

Womensia



KRITI SANON
@KRITISANON

This is how I'll remember you..
Smiling like a child!
Happy Birthday Sush
I hope you are smiling and at peace wherever
you are..



For beautiful mother-to-be

Being pregnant changes every inch of us. A woman's body goes through physiological, hormonal and glandular changes during this time, that's because of the joy and excitement one goes through. Pregnancy brings mixed feelings. Along with the joy and anticipation, there can be feelings of fear and doubt. This is natural because pregnancy and the arrival of the baby mean many changes in the body and way of life. The youthful figure changes and there is the fear that it may never be the same again. Pregnancy, however, is a natural physiological process. It is much easier to accept the changes in a positive way if one can prepare in advance and take regular care of the skin, hair and body. In fact, it can be a time which you will always remember and cherish.

Many women find that their skin improves during pregnancy and takes on a healthy glow. This is due to hormonal changes. Some, however, may find that certain skin problems like blotchy patches, acne, dark circles or pigmentations. If there are any nutritional deficiencies, this may reflect on the skin, in terms of a pale and sallow complexion. To hide those spots and colour differences, you need to make sure you use the right lipstick, mascara, concealer and foundation that does not have any harsh chemicals.

A daily skincare routine should be followed, in keeping with individual requirements. If the skin is dry, it should be moisturised and nourished every day. Cleanse the skin twice a day with a cleansing cream or milk. Apply a moisturising lotion and sunscreen during the



A daily skincare routine should be followed, in keeping with individual requirements. If the skin is dry, it should be moisturised and nourished every day during pregnancy



Shahnaz Husain

day. At night, apply a good nourishing cream and massage the skin for a few minutes. Use outward and slightly upward strokes. Wipe off the cream with damp cotton wool.

For oily skin, use a cleansing lotion. A scrub should be used two or three times a week if there are no pimples, acne or rash. This helps to keep the pores free of hardened oil. A light toning lotion should be used to refresh the skin. It can be used several times during the day.

Chloasma or pregnancy mask is a common problem during pregnancy, in which the skin develops pigmented (dark) patches. Usually, they occur on the cheeks, or the

highpoints, like forehead, nose and cheeks. The use of a sunscreen lotion is important, to provide protection from UV rays, which actually make these patches apparent. Try to avoid the sun, as far as possible, especially from noon till 3 p.m. This would help to prevent aggravation of the condition. It is a good idea to visit a beauty therapist and seek treatment. Facial massages and application of certain creams can help. If there is no acne or other eruption, the use of facial scrubs will also help to minimize the marks.

As a home remedy, add a pinch of turmeric to yogurt (curd) and apply daily on the patches. Leave it on for about 20 minutes and wash it off with water. Or mix together honey and lemon juice and apply on the patches daily, the

same way. The use of a facial scrub or cleansing grains, rubbing gently on the dark areas, will help.

The hormonal activity usually benefits the hair during pregnancy. Good nutrition and the vitamin and mineral supplements, prescribed by the doctor, actually help the hair to improve. If there is any mental stress, however, this can reflect on the hair, by way of problems like hair loss. It is after the baby is born that hair loss can occur. In fact, post-pregnancy hair loss is almost routine. The hair may also begin to look dull and lifeless. There is no need to be alarmed about it. Once the hormones settle, the condition is usually checked. Regular hair care during pregnancy goes a long way in minimising problems.

Your regular care should include

washing the hair, two to three times a week, with a mild herbal shampoo. Avoid using hair dryers, unless it is absolutely essential. Allow the hair to dry naturally as often as you can. Weekly henna treatments also help to keep the hair in good condition. They also improve the appearance of the hair by adding body and shine. Weekly oil treatments are also needed. In fact, the oil may be applied the night before your shampoo. You should also consult your doctor regarding continuing vitamin and mineral supplements even after the baby's birth.

What you must remember is that pregnancy is not a disease. It is a natural process. So enjoy the anticipation and the event. Along with daily external care, pay attention to your health.

Reuse your Indian wedding dress



LEHENGA

Usually, on formal or ceremonial occasions, Indian Women wear a full ankle-length skirt called Lehenga. Bridal lehenga has a feature like more flared with heavy embroidery. In the wedding lehenga set, lehenga makes you lavish on the stage. It will always take the attention from all corners, you can mix match with following

ANARKALI

Anarkalis will never go out of style as they are a classic. You can stitch the choli with the lehenga skirt, you get a brand new Anarkali. You do not need to do anything with the flare of the skirt and can easily transform your wedding lehenga into a designer Anarkali suit in a short time. Make it impressive by attaching tassels or hangings in its borders.

What happens to your expensive bridal lehenga once the wedding is over?? They were safely dry-cleaned and stored in your wardrobe. I am sure that you wear that lehenga hardly twice or thrice after your wedding. That's not good for spending a lot of money and storing them in a Wardrobe without using them. The ravishing Wedding attire suffices enough to transform the bride to a gorgeous glamorous one with mix and match concept

Here are few ways to reuse wedding dress, lehenga choli, and anarkali dress.

Reuse the choli

You can use your Blouse in multiple ways. Most of the Wedding blouses have heavy embroidery work, we can pair up easily with a plain saree having the opposite colour border. You can also opt for a plain skirt and go in for a new look. You can add a modern twist to your bridal blouse by altering it to a design of your choice just because of the changing trend your blouse seems a bit of old fashion.

Dupatta

There is no hard rule to use

your bridal dupatta with Lehenga only, you can use your bridal dupatta with a simple salwar suit, Anarkali or lehenga choli, and make a regular outfit look heavier or you can stitch into a Kurta, Shrug, transparent jacket, flared top. You can drape your Bridal Dupatta differently it also gives you a different look like wear it with half style with a lehenga or it has long trailing dupatta style it up with saree.

Jacket style top

Opt with a jacket style top, remember one thing 'highlight only one rule' where only your skirt or the kurta can be on the heavier side, gives you an Indo Western fusion to rock the floor in an occasion.

Different tops

Shirt it up with a button-down top or you can match up with a plain blouse to give fresh look. You can team up with a different bodice like off-shoulder or cold-shoulder choli or with a crop-cap top.

Reduce some pleats

Reduce some pleats and make it into a fish cut lehenga which adds hourglass shape to your body.

Get rid of dry skin



Dry skin (xerosis) is a common condition with many causes. Dry skin can be a symptom that indicates a more serious diagnosis. But in most cases, dry skin is caused by environmental factors that remove moisture from the skin.

Heat, hot showers, arid climates, and harsh soaps can all trigger dry skin. Fortunately, you can use home remedies to address dry skin symptoms and restore moisture. Read on to learn more.

Coconut oil

Coconut oil has emollient properties. Emollients fill the spaces between skin cells, creating a smooth surface. That's why the saturated fatty acids that occur naturally in coconut oil can hydrate and smooth the skin. You can use coconut oil daily on even the most sensitive parts of your body. These include the area underneath your eyes and around your mouth. Another advantage of coconut oil is that you don't need to mix it with

anything. Coconut is gentle enough for substantial everyday use.

Petroleum jelly

Petroleum jelly products can heal skin in older adults. Petroleum jelly, also known as mineral oil, covers the skin in a protective layer. It traps moisture underneath. This helps heal dry, irritated skin patches.

Oatmeal baths

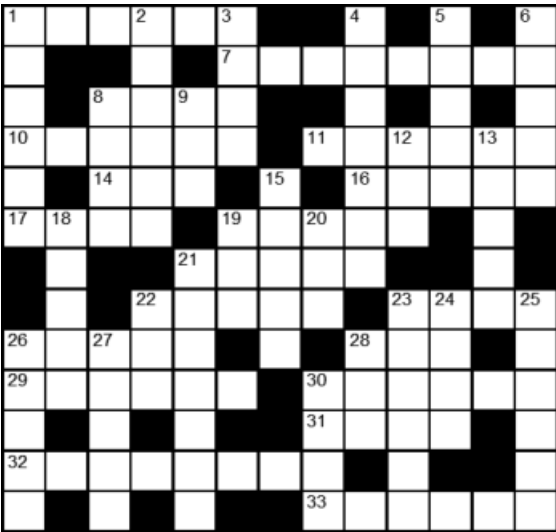
Oatmeal is common folk remedy for irritated skin. Colloidal oatmeal has antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties that soothe irritation. This remedy is especially effective if you're seeking to relieve itching. After you've taken an oatmeal bath, make sure you moisturize your skin to lock in the barrier. You can make an oatmeal bath at home. Use a food processor to chop oatmeal into a fine powder, then stir it into warm water. You can also try one of the many commercial products available to make an oatmeal soak.

Antioxidants and omega-3s

When your skin is dry, it means you're exposing it to elements that are damaging skin cells faster than your body can repair them. There are some foods that can help your skin appear healthier. Foods rich in antioxidants can minimise damage from toxins and help your body make healthy cells. Foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids like salmon, may also contribute to a glowing-skin diet.

Gloves

Hands tend to experience the most direct contact with environmental irritants. These include dish soap and laundry detergent. Get in the habit of wearing gloves when your hands are in water. Your hands also take a lot of abuse when temperatures drop and you're working outside in the cold. Wearing insulated gloves while doing household chores, or when you're outside in extreme temperatures can cut down on dry, irritated skin.



SOLUTION TO JANUARY 21

CROSSWORD

Across

- Lacking in pigment (6)
- Way to the heart (4,4)
- Church section (4)
- Recover (6)
- Crusoe's native (6)
- A vase for a person's ashes (3)
- Not external (5)
- Sharpen (4)
- Chores or jobs (5)
- Craze (5)
- Gains (5)
- Expectant desire (4)
- Attentive or vigilant (5)
- Peruse, study or learn by heart (3)
- Battled (6)
- Relating to sexual pleasure (6)
- A board game (4)
- Frozen dessert (8)
- Not long pants ? (6)

Down

- One of the 12 apostles (6)

- Give or bestow; divulge (6)
- Baking chamber (4)
- Red powdery condiment (7)
- Joseph ____, Austrian composer (5)
- Woodland deity (5)
- Fever and paroxysms associated with malaria (4)
- Moral offence (3)
- Election winners (3)
- Fable writer (5)
- Child's nurse (5)
- Greeting (5)
- Pitch (3)
- Female sibling (3)
- Famous city in Uttar Pradesh (7)
- Work unit (3)
- Jinx (6)
- Aware of (4)
- Amount too much (6)
- Attach (5)
- Leonhard ____, Swiss mathematician (5)
- French vineyard (3)
- Tall, stately trees (4)

SUDOKU



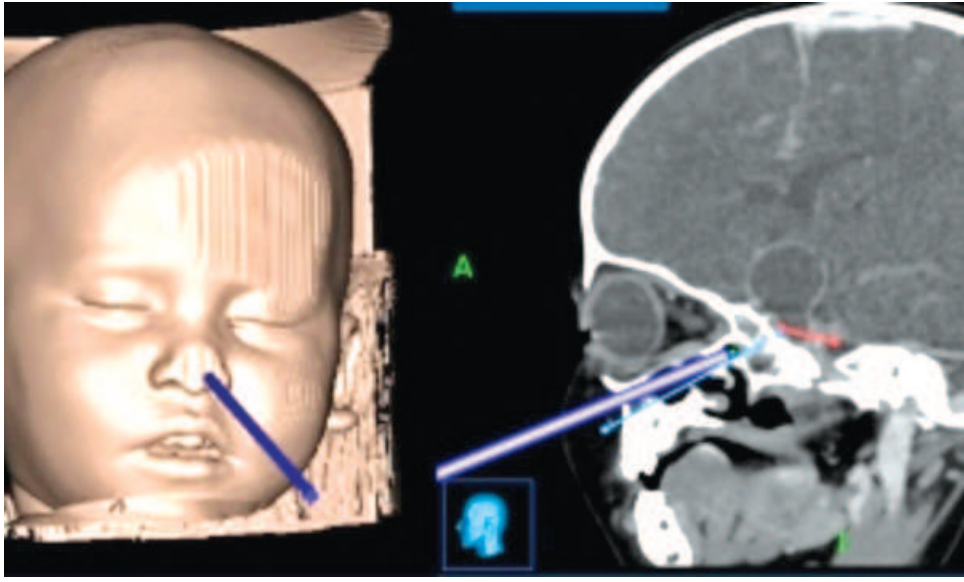
NEWS ROUNDUP

Alaya F sets the floor on fire with dance moves



Bollywood actress set temperatures soaring on Thursday with her dance moves on the title track of Kalank. Twinkle toes Alaya posted a video of her dancing on Instagram. Alongside the clip, she wrote: "Decided to make a dance reel on one of my favourite songs!?? hope you guys enjoy this so all the bruises on my leg today are worth it. Choreographed by (and dancing with me): @utkarshc21 #kalank." Daughter of actress Pooja Bedi, Alaya made her Bollywood debut with "Jawaani

World's youngest large brain tumour patient operated in C'garh



CHANDIGARH

DOCTORS at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER) here have created history by operating on the world's youngest large brain tumour patient that was removed through the nose, it was announced on Thursday.

The youngest child reported till date to have undergone endoscopic surgery through the nose for removal of such a tumour was two years old, operated on in 2019 in Stanford in the US, said a hospital press release..

A team of endoscopic skull base surgeons, Dhandapani S.S. and Sushant, both of the Department of Neurosurgery, and Rijuneeta from the Department of ENT, operated upon the one year and four months old girl hailing from Uttarakhanda.

She was referred to the PGIMER with loss of vision.

As per the doctors, the child was normal and

playful following visual stimuli a few months back. For the last 20 days, the mother noticed that the child was not following anything shown to her. The child's MRI revealed a calcified brain tumour at the base of the skull suggestive of craniopharyngioma of size three cm, large for a child of one year, close to critical neural structures such as optic nerves and hypothalamus.

The tumours are usually operated on through open surgery, and the remaining part is treated with radiation therapy. Over the last few years, such tumours are being removed through the nose endoscopically by neurosurgeons teaming with ENT surgeons among patients older than six years.

However, endoscopic removal through the nose is highly challenging in small children because of small nostrils, immature bones at the skull base, and proximity to crucial blood vessels.

Despite the enormous challenge, Dhandapani chose the endonasal corridor, as the skull open-

ing and brain retraction are avoided if operated through the nose.

The team studied the child elaborately using CT angiography navigation and planned for endoscopy. A thin high definition endoscope, micro-instruments, and laryngeal coblator were used during the initial steps.

Reaching up to the tumour was difficult, as the bones and sinuses were immature. The typical air sinus, which usually gives a corridor to reach up to the tumour base, was absent in this child.

The nasal stage was performed by ENT surgeon Rijuneeta, while the skull base part was completed by Dhandapani and Sushant.

Extensive drilling of the immature bones with a diamond drill was carried out using computer navigation to create a tumour removal corridor.

Doctors say the tumour was dissected from critical structures using angled endoscopes and removed through the nose despite very little working space.

Gambhir contributes ₹1-cr for Ram Temple

NEW DELHI

BJP MP Gautam Gambhir has donated Rs one crore for construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya.

The cricketer-turned-politician said the donation was made by him and his family for a "glorious" temple in Ayodhya that is the dream of all Indians.

"A glorious Ram temple has been the dream of all Indians. Finally this long standing issue has been put to rest. This will pave the way for unity and tranquility. A small contribution from me and my family has been made in this endeavour," the east Delhi MP said in a statement.

The Delhi BJP has launched a campaign for collection of donations through coupons across the city, said party leaders. "Coupons of Rs 10, 100 and 1000 will be used for collection of donations from as many households as possible," said Kuljeet Chahal, Delhi BJP general secretary and convener of the campaign. Contributions over Rs 1000 will be made through cheques.

There are many persons who have their sentiments deeply associated with the Ram temple and who are willing to contribute large sums of one crore or more, he said. Various saffron outfits including the RSS, VHP and others will also participate in the campaign for collecting contributions from people. A door-to-door campaign will be started for collection of donations through coupons from February 1, Chahal said.



Nripendra in Ayodhya to discuss final stages

AYODHYA

RAM Janmabhoomi Construction Committee head Nripendra Mishra arrived in Ayodhya on Thursday to attend a two-day meeting called to discuss the final stages of the temple development scheme.

After reaching Ayodhya, Mishra did a spot inspection of the Janmabhoomi campus and held a meeting with the engineers of Larsen and Toubro, which is executing the project, at the Vishwamitra Ashram. The second meeting between the office-bearers of the

Trust and the engineers of L&T and Tata Consultancy will be held at the Circuit House. Architect Sompura has also reached Ayodhya to attend the meeting.

In the meeting, engineers will present the foundation design for temple construction. At the same time, soil is being removed from the surroundings of the sanctum sanctorum for the construction of the Ram temple. The meeting will be held in four phases with Ram Trust officials and others associated with the construction work involved in the first phase.



Woman kills minor son, commits suicide in UP

HAMIRPUR

A 30-year-old woman allegedly killed her five-year-old son by giving him milk laced with powdered glass to drink and then committed suicide by consuming the same at her parental house in Hamirpur district of Uttar Pradesh, police said on Thursday.

Soni Nishad along with her son Shani was living with her parents in Sahurapur village in Lalpura police area for the past six-seven months after differences with her in-laws.

Her husband Bhola, 40, of Brahma Ka Dera village in Kotwali police area, is a labourer based at present in Surat.

The incident was reported on Wednesday when Soni's mother Marri, a cook at a basic school, returned home and saw Soni and Shani lying unconscious and raised an alarm.

Police reached the spot and got the two admitted to a district hospital, where Soni died during treatment.

Minus 27.1 in Drass sector, Srinagar freezes at minus 7

SRINAGAR

MINIMUM temperatures plummeted further across the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh on Thursday as the weather office forecast another spell of snow and rain during the next three days.

Minimum temperatures across the valley and Ladakh dropped further on Thursday due to clear night sky. Another spell of moderate snow in Kashmir hills and plains and higher reaches of Jammu and rain in the plains of Jammu is expected starting Friday. "Maximum activity is likely

on 23rd and 24th of January," an official of the weather office said.

The 40-day long of harsh winter cold 'Chillai Kalan' will end on January 31. Srinagar recorded minus 7 degrees Celsius, Pahalgam minus 9.3 and Gulmarg minus 7.8 as the night's lowest temperature.

Leh town of Ladakh had minus 16.2, Kargil minus 18.4 and Drass minus 27.1 as the minimum temperature.

Jammu had 5.7, Katra 7.5, Batote 4.3, Bannihal 4.8 and Bhaderwah minus 0.5 as the minimum temperature.

Priest bludgeoned to death in Lucknow

LUCKNOW

AN 85-year-old priest of a Shiva temple was brutally bludgeoned to death in Shivpur village on the outskirts of the Uttar Pradesh capital.

The blood-soaked body of the priest, Fakire Das, was found inside his hut on the temple premises. His assailants appeared to have used a brick to hit him. The brick was also recovered from the spot. The priest's body was dis-



covered by a villager who had come to the temple and later informed the police.

According to sources, the donation box was found bro-

ken and the cash in it was missing.

The food grains stocked in the store room of the temple complex were also missing.

Police sources said that there was a possibility that the priest had resisted a robbery attempt and was attacked by the miscreants with the brick.

Circle Officer of Bakshi Ka Talab police station, Hridesh Katheria said the priest had been staying alone in the temple for the past few years.

Allot flats to people living in JJ clusters: Kejriwal



NEW DELHI

CHIEF MINISTER Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday directed officials to "expeditiously" allot flats to people living in the city's identified JJ (jhuggi jhopri) clusters.

The chief minister chaired a meeting to review the status of the ongoing JJ cluster rehabilitation plan under Mukhyamantri Awas Yojana.

Urban Development Minister Satyendar Jain also attended the meeting. "We have to provide shelter to every poor in Delhi. The project should be completed within its due timeline," Kejriwal said.

A total of 9,315 house inventories is in a ready-to-move condition for 14 identified JJ clusters.

ters. Apart from these, 28,910 are being constructed for 73 identified JJ clusters, said a Delhi government statement. The chief minister instructed officials to expeditiously allot the flats that have been constructed for the economically weaker section and slum dwellers.

He said all obstacles in the allotment of land required for the construction of these flats should be removed, the statement said. Officials of the Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) said out of the 9,315 ready-to-move in houses, 7,400 are in Bhalswa Jahangirpuri area for seven identified JJ clusters, 1,060 are in Sultanpuri area for four such clusters and 855 are in Bawana area for three identified JJ clusters.

53,000 poultry birds to be culled at Punjab's Mohali

CHANDIGARH

AROUND 53,000 birds of two poultry farms in Punjab's Mohali are to be culled after some samples from there testing positive for avian flu, a senior official said on Thursday.

The reports of samples taken from two poultry farms at Behra village in Dera Bassi

in Mohali were received from the National Institute of High-Security Animal Diseases lab in Bhopal on Wednesday.

"The culling of around 53,000 birds will either start today evening or tomorrow," said V K Janjua, Additional Chief Secretary (Animal Husbandry and Dairy).

As per the government of India guidelines, the birds of poultry farms located

within one km of an infected farm have to be culled.

There was no other poultry farm other than these two within one km radius, an official said. The department has constituted 25 teams for the culling drive, he added. After culling, the poultry birds would be buried, he said.

The samples taken from two poultry

farms had tested positive for H5N8 strain on Wednesday.

The samples from these poultry farms were sent to NISAD for confirmation on January 15 after the Northern Regional Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (NRDDL) in Jalandhar suspected them to be positive for bird flu. These two poultry farms are layer farms where birds are reared for eggs.

Amid factionalism, BJP begins campaigning for 4 by-poll seats in Raj

JAIPUR

AMID factionism, feuds and tussle over leadership status, the opposition BJP in Rajasthan has started campaigning for the Assembly by-elections to be held in four constituencies, however, the dates for the same are awaited.

Assembly by-polls shall be held in Sujargarh, Rajsamand, Sahara (Bhilwara) and Vallabhnagar (Udaipur) after the deaths of the members of legislative assembly following illness in last four months.

The by-polls shall be held during interesting times when fractions within BJP have come out open recently. Former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje's followers recently announced the formation of an outfit supporting her and demanded that she be

declared as the chief ministerial candidate for the 2023 Assembly election.

The BJP has however officially maintained silence on the issue and downplayed any further attempts to project any individual as the CM.

However, the party has promoted anti-Raje cadres on many significant positions. Meanwhile, BJP state president Satish Poonia, starting the by-poll campaigning after offering prayers at Salasar Balaji temple, said, "We shall make a strong win in by-polls due to the people-friendly policies launched by PM Narendra Modi and with the hard work of party workers."

He further said that the party shall break the trend of Rajasthan under which BJP and Congress passes power to alternate hands after tenure of five years.

"We shall break this trend and ensure that BJP emerges as an undefeated and unconquered party forever in the state in coming elections," he added.

Poonia was supposed to travel to Chittaurgarh, Pratapgarh, Banswara and Dungarpur on Thursday on his election campaign. However, he cancelled it in the wake of last rites for MLA Gajendra Singh Shaktawat being performed in his home town.

However, his visit to Rajsamand is scheduled on January 22 and to Bhilwara on January 23.

He shall also visit Shaktawat's residence on Friday, said party sources.

It needs to be mentioned here that the Sahara MLA Kailash Trivedi died in October last year, the Sujargarh Assembly seat further fell vacant after the death of Con-

gress MLA and Social Justice and Empowerment Minister Bhanwarlal Meghwal on November 16, 2020.

Later, Rajsamand, BJP MLA from Rajsamand and Kiran Maheshwari died in November 2020, leaving her constituency vacant and on Wednesday, Vallabhnagar (Udaipur) Gajendra Singh Shaktawat passed away.

Eventually, the strength of the legislators in the 200-member Assembly has been reduced to 196. Eventually, BJP is aiming to win all four seats after studying the caste composition and the issues affecting the voters.

At present, the Congress has 104 MLAs, the BJP has 71, Communist Party of India has 2, RLP has 3, the Bharatiya Tribal Party has 2, the Rashtriya Lok Dal has 1, besides 13 independent MLAs.

SELECT E AUCTIONEER
SCRAP FOR SALE
e-Auction to salvage sale of Minor Heat & Water Affected Footwear (Auction id - RE0000400)
e-Auction will be carried out for disposal of Minor Heat & Water Affected Footwear on whole lot basis on behalf of M/s Nand Traders on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" on 9th February 2021. The affected items can be inspected at M/s Nand Traders lying at M/s Nand Traders 32 A Ground Floor, Anand Nagar, Inderki-35 from 25th January onwards after taking prior appointment with Ms. Dimple (SEA) Mobile No. 8920358280, Mr. Ajay Sharma (SEA) Mobile No. 9911999047 & Mr. Naveen Jindal (M/s Nand Traders) 9266100007. To participate please register on www.eauctioneer.in. Duty filled Participation Form and DD/UTR for RTGS payments must be provided to M/s Select E Auctioneer Pvt. Ltd. at the following address e-mail id by 8th February 2021.:
301-302, Samrat, Bhawan, A-7/8/9, Ranjit Nagar Commercial Complex, New Delhi - 110008
email: bid@eauctioneer.in Contact: Ms. Dimple 8920358280, 09911999047, 25701274 - 75 - 76

The ongoing tussle over AP local body elections

THE AP government has decided to contest the ruling of the AP High Court in favour of the SEC move to hold panchayat elections in the state. A Division Bench of the High Court has ruled in favour of the elections after a single judge bench ruled against the elections allowing the contention of the government to prevail that elections could not be held as the anti-corona vaccination has begun in the state and that it would take away all the energy and time of the government. Whatever could be the interpretation of political parties on the ruling in favour of the elections, it brings down curtains, for the time being, on the contentious issue that kept both the SEC and the State government pre-occupied in war of words at every turn.

The issue has been rocking the State since the day the SEC proposed elections on March 7 last year to the MPTCs and ZPTCs. Two days later it issued another notification for holding the elections to the civic bodies in the State. The notification for holding elections to the panchayats was to come up on March 15, when the SEC decided to halt the same after complaints from the opposition midway. Next came the move of the government which cut short the term of the SEC and appointed a former judge to the office.

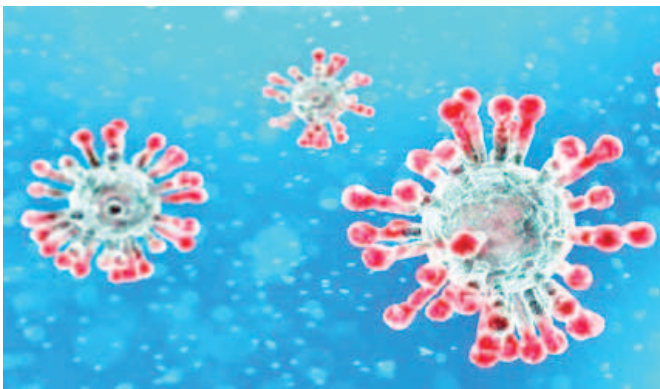
The SEC knocked the doors of the Supreme Court against the decision and got an order in favour of it. The SEC immediately went ahead and began consultations with the political parties to

continue the election process. The latest order of the High Court is on predictable lines as the Election Commission is an independent body and once the election schedule is announced, there is little that anyone could do against the same. But what is not understandable is the hype around the local body elections. There is little for the ruling party to be afraid of the elections as it has used its welfare schemes to penetrate almost all sections of the society.

The YSRCP has been in power for just over a year and there is little for it to worry about. Yet the unseemly tussle went on with both the Government and the SEC acting in haste and against each other. Both the parties to the litigation

sound logical in questioning the moves of the other. They sound so because the logic has only been reversed by both to the extent that they just swapped the other party's arguments with theirs. The litigation sounded more like an ego clash.

Local body elections are for the larger good of the state. When the State government is spending humongous amounts of money on welfare, it is always advisable to have elected people's representatives at every level including the ZPTCs and MPTCs and panchayats and civic bodies to make the money reach the right beneficiaries. The ruling party in Andhra Pradesh should remember that it is only through elections and a democratic process that it has come to power with a big margin and majority of seats. The SEC can only conduct the elections, not influence the voting pattern!



‘Link between smoking, vegetarianism, Covid not fully understood’

SHAKOOR RATHER

A pan-India CSIR survey suggests that smoking and a vegetarian diet may provide protection against Covid-19, but there is no cause for either group to celebrate with scientists as well authors of the study cautioning that this is an observation and requires further research. Smoking is bad for health. Period. And the link between vegetarianism, smoking and less Covid-19 sero-positivity is only a reported association, stressed Anurag Agarwal, director of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Institute of Genomics and Integrated Biology (CSIR-IGIB) and one of the authors of the survey, Sero-positivity means a positive result for antibodies in a blood test.

The CSIR paper, yet to be peer-reviewed or published, also cites two studies from France and similar reports from Italy, New York and China, which reported lower infection rates among smokers. “There is some such data elsewhere for smoking. There are many (studies) that have found the opposite too. As I said this is an association. Smokers and those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are at greater risk of death. We do not advocate smoking,” Agarwal told PTI.

“Most importantly, low sero-positivity can be due to lower production or faster loss of antibodies also. The topic needs further study,” he clarified. The CSIR survey, reported earlier this week, tracked about 10,000 of its employees on the prevalence of Covid-19, and found that nearly 10 per cent of the staff had antibodies. The study also found that smoking and vegetarianism are associated with lower chances of contracting the virus. It did not go into scientific details of why and how beyond reporting the observations.

“Use of private transport, lower-exposure occupations, smoking, vegetarianism and ‘A’ or ‘O’ blood groups appeared to be protective, using sero-positivity as a surrogate for infection,” the authors of the pan-India survey said. For its study, CSIR took samples of 10,427 adult individuals working in its laboratories or institutions and their family members, based on voluntary participation, to assess the presence of antibodies against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes Covid-19.

The study, piloted by CSIR-IGIB, Delhi, found that 1,058 (10.14 per cent) of the 10,427 had antibodies against SARS-CoV-2. The study did not specify how many of these are smokers or vegetarians. Agarwal said the study suggests that declining infections in India by October end last year may be linked to sub-community level immunity. “Most importantly, low sero-positivity can be due to lower production or faster loss of antibodies also. The topic needs further study,” he added

key takeaway from the study, Agarwal said, is to be cautious since the disease spreads very fast and easily, and there is some optimism that the worst is behind us. He added that the antibody stability for six months found in the study is a good sign.

Reacting to the conclusions drawn from the survey, immunologist Satyajit Rath noted that the research paper treats sero-positivity, or the presence of antibodies, as a surrogate for exposure to the virus, and sero-negativity as an evidence of protection against the pathogen conferred by smoking, vegetarianism, and other factors. “Nobody would interpret sero-negativity as evidence of protection, but only as lack of exposure,” Rath told PTI.

Classically, sero-positivity is interpreted as evidence of prior exposure, not as evidence of susceptibility, he explained. “All interpretations about so-called roles for blood groups, smoking, and vegetarianism appear to be based on this incorrect interpretation,” Rath, from Delhi’s National Institute of Immunology (NII), added. A review of 174 cohort studies in August revealed an unexpected low number of current smokers among subjects tested for SARS-CoV-2 infections.

The prevalence of current smokers suffering from symptomatic Covid-19 was frequently significantly lower than in the general population, it said. Cohort study is a type of panel study where the individuals in the panel share a common characteristic. The World Health Organisation (WHO) associates smoking with an adverse progression of Covid-19 and has in the past called on people to quit smoking. There are also many published studies which suggest that quitting smoking might reduce the risk of a severe coronavirus infection.

According to a study published in the journal Developmental Cell in May, cigarette smoke spurs the lungs to make more of the receptor protein which the novel coronavirus uses to enter human cells. The findings may explain why smokers appear to be particularly vulnerable to severe Covid-19, the researchers of the study said. Another study published in the journal Cell Stem Cell in November, pointed out that smoking cigarettes causes more severe infection by the novel coronavirus in the airways of the lungs. “In the absence of specifically designed studies, any hypothesis on the effect of smoking/nicotine uptake on symptomatic Covid-19 remains speculative,” according to an editorial published in the journal ‘Tobacco Induced Diseases’.

While there isn’t much scientific literature on the effect of vegetarian diet on chances of getting ill with Covid-19, the CSIR study does suggest that vegetarianism is associated with less Covid-19 sero-positivity. K Srinath Reddy, president of the Public Health Foundation of India, told PTI in an earlier interview that there is no proof at the moment that vegetarians are protected against Covid-19. However, he said people who take a lot of fruits and vegetables as part of their natural diet have better innate immunity, and might be able to fight the infection much better.

According to immunologist Vineeta Bal, while the CSIR study provides useful data, there are some limitations to it. “The study is family based -- transmission within the family is an important parameter in such a situation and data provides no information about it. Family as a unit is also important while analysing parameters such as smoking, food habits etc,” Bal, visiting professor at Pune’s Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, told PTI.

“Samples are also primarily city based. Male-female ratios don’t reflect the population distribution. These concerns are important from a public health perspective as recommendations for issuing guidelines about food, smoking etc. should have a more sound and wider basis,” she said. She also noted that the CSIR study is an observational one and such studies can only highlight associations. “More focused studies will be needed to strengthen or refute observations reported in this study. In any case, I think it is premature to derive public guidelines out of this study for people to make an informed choice,” Bal said.

Rebuilding a young Republic

SURGICAL STRIKE



K KRISHNA SAAGAR RAO

INDIA needs to be rebuilt all over again. This time around with ‘India-centric core-values’. Imagine a nation waking up to independence at midnight with zero ‘nation building’ process led by the key national leaders of that contemporary period. Many misconstrue ‘nation building’ to be ‘governance of a nation’ through legislation and execution, however that is merely ‘governance’.

It is 70 years since we turned a Republic, and it is important at least now to get a fresh perspective on ‘governing a nation’ and ‘leading a nation’. Any elected leader, with the help of an established administrative framework and machinery can govern a nation. It amounts to just ‘maintenance of a nation’ and not ‘inspiring and leading nation’. Unfortunately, India has been simply ‘governed’ for the first 60 years, with an exception of one term led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee in between that six-decade period.

PM Narendra Modi since 2014 is ‘leading the nation’ and not just governing it. PM Modi is making courageous decisions to shatter the status quo. He is consciously attempting to drive positive disruption, to ensure ‘strategic leap’ for the nation, instead of evolutionary growth.

“Reform – Perform – Transform” is a discerning agenda of the PM Narendra Modi and its core objective is to ‘rebuild India’. I have a clear vision to rebuild this 70-year young Republic with ‘India-centric value system’. I strongly believe this is the only lasting solution for a progressive, abundant and prosperous nation.

perous nation.

I share with you below, few initiatives of ‘nation building’ that reshape and rebuild India with robust value framework.

Designing India’s national values

It is essential to understand that ‘values’ are not ethical and moral guidelines. The term ‘values’ has been misused and abused more than it is actually understood and applied.

‘Values’ are what is considered of great importance and it mean, what one holds valuable. The wishlist of what an individual holds valuable are ‘individual values’ and the wishlist of what a nation holds valuable are ‘national values’.

Unfortunately, we as a nation have so far, neither defined the general frame work of ‘individual values’ for Indians, nor did we define the macro value-frame work - ‘national values’. Lack of prioritised value-frame work for an individual highlights the lack of direction and guidance for an individual, and the lack of ‘national value framework’ establishes the same about a nation.

A nation of our size, population, diversity and economy cannot afford to not have a pan-Indian discussion, on this necessary national exercise. At least now, it is time to rebuild this Republic with a structured national value frame work.

National pride

The quality of ‘national values’ drive or not drive ‘national pride’. Fortunately for India, as its early origins are from the confluence of superior knowledge civilisation and Sanatana Dharma, some positive values are embedded ‘by default’. No wonder, despite centuries of oppression, slavery and violation of human freedom by foreign invaders, the un-defined ‘Indian values’ are still visible both in the nationals and the nation.

‘National pride’ is critical for designing, adopting and implementing national values for a nation and its nationals. There are innumerable examples of failed nations, failing nations,



‘National pride’ is critical for designing, adopting and implementing national values for a nation and its nationals. There are innumerable examples of failed nations, failing nations, disintegrated nations and rogue nations across the world. One can’t find ‘national pride’ in the nationals of these nations, even while they are functional states. The key to failure of many of these nations is, they neither had glorious values from the past as legacy nor did they led their nations with a well-defined value-frame work in the present, while they still had a chance for better future

disintegrated nations and rogue nations across the world. One can’t find ‘national pride’ in the nationals of these nations, even while they are functional states. The key to failure of many of these nations is, they neither had glorious values from the past as legacy nor did they led their nations with a well-defined value-frame work in the present, while they still had a chance for better future.

Indians should thank their

stars for surviving the ‘walk-in-the-dark’ for 60 long years, without any structured value-guidance built for this nation by successive national leaders, until recently.

National identity

A nation, especially if it is a heterogeneous union of states like India, it requires many connecting threads to stitch the union together for lasting unity and integrity. National identity

becomes a critical connecting thread to connect the nationals under a singular identity.

Divisive forces inside any nation will try dividing a nation on the basis of multiple identities. The time-tested weapon used by separatists to destabilise a nation is to drive religious, racial, regional, casteist and ethnic divide between communities. These are few multiple-identities used to over-ride the national identity, to destabilise social harmony and disintegrate a united nation.

Lack of well thought-out, designed, adopted and implemented National Value Framework can inspire nationals of a nation to choose ‘national Identity’ as their primary identity.

A nation to stay united, vibrant and progressive requires strong threads to keep it harmonious, vibrant, peaceful and progressive. The consequences of not undertaking nation-building can lead to catastrophic consequences for a nation both in near term and long term.

Nation-building is an essential initiative for India to undertake in this new decade starting 2021. There is no other nation than India, which has an untapped potential to a degree, if unleashed with structured guidance can lead the world.

(The author is the chief spokesperson of the BJP Telangana State, an organisational strategist & a leadership coach)

LETTERS

Ugly spat, avoidable

LITERALLY there is a fight between the LA P legislature with the judiciary which is a sorry state of affairs prevailing in the State. It is really shocking that the ruling party announces and implements some scheme or the other under the head of welfare involving money/ people each and every day when on the other side the same government states of corona fear being the reason fighting for postponement of panchayat elections in courts..

Even a layman knows that the actions of the ruling party are only political to defeat the State Election Commissioner both officially and personal reputation damage with utmost non-co-operation to him throwing away basic rules of decency and decorum given to the State Election Commission under the constitution.. It is also a very bad behaviour of some MLAs and even ministers criticising the commissioner indecently in electronic media and the press recently. Thus, it is a timely correct decision taken by the full bench of the A P High court in over-riding the single judge decision taken earlier for postponement of elections and advising the state to hold panchayat elections as per the schedule already announced by the SEC.

Further, it is really ridiculous for the employees unions to also take political decisions in such an important issue when they are expected to be neutral and carry on the orders of the government whichever is ruling the state.. After all, are they not involved in all these every-day schemes, that

are being announced by the government every day involving thousands of people and if so what about Corona ? The State can always go to Supreme Court but at whose cost and it is the cost of the tax-payers which the people should know.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao, Rajahmundry

Will US see winds of change?

PROPOS, “Biden takes oath as 46th US President”, (The Hans India, January 21). President Joe Biden has taken office in a country looking strikingly different than it did on his predecessor’s Inauguration Day. His elevation as the 46th President of the United State (US) marks a moment of victory for all those who believe in liberal democracy, civilised politics within the rules of the game, responsible leadership, and the inclusion of various social groups, including minorities in the power structure. But his most challenging domestic political task will be to heal a divided nation - the fact that over 70 million people voted for Mr Trump is a grim reminder of the internal fault lines.

Along with domestic priorities, Biden’s presidency will have to deal with the most strategic challenge of the times - the beligerence of China. With Biden having described India as a “bipartisan success story”, there will be overall continuity in the US view of India as balancing Chinese power in Asia. So progress on defence ties should continue apace. But as its suspension of India’s benefits under the Gener-

alised System of Preferences showed, all too often the Trump administration took disproportionate economic swipes against friends. A more strategic and sensible approach is expected from the Biden administration. Against this economic backdrop, India should not just aim at status quo ante but a comprehensive trade agreement. We should let ambition, rather than trepidation and indecision, be our guide. For now, all democrats should celebrate Mr Biden’s win - and the return of the politics of sanity in the most powerful country of the world.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, Bengaluru

II

WITH assuming of Joe Biden as 46th President of the US the new era began in that country. The outgoing President Trump neither respected nor cared the age old traditions of the country even at time of transfer of power. Trump with his stubborn decisions during his tenure made dent to the soul of America - freedom, equality, communal harmony and traditions. So, the Trump rule can be compared to the internal war in that country in 1861 and great economic depression in 1933 during which Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Roosevelt faced the challenges.

Similarly new President Biden who is said to be the oldest President in that country’s history has to face the challenges which were virtually made by the Trump rule. The Trump policy decisions not only shook the conscience of the USA but also had international ramifications. Besides putting these hasty decisions with matured understanding Biden must strive for put

the \$ 1.9 lakh crore package supposed to revive the economy that suffered from the pandemic. The new President also must insist on scientific methods to control the virus which were largely neglected by the outgoing President. The brighter side of the November 2020 elections in the country is electing woman as Vice President of the country for the first time after women got rights to franchise 100 years ago that too with roots in India.

Pratapa Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru

BJP and ‘Kamalam’

I think BJP seems to be falling short of states and cities for changing the names and Gujarat Chief Minister has now taken up the task of renaming the dragon fruit as “Kamalam” which indeed resembles his party’s symbol. Maybe when the elections are around next time, the Election Commission may direct to hide this fruit during the campaign. Why Gujarat government did not consider Hindi name “Ajagar” or Hindu mythological name “Vritra” instead of Kamalam, a name which is quite common in south India.

Either way, the fruit grown in Gujarat is beyond the reach of the common man unless the BJP promises to give Kamalam free of cost. On a lighter note, our national fruit Mango in Hindi is called “Aam”. Will BJP rename the fruit as it syncs with “Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as “Kaamalam” to stir-up hornest’ nest!

N Nagarajan, Hyderabad

thehansreader@gmail.com

CM prods babus to fast-track Sitarama lift irrigation works

Sitarama project designed to make combined Khammam district fertile



SNEAK PEEK

Officials told lift water from Dummugudem and supply to canals

Plan to provide irrigation to 10 lakh acres

Need to construct aqueducts on Munneru and Akeru streams

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

CHIEF Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has instructed the officials concerned to expedite works of Sitarama Lift Irrigation Project to provide irrigation facility to 10 lakh acres in the combined Khammam district.

At a high-level review with irrigation officials on Thursday, the CM said that the government sanctioned Sitarama project for Khammam district, which lies between Godavari and Krishna rivers, to make it fertile. Water is available adequately throughout

Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao at a high-level meeting directs the officials concerned to expedite the works of Sitarama Lift Irrigation Project to irrigate over 10 lakh acres in the combined Khammam district

the year at Dummugudem point on Godavari which can be supplied to the entire Khammam district. He wanted the supply of water by lifting from Dummugudem and supplying to canals of

Sathupally, Illendu and Paler reservoirs. The CM instructed the officials to complete the survey for the remaining works on canals going to Sathupally and Illendu and invite tenders and construct aqueducts on Munneru and Akeru streams besides completing the canal works of Paler reservoir by June.

“We have no idea when water will be available in the Krishna river. There is uncertainty on this. If we don’t get any water from the Krishna, make arrangements to supply water from the Godavari river,” the CM ordered.

DONATIONS FOR RAM TEMPLE

TRS MLA under saffron attack

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE State BJP leadership on Thursday lashed out at TRS MLA from Korutla, Vidyasagar Rao for reportedly asking people to not to contribute for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya.

State BJP chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar questioned the TRS MLA as to why he was so pained when Hindus were contributing to the temple construction at their will?

Accusing the TRS leaders of adopting double standards, Sanjay sought to why the Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao had gone to Tirupati and made offerings?

Terming the campaign seeking donations for the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya as apolitical, Sanjay said cadre from other political parties were also participating in the programme. Even the BJP Minority Morcha leaders have contributed to the construction of the temple, he informed.

- The TRS MLA, Vidyasagar Rao, has reportedly asked people to not to contribute for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya
- BJP calls the statements of the TRS MLA anti-national and divisive



The Karimnagar MP also wondered as to why the police have not filed a case against the TRS MLA for stoking religious discord among people. Demanding KCR to spell out his stand on the construction of Ram temple, Sanjay dared to give a call to his party cadre to participate in the campaign for contributing to the construction of Ram temple as it was not against any religion and organised as an apolitical activity. He appealed to the party cadre to give no scope for any kind of controversy and not to get provoked if some tries to do so. Calling the statement of TRS

MLA anti-national and divisive, party MLC N Ramchander Rao demanded an apology from the MLA. “It is highly objectionable and deplorable. His statement asking not to contribute since the temple is in Ayodhya and not in Telangana is divisive in its nature. I don’t think this is the official line of the TRS party. But, if the TRS thinks so, then why people should visit Tirupati, Yadadri, Raja Rajeswaraswamy temple at Vemulawada?” he asked. Similarly, BJP MLA Raja Singh has also demanded the TRS MLA to tender an apology, and condemned his statement.

Talasani fires injustice salvo at Centre

Hyderabad: Animal Husbandry Minister T Srinivas Yadav on Thursday criticised the Centre for failing to give funds to Telangana State for development and BJP leaders making false accusations against the Telangana government. He asked the Modi government to release a white paper on Central funds to Telangana State. He attended a programme to distribute sheep units among Yadav community with Minister G Kamalakar. On the occasion, Srinivas Yadav assured a building for Gangaputra community in Uppal Bhagayat area. “My words were misunderstood by Gangaputra community who staged protests,” he said. The State government was aiming at overall welfare of the Golla and Kuruma and fishermen and all others, he told them. “As per our plan, the government will lay foundation for a Gangaputra Community Bhavan in Uppal Bhagayat area. The KCR government allotted Rs 3 crore and 3 acres in this regard. Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has been working for welfare of the communities by offering about Rs 1,000 crore,” he informed. He claimed that no other State was spending huge welfare funds and schemes as Telangana. Taking a dig at the BJP leaders, Srinivas Yadav accused them of mud-slinging on the KCR government. “We can also make comments against the BJP leaders for doing so,” he said. He reminded the BJP leaders that the Centre failed to give national status to Kaleswaram project despite repeated appeals. He alleged a misinformation campaign to besmirch the reputation of TRS government. “The BJP leaders should stop mudslinging. Else, the people will teach them a befitting lesson,” he warned.

PANCHAYAT POLLS

YSRCP pins hopes on SC

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

THE AP High Court order giving green signal to conduct panchayat elections triggered a serious debate in both ruling and opposition parties in the State. While the state government which expressed its inability to conduct the elections with the ongoing Covid vaccination programme trying to stall the election process by filing a petition in Supreme Court, the leaders of various opposition parties welcomed the High Court order.

On the other hand, State Election Commission (SEC) is ready to convene a meeting with the officials of the state government in a day or two to discuss the election process. The State Election Commissioner, Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar, said the election process would continue. According to sources in ruling party, the state government is pinning hopes on the positive outcome from the apex court. YSRCP leaders are confident that it will win most of the panchayat bodies in the elections with the implementation of various welfare schemes launched by Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy.

WHITHER SABKA SAATH - SABKA VIKAS?

‘Modi govt dilly-dallying on coach factory for TS’

KTR alleges Centre showing step-motherly attitude towards Telangana State

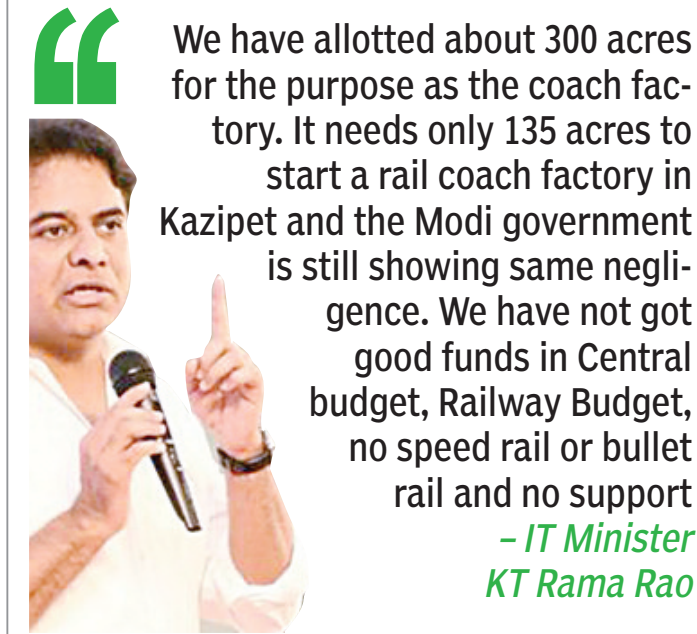
SECUNDERABAD

IT and Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister KT Rama Rao on Thursday strongly criticised the Modi government at the Centre for showing step-motherly attitude towards the Telangana state and its development.

The minister hit out that the BJP government failed to implement bifurcation promises. Citing that despite land allocation the Modi government was yet to take a call, he expressed displeasure.

KTR was addressing a meeting after inaugurating the South Central Railway Employees Sangh division office at Secunderabad, along with Deputy Speaker Padma Rao Goud and others. On the occasion, KTR said that, “we have allotted about 300 acres for the purpose as the coach factory. It needs only 135 acres to start a rail coach factory in Kazipet and the Modi government is still showing same negligence.”

The Minister extended thanks to railway workers for their support to statehood. “We have been friendly to the railway workers and will try to address their issues,” saying so, he assured to address their issues. He accused the BJP government of failing to keep the promises during bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. “We have not got good



We have allotted about 300 acres for the purpose as the coach factory. It needs only 135 acres to start a rail coach factory in Kazipet and the Modi government is still showing same negligence. We have not got good funds in Central budget, Railway Budget, no speed rail or bullet rail and no support

- IT Minister
KT Rama Rao

funds in Central budget, Railway Budget, no speed rail or bullet rail and no support,” he said. Since bullet and speed rails will push development of the State and its economy, there was pressing a need for their expansion, he stressed. He attributed it to deliberate attempt to ignore the State by the centre.

KTR said that the state government already given about 300 acres for Kazipet rail coach factory which needs 135 acres. He said that, “Narendra Modi, who says Sabka

Saath - Sabka Vikas, is not showing it in deeds. He is continuing negligence by the centre in this regard to partiality towards us. Why hasn’t the Centre allotted coach factory to Telangana which is entitled to it.”

KTR said that the Central government had not offered anything for the State development post-bifurcation. The TRS government and Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao was striving for workers welfare, he added.

Police foil TDP ‘Yatra’ in Tirupati

- Prevent party leaders including State chief Atchannaidu, Tirupati LS bypoll candidate Panabaka Lakshmi, party leaders from other parts of the State, from leaving the hotel where they were staying
- The permission granted earlier for the yatra and a public meeting was suddenly cancelled
- Police also stop motorcycle rally at Alipiri after taking around 60 party leaders and activists into custody

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

POLICE foiled TDP’s ‘Dharma Parirakshana Yatra’ which was scheduled to take off from the pilgrim city on Thursday. The Tirupati Parliament constituency-level Dharma Parirakshana Yatra, a mass contact programme involving senior party leader campaigning in a convoy of 70 vehicles covering seven Assembly segments in Nellore and Chittoor districts, was to press for upholding the sanctity and serenity of Tirupati-Tirumala.

Interestingly, police first con-



Police arrest TDP leaders and activists at Town Club near NTR Circle in Tirupati on Thursday

sented for the Ratha Yatra, including a motor-cycle rally from Alipiri, the foot of the holy Tirumala hills to NTR statue at Town Club in the city where a public meeting also was planned by the party before flagging of the yatra but the permission for the yatra was suddenly withdrawn on Thursday leaving the TDP leaders angry and surprised.

TDP state president K Atchannaidu, contesting candidate for the by election Panabaka Lakshmi, party leaders from Nellore and Chittoor districts, including former minister N Amaranatha Reddy preparing to go for the launching of Yatra were prevented by a posse of police personnel at a private hotel where they are staying forcing them confine to the hotel, leading to the party not able to launch the campaign for which elaborate

arrangements were already made in the city.

Police also stopped the motor-cycle rally at Alipiri after taking 50-60 party leaders and activists into custody and saw no public meeting was held at Town Club scheduled to mark the launch of Dharma Parirakshana Yatra while the party activists who tried to regroup near Alipiri were chased away by the police who were present in strength at all places.

Tense situation prevailed at the private hotel where TDP leaders were confined when party activists tried in vain to barge into the hotel.

A strong police force stood at the closed gate thwarted repeated attempts of party activists to gate crash amidst slogans shouting against Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy

and the police leading to tension.

Atchannaidu strongly condemned the police preventing him and leaders from participation in Dharma Ratha Yatra.

Fuming at the Jagan Mohan Reddy government, Naidu said he was trying to throttle the voice of democracy.

The arrested leaders, including Tirupati Parliament constituency president and former TUDA chairman G Narasimha Yadava and activists at Alipiri were taken to MR Palli and Chandragiri police stations where they were in police custody when reports last came in.

Meanwhile, protesting police action against TDP leaders and activists in Tirupati and also other places in the state, party activists staged protest in several places in Chittoor district.

DGP must quit if he can’t respect his uniform: Naidu

AMARAVATI

TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu termed it ‘dangerous thinking’ on the part of the YSRCP government to make illegal arrests in the Ramatheertham temple case with the ulterior motive of terrifying and suppressing the voice of the Opposition leaders and cadres.

Condemning the late night arrest of TDP AP former president K Kala Venkat Rao regardless of the fact that he was a non-controversial 69-year-old leader with 40 years experience of credible political career.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, the TDP chief demanded DGP D Gautam Sawang to explain what crime Venkata Rao had committed. It was YSRCP MP V Vijayasai Reddy who came on an unscheduled visit only to create obstacles to the TDP leaders’ visit to Ramatheertham. The DGP should explain why no preventive steps were taken nor any case was filed against the MP. On the contrary, false cases were filed against the TDP leaders in the name of attack on the MP’s car.

Naidu strongly criticised, saying that it was high time for Gautam Sawang to follow the Indian Penal Code to safeguard the rights of the people but not the ‘Jagan Reddy Penal Code’. If the DGP cannot overcome pressure from the ruling

- Alleges that YSRCP govt is trying to suppress voice of Opposition by threatening leaders
- Wonders how police arrest Kala Venkata Rao when it was YSRCP MP Vijayasai who paid a sudden visit to create obstacles to TDP leaders’ programme at Ramatheertham



TDP national president and former Chief Minister N Chandrababu addressing a press conference at party office in Mangalagiri on Thursday

party leaders to implement the rule of law, then he should resign and go home.

He welcomed the latest order of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh giving green signal for the panchayat elections in the State. The YCP leaders should realise that judges may change but justice will remain. Referring to the Dharma Parirakshana Yatra in Tirupati, the TDP chief asked the DGP to clarify how the police permission that was given on Wednesday could be cancelled on Friday. It was not clear what sections or which constitution the AP police were following. The former chief minister accused the ruling party leaders of provoking the Christian associations to make defamatory comments against the TDP. He asked

why he should apologise when it was true that being a Christian, Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy was not trying to respect the sentiments of other religions. It was true that forcible conversions were going on in this regime and they were being used for commercial purposes.

Naidu demanded the DGP to explain why a royal treatment was being given to pastor Praveen Chakravarthy who was reported to have a bank account in Kadapa.

Alleging that the Chief Minister, the DGP and the YSRCP leaders were responsible for religious disharmony in AP now, he said this was what would happen when the Chief Minister, the home minister, the DGP, the CID chief and such top persons belong to one religion.

Covid vaccine drive

Why our politicians hesitant? AIIMS doc

PM Modi, CMs to take vaccine shot in second phase

British Indian survey finds reluctance in community

NEW DELHI

PM Narendra Modi will be given the Covid-19 vaccine shot in the second stage of the ongoing mass vaccination drive in the country. The Prime Minister all other chief ministers will be administered the COVID-19 vaccine dose after the first phase of mass vaccination ends.

It has also been reported that along with PM Modi, other leaders, bureaucrats, government officials aged over 50 years will also be vaccinated in the second phase of the vaccination. As per the plan, the COVID-19 vaccine will be administered to people above 50 and those with comorbidities in the second phase of vaccination. The move will instil confidence among the general public amid concerns over the efficacy and safety of the two Covid-19 vaccines approved by the Drugs Controller General of India.

AIIMS Resident Doctors Association president Adarsh Pratap Singh says that in other countries politicians and head of states have taken the vaccine to instil confidence among people.

"Unfortunately, I haven't heard of any politician in India be it the PM, President, Health Minister or any Parliamentarian have come forward for this. Why aren't they taking the vaccine?" He adds that it will go a long way in inspiring the general public about its safety and efficacy.

Doctors say that when the US President-elect Joe Biden, former Vice President Mike Pence, US Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, UAE Prime Minister Sheikh Mo-



A medic administers Covid vaccine to a doctor during the first phase of the countrywide inoculation drive, in Jammu on Thursday

India hands over 2 mn doses to Bangladesh

India has handed over 2 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to Bangladesh under grant assistance, a senior Minister said on Thursday. The vaccines were given to Bangladesh at a crucial time when the number of coronavirus cases in the nation continues to rise and has reached 529,687 till Thursday

ammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum and many others can take the shot, "why our politicians are hesitant?" Singh questioned.

Former RDA president of Lok Nayak Jai Prakash hospital Dr Parv Mittal says, "The nation's elected representatives taking the jab would go a long way in allaying vaccine fears amongst the coun-

trial data of Covaxin in the public domain.

AIIMS RDA ex-general secretary Srinivas Rajkumar blames the Health Ministry and ICMR for coming out with inconsistent facts in the past on several issues related to treatment and containment of the infection.

Only 56 per cent of British Indians would take a vaccine to protect against COVID-19 and women fall within the significantly less likely to be open to a jab over fertility concerns, a new survey by a think tank led by Oxford University experts said on Thursday.

The research by the 1928 Institute, a platform created to research and reflect the views of British Indians as the UK's largest ethnic minority group, follows concerns about a lower uptake of COVID-19 jabs among Britain's ethnic minority populations and is calling on the authorities to fund a clear and concerted public health campaign tailored to the British Indian community.

"Despite being one of the hardest hit communities by COVID-19, British Indians show reluctance in taking a vaccine. Much of this reluctance stems from the community saying they do not feel informed enough about the vaccine, its benefits and its impact," says the report entitled 'Vaccines, The Pandemic and British Indians'. "A clear and concerted public health campaign, tailored to our diverse community, to assuage doubts amongst British Indians is needed. An example of this would be campaigns in different languages and co-produced with community leaders and influencers," it notes.

Over 12K test positive after taking Pfizer vaccine in Israel

JERUSALEM

WHILE speculations over the efficacy of the recently launched vaccines against Coronavirus are still rife, it was reported that in Israel over 12000 people who were administered the Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine later tested positive for coronavirus.

The Health Ministry in Israel tested over 1,80,000 people after they had taken Pfizer's Covid vaccine shots. Of those, over 12000 people tested positive which amounts to about 6.6 per cent.

The vaccination drive in Israel was launched on December 19 wherein the elderly and people with comorbidities were prioritised for vaccine shots.

About one-fourth of Israeli population has al-

ready been vaccinated and about 3.5 per cent also taken the second dose of the vaccine. Despite high number of vaccinated individuals and third lockdown being in place, Israel is reporting high infection rates. The rise in infections, despite the lockdown and vaccinations, has been attributed to virus mutations and disregard by some people of restrictions on assembly. Israel has committed to sharing information with the US-German manufacturer on the effects of the mass immunisation.

A lineage of the novel coronavirus, first reported to have emerged in South Africa, escapes neutralisation by antibodies from recovered COVID-19 patients, says a new study which raises questions on the possibility of reinfection by this strain.



Security personnel watch IAF's aircrafts flying past Rajpath during the rehearsals for Republic Day Parade 2021, in New Delhi on Thursday

Man in PPE kit steals ₹20-cr jewellery, held

NEW DELHI

ELECTRICIAN Sheikh Nur Rehman had meticulously planned a perfect burglary -- or at least he thought so -- in his employer's jewellery showroom in Kalkaji and seemed headed for a 'glittering' future with over Rs 20-crore booty. But within hours, as ill-luck would have it, he was in police cross-hairs and cooling his heels behind bars.

When Rehman, 25, took leave on January 10 to visit his native place in West Bengal, no one suspected anything amiss.

On January 20, the jewellery showroom owner reported to Kalkaji police that a man wearing a PPE kit who broke into his premises in PPE kit had fled with jewellery valued at more than Rs 20 crore.

Though the burglar was caught on CCTV, no one knew his identity.

When Kalkaji police station SHO and his team visited the spot after report of burglary on the ground floor of the showroom, they found that most ornaments had been taken from the show window on the ground floor and drawers. The burglar had entered through a fibre sheet on the building's roof, and then down the stairs to the main shop on the ground floor. A lock on the iron grill on the 3rd floor was also found broken. Police teams scrutinised the CCTV footage from the showroom, neighbouring buildings and adjoining areas and also carried out verification of the antecedents of present and former staff, including security guards.



Army jawan killed in Pak firing

SRINAGAR

AN Army jawan was killed when Pakistan violated the ceasefire and resorted to firing on forward positions along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district on Thursday, officials said.

The Pakistan Army resorted to unprovoked firing along the LoC in the Krishna Ghati sector of Poonch, the officials said.

The Indian Army responded to the enemy fire in a befitting manner, they added.

Havaldar Nirmal Singh of the 10 JAK Rifles unit of the Army was critically injured in the firing and subsequently succumbed to his injuries, the officials said.

Singh was a brave, highly-motivated and sincere soldier, a defence spokesperson said, adding that the nation will always remain indebted to him for his supreme sacrifice and devotion to duty.



A flock of White Egret at Perumbakkam marshland, near Chennai on Thursday

NCB busts Dawood's drugs factory

MUMBAI

IN a mega action against the drug cartels in Mumbai, the Narcotics Control Bureau has found the links of fugitive underworld don Dawood Ibrahim Kaskar after the agency busted a drugs factory in Mumbai's Dongri, which was being operated by Karim Lala's grandson Parwez Khan aka Chinku Pathan. The NCB sleuths also recovered cash to the tune of Rs 2.18 crore from the premises of his associate Arif Bujhwala, another kingpin.

An NCB official connected to the probe, requesting anonymity told IANS, "Chinku Pathan, who was nabbed by the NCB yesterday is the grandson of Lala, who was the mentor of Dawood Ibrahim."

The official said that Lala was the original underworld don of Mumbai. "This cartel was basically being run by the Pathani gang and they were also having relations with the Dawood gang," he said.

The official said that Chinku Pathan's partner Bhujwala is the biggest supplier of drugs in Maharashtra.

It began on Wednesday morning, when the agency sleuths arrested Chinku Pathan along with his associate Zakir Hussain Fazal Huk Shaikh and seized 2.9 grams of heroin and 52.2 grams of mephedrone or 'MD' from his residence at 7th Floor, 'B' Wing, Progressive Signature CHS, Ghansoli.

Houses to everyone by August 15, 2022: Shah

GANDHINAGAR

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said he had full faith that the BJP government at the Centre led by PM Narendra Modi will provide a home to every citizen of the country by August 15, 2022. He was speaking at the virtual public dedication of one-km-long overbridge at Shilaj in Ahmedabad.

Shah said, "The way in which our BJP Government is undertaking housing projects in the country in rural as well as urban areas, I have full assurance that by August 15, 2022 everyone in the country will be facilitated with a house to live in. The Narendra Modi government has provided more than 10 crore [units of] affordable housing."

"More than 13 crore poor families were provided with gas cylinders under the Ujjwala scheme by our PM Narendra Modi...Our government has provided electricity to all the villages in the country and now we are working towards providing water connectivity to every household in the country by 2022. I have full faith that by the time the BJP will contest the next Lok Sabha elections, there won't be a single house in the country devoid of water connectivity," Shah added.



Shah, on Thursday carried out the virtual dedication of overbridge on the railway track at Thaltej-Shilaj area in Ahmedabad. Gujarat deputy chief minister Nitin Patel was present at the site.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi took a decision to free around one lakh railway crossings in the country and under that we have taken up the works to have overbridges or under Bridges at these places with fifty fifty cost sharing with the state governments. The railways has also decided to do away with unmanned railway crossings in the country and by 2022, there won't be a single unmanned railway crossing in the country," added Shah.

Women warriors in CoBRA to fight Maoists

NEW DELHI

THE Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is in the process to induct women warriors of the force into its elite CoBRA Battalion to engage in the fight against the Maoists -- the first of such kinds of initiatives taken in the Maoist warfare duties.

Outgoing CRPF Director General A.P. Maheshwari, who is to retire on February 28, made the announcemet while addressing the media in his first interaction during the Covid crisis. "We are inducting women warriors in the CoBRA force, the anti-Naxal wing," Maheshwari said.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had accorded approval for setting up of sanction of 10 unattached battalions of the Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) for guerrilla and jungle warfare type operations for dealing with extremists and insurgents.

Two Battalions of CoBRA force were raised in 2008-09. In 2009-10, the number of the Battalion was increased to four. Later, four more Battalions of the force were raised in 2010-11.

This is the first time when women are being inducted into the CoBRA force.

Minutes after Trump's exit, China bans his coterie

'Trump's team and their immediate family members are prohibited from entering the mainland, Hong Kong and Macao of China. They and companies and institutions associated with them are also restricted from doing business with China'

BEIJING

MINUTES after Joe Biden was sworn in as the new President of the United States, China imposed sanctions against former US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and 27 others associated with the previous Trump administration for promoting and executing "crazy moves", which "gravely" undermined its interests.

Besides Pompeo, the list included Trump's economic advisor Peter K. NSA Robert C. O'Brien, former White House chief strategist Stephen K. Bannon, human services secretary Alex M. Azar and UN ambassador Kelly D. K. Craft. The list also included David R. Stilwell, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs; former Deputy National Security Advisor Matthew Pottinger; Keith J. Krach, Under Secretary of

State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment; and former national security advisor John Bolton.

"These individuals and their immediate family members are prohibited from entering the mainland, Hong Kong and Macao of China. They and companies and institutions associated with them are also restricted from doing business with China," foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said in a press release.

The sanctions were announced immediately after Biden was sworn in as president, ending Trump's regime during which China-US ties touched a new low over various issues, including trade, human rights, the origins of the novel coronavirus pandemic and the communist giant's aggressive military moves in the disputed South China Sea. The Trump administration had also announced sanctions against a host of Chinese of-



officials responsible for the crackdown in Hong Kong, Tibet and Xinjiang. "Over the past few years, some anti-China politicians in the US, out of their selfish political interests and prejudice and hatred against China and showing no regard for the interests of the Chinese and American people, have planned, promoted and executed the crazy moves which have gravely interfered in China's internal affairs, undermined China's interests, offended the China," Hua told a media briefing here on Wednesday, announcing the sanctions.

"The Chinese government is firmly resolved to defend China's national sovereignty, security and development interests," she said. China particularly targeted Pompeo, a bitter critic of Beijing and the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC). Pompeo's last act was to hit China with new sanctions by declaring that Beijing's policies

on Muslims and ethnic minorities in western Xinjiang Province constitute a "genocide". Reacting to the genocide charge, Hua said, "Pompeo's venomous lies in the past several years are too numerous to be counted, and the matter you mentioned is only one of those ludicrous fabrications. To us, Pompeo's so-called determination is nothing more than a piece of waste paper." "This notorious liar and cheater is making himself a doomed clown and a joke of the century with his show of lies and madness just before the curtain falls," she said. Underlining that crimes against humanity and genocide are "clearly-defined in international law", Hua said, "China committing genocide and crimes in Xinjiang" is a completely false allegation and a malicious farce fabricated and hyped up by certain anti-China, anti-communist forces, with Pompeo being a "fanatical pioneer".

TODAY'S QUOTE

World surprised at India's V-shaped recovery

“The Indian economy is undergoing a 'V-shaped recovery', economies of all countries in the world were affected due to the coronavirus. But, the world is surprised and watching the V-shaped recovery of the Indian economy. The Covid-19 vaccination drive is progressing well and once everyone is vaccinated, we will attain victory over the pandemic.”


— Amit Shah, Union Home Minister



MARKET

Sebi slaps ₹1 cr fine on HDFC Bank

SEBI imposed a penalty of Rs 1 crore on HDFC Bank for invoking securities pledged by stock broker BRH Wealth Kreators in violation of the regulator's interim directions. In addition, the bank has been directed to transfer Rs 158.68 crore along with 7% interest into an escrow account till the issue of settlement of clients' securities is reconciled.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	77.37	South	
Euro	93	African Rand	5.66
UAE Dirham	21.86	Hong Kong Dollar	10.83
Thai Baht	2.8	Japanese Yen	0.81
British Pound	59.53	New Zealand Dollar	55.26
Australian Dollar	60.69	Saudi Riyal	21.39
Canadian Dollar	60.39	Swedish Krona	10.09
Swiss Franc	85.48	Singapore Dollar	57.91

DELHI FRIDAY 22 JANUARY 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

Pega conducts study on AI

PEGASYSTEMS Inc in association with iResearch conducted a global study to examine how growing technology trends such as artificial intelligence (AI) governance, hyper automation, extended reality (XR), extended edge, and distributed cloud will evolve over the next five years. It surveyed 1350 C-level executives across seven different industries in 12 countries. The key findings of the research are that the public sector is poised to fill the AI governance gap: Three quarters (65 per cent) of respondents feel the current level of external AI governance isn't sufficient to manage its explosive growth. However, over a quarter (27 per cent) of respondents said they have no designated AI governance leader, successful integration will be key to the dawn of the age of hyper automation.

Vivo rolls out new device

Smartphone brand Vivo launched Y31 smartphone in India. The mobile comes with 48MP AI Triple Rear Camera setup with outstanding photo processing algorithms which help in capturing valuable moments with maximum clarity. It also has features like 5000mAh battery and 18W fast charge support with the reverse charge feature. For security, the phone comes with a side fingerprint sensor and 6.58-inch halo full view display with FHD+ (2408x1080) resolution. The Vivo Y31 provides a wide and an immersive experience for both videos and games. It is available for purchase in two colour options - racing black and ocean blue - on Vivo India E-store, Amazon, Flipkart, Paytm, and across all partner retail stores.

NIIT's survey on Covid safety

NIIT University (NU) conducted survey among parents to ensure safety protocols being implemented at the university to meet parents' expectations. The survey was carried out among all parents of students currently studying at NIIT University (NU) by mailing them questionnaire and elicited close to 250 responses. The feedback is collected and 89.1 per cent of parents felt that the university should use access cards instead of allowing thumbprint access, 35.1 per cent felt that the washroom areas should be sanitized at least 5 times a day, a majority of the parents (55 per cent) felt that the university should not issue out passes neither for staff nor students till the situation is completely safe. 92.3 per cent of the parents felt that the university should do Covid-19 test while entering and after a few days' students had come into campus.

Dabur unveils new product

DABUR India Ltd announced the launch of 'Dabur Himalayan organic apple cider vinegar', which is organic certified and helps boost immunity. The product, an organic version of the Dabur Himalayan apple cider vinegar launched in August 2020, offers consumer premium quality organic certified apple cider vinegar as a step forward on Dabur mission to provide health & well-being for every household. Dabur India AGM-Consumer Marketing, Rajat Mathur said: "The launch of new product demonstrates Dabur's continued commitment to providing innovative natural products of the highest quality standards, without compromise. Apple Cider Vinegar is brewed vinegar made by fermenting the real apple juice."

HANS BUSINESS
MUMBAI

IT was a Diwali of historic kind on Thursday when benchmark BSE Sensex scaled the 50,000-mark for the first time, thus scripting a new chapter in the annals of India's stock market. Sensex's historic climb came even as the country's economy registered a steep contraction of -23.9 per cent in the first quarter and of -7.5 per cent in the second quarter that ended in September.

Driven by hopes of faster economic recovery and positive developments, the stock market index marched past the milestone in the morning before retreating in the flag-end trade on profit-booking to close in the red. Weighed by selling in banking, finance and IT counters, the 30-share BSE index ended 167.36 points or 0.34 per cent lower at 49,624.76. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty slipped 54.35 points or 0.37 per cent to close at 14,590.35. ONGC was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 4 per cent, followed by Bharti Airtel, SBI, IndusInd Bank, NTPC, Sun Pharma and ITC. On the other hand, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Auto, Reliance Industries (RIL), Bajaj Finserv and Asian Paints were among the gainers,



Celebrations at BSE after the Sensex crossed 50,000 mark for the first time, in Mumbai on Thursday. (PTI Photo/Mitesh Bhuvad)

climbing up to 2.72 per cent. Market heavyweight RIL spurted 2.09 per cent after stock exchanges cleared Future Retail's Rs 24,713 crore deal to sell its retail assets to the billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led conglomerate, with certain riders.

"Sensex at 50,000 is great news not only for the market and investors but for the economy also. Markets are barometers of the economy with the potential to discount the future. If this is true, the Indian economy is on a strong recovery

path," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services. If the recovery in growth and corporate earnings, currently underway in India, gathers momentum, the markets may further surprise on the upside, he added.

"But it is important to appreciate that the market is overvalued from the short-term perspective. At high levels, the market is vulnerable to a correction. Investors can utilise the current euphoria to get rid of low-

ICSI Hyd Chapter gets new Chairman

HYDERABAD

NAVAYOTH Puttaparthi, Partner, Puttaparthi Jagannatham & Co, has been appointed as Chairman, Hyderabad Chapter, Institute of Company Secretaries of India, for the year 2021. The other office bearers are: Sudhir Kumar Pola (Vice Chairman, Tangirala Lalitha Devi (Secretary), Akshita Surana (Treasurer).

P Vikram Reddy, S Radha Krishna and A Raja Mogiliare members of the committee. Ahalada Rao V, central council member and Rajavolu Venkata Ramana, SIRC Member, are the ex-officio members of the committee.



Navayoth Puttaparthi

AP IT industry pins high hopes on post-pandemic Budget

SANTOSH PATNAIK
VISAKHAPATNAM

WITH the Central govt. indicating lot of incentives under the Atma Nirbhar Abhiyan (self-reliance campaign) as part of Make in India and Digital India initiatives, the Union Budget to be presented on February 1 has raised a lot of hopes in the IT community.

Posed with a stiff challenge ahead in the aftermath of Covid-19 pandemic mainly due to popularisation of digital platforms and microblogging sites, the IT sector expects a slew of incentives in the form of cut in taxes like GST.

Domain experts whom Bizz Buzz contacted said they are hopeful of getting a stimulus package particularly to the startups involved in healthcare, pharma and new age



technologies like Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, machine learning, artificial intelligence, analytics and cyber security so as to ensure better handholding and strengthening of existing ecosystem.

IT Association of Andhra Pradesh (ITAAP) president Sridhar Kosaraju said a fresh scheme or re-launch of

India BPO Promotion Scheme (IBPS) is expected by them. He said IBPS implemented by the Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) has become a bright in making India the most preferred destination for IT and ITES units mostly by the small and medium entrepreneurs.

AP IT has bagged maximum number of seats in India under IBPS. Already 10,000 jobs have been created in the last two and half years with the scheme. He said the country needed similar mechanisms for core IT and product-based IT companies too.

Reliance-Future deal gets Sebi nod

MUMBAI

MARKET regulator SEBI gave a go-ahead on Wednesday to Future Group's scheme of arrangement and sale of assets to Reliance, based on which the Bombay Stock Exchange also granted its "no adverse observation" report to the Rs 24,713-crore deal. Amazon had written several letters to the SEBI and other regulatory agencies to suspend their review of the deal and not grant it a no objection certification on ground that its challenge to the agreement was before the Delhi High Court. The Securities and Exchange Board of India allowed the deal with some riders, five months after it was announced last August. While seeking shareholders or the National Company Law Tribunal approval, the SEBI has asked Fu-



ture Group to specifically mention the litigation pending before the Delhi High Court and arbitration proceedings by the e-commerce major Amazon contesting the deal, the Bombay Stock Exchange stated in its observation letter. The BSE has also held that SEBI's go-ahead on the draft scheme of arrangement would be subject to the outcome of these proceedings. "It is observed that there are certain ongoing litigations/arbitration/legal proceedings against the draft scheme," the SEBI said.

Prakasam: 'Land' of untapped opportunities

NARESH NANDAM
ONGOLE

THE Prakasam district is the largest district in coastal Andhra Pradesh. Spanning over 17,626 square kilometres, the district has an abundant government land bank to be utilised for industrial development. The experiences with the black galaxy granite companies prove that the people migrating for work from the district can be a source of skilled workforce, if properly trained.

The Veligonda project, whose first phase is about to be completed in a few months, promises to be a dependable water source for the industries in the district. Yet, the industrial opportunities in the district remain unexplored. The district is lagging behind as far as development is concerned.

Of the 43.54 lakh acres of land in Prakasam district, only 13.60 lakh acres is sown on an average every year. The remaining 11.36 lakh acres is occupied by forests, while 3.78 lakh acres is barren and uncultivable land. A total of 7.29 lakh acres of land is fallow.

It is estimated that there is 11.99 lakh acres of government land, 20.91 lakh acres of private land and 0.26 lakh acres of inam land in the district. The APIIC owns about 44,000 acres in the district.

The Gross Domestic District Product for the district is roughly estimated at about Rs 36,000 crore, to which agriculture is contributing



about Rs 13,000 crore, industries in the construction sector contributing Rs 3,900 crore, manufacturing sector Rs 1,400 crore and minerals Rs 1,600 crore.

The district is rich in deposits of black galaxy granite, granite, building stone, silica sand, quartz, slate stone, iron ore and manganese. In the financial year 2019-20, the government earned revenue of Rs 352 crore from the minerals.

According to the department of industries, there are 955 micro, 1,663 small, 31 medium, 41 large industries and one mega industrial project in the district. The government is building a product SEZ at Ongole, besides the existing growth centre.

The APIIC has made land allotments for industrial parks at Giddalur, Chandaluru, Singarayakonda, MSME parks at Malakondapuram and Ragamakkapalli. About 1,784 acres is allocated for the National Investment and Manufacturing

Zone at Kanigiri and 2,352 acres is allocated for the Donakonda Industrial Mega Hub. The price of the land, however, needs to be fixed before the Centre proceeds with the construction of these.

Hub of granite, textiles and tobacco

Prakasam district is known for granite production, textiles and tobacco. The granite industry alone provides Rs 250 crore revenue to the government, every year. There are around 300 granite processing industries at Chimakurthy and Addanki, providing employment to 26,000 workers including 15,000 from other states, directly. Another 40,000 workers are being provided employment indirectly.

About 30,000 cubic meters of the monthly produced 50,000 cubic meters of the granite slabs is used to be exported to China. But, due to the restrictions imposed by Chinese



companies in February, Coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown has brought dark days to the industry of glittering stone.

Currently, more than 100 units have completely shut down their operations while about 100 units are partially running to meet the recurring expenses. Textiles, particularly, handloom textiles is another industry the district is known for. The Chirala handloom cluster is famous for the Kuppadam style sarees and the delicate craftsmanship in weaving them. However, the number of installed handlooms is gradually reduced from 25,000 to 8,000 now over a decade. The tobacco, aqua, and social forestry farmers generate about Rs 2,500 crore revenue but they are losing market gradually.

The locals including the industries are now looking at the government for creating more opportunities by encouraging new industries and providing training opportunities to the workers for them.

Uncertainty over projects

One of the important reasons for the non-realisation of units by many industries expressing interest to establish units in the district is a scarcity of water. Officials are planning to release water through Veligonda project Phase-I, which is on the verge of completion.

Uncertainty over the fate of Kandukur Assembly constituency, whether it will continue to be in Prakasam district or move into Nellore district is posing a question mark over the future of the industrial development. Ramayapatnam port, work on which is about to be initiated is in stalemate as a result of the uncertainty.

The availability of land for the industries along the national and state highways passing through the district is a big positive factor for the prospective industries.

However, based on the availability of resources, the district has huge scope for establishment of industries related to food processing, oils, fish and prawns processing, dairy, paper and pulp, granite processing, M-sand, and solar power units to begin with.

The vocational training centre at Chimakurthy, Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute in Ongole and others are providing the necessary training in entrepreneurship skill development to the youth preparing them for the upcoming opportunities.

Brigade launches luxury homes project

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

BRIGADE Group, a leading property developer, has launched Brigade Citadel, a 11-acre residential project in Moti Nagar, Hyderabad. This is Brigade Group's second project in Hyderabad.

Brigade Citadel comprises of over 1,300 luxurious two and three-bedroom homes that are competitively priced. The prices of residences start at Rs 75 lakh and 99 lakh respectively. With a thoughtful array of amenities and sprawling outdoors, each home is designed to maximise space through world-class architecture and conforms to the highest standards of quality.

The project is set among aesthetic and lush landscaping with a lavish central courtyard seating area around a 100-year-old banyan tree. Addressing a press conference at the launch, Rajendra Joshi, CEO, Residential, Brigade Enterprises said, "The sale of residential units has shown a steady rise in the last 6 months. We are expecting this trend to continue in 2021." "We at Brigade Group look at Hyderabad as a vital growth driver, given that it recorded the lowest level of unsold inventory in the recent past compared to the other metros in the country," he said.

SYDNEY CRICKET GROUND RACIAL ABUSE

Umpires offered us option to leave Test midway: Siraj

26-year-old heads straight to father's grave from airport, offers prayers

HANS NEWS SERVICE

HYDERABAD: India fast bowler Mohammed Siraj on Thursday revealed that on-field umpires had offered his team the option of leaving the third Test against Australia midway after he was subjected to racial abuse by the crowd in Sydney Cricket Ground in Australia.

Siraj and his senior pace colleague Jasprit Bumrah faced racial abuse for two days at the Sydney Cricket Ground, forcing the Indian team management to lodge an official complaint with match referee David Boon.

Crickets Australia later offered an unreserved apology for the incidents. Siraj, called a "brown monkey" by some spectators, had reported the matter to skipper Ajinkya Rahane, who brought it to the notice of on-field umpires Paul Reiffel and Paul Wilson during the match.

"I faced abuses in Australia. The case is going on, let's see whether I get justice or not. My job was to report the incident to the captain," the 26-year-old, who was India's highest wicket-taker with 13 scalps during the historic 2-1 series win, said during a press conference after his arrival here.

"The umpires offered us to leave the game but Rahane (bhai) said we won't leave the game. We did no mistake, so we will play," he recalled about the match that was halted for a few minutes on the fourth day and ended in a thrilling draw.

He said the unruly crowd behaviour acted as a morale-booster for him during his debut Test series. "The abuses which I faced in Australia made me mentally stronger. I didn't let them affect my game," Siraj said.

Six spectators were expelled from the stadium after play was held up during the match. Cricket Australia has promised to the strongest possible action those found guilty.

Siraj, who

was fortunate enough to play under the captaincy of Virat Kohli and stand-in captain Ajinkya Rahane, said that he enjoyed the game and so do playing under two captains. Barring some unpleasant incidents, the tour was very successful and a memorable one.

Earlier, Siraj went straight to the graveyard on his return from a historic tour and paid his last respects to his father who died two months ago while the India speedster was doing national team duty in Australia.

As Siraj stood and prayed in front of his father Mohammed Ghouse's grave, his two-month long wait finally came to an end. He laid flowers at his father's grave while offering prayers before heading to his home in Al-Hasnath colony.

Siraj's 53-year-old father, who was an auto driver, had died on November 20 due to a lung ailment -- barely a week after his son landed in Australia with the Indian team.

He was given the option of returning home but the pacer chose to stay back with the team for the tour.

He made his Test debut in the second match in Melbourne and finished the Border-Gavaskar series with 13 wickets - the most by any Indian bowler as the team came from behind to script a memorable 2-1 series win.

Having got the backing of his family, Siraj's brave decision to stay back not only saw him make his India debut but also play an instrumental part in the team's victory while fulfilling his father's dream of representing the country in the highest form of the game.

"It was my (late) father's dream that Siraj should represent India in Tests. He always wanted to see him (Siraj) in blue and white jersey to represent the nation, so the dream got fulfilled," Siraj's brother Mohammed Ismail said.

Siraj bowled his heart out and picked up a maiden five-wicket haul (5/73) at the Gabba in Brisbane, Australia's fortress which was breached on Tuesday after 32 years.

"It was a great achievement by the Indian team and my brother Siraj has achieved what our father dreamt. We are happy that Siraj was able to contribute to the victory," Ismail said. (With inputs from PTI)

Indian Pacer Mohammed Siraj gestures after his arrival in the city, at his residence in Hyderabad on Thursday. (Right) Siraj speaks to media personnel (Photos: Ch Prabhud Das)



Indian Pacer Mohammed Siraj pays respect to his father Mohammed Ghouse after his arrival in the city, at a graveyard in Hyderabad, on Thursday



Rahane receives red carpet welcome

MUMBAI

AJINKYA Rahane, who captained India to a memorable Test series win in Australia, received a red carpet welcome when he arrived at his Matunga residence here on Thursday. He held his little daughter Aarya and walked slowly on the long carpet laid out by the members of the society where he lives while a lifesize poster of the master batsman was pasted on one of the pillars, along with words "Congrats to Our Persistent Pillar" written on top of it.

A large number of his society members gathered near Rahane's home as people showered rose petals on him while dhol and trumpets played constantly. Chants of 'aala re aala Ajinkya aala' (here comes our Ajinkya) could be heard clearly, all of which turned it into a celebratory occasion.

Rahane's wife Radhika Dhopavkar also walked on the red carpet. Besides Rahane, head coach Ravi Shastri, bats-



man Rohit Sharma, pacer Shardul Thakur, and opener Prithvi Shaw reached Mumbai while fourth Test hero Rishabh Pant landed in New Delhi early on Thursday morning.

Rahane had taken over the captaincy from Virat Kohli after the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy when he latter returned home to be with his wife who was expecting their first child. The baby was born last week.

India won the four-Test series 2-1. India's next assignment is a full fledged home series against England. (IANS)

5,000 people receive bowling hero Natarajan, take him on chariot

CHINNAPPAMPATTI (TAMIL NADU)

AROUND 5,000 people turned up to receive one of India's latest bowling sensation, T. Natarajan, and took him in a horse-drawn tastefully-decorated chariot for two kilometres in his native village Chinnappampatti in Salem district on Thursday.

Left-arm pacer Natarajan made his India debut in all three formats during the recent tour of Australia, and played a role in India's three-wicket win in the fourth and final Test in Brisbane on his debut.

Natarajan, who picked three wickets for 78 runs in the first innings to help India win the match -- and the series 2-1 -- was taken on a horse-drawn chariot for about two kilometres. "Close to 5,000 people were present. The entire village had turned up to wish him. He reached his house in the evening and saw his daughter for the first time," an official told IANS. "The who's who of the village came to wish him. All the local government officials also went to meet him," said the official.

I was bowling and aiming at a single wicket. The 2020 IPL was most important season of my life. I decided not to relax. When I went to IPL, I met Dale Steyn sir, spoke to him and learnt from him. I developed my outswinger. My performance in IPL gave me confidence, and then I was selected for red ball cricket in Australia [Test series]. I had not thought I would get a chance. When I got the chance, I performed well. It gave me confidence and I will carry this to England series — Mohammed Siraj

Ronaldo becomes top goalscorer in football history

ROME

CRISTIANO Ronaldo has become the top goalscorer in football history as his Juventus side won the Italian Super Cup (Supercoppa) for the ninth time, beating Napoli 2-0 in the final at Mapei Stadium. It was his 760th career goal for club and country, making him the top goalscorer of all-time, surpassing the record of 759 set by Josef Bican.

Victory for the Bianconeri came on Wednesday evening despite a shaky performance in Serie A, with the defending champions currently ranking only fifth in the 2020-21 table, reports Xinhua news agency.

The Supercoppa is a traditional clash between the previous season's Serie A and Coppa Italia winners. Juventus was missing Paulo Dybala, Matthijs de Ligt and Alex Sandro, but Juan Cuadrado returned to the starting line-up after recovering from Covid-19. Meanwhile, Napoli had to do without Victor Osimhen and Fabian Ruiz.

Juventus dominated possession in the first half, but Napoli had the best chance in the 29th minute when Diego Demme rolled across



from the left and Hirving Lozano's diving header forced a stunning save from Wojciech Szczesny.

Federico Chiesa picked up an injury, making way for Federico Bernardeschi who almost found the net right after the interval.

Juventus started to lay siege to Napoli's goal as time wore on, and it paid off in the 64th minute when a corner bounced off Tiemoue Bakayoko and bobbed kindly for Ronaldo to sweep in from point-blank range.

"Very happy with my 4th title in Italy...We are back! This is the Juve we love, this is the team we trust

and this is the spirit that will lead to the wins we want! Well done, guys," Ronaldo tweeted after the win.

Lorenzo Insigne should have scored an equalizer and his 100th goal for Napoli, but the captain missed a penalty earned by Dries Mertens in the 80th minute.

Juve punished Napoli deep into stoppage time, as after a textbook counter, Cuadrado surged forward and squared for Alvaro Morata to seal the win.

The Supercoppa is Juventus' first title in the current 2020-21 season, and also Andrea Pirlo's maiden trophy as a head coach. (IANS)

Archer, Stokes return to England Test squad

LONDON: England on Thursday announced its squad for the first and second Tests of their upcoming five-match series in India. Fast bowler Jofra Archer and all-rounder Ben Stokes, who were rested for England's tour of Sri Lanka, have both been included in the squad.

Opener Rory Burns, who had missed the Sri Lanka series for the birth of his first child, also returns to the squad. Batsman Ollie Pope is recovering from a shoulder injury sustained in September during a Test series against Pakistan, will travel to India and will be added to the squad when passed fit.

Wicketkeeper batsman Jonny Bairstow, all-rounder Sam Curran and fast bowler Mark Wood have been rested for the first two Tests.

"This is consistent with the selection policy of finding a block of rest for all multi-format players at some point during post-Christmas winter schedule," said the England and Wales Cricket Board. James Bracey, Mason Crane, Saqib Mahmood, Matthew Parkinson, Ollie Robinson and Amar Virdi have been announced as reserves.

The first Test will be played from Feb 5 to 9 while the second is scheduled to be held from Feb 13 to 17. Both matches will be played at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, Chennai.

Sindhu, Sameer through to Thailand Open quarters

Satwik-Ponnappa sail into last 8; Prannoy loses

BANGKOK

REIGNING badminton world champion PV Sindhu on Thursday entered the quarter-final of the Toyota Thailand Open Super 1000 tournament with a straight-game win over Malaysia's Kisona Selvaduray.

Sindhu beat Selvaduray 21-10, 21-12 in a match that lasted 35 minutes. The Olympic silver medallist now faces either Thai fourth-seed Ratchanok Intanon, who beat former world no.1 Saina Nehwal in the first round, or South Korea's Hyung Ji Sung.

Earlier, Sameer Verma on Thursday continued his stellar run as he eased past Denmark's Rasmus Gemke in straight games to advance to the quarter-finals of the men's singles event. However, there was disappointment for HS Prannoy who fell to Malaysia's Liew Daren.

The world no 31 Indian, who had shocked Malaysia's eighth seed Lee Zii Jia

in the opening round, needed just 39 minutes to see off Gemke 21-12 21-9. This was Sameer's third victory over Gemke. The Indian had defeated the world no 17 Danish shuttler in their previous two clashes.

Gemke was no match for Sameer, who showed better control and execution to dominate the proceedings right from the word go. The Indian opened up a 3-0 lead and kept marching ahead to grab a six-point advantage at the break. Gemke tried his best but couldn't trouble Sameer, who easily claimed the first game. In the second game, Gemke managed to hold slender leads of 3-1 and 5-3 but Sameer broke off at 6-6 and never looked back.

Sameer will face third seed Anders Antonsen of Denmark, who re-

ceived a walkover, in the quarter-finals. "I was very confident before the match. I came prepared. Next up I have Anders Antonsen from Denmark. I'm feeling very confident, so let's see. It will be tough but I will play my best," Sameer said.

HS Prannoy, on the other hand, failed to cross the second hurdle, going down 17-21 18-21 to Malaysia's Daren Liew, a day after battling through pain to upstage Asian Games champion Jonatan Christie in a gruelling three-game match.

In mixed doubles event, the Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa secured their berth into the quarter-finals after beating Germany's Mark Lamsfuss and Isabel Hertrich in their second round contest.

Satwiksairaj and Ashwini defeated their German opponents 22-20, 14-21, 21-16 in a match that lasted for 56 minutes. The pair will now face Malaysia's Chan Peng Soon and Goh Liu Ying for a place in the semis. (IANS-PTI)



Resurgent East Bengal face flying Mumbai City

VASCO (GOA)



EAST Bengal being in contention for a playoff spot in the 2020/21 Indian Super League (ISL) seemed improbable in the first half of the season but they are now just one win away from getting into the top four. However, they face an uphill struggle in getting that win as they face table-toppers Mumbai City on Friday at the Tilak Maidan Stadium.

East Bengal have turned around their for-

TODAY'S MATCH

SC East Bengal vs Mumbai City FC at Tilak Maidan Stadium 7.30pm



tunes in remarkable fashion and are currently on a seven-game unbeaten run. However, MCFC will present a much tougher challenge than the ones they encountered in the last match.

While the arrival of Bright Enobakhare has given them a trump card in attack, SCEB do have defensive issues. No team has conceded

RESULTS

ATK Mohun Bagan beat Chennaiyin FC 1-0

as many goals as them in the second half (13) and only one has conceded more in the last fifteen minutes of the match (5). They will, however, be buoyed by the form that goalkeeper Debjit Majumder has been displaying.

"Mumbai are a good side and they have been doing really well," said East Bengal assistant coach Renedy Singh. "But I feel we have to consider our own style, how we've played in the last seven matches. I think the boys have worked really hard. It is a process that we have to continue. We will work on our own side while giving respect to them."