civilisation in Europe. Vatican City, France, Germany, Netherlands also have elements of this culture. (IANS)

Gender inequality has cost world \$70 tln since 1990

It will take 257 years to close the gap at the current rate

WITH many reports confirming women and other socially-disadvantaged sections have suffered the most during the pandemic, economists at BofA Securities have tabulated the cost of lack of gender diversity and inclusion, saying it will take 257 years to close the gap at the current rate, and not doing this has cost the world a whopping USD 70 trillion since 1990.

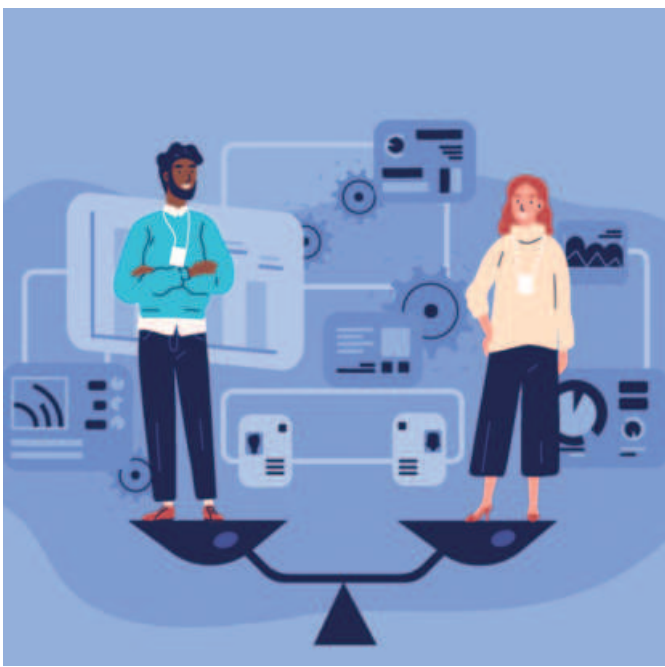
The report also notes that full gender equality globally can increase the world GDP by up to USD 28 trillion by 2025 and the loss of human capital wealth due to gender inequality alone is estimated at USD 160.2 trillion.

"Not closing the gender inequality gap and a lack of diversity and inclusion has an economic price tag. Not doing the right thing on this count has cost us USD 70 trillion since 1990...It will take us 257 years to close the gender economic gap at today's rate," says the report, adding the pandemic alone, when women suffered the most, has cost women USD 1 trillion in income.

Noting that gender and racial biases lead to persistent labour market disparities and limit the economy, it says closing the gender and race gaps in education and employment would have generated USD 2.6 trillion more in economic output in 2019 and the cumulative gains from 1990 would have been USD 70 trillion at the 2019 dollar rate.

Closing racial earnings gap resulting from disparities in health, education, incarceration and employment opportunities would boost trend growth by 0.5 per cent per year through 2050, says the report. Reeling out numbers, the report says in 2020, there were no Black senior executives in any of the FTSE 100 companies.

For the first time in six years in 2020 there were no black



chairs, chief executives or finance chiefs in the FTSE 100 companies and just one company in the S&P 500 is run by a Black female CEO today, and only eight companies have at least 50 per cent female management teams.

As much as 75 per cent of Nasdaq companies do not have at least one woman and one under-represented minority or LGBT+ member on the board, it says, adding continued racial inequality could cost the US economy USD1-1.5 trillion in lost consumption and investment over the next decade.

The LGBTQ+ community is equivalent to the fourth largest economy in the world at USD 3.9 trillion.

All in all, S&P 500 companies with above-median gender diversity on their boards see 15 per cent higher return on equity, and for companies with ethnic and racially diversified workforce this is 8 per cent higher.

And the pandemic has only

deepened the gender inequality crisis. As much as 96 million people will slide into extreme poverty in 2021, of which 47 million are women.

Women's jobs were 19 per cent more at risk and women took up an even greater share of child-care and unpaid labour during the pandemic.

Even before the pandemic, the gender gap was worsening and at the current rate of inclusion, it will take 257 years to reach economic equality, warns the report. As much as 90 per cent of children with disabilities in emerging markets countries do not attend school, says the report.

Stating that gender diversity and inclusion are leading the way to tackling the social issues of our times, the report says from the MeToo movement to BlackLivesMatter, the awareness of injustices faced by under-represented and marginalised groups is at an all-time high, and especially during the pandemic. (PTI)

ARCHANA SHARMA

AS the camel population in Rajasthan witnesses a sharp decline, there are apprehensions whether the ship of the desert can weather the challenges it is facing and survive for the next five years.

Hanwant Singh Rathore, director of Lokhit Pashu Palak Sansthan, told IANS: "If the government does not do anything in the next five years, camels will be finished in the desert state. There are many villages near Bikaner where there were 500 camels a few years ago. Today, there isn't even a single camel around."

As per the 20th livestock census announced by Rajasthan government, camels, which once stood at 3,25,713 in number in 2012, were reduced to 2,12,739.

Earlier in 2007, camel numbers stood at 4,21,836, against 3,25,713 in 2012 in Rajasthan

recording a negative per cent change of -22.79.

In fact, till 1991, there were more than 10 lakh camels in the country, a number that has now declined to 2.5 lakh as of now, out of which the maximum number exists in Rajasthan.

Rathore listed multiple reasons for the decline in camel numbers. "First, the youth are disinterested in caring for these animals as they see no profit in it. Secondly, newer modes of transport such as cars, jeeps etc have replaced the camel as the preferred mode of transport. Thirdly, the government doesn't seem to be interested in boosting the growth of this animal," he added.

Rathore says at a time when petrol and diesel prices are soaring, why can't the government promote the animal for the purposes of ploughing and transportation. "It seems that the government has no policy to

We need to be able to sell our male camels freely, including to Arab countries where there is a demand for racing camels. So, remove the export ban for male camels immediately, although it can stay in place for female camels

save the animal," he added.

The Lokhit Pashu-Palak Sansthan (LPPS) was founded in 1996 by Rathore in response to requests for support by Raika camel breeders in Pali District.

Rathore said, "When the camel was declared the state animal in 2014, we became hopeful that traditional breeders and caretaker communities and our animals would benefit. However, these hopes were dashed in 2015, when the Rajasthan Camel Prohibition of Export Act was passed. This has had a negative effect, which affected the camel population," he added.

"The ban in the Act prohibits camel sales to any other state or country and was pushed arguing that camels were being sent to be slaughtered in Bangladesh. Camels were also sold to Haryana and neighbouring states, but now that has stopped. Now, camels taking goods across the state border have also stopped," explains Rathore.

"We need to be able to sell our male camels freely, including to Arab countries where there is a demand for racing camels. So, remove the export ban for male camels immediately, although it can stay in place for female camels," he added further.

Rathore says there needs to be a policy to sustain camels. "We have suggested to the concerned department marketing of camel milk and camel dung paper and asked officials to connect camels with the state's heritage and culture or promote camel safaris through tourism. But the government, it seems, is not interested," he alleged.

A senior government officer told IANS, "The livestock sector is facing new challenges like increased incidence of emerging and re-emerging animal diseases, vulnerability to exotic diseases and shortage of feed and fodder. There is a need to increase production to meet the demand for animal products. To meet the challenges specific to the state and to avail the innovative opportunities available for the growth of the sector, a planned approach is required and we are working in that direction," he added.

Goats, sheep, horses and ponies have all been witnessing a decline in numbers. Sheep, which stood at 90,79,702 in 2012 declined to 79,03,857 in 2019. The goat count in 2012 was 216,65,939 which declined to 208,40,203 in the same period. Horse and ponies in 2012 were 37776 while in 2019 they dwindled to 33679.

Productivity in co-Covid world



Viiveck Verma

PRODUCTIVITY is a much-talked about word in today's day and age. We are consistently urged to be productive, to make the most of the opportunities offered by space, time and circumstance. How much of the day do we take away as it takes away from us, and what we accomplish with the passing away of time often serves as a key determinant of self-worth.

However, is productivity enjoyable and cherished, or is it a euphemism for hours of uninspiring labour? In the event of Covid-19, if the workday had the potential to burden us before the pandemic, how do we make sense of being productive in a co-Covid world? What does being productive mean to us personally?

These questions find no easy answers as the relationship between satisfaction and productivity has always been a fraught one. A 2019 poll conducted by Gallop revealed that only 15 per cent of the world's one billion full-time workers were engaged in their jobs, while the other 85 per cent remained dissatisfied and unhappy. These are concerning statistics and we could be on either side of the coin. In either circumstance, how do we make productivity work for ourselves? How do we find fulfilment in work? How do we make sense of our aspirations and efforts in general?

To attempt finding resolutions to these concerns, it is necessary to not accept an imposed definition of productivity, and not evaluate work merely based on whether we accomplish certain things in certain durations.

Work is more than a race

A good work ethic is not simply one about being a worker who delivers but one that reconstitutes the employee's desire to be at work every next day



Productiveness is your acceptance of morality, your recognition of the fact that you choose to live--that productive work is the process by which man's consciousness controls his existence [...]

— Ayn Rand

against the clock and chasing deadlines; it is a contribution to the world and must be valued in the same sense. A good work ethic is not simply one about being a worker who delivers but one that reconstitutes the employee's desire to be at work every next day. In other words, it is important to foster a culture of productivity that emancipates instead of burdening and makes work appear relevant and inviting. Such cultures are nearer than we think, as exemplified by redefinitions of productivity during the crisis engendered by Covid-19.

Technology and innovation paved ways to reimagine the workplace and provide new avenues for professional satisfaction. A study by BCG

showed how over 75 per cent of workers were able to maintain or improve productivity on their individual tasks in the first few months of the pandemic, despite the shift to a remote-working model and 70 per cent of managers said they are more open to flexible models for their teams than they were before the pandemic.

Technology, when used in unprecedented ways on an unimaginable frequency, led to individuals moving beyond conventional routes to delivering output, harnessing their previously unused potential and doing it from a space of relative control and belonging. Working from home enabled an economizing of time and resources and provided people with flexibility while striving for professional goals.

BBC, in a January 2021 article, quoted specific individual workers on how they realized during the pandemic that productivity was not limited to delivering certain aimed results but also included things that brought them closer to overarching goals. In other words, the time spent outside their professional lives, for working on themselves was deemed productive as well.

Productivity is a measure to enliven and secure the self and provide it with a sense of purpose. It should therefore, not be seen as a task to accomplish but a driving force, an energy that illuminates our will to live

This is powerfully exemplified by stories of people acquiring new skills during the lockdowns, disengaging with unnecessary situations and finding self-fashioned ideas and spaces of comfort and fulfilment. These findings tell us that technology can be radically utilized to make work more rewarding and conducive, and in a co-Covid world, it certainly seems the way to go.

On an individual level, we can employ technology to ensure a streamlined workday. Through a deft use of the right tools, scheduling and communication, which would have taken more time and effort in a conventional work setting, become seamlessly attainable. Technology also enables us to

adopt flexible work habits and keeps unnecessary things out of the way for an unrestricted engagement with professional commitments. Work, consequently, is likely to be better and feel rewarding at the end of the day.

However, outside externalities, productivity can appear satisfactory only when your mind and effort are attuned to the task you undertake. Beyond the workplace as well, we have personal occasions for productivity, such as improving our health or sorting out social and personal issues. Therefore, our relationship with productivity must be driven by an internal impetus and a general quest to assess what we do and what a certain accomplishment means to us.

There are numerous liberating manifestations of being productive while staying in touch with ourselves. For instance, if we attempt to stop fixating on negative thoughts and end up doing it well, it can undoubtedly be deemed a productive endeavour.

Productivity is a measure to enliven and secure the self and provide it with a sense of purpose. It should therefore, not be seen as a task to accomplish but a driving force, an energy that illuminates our will to live. This deeply intimate, life-affirming aspect of productivity must not be forgotten as we wade through our everyday challenges.

Productivity, in fact, necessitates looking both outside and inside and provides avenues for exemplary growth and contentment on both sides of the coin. Thus, go ahead, embrace an aware, self-enriching productive spree and cherish the vitality every effort of yours has to offer!

The author is founder, Upsurge Global and Senior Advisor, Telangana State Innovation Cell

QUIZ NO. 163

HANS BIZ QUIZ

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



1. On January 3, 2021, Pelosi was re-elected as the House of Representatives' Speaker by a narrow 216-209 vote. When did she first serve as the speaker of the House?

- a) 2012 b) 2008
c) 2006 d) 1998

2. The 17 years old climate activist has started a worldwide revolution for climate change and became the most powerful female force today and Time's Person of the Year in 2019. Whom are we talking about?

- a) Rhiana Gunn-Wright b) Greta Thunberg
c) Hilda Heine d) Rachel Kyte

3. Melinda Gates, the most powerful woman in philanthropy as co-chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, started working as a product manager at Microsoft in 1987. Identify the MS product Melinda worked on?

- a) Expedia b) Flight Simulator
c) Encarta d) Microsoft Money

4. Oprah Winfrey has been a fixture of Fortune's Most Powerful Women list for years, and she is best known for her award-winning talk shows. Identify the movie in which Winfrey, the crusader for girls' education, did not act?

- a) The Color Purple b) Beloved
c) The Butler d) Child's Play

5. Identify the author of the best-selling book "Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead"?

- a) Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook
b) Irene Rosenfeld, former Chairman and CEO of Mondelēz International
c) Ursula M. Burns, Member of the board of directors of Uber
d) Indra Nooyi, former Chairperson and CEO of PepsiCo

6. Susan Diane Wojcicki is the CEO of YouTube. Identify the company in which Susan Wojcicki was involved in the founding stage and served as the first marketing manager?

- a) Facebook b) Google
c) Netscape d) Yahoo

7. Christine Lagarde is a powerhouse in her own right. Which statement concerning Christine Lagarde is true?

- a) France's First woman finance minister
b) First woman managing director of the IMF
c) First woman president of the European Central Bank
d) All of the above

8. Germany's first female Chancellor, Angela Merkel, was also instrumental in forming the European Union. Merkel is serving her fourth term as chancellor. In which year she narrowly elected German chancellor by just three seats?

- a) 2012 b) 2008
c) 2005 d) 1999

9. Cynthia Marshall, CEO of the Dallas Mavericks, is the first black woman to serve as an NBA team's business leader. With which company Marshall worked for 36 years as an advocate for inclusion and diversity?

- a) AT&T b) Boeing
c) Reebok d) Nike

10. Identify the first Latina woman to serve on the United States Supreme Court, appointed by President Barack Obama's administration in May 2009?

- a) Ana Mendieta b) Dolores Huerta
c) Ellen Ochoa d) Sonia Sotomayor

The Hans Biz Quiz has been compiled by **Sunil Dhavala**, CEO, The Third Umpire Media. He had held senior management roles at Bertelsmann, NGC, Fox Broadcasting, Star TV and others. He is an alumnus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

KEY 1C 2B 3A 4D 5A 6B 7D 8C 9A 10D

UPS Healthcare to facilitate equal vaccine deliveries

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HYDERABAD

UPS Healthcare and the UPS Foundation are moving quickly to support an equitable delivery programme and sustainable global supply chain of Covid-19 vaccines.

UPS, in collaboration with Covax, Gavi, the vaccine alliance, and CARE, will initially facilitate the delivery of 20 million doses for countries that have not had sufficient access to vaccines, including top priority groups like healthcare workers. Global success hinges upon bringing together and mobilizing the right partnerships.

"We believe that we have the ability and responsibility to facilitate and accelerate equitable Covid-19 vaccine delivery around the world. UPS continues to build and inspire action across a network of global public-private partnerships that will ensure vaccines move more efficiently and equitably," Scott Price, president, UPS International.

Our work focuses on countries with limited resources and constrained supply chains and infrastructures. The goal is simple, and our commitment is unwavering moving our world forward by delivering what matters, he added.

To achieve this objective, the two organisations will provide transportation solutions that leverage UPS cold-chain technology, dedicate ultra-low temperature freezer donations necessary to maintain vaccine dose viability at the correct temperature in varying environments. They will also commit UPS loaned executives to provide logistics expertise and coordination with vaccine manufacturers and NGO partners to manage and streamline deliveries.

BIS QCO norm a stumbling block for metal packaging industry

Covid-19-induced situation creating new demand for metal packaging industry and new markets of sanitizers, disinfectants

KUMUD DAS

What are the growing opportunities in metal packaging?

Owing to the rising population, increasing income levels, changing lifestyles, increased media, and the demand for packaging is growing. Besides, it is one of the strongest growing sectors in the country. The rapid growth of the market is primarily driven by the pharmaceuticals, foods and beverages, decorative paints, etc. Huge investments in these industries is creating scope for expansion of the packaging market. The end-user of such products includes food, beverage, healthcare, cosmetics, personal care, paints, household care and industrial segment. As per retail association reports, the current situation amid second phase of Covid-19 is creating further opportunities for packaging of food products, sanitizers and disinfectants in aerosol cans for longer shelf life.

Tell us about the emerging technologies in metal packaging industry?

Metal packaging industry in India is primarily concentrated in the MSME sector. The industry is located all over the country close to the filling units as the freight cost on the empty containers is quite high. The industry is focusing on several factors including new technologies in making quality cans in a cost-effective manner, continuous focus on innovation, adopting environment-friendly technologies in the can making process, promoting localization of imported components such as easy open ends and peel off ends.

How does the BIS order on tin products hit packaging industry?

The industry is facing tough time owing to the steel and steel products Quality Control Order (QCO) dated July 17, 2020, issued by the Union Steel Ministry, that imposed mandatory BIS Certification on the major inputs required by the industry like

The metal packaging industry is currently facing a turbulent situation. "The crisis is because of the Steel and Steel Products Quality Control Order (QCO), which was issued by the Union Steel Ministry," says **Sanjay Bhatia**, president of Metal Container Manufacturers' Association and Managing Director of Hindustan Tin Works in an exclusive interview with **Bizz Buzz**



The BIS QCO has been notified at a time when the entire industry is struggling during the Covid pandemic. It's impossible to force the international suppliers to go for BIS certifications as the procedure for getting BIS license is quite cumbersome and expensive. For international suppliers of tin plates, India is a small market

tinplate/tin free steel and also imposed restriction on various steel products like easy open ends and peel off ends, which the industry is importing from several countries.

For international suppliers of tin plates, India is a small market, so they are not interested to get into lengthy bureaucratic and cost intensive BIS certification process.

The foreign suppliers have therefore stopped shipping tin plates to India and there is already a shortage in the domestic market. Furthermore, the industry is witnessing a sharp increase in the prices of local tin plate due to virtual monopoly of the two producers. In the quarter ending December, there is an increase of about six to seven per cent in the tin plate/tin free steel prices along with another 7 to 8 per cent increase announced from January onwards. The industry fears any increase in the prices of tinplate/tin free steel, which is almost equal to 60 per cent of the cost of a tin container/closure, will further add to the price rise. Consequently, high prices of cans may force our customers to move away from metal packaging to other alternative packaging options especially in food, beverage and paint industry.

Will metal consumption and demand pick up in the days to come? How will prices behave?

The demand can pick up if the QCO is dropped. For example, a sim-

ilar notification imposing mandatory BIS standards was brought earlier in the 2008, 2015 and 2017. However, after considering representation from trade and industry and keeping in mind practical issues in implementation, the said notifications were withdrawn. Also, the local producers had filed applications with Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) for imposition of Anti-Dumping duty on import of tinplate, which was favourably considered by DGTR in June, 2020. The DGTR recommended levying Anti-Dumping duty ranging from Rs15,000 to Rs 25,000 per tonne for import of tinplate/tin free steel from select countries. The Finance Ministry favourably considered representation of MCMA and decided to drop such recommendation; hence no Anti-Dumping duty was imposed.

What is the government's roadmap

for boosting domestic metal demand?

Well, the industry has put forth a set of recommendations to the ministry over the concern of BIS certifications and hoping for a positive response from the policy makers since the industry is providing packaging material and packaging solutions in the form of tin container and component closures to food, beverages and other household industry. By withdrawing the mandatory certification, the foreign suppliers will restart shipping tin plates to India as at present there is a huge shortage in the domestic market.

Apart from BIS norms, how Covid has impacted the metal industry?

Covid-19 has impacted the industry both positively and negatively. The industry lost production for almost 40-45 days, although packaging materials were included in the essential commodity. The industry also lost the business of various food products, which were canned in the tin container to be consumed by the hotels, restaurants, and catering industry (HORECA segment). As already mentioned, certain new markets have been opened for metal packaging for products such as sanitizers and disinfectants. Certain products shifted from alternate packaging material to tin cans considering its superior quality in providing longer shelf life to the products.

What percentage of MSMEs are involved in metal packaging industry and as of now, there are only two companies that have been granted the BIS certification. So, this is going to increase monopoly. What is your view on this?

Well, the industry is witnessing a sharp increase in the prices of tin plates due to virtual monopoly of the two producers. In the quarter ending December, there is an increase of about 6 to 7 per cent in the tin plates/tin-free steel prices along with another 7 to 8 per cent increase announced from January.

BIS implementation is not only on metal, it is also on import of various other products such as plastic, processed industry, auto wheel rims and many other products, then why metal industry is against this decision? If demand is for extension, then how much extension is going to help the industry?

The resistance of the metal packaging industry against imposition of BIS is due to following reasons: There is a demand-supply gap, i.e. the industry needs about 7 lakh tonnes of material, while the domestic production is about 4.50 lakh tonnes. Keeping in mind, the demand and growth of about five per cent, the industry meets its requirement from imports and with the kind of investment, it has done and employment it provides, industry's requirement of material has to be met. Industry imports both prime and non-prime materials for manufacture of tin containers/various products for food and non-food segments. The industry can use non-prime material for manufacture of tin containers for non-edible products such as paints and chemicals and various other products like stationery items. Non-prime material arises as a by-product when the prime material is produced by the tinplate mills and is categorised as non-prime due to thickness variation and surface defect.



NHRD, HYSEA celebrate Women's Day

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

NHRD Hyderabad Chapter in partnership with HYSEA, celebrated International Women's Day on the theme 'Choose to Challenge'. In a power packed event held on Saturday, Telangana Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan delivered the keynote address. The International Women's Day falls on March 8.

Governor enthralled the audience by citing her own personal stories and relatable anecdotes on "Choose to Challenge". She also commended the entire NHRD and HYSEA team members who had come together to make a difference in the field of diversity, equity and inclusion. She lauded their efforts and encouraged others to come forward with their support to make our personal and professional lives more equitable and inclusive.

As part of the event, a unique opportunity of joining mentoring sessions from some of the most accomplished leaders in the industry was provided for registered participants. There were 13 such mentoring sessions and a main parallel session, carefully crafted around the needs identified as critical-to-success by the women who wish to make a mark in their journey.

During the event, HYSEA president Bharani Kumar Aroll and NHRD Hyderabad Chapter president Srinivas Reddy Vudumula shared their thoughts on how to realize their vision of enabling corporates to not just be diverse and inclusive but also ensure there is equity.

Sindhu enters final; Srikanth, Satwik-Chirag lose in semis

BASEL

OLYMPIC silver medallist P V Sindhu dished out a superlative performance to outclass Mia Blichfeldt of Denmark in straight games and enter the women's singles final of the Swiss Open Super 300 tournament here on Saturday.

Sindhu, the reigning world champion, beat fourth seeded Blichfeldt 22-20 21-10 in 43 minutes to avenge her first-round loss to the Danish world number 12 at the Yonex Thailand Open in January. This is Sindhu's first final appearance since the World championships here in 2019.

The second seeded Indian will take on top seed and Rio Olympics gold medallist Carolina Marin in the summit clash on Sunday. It will be the first meeting between the two in over two years. Former champion Kidambi Srikanth, however, couldn't cross the semifinal stage as he went down 13-21 19-21 to top seed and former world champion Viktor Axelsen.

World number 10 Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also bowed out after losing 10-21 17-21 to sixth seeded Danish pair of Kim Astrup and Anders Skarup Rasmussen in the last-four stage. The Indian duo had a last four

Swiss Open

finish in their last event at Toyota Thailand Open in January.

Sindhu thus emerged as the lone Indian survivor in the USD 140,000 event, the first tournament in the extended Olympic qualification period which ends on June 15. In the women's singles match, Sindhu erased a 5-7 deficit in the opening game to grab a 11-8 advantage at the interval.

The Indian then zoomed to 17-12 but Blichfeldt clawed back with five straight points. Sindhu soon grabbed three game points but again her rival managed to level



the score. However, the Indian ensured she had the last laugh as she pocketed the opening game.

Sindhu dominated the proceedings in the second game as she was up 5-2 first and kept moving ahead. She enjoyed a 11-6 lead at the break and continued her good run to eventually shut the door on her opponent.

On Friday night, Srikanth had beat sixth seed Kantaphon Wangcharoen of Thailand 21-19 21-15 to enter the semifinals. Satwik and Chirag also had notched up a 12-21 21-19 21-12 win over against fifth seeds Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi to enter the semifinals. (PTI)

'Rohit's 161 most defining moment of series'

AHMEDABAD

FACING criticism for his devil-may-care attitude and not putting a heavy price on his wicket in Australia series and in the first Test against England in Chennai, Rohit Sharma's knock of 161 in the second Test emerged as the defining moment.

India skipper Virat Kohli reserved ultimate praise for the knock that pushed the momentum in India's favour. The hosts never looked back from there.

"Rohit's knock in second Test was the most defining moment in us coming back in the series. Getting 160 on that pitch was as good as getting 250 on any good batting wicket and it got us into the contest. That gave us the momentum we needed. Throughout the series, he got important knocks and partnerships which is unnoticed when you don't get those three figures," Kohli said after the match.

Kohli said the India's comeback in the second Test from where they won the series 3-1 made him most happy.



Indian cricket team players hold the trophy as they pose for photographs after defeating England during the third day's play of the 4th and last Test match of the series in Ahmedabad on Saturday

viduals as well to perform and take on like Rishabh and Washy [Washington Sundar] and then Washy with Axar, the game-changing partnerships they had. These are kind of situations where individuals stand up and say, okay, I am going to make a mark and be that player who can make a name for himself," he said.

The India skipper, who became India's most successful captain at home, said that India bounced back from complacency and realised that things can't be taken lightly even at home.

"Just like you have to work hard

to win away from home, you have to work hard to win at home as well, because every team at international level is a quality side and we need to be at our A game to be able to beat them," he said.

Kohli also praised off-spinner R Ashwin for his consistency.

"Ashwin has been a banker for us in the past seven-eight years in Test cricket. His numbers speak of volumes of what he has done in the past few years," he said.

India will now play the World Test Championship (WTC) final against New Zealand in June. While Kohli had earlier said that

he doesn't care about the WTC final since it is more of a distraction, he says that now is the time to begin focusing on it.

"Now, we can accept and admit that we are in the WTC final. It was more of a distraction till now for us. We are a side that is committed to playing Test cricket. These extra things can be a distraction. It did become a bit of a distraction for us in New Zealand, but from then on it was one game at a time and now we are in the final," he said.

The final will be played in June, and the ICC is expected to announce the venue next week. (ANS)

India's glorious unbeaten home run of 13 Test series wins

AHMEDABAD

INDIA on Saturday registered their 13th consecutive Test series win at home as they thrashed England 3-1 in the four-Test series here. India's winning streak began with a 4-0 mauling of Australia in 2013.

In this eight-year span, India have beaten eight countries, excluding Pakistan. Against Australia and England, India have registered two wins each since 2013.

India's last home defeat came in 2012-13 against England who shocked the hosts 2-1. But India avenged that defeat with a 4-0 thrashing in the five-match series in 2016-17.

The 13 home series wins also

UNBEATEN FOR 13 SERIES AT HOME...

India have won 13 consecutive home Test series in eight years, starting with a 4-0 whitewash of Australia in 2013. During this period, India have beaten England and Australia twice each, and with big margins.

Photo: ICC

Team	Series wins	Span
India	13 unbeaten	2013-2021
Australia	10	1994-2001
Australia	10	2004-2008
West Indies	8	1976-1996
New Zealand	8 unbeaten	2017-2021
South Africa	7	1996-2001
England	7	2009-2012



Note: The 13 home 'series' wins include two one-off Test matches against Bangladesh in 2017 and Afghanistan in 2018.

comprise two one-off Test matches against Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

Australia is the second in the list of teams with most consecutive home series victories. They won 10 consecutive home series on two occasions - first from

1994 to 2001 and then from 2004 to 2008.

New Zealand, who will play India in the World Test Championship final in June, have an unbeaten streak of eight consecutive series wins at home. Their fine run started in 2017. (ANS)

Effortless nonchalance: Pant on reverse flicking pacers, making commentators look dull

AHMEDABAD

HE has got everyone excited but Rishabh Pant was nonchalance personified as he picked up the man of the match honours for his brilliant hundred in the fourth and final Test against England here on Saturday.

Pant's 101 off 118 balls, during which he smoothly shifted gears to unsettle the English bowlers, had everyone, from his own skipper Virat Kohli to rival captain Joe Root, praising him to sky.

The 23-year-old man of the moment, however, had

“That victory against England means India finish the league phase of the inaugural ICC World Test Championship with a fine view from the top of the table

— the ICC tweeted

very little to say after picking up the award with his trademark cheeky grin firmly in place.

"I think the drills have helped, and my confidence has helped, transferring it from my batting to my keeping," he responded to an elaborate query on what has worked for him and the secret of his apparent joy while playing the game.

Nonetheless, he did acknowledge that the knock meant a lot to him as it helped the team come out of a seemingly precarious position. That perhaps was an understatement, for his hundred changed the face of the game completely and effectively shut the door on England.

"This was a very important innings, especially with the team under pressure. We were in a tough situation at 146-6, and there's nothing better than performing

- India wrap up the league phase at summit with 520 points, which includes 12 wins, four losses and one draw.
- India will face New Zealand in the ICC World Test Championship final scheduled to be held at the iconic Lord's in June this year.
- New Zealand finished in the second spot with 420 points, including seven wins and four losses.
- Australia finished third with 332 points ahead of England and Pakistan.

when the team needs you the most," he said. And what about that outrageous reverse flick off James Anderson that was adjudged the moment of the match and about which, the Englishmen haven't stopped talking about after getting over their fixation with India's dust bowl pitches? "If I get the chance to reverse-flick a fast bowler again, I definitely would," he said.

And lastly, he seems to be an entertainer not just with the bat but also behind the stumps with his often hilarious chirpiness. Harsha Bhogle quipped that his chatter was making seasoned commentators like him seem dull to the viewers.

"It's a compliment for me but I am sorry it has become a problem for you," he couldn't hide his grin while responding to that. "I have grown up believing that I will play the game to be happy and make everyone happy," he said summing up his philosophy as a player. (PTI)

SCOREBOARD

England 1st Innings 205 India 1st Innings Shubman Gill lbw b Anderson0 Rohit Sharma lbw b Stokes49 Cheteshwar Pujara lbw b Leach17 Virat Kohli c Foakes b Stokes0 Ajinkya Rahane c Stokes b Anderson27 Rishabh Pant c Root b Anderson101 Ravichandran Ashwin c Pope b Leach13 Washington Sundar not out96 Axar Patel run out (Baird/Root)43 Ishant Sharma lbw b Stokes0 Mohammed Siraj b Stokes0 Extras: (B-10, LB-6, NB-3)19 Total: (All out in 114.4 overs)365 Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-40, 3-41, 4-80, 5-121, 6-146, 7-259, 8-365, 9-365, 10-365 Bowling: James Anderson 25-14-44-3, Ben Stokes 27.4-6-89-4, Jack Leach	27-5-89-2, Dom Bess 17-1-71-0, Joe Root 18-1-56-0. England 2nd Innings Zak Crawley c Rahane b Ashwin5 Dominic Sibley c Pant b Axar3 Jonny Bairstow c Rohit b Ashwin0 Joe Root lbw b Ashwin30 Ben Stokes c Kohli b Axar2 Ollie Pope st Pant b Axar15 Daniel Lawrence b Ashwin50 Ben Foakes c Rahane b Axar13 Dominic Bess c Pant b Axar2 Jack Leach c Rahane b Ashwin2 James Anderson not out1 Extras: (B-4, LB-8)12 Total: (all out in 54.5 overs)135 Fall of wickets: 1-10, 2-10, 3-20, 4-30, 5-65, 6-65, 7-109, 8-111, 9-134, 10-135. Bowling: Mohammed Siraj 4-0-12-0, Axar Patel 24-6-48-5, Ravichandran Ashwin 22.5-4-47-5, Washington Sundar 4-0-16-0.
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IPL to begin on April 9: BCCI source

NEW DELHI: The 2021 edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) will begin on April 9, exactly 12 days after the Indian cricket team completes its ongoing assignment against England, a BCCI source revealed on Saturday.

The third and last match of the ODI series against England will be held on March 28 in Pune.

"We have provisionally decided that IPL will start on April 9 and end on May 30," a senior BCCI source told PTI.

"The formal approval of dates and venues will be done during Governing Council meeting next week," the source added.

The BCCI has decided to host IPL matches in five cities -- Chennai, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Delhi and Ahmedabad. The allotment of matches to Chennai and Kolkata would be done, keeping in mind the state Assembly election scheduled there in the next few weeks.

Mumbai Indians had won the 2020 edition that was held in the UAE in a bio-secure bubble.

Also, the Asia Cup, that was scheduled in June this year in India, stands cancelled " now that India have qualified for the World Test Championship final, courtesy their 3-1 series win over England." (PTI)

National Road Cycling Championships

Hyderabad's Aashirwad clinches bronze

HYDERABAD

AASHIRWAD Saxena, a budding road bicyclist from Telangana, won bronze medal on Saturday in the 25th Senior, Junior & Sub-Junior National Road Cycling Championships currently underway at NAVI Mumbai.

Aashirwad Saxena, a class 10 student of St.Pauls High School, took to professional cycling two years back and has been performing well since then.

The 15-year-old boy faced stiff competition from cyclists of many states as he made it to the third place. Neeraj from Harayana stood first and won Gold while Varad Patil from Maharashtra finished second to clinch the silver. Aashirwad who had to be satisfy with the bronze had taken part in 18years team time trial before this event.

After winning the bronze, an upbeat Aashirwad said, "I am happy with my performance. But there is always scope for improvement. I am aiming for the Olympics. So I will focus more."

"I have also started my preparations for the nationals to be



Aashirwad Saxena seen with Dr Maxwell Trevor his coach immediately after winning the bronze medal.

held in Hyderabad towards the end of March," he added.

His coach Dr Maxwell Trevor said, "Aashirwad is a promising road bicyclist to be watched. He is talented and working towards bettering his performance."

Boxam boxing: Pooja beats world champ, 9 Indians in finals

CASTELLON (SPAIN): Asian Championship gold medallist Pooja Rani (75 kg) defeated world champion Atheyna Bylon of Panama in a semi-final bout as nine Indian boxers stormed into the finals of the 35th Boxam International boxing tournament here.

Pooja dominated her opponent from the beginning and looked unfazed throughout and assured a unanimous win on Friday. She will now square off against Melissa Graham of USA in the final on Sunday night.

Other women boxers joining Pooja in the final are debutant Jasmine (57 kg) and Simranjit (60 kg).

Young Jasmine, who is playing her first senior international tournament showed great composure and played from distance to ensure a comfortable 4-1 win over Italy's Sirine Charaabi. She will be up against European champion Irma Testa in the gold medal bout.

World Championship bronze medallist Simranjit was up against veteran Puerto Rican Kiria Tapia and in a close encounter which saw both the boxers trade a series of punches throughout but some intelligent ring craft by the Indian ensured a close 3-2 win over her senior opponent.

Simran will take on World Championship bronze medallist Rashida Ellis in the final bout on Sunday night.

However, it was a flawless day for the Indian male boxers as all six of them marched into the finals.

CWG bronze medallist Mohammed Hussamuddin (57 kg) continued his fine run and displayed technical superiority over Panama's Orlando Martinez to win 4-1. He will face Puerto Rico's Paul Rivera in the final.

