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Prashant meets Rahul, Punjab polls on agenda

NEW DELHI: Poll strategist Prashant Kishor met Congress leader Rahul Gandhi here on Tuesday. There is no official word regarding the meeting, at which Congress General Secretary K.C. Venugopal was also present, but sources say Punjab elections were discussed and a possible equation was on the table as Kishor has been advising Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on key political issues. When the Punjab Chief Minister was in Delhi to meet interim party chief Sonia Gandhi, he had also met Kishor. The Congress is likely to come with amicable formula for Punjab this week as infighting within the state unit has not de-escalated.

NEET-PG exam to be held on Sept 11

THE NEET Postgraduate exam will be held on September 11, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya announced on Tuesday. "We have decided to conduct #NEET Postgraduate exam on 11th September, 2021. My best wishes to young medical aspirants!" he tweeted. In view of the spike in COVID-19 cases, the National Eligibility Cum Entrance test-PG which was scheduled to be held on April 18 was postponed.

CBI raids Delhi, UP locations in DDA land scam case

NEW DELHI: The CBI carried out searches at 14 locations in Delhi and Lucknow and Shamli in connection with a case against three former officials of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) for alleged illegal allotment of land. A CBI spokesperson said that the agency has registered a case against Sudhansu Ranjan, the then Assistant Director, DDA; Ajeet Kumar Bhardwaj, the then Senior Secretariat Assistant, DDA; Darwan Singh, the then Security Guard (W/C), DDA and private persons Iqbal Hussain, Sunil Kumar Meena, Sapan Kumar, Jamaluddin, Rajwant Singh and Shakuntla Devi. The official said that it registered the case on a complaint alleging illegal allotment of many DDA plots in Madanpur Khadar area near Sarita Vihar in Delhi using false and fabricated documents.

HOW LONG WILL DELHIITES WAIT TO GET VACCINATED?

As the Prime Minister urges states to accelerate the vaccination drive ahead of an imminent third Covid wave, on the ground, a shortage of vaccines continues to plague the best intentions by states.

At several government-run COVID-19 vaccination centres across the national capital there are severe vaccination shortages, especially of Covishield, and several people are worried that they are going to miss their scheduled date for the second shot.

The scenario in Delhi started to worsen from July 12, with many centres

asking people not to come till further informed. The country had just recovered from the previous vaccine shortage with the implementation of the Centre's new free universal vaccination policy.

As per the Delhi government's daily bulletin, as many as 62,04,600 doses of Covidshield and 22,88,780 doses of COVAXIN have been received from the Central government so far.

An average of 61.14 lakh vaccine doses were given across the country between June 21 to 27, as per the Centre's Co-Win portal.

However, between July 5 to 11, the



daily average doses plummeted to 34.32 lakh. While speaking to ANI, people expressed concerns and irritation that despite repeated visits to inoculation centres, they have been told to go back without a dose.

"I have been coming here for the last three days to get my second shot. It was due 10 days ago but now they are saying there is no vaccine. They are not even giving me an assured date. The same scenario has cropped up once again. How long shall we wait to get shots?" said 78-year-old Daroga Rai.

Delhi received a fresh supply of 1.5

lakh doses of Covid-19 vaccines, said Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain on Tuesday, adding that the new stock will be administered in the next two days.

Jain said that many vaccination centres will have to be shut from Wednesday. "There is a shortage of vaccines. We have received a small stock of 1.5 lakh Covishield doses on Monday night," he said.

As per Delhi government's data, Delhi has on Tuesday administered about 1,25,000 doses on Tuesday. Delhi has so far administered 22,88,780 doses of vaccines till date.

India's first Covid patient tests positive again

PM's concern over big crowds without masks at hill stations

KOCHI

A student from Kerala's Thrissur enrolled at a medical college in China, who was the first Indian to test positive for Covid-19 in January 2020 after returning to India following the outbreak of the pandemic, has been infected again, a health official said on Tuesday. She is, however, asymptomatic, the official added.

"She has been tested positive and under quarantine at her home. None of the family members have tested positive so far," said Thrissur district medical officer K J Reena. She said re-infection is nothing new, and some of the health workers have been infected twice.

The student was found to have been reinfected after she was retested as she planned to travel to Delhi. Her family said she is showing no visible symptoms and that she has also been administered the first Covid-19 vaccine dose.

The student, who has been unable to return to China as Beijing is yet to allow Indian students back into the country because of the pandemic,



spent almost a month in hospital while undergoing treatment for Covid-19 in 2020. Two of her friends, who travelled with her from Wuhan, the epicentre of the pandemic in China, were also later tested positive.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday expressed concern over people crowding at hill stations and markets without wearing masks or observing social distancing norms, as he

urged all to guard against complacency to prevent a third wave of the coronavirus spread.

"If we remain cautious and take precautions we will be able to prevent the third wave...there should be no compromise in this," he said, while also stressing that the vaccination drive needs to be continuously ramped up. The Prime Minister was speaking during an interaction with chief ministers of eight Northeastern states through video conferencing. Modi said the COVID-19 situation was worrisome in some districts of the region and urged the chief ministers to stay alert and act fast to check the further spread of the virus.

A fourth case of Zika virus was reported from Kerala on Tuesday taking the infection count in the state to 23, the health department said.

"A 16-year-old Thiruvananthapuram native girl was found infected with the virus after the sample was tested at the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology here," state Health Minister Veena George said. The others who tested positive today included a doctor of a private hospital here.

2 dead, 10 missing, 20 stranded in HP floods

SHIMLA: As parts of Himachal Pradesh continue to receive heavy rainfall triggering devastating flash floods, at least two people have died, 10 are missing and 20 are stranded in different locations in Kangra district.

As per the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) and the Revenue Department, over 100 people, including 80 students and a few families, have been rescued from the popular Triund trekking route. Four have also been rescued from flood-hit Boh village. The SDMC further reported that about 11 houses and several vehicles have been damaged.

Electricity supply has been hampered at various locations and nearly 60 roads have been closed in different parts. A yellow alert had been issued in Kullu, Additional Deputy Commissioner Prakash Singh informed, adding that at least 25 roads had been shut in the district.

Oxygen crisis: Court pulls up police for casual reply

NEW DELHI

A court here on Tuesday pulled up Delhi Police for filing in a "casual manner" the reply to a plea seeking registration of an FIR against Jaipur Golden Hospital management for alleged deaths of COVID-19 patients due to oxygen shortage. As many as 21 critically ill patients had died at the hospital on the intervening night of April 23-24 as it allegedly awaited the oxygen supply to be replenished, following which six family members of the deceased approached the court. Not satisfied with the status report filed by the police, Met-

ropolitan Magistrate Vivek Beniwal said, "The status report has been filed in a casual manner. The IO has not disclosed what steps were taken after he was directed to file the status report." Furthermore, the judge called it a "highly sensitive matter" and gave the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) the last opportunity to file the status report, failing which the court would take action as per the law. Notably, family members of the deceased approached the court claiming that the hospital management should be punished, but police, with mala fide intention, have neither arrested nor set up an inquiry against them.



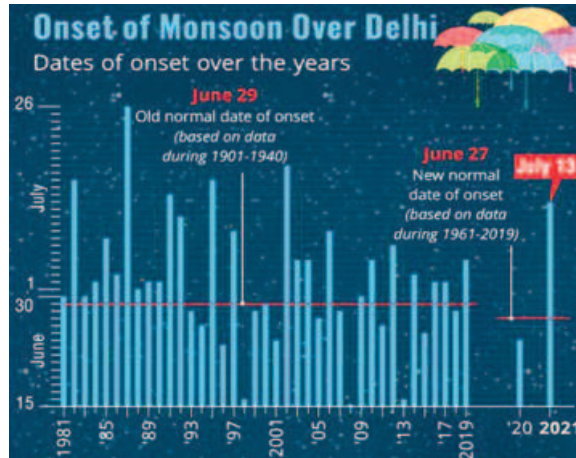
Delhi's wait for monsoon ends, rain drenches parts of city

NEW DELHI

THE much-awaited Southwest Monsoon finally arrived in Delhi Tuesday morning bringing respite from scorching summer temperatures, with weather officials saying the onset has been over two weeks behind the schedule, making it the most delayed in 19 years. In 2002, the monsoon had covered Delhi on July 19.

"The monsoon has arrived in Delhi," senior IMD scientist K Jenamani said after a spell of rains drenched parts of south Delhi Tuesday morning. Other parts of the city also recorded rains during the day with people reporting waterlogging and traffic snarls in some areas.

"The monsoon advanced over Delhi on July 13 against the normal date of June 27," the IMD said. With this, the monsoon has covered the entire country. "Southwest monsoon has further advanced into remaining parts



of the country including Delhi, remaining parts of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. Thus, the Southwest Monsoon has covered entire country on July 13, against the normal date of July 8," the IMD said.

The IMD said that between 8.30 am on July 12 to 8.30 am on July 13, the weather stations at Safdarjung recorded 2.5 cm rain-

fall, Palam 2.4 cm and Lodhi Road 0.9 cm.

"Finally Monsoon Rains over Delhi! Even though monsoon conditions were prevailing last 2-3 days, @Indiametdept was waiting for these rains to declare monsoon onset. Last 2 days it rained everywhere surrounding Delhi, except Delhi," Ministry of Earth Sciences secretary Madhavan Rajeevan tweeted.

Delete tweets against Minister Puri's wife, court orders activist

NEW DELHI

THE Delhi High Court Tuesday restrained activist Saket Gokhale from posting defamatory or scandalous tweets against former diplomat Lakshmi Murdeshwar Puri or her husband, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, observing that reputations nurtured over years of selfless service and toil may crumble with a thoughtless barb.

In an interim order, the high court directed Gokhale to immediately delete from his Twitter account all tweets against Puri, saying the damage that she and her husband have suffered is apparent but it is one of the unavoidable pitfalls of access to social media platforms. Justice C Hari Shankar also said if Gokhale

fails to comply with the directions within 24 hours of the order, Twitter shall take down the tweets made against Puri, former Assistant Secretary-General at the United Nations. Gokhale, in his tweets on June 13 and 26 made reference to certain property purchased by Puri in Switzerland and also referred to her husband. The court passed the order on a defamation suit filed by Lakshmi Puri seeking Rs 5 crore damages from Gokhale, also a freelance journalist, and a direction that he deletes the tweets. "It is an unfortunate truism, of human nature - which forms subject matter of philosophical debate since ages - that we prefer brickbats to bouquets.

Criticism always makes for better press than praise, and the more vitriolic



the criticism, the better," the court said in its 22-page verdict. The exponential fashion in which social media platforms have evolved, has provided fertile soil for the growth and mushrooming of this unfortunate human tendency, it said. The court said reputations, nourished and nurtured over years of selfless service and toil, may crumble in an instant; one thoughtless barb is sufficient.

It said in the age of social media, desecration of the reputation of a public figure has become a child's play and all that is needed is the opening of a social media account and posting messages. Thousands of responses are received and in the process the reputation of the man, who is targeted, becomes mud, it said. It added that senior advocate Maninder

Singh, representing Puri, has pointed out that till the date of filing of the suit, the tweets posted by Gokhale had been "liked" by more than 26,270 users and "re-tweeted" by over 8,280 users. The responding tweets by members of Gokhale's target audience are in very poor taste, containing abuses, allegations and opprobrious epithets against the couple, it said. Considering the false representations contained in the tweets, the court said it required "immediate peremptory orders", without awaiting a formal response from Gokhale. "The loss and prejudice that the plaintiff is likely to suffer, as a consequence of the thoughtless tweets of the defendant, cannot be compensated in monetary terms," it added. In her suit, filed through Karan-

jawala and Company, Puri alleged that Gokhale has made false and factually incorrect, per-se defamatory, slanderous and libelous statements/ imputations against her and her family. Referring to the facts of the case, the court observed that the Swiss apartment was purchased by Puri in 2005 and it was disclosed by her to the MEA, in Income Tax returns and even her husband had mentioned it in his election affidavits in 2018 and 2020.

The bona fides of the series of tweets appear to be seriously questionable, the court said, adding that Gokhale has been economical with the truth, misleading his "followers" into believing that Puri was on deputation with the UN, drawing a salary of Rs 10-12 lakhs, and purchased the apartment from this salary.

Womenia



Anyone who loves to groove can be a dancer: Alisha Singh

Dance and Bollywood must co-exist, without each other they might lose the entertainment factor, says the popular dancer

platforms widened the talent pool of dance, as even amateurs follow trends?

Short video talent apps like Glance Roposo have helped content creators build a viewer base by providing them with a platform to showcase their skills.

It keeps them engaged and excited with trends, challenges, contests, and co-creation opportunities in their genre of interest. It allows amateurs to follow various trends and feel included. I think anyone who loves to groove to a song, entertain their followers and in general make fun content can be a dancer. Many content creators have regular 9 to 5 day jobs but create great dance videos with their families in the evenings at home!

Bollywood and dance have an inextricable connection, what do you feel about this?

Dance and Bollywood must co-exist, and without each other,

they might lose the entertainment factor. The Bollywood dance form itself is an amalgamation of various classical and folk dance forms from all over India.

Which dance moves will you be teaching on the Glance Roposo app?

I'm excited to create some amazing content on the app throughout the current special Roposo Monsoon Week celebration from 13th July onwards as I challenge dancers, other content creators, and my audience at large to participate in the #DanceWithAlisha challenge. Users of the app can create a duet video with me using various monsoon-special filters with interesting rain effects wherein they can win and redeem 30,000 Roposo coins along with a special shoutout from me on my social media handles. I will teach users easy and fun dance steps on the fun and catchy song 'sawan mein lag gayi aag'.

Why did you choose to associate with digital event?

Glance Roposo is one of India's leading short video apps and the go to destination for aspiring talent who create original and engaging content. With the pandemic and everyone being at home, short video content especially has seen a rise and people are looking at apps like it to express themselves. The millions of content creators on the app have access to different celebrities, music, trends, filters, and effects. I find their platform and concept unique compared to the other short video platforms. They focus on each of their exclusive artists and creators to create a community with them and helps them to feel connected with other users based on different content. It's available in multiple Indian languages across varied channels like comedy, films, news, fashion, and sports amongst others which makes it one of the most entertaining talent platforms for content creators in the country.

SIDDHI JAIN

A familiar face in dance reality shows, Alisha Singh, says that anyone who loves to groove to a song, entertain their followers and in general make fun content can be a dancer.

The dancer and choreographer talks about how dance talent shines through on new-age apps:

How have short video

An expert take on low birth weight babies

DR AMODITA AHUJ

Low birth weight and premature births are the leading cause of mortality amongst newborns in India. But thanks to ongoing projects the incidence of low birth weight has reduced drastically in the last one decade.

The most common cause of low birth weight babies is premature delivery, when the baby doesn't get enough time to grow inside the womb of the mother. The second most common cause is when the baby stops growing inside the womb and no matter what the growth just stops. In this case we need to deliver the baby irrespective of the gestational age.

Talking about premature deliveries, there are several reasons as to why this happens. It can happen due to infections in the vagina of the mother like Group B Streptococcal infections or a recurrent urinary tract infection. These infections start the cascade of reactions which ultimately starts the premature delivery process.

It can also happen if the mouth of the uterus is so short that it cannot hold the weight of the pregnancy and with this pressure it just opens up.

Sometimes it can also happen due to the infection of the womb by the TORCH infections, named so due to Toxoplasmosis,



Rubella, Cytomegalovirus, Herpes.

It can also be caused due to some structural anomalies in the uterus like if there is a septum in the middle of the cavity of the uterus or if the cavity of uterus is divided into two parts due to which there is not enough space for the baby to grow inside the womb.

Too much amniotic fluid can also start the process of labor due to excessive pressure.

Sometimes the age of the mother also plays a role, a very young mother, like a teenager, has organs which might not be well developed to hold the baby till term. Similarly if she is too old then the organs become too weak.

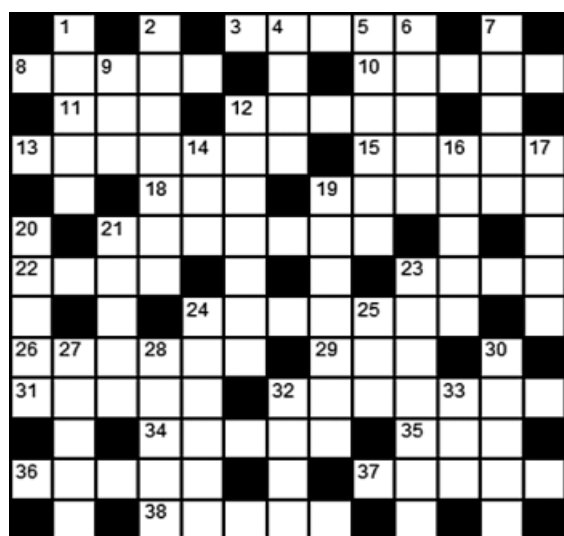
All these factors can lead to preterm delivery and hence low birth weight babies.

Coming to the next part when the baby stops growing inside the womb which is also known as fetal growth restriction, this can happen if the baby is unable to receive proper nutrition either due to the functional abnormality in the placenta (the powerhouse which brings nutrition and oxygen to the baby) or due to abnormality in blood vessels in the umbilical cord (which carries blood from the placenta to the baby).

The abnormalities in the placenta like placenta praevia when part of the placenta is in the lower uterine segment or circumvallate placenta can hamper the growth of the baby.

The reasons for abnormal blood supply through umbilical cord are malnutrition in the mother, drug abuse, smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol, chronic health conditions like hypertension, advanced diabetes, autoimmune disorders, sickle cell anemia, chronic kidney disease, obesity and APLA syndrome. All these factors disrupt the blood supply to the baby and hence the low birth weight.

All the above are the maternal factors which can cause low birth weight in the babies. Along with this there are certain fetal factors also which can cause low birth weight in babies like twin pregnancy, fetal anomalies like aneuploidy, triploidy, trisomy 13,18,21, turners' syndrome.



SISSY BIDDING
KUEEANO
YANGTZE UNCUT
LNIFIBUH
AVIVSGEROS
RELAINEV
KINGT OF FEAR
OHORROR
FISTREYALE
RTVIA GKG
EERIE GOURAMI
AUGRM MN
KAMPALA SLANG

SOLUTION TO JULY 13

CROSSWORD

Across

- 3 Angry frown (5)
- 8 Killer whales (5)
- 10 Assisted (5)
- 11 Branch or wing; weapon (3)
- 12 List of data (5)
- 13 Royal household officer (7)
- 15 Hindu sage or saint (5)
- 18 Colourful Japanese carp (3)
- 19 Submerged (6)
- 21 They are worn to keep neck-wear in place (3-4)
- 22 Area of grass (4)
- 23 Birds in herds (4)
- 24 Advance stealthily (5,2)
- 26 Dashboard (6)
- 29 Energy (3)
- 31 Stopped lying? (3,2)
- 32 Procedures (7)
- 34 Flightless birds (5)
- 35 Piece of poetry (3)
- 36 Feature film (5)
- 37 Bestow upon (5)
- 38 Mistake (5)

Down

- 1 Mesopotamian (5)
- 2 Open dish (7)
- 4 Pottery material (4)
- 5 Large marine mammal (6)
- 6 ___ ruins : be overthrown or fallen ? (3,2)
- 7 River of forgetfulness (5)
- 9 French vineyard -"cur" anagram ? (3)
- 12 Indian state neighbouring Bangladesh (7)
- 14 Fish eggs (3)
- 16 Scrimp (5)
- 17 Engaged (2,3)
- 19 Exhales violently (7)
- 20 Musical characters (5)
- 21 Oliver ___ : Dickensian hero? (5)
- 23 Agreeableness of sound (7)
- 24 Coded message (6)
- 25 Cavity (3)
- 27 Moses's brother (5)
- 28 Radioactivity unit (5)
- 30 A theatre or concert hall - "do one" anagram ? (5)
- 32 Salad dressing (4)
- 33 Peculiar or strange (3)

SUDOKU

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

SOLUTION TO JULY 13

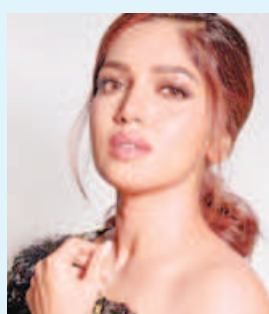
5	6	7	2	9	1	8	4	3
3	9	8	4	5	6	2	1	7
1	4	2	7	3	8	5	9	6
7	8	1	3	2	9	4	6	5
9	2	6	5	1	4	7	3	8
4	3	5	8	6	7	9	2	1
6	7	4	9	8	3	1	5	2
8	5	3	1	4	2	6	7	9
2	1	9	6	7	5	3	8	4

TWEET PATROL



BHUMI PEDNEKAR
@BHUMIPEDNEKAR

Climate Change is real. We have accelerated it to levels of heavy repercussions. Our planet is heating up. Flash floods, drought, forest fires, disease outbreaks, mass extinction. Instead of regenerating our planet we are putting billions into finding our next home/planet



Different style combos to carry t-shirts with skirts

Among the varied fashion trends this season, skirts with t-shirts could be a combination you'll probably never run out of options. It's time to alter up your usual style by pairing your favourite t-shirts together with your skirts

YAMINI SAINI

Are you the one for whom am I writing today? Are you always worried what to wear? This or that? Yay or Nah? Style or comfy? This is one among the most well liked topics in women's life. So today I came up with comfy plus stylish fashion for all the fashionista out there! Among the varied fashion trends this season, skirts with t-shirts could be a combination you'll probably never run out of options. It's time to alter up your usual style by pairing your favourite t-shirts together with your skirts. Any length, t-shirts are an excellent option to make any outfit look cute, comfortable and even professional.

Here are eight of our favourite styles that are easy to style for any occasion and at any time of the day.

Be Bold with button front

Wear crop t-shirts with button front skirts which will offer you a slay look. Straightforward thanks to style your skirts is with crop tops and cropped tee. Choose for crop t-shirts with bigger skirts while a loser t-shirt for pencil skirts.

Dazzling denim

Opt full sleeves t-shirts with denim skirts. During this changing weather, keep cool along with your short skirt and warm with you a full-sleeved t-shirt. Denim is all-time in with dangles, boots, and of course your bright smile.

Look stunning in leather skirts

Go for a combo of a t-shirt with a leather skirt. Rocker or maybe lakhnavi chic vibe, leather skirts are best paired with printed t-shirts. So placed on your favourite band t-shirt which leather skirt for an evening out at the club.

Shine the planet with slit skirts

Plain black or white t-shirt with short or long, slit skirt. This helps create a balance between your top and bottom as separate looks whether or not they're within the same colour shades or even same colour shade or patterns will go best with slit skirts.

Plain t-shirts with printed skirts

Nothing says simple sort of a

FASHIONISTA



plain t-shirt. But augment that a cool printed skirt and you'll look cute and chic. Strap on flats or heels and sling a tote for a fun day trip with friends.

Printed t-shirts with printed skirt

Catch the planet with attention-grabbing patterns. You'll be able to for either plain t-shirt with printed skirts or with printed t and plain skirt. Try a once black plain t-shirt with a polka-dot skirt.

Go bossy at the professional front

Give your outfit an office-appropriate update and wear it with a blazer. Grab a press release ring or classic pair of ankle boots to complete this look.

Go long to chase your goals with tee and long skirts

Pair up your t-shirt with long skirt. It is another cute combo, thanks to dress up an easy tee. Wear it with a metallic pleated mules, midi, and statement silver jewellery.

Shark Awareness Day

Contrary to what you might expect, the purpose of Shark Awareness Day is not to stand on the beach and shout out warnings to terrified swimmers and surfers, despite the hours of mischievous fun that could provide!

Like top predators in any ecosystem, sharks play an essential role in keeping the seas healthy and productive, and yet various threats make these ocean oligarchs a persecuted and vulnerable species. While no one is suggesting we go out and hug a great white on Shark Awareness Day, it's the least we can do to respect these wonderful creatures and help protect them.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY
JULY 13
HANS INDIA



NEWS ROUNDUP

Shriya Pilgaonkar starts shooting for 'The Gone Game Season 2'

Actress Shriya Pilgaonkar started shooting for the second season of the web series "The Gone Game" here on Tuesday. The actress returns as Suhani Gajral, a social media influencer whose character bore shades of grey in season one.

"I'm happy to get back to work after lockdown. Now that I'm vaccinated, I also feel more comfortable being on a set. However, all the precautions are being taken to ensure everyone's safety. We shot the first season of 'The Gone Game' remotely and it was a fun, challenging experience," says Shriya. "This year with the eased restrictions, we're shooting on a set and it's so good to reunite with the cast in person. We got a lot of love for the first season of 'The Gone Game' and I hope the audience is excited to see what's in store for season 2," she added. The actress will be seen in a couple of new series, a comedy and a legal drama.

She will begin shooting for season 2 of Apoorva Lakhia's espionage thriller "Crackdown" soon.



Protesting farmers ready for monsoons at Delhi borders

NEW DELHI

WITH metal reinforced roofs for ‘tents’, battery powered lights and cleaning drives to ensure there is no stagnation of water around their temporary homes, the doughty band of farmers camping at Delhi’s borders are busy getting ready for the monsoons.

Rains spell relief from the sweltering heat but also lead to huge problems, farmer leaders said on Tuesday as the first monsoon showers fell over the national capital and its surrounding areas. From keeping ration stocks dry and tackling waterlogging to ward off diseases to preventing electricity related mishaps and ensuring power supply in case of any out-

age, the challenges are aplenty at the Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur sites where thousands of farmers have been camping for seven months to protest the centre’s new farm laws. “It is true the rains will bring us some relief from the heat, but the monsoon has its own set of problems. Tents get uprooted.

The rains result in stagnant water, which in turn lead to the breeding of disease-causing mosquitoes,” said farmer leader Avtar Mehma. One of the first measures to brave the rains was to strengthen the structures that have been their homes. “We have renovated our tents. The tarpaulin covers have been replaced by more permanent roofs. Plus, a

large number of units have been turned into fixed structures with pillars being dug into the ground,” said Lakhbir Singh, another farmer leader.

Mehma added that their “simple tents” have been transformed into “pucca structures” with iron roofs. These structures will protect the protestors as well as their ration stocks from the rains. “We are trying to ensure that ration is stored in these rooms and kept on elevated surfaces so it stays protected in case there is waterlogging,” Mehma said. The recent death of a 46-year-old farmer who was electrocuted at the Tikri border has raised anxiety levels. “We have been managing electricity by joining wires from here and

there... Open wires can often cause accidents so we are trying to get that fixed because chances of accidents will increase in the rains,” Mehma said.

Monsoon rains also bring with them frequent power cuts, even in the best parts of the city, and these temporary townships on highways are no exceptions. “There is nothing we can do about the frequent power cuts. But we are trying to arrange for emergency lights that use batteries as well as solar lights. “We have also installed inverters and generators in few locations at these protest sites in case of an emergency,” Lakhbir Singh said. Mehma added that while waterlogging in some areas is unavoidable in this sea-

son, volunteers have been deployed to try and stop water from stagnating and to fumigate the protest sites to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes and other insects. “The governments have not helped us. We have been ensuring cleanliness and sanitation by ourselves right from the beginning,” Mehma said. They braved the bone-chilling winter, the hot summer and the monsoons are further par for the course, the farmers said.

The Ghazipur border, for instance, where around 4,000 to 5,000 protestors have been camping under the banner of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) led by Rakesh Tikait, is buzzing with activity.



FAKE MARKSHEET CASE IN RAJASTHAN

BJP MLA REMANDED IN JUDICIAL CUSTODY

JAIPUR

BJP legislator from Salumbar Assembly constituency in Rajasthan’s Udaipur district, Amrit Lal Meena, has been remanded in judicial custody till July 23 after he surrendered before a court here for allegedly forging his wife’s marksheet to enable her to contest the 2015 panchayat polls, officials said.

Meena had signed the documents as a guardian of his wife Shanta Devi for contesting election from the Semari gram panchayat.

A forged marksheet of class 5 was presented following which a charge sheet was filed against Shanta Devi who is out on bail, they said. “The legislator on Monday surrendered before a court in Sarada. His interim bail was rejected following which he was sent to jail till July 23,” DSP, Sarada, DS Chundawat said. He said Meena was denied interim bail from the high court following which he moved a Special Leave Petition (SLP) in the Supreme Court which directed him to surrender before the court in Sarada town within three weeks and stayed his arrest.

In 2015, Shanta Devi’s opponent Sugna Devi had filed a case against her in Semari police station for allegedly forging the marksheet while filing nomination to contest election. According to the police, the marksheet was of a school in Nasirabad in Ajmer district.



The investigation into the case was given to the CB-CID, which found that the marksheet was fake and that Shanta Devi had

not passed class five. A charge sheet was subsequently filed against Meena. The BJP in its previous tenure had introduced minimum education qualification to contest panchayat and local body elections.

The government had stipulated that for contesting the zila parishad or panchayat samiti polls, a contestant must have a minimum qualification of secondary education (class 10). To contest the sarpanch elections, an aspirant from the general category must have passed class 8 and a SC/ST aspirant must have passed class 5. However, the Congress government, in its first cabinet meeting after being elected in 2018, did away with the minimum education qualification required to contest panchayat and urban bodies’ elections.



AZAM KHAN, SON DISCHARGED FROM HOSPITAL

LUCKNOW

SENIOR Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan and his son Abdullah Khan were discharged from a hospital here Tuesday after recovering from COVID-19 and are being taken to the Sitapur district jail where they were lodged in various cases before being hospitalised, officials said.

The 72-year-old Rampur Lok Sabha MP and his son (30) were admitted to the Medanta Hospital on May 9. “Seeing the improvement in his (Azam Khan’s) and his son’s health conditions, they were discharged from the Medanta Hospital at 10.30 on July 13. He and his son are now fully medically fit,” the hospital said in a statement issued here. Khan and his son were confirmed Covid positive on April 30. Hospital Director Dr Rakesh Kapoor said Tuesday they were admitted to the hospital from the jail on May 9. Sitapur district jail superintendent Suresk Kumar Singh told PTI Tuesday that the two are being brought back to the jail. Khan, his son and wife Tazeen Fatma were lodged in the jail in February last year in connection with various cases. The Allahabad High Court had in December granted bail to Tazeen Fatma in all 34 cases registered against her.

POPULATION CONTROL BILL

Mayawati questions BJP govt’s intentions in UP

LUCKNOW

BSP president Mayawati on Tuesday said the draft population control bill has raised questions about the Uttar Pradesh government’s intentions as people believe it lacks seriousness and has more to do with the ruling BJP’s electoral interests.

She said if the BJP government had been serious about the population control, then it would have started working towards it when the government was formed. The BSP chief’s reaction comes in the wake of the Uttar Pradesh State Law Commission (UPSLC) posting the draft of the population control bill on its website.

“The new bill being brought by the BJP government for population control, more than its merits and demerits, raises doubts over both the policy and intention of the government regarding the seriousness of this national concern. People believe it lacks seriousness and has more to do with electoral interests,” Mayawati said in a tweet in Hindi.

“Failing to turn the growing population into the country’s strength and honour by making them more aware and educated, the



BJP is now trying to control the population by force and punishing most of the families like the previous Congress government, which is grossly unfair in the eyes of the public,” she added. According to the draft bill, people having more than two children in the state will be debarred from contesting local bodies polls, applying for government jobs or receiving any kind of subsidy.

The draft bill, for which suggestions have been invited from the public till July 19, also prohibits promotions in government jobs for such people, while offering incentives to those limiting their children to two. The draft says it is necessary to control and stabilise the population of the state for the promotion of sustainable development with more equitable distribution.

MAN KILLS FATHER FOR SLAPPING GRANDSON

JAIPUR

A man allegedly killed his father for slapping his son in Rajasthan’s Banswara district, police said on Tuesday.

The man, Jayanti, allegedly beat up his father in Jodi village of Tandvadla gram panchayat on Sunday night, they said. Vesta (50) had slapped his eight-year-old grandson for misbehaving with him. Angered by it, the child asked a neighbour to call his father, who works as a labourer in Gujarat, Kushalgarh Station House Officer (SHO) Pradeep Kumar said.

The grandfather died on Monday, he said. The post-mortem has been conducted and the report is awaited, the SHO said, adding that the accused was arrested on Tuesday. He said it seems that the man died of some internal injuries as he was probably hit hard.

The accused told police he did not know that his father would die due to the injuries. He said he had thought of taking his father to hospital the next morning as they lived in a hilly area, but he had died by then. Police said Jayanti’s son was living with his grandparents in Rajasthan whereas rest of his family and the brother’s family lived in neighbouring Gujarat for earning their livelihood.

‘No talk of any alliance between AAP, SBSP’

NEW DELHI

THERE is no talk of an alliance between the Aam Aadmi Party and the SBSP, AAP leader Sanjay Singh clarified on Tuesday amid reports of a tie-up between the two parties ahead of assembly polls in Uttar Pradesh next year.

Singh also accused Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party chief Om Prakash Rajbhar of lying on Monday when he said he will meet AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal this week to firm up an alliance



for the elections. “O P Rajbhar ji is lying. No meeting of Kejriwal ji with him has been fixed. Nor is there any talk of alliance with them,” Singh said on Twitter.

ter. “Whatever news is being published about the meeting of Om Prakash Rajbhar Ji with Arvind Kejriwal Ji is false and baseless...,” the Rajya Sabha MP and AAP UP in-charge added.

Rajbhar had said he would meet Kejriwal on July 17 in the presence of Singh. “During the meeting talks will be held to include the AAP in the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha as an ally,” Rajbhar said. The Morcha is a front of small parties led by Rajbhar.

Haryana Dy Speaker car’s attack: Police books over 100 protesters

CHANDIGARH

SIRSA police has registered a case against over 100 protesters on various charges in connection with the incident on Sunday in which Haryana Deputy Speaker Ranbir Gangwa’s car came under attack during a farmers’ protest targeting events of BJP leaders.

“We have registered an FIR against 100-150 protesters under various provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including obstructing public servants in discharge of their duty, murderous attempt on an elected representative, damaging public property...Section 124 A (sedition) has also been added in the FIR and further investigations are on,” Station House Officer (SHO) Civil Lines police station, Inspec-

tor Vikram Singh said over the phone on Tuesday.

He said that the FIR mentions two farmer leaders by name. CCTV footage of the incident was being gathered, Singh said, adding that “arrests will be made as other accused are identified.” Gangwa told reporters here on Tuesday that those who pelted stones at his vehicle on Sunday cannot be called farmers. “They cannot be called farmers. I can say those who attacked looked like addicts...,” he said.

State Assembly Speaker Gian Chand Gupta told reporters that everyone has a right to hold protest in a peaceful way, but no



one can take law into one’s hands. “The way the deputy speaker’s car was attacked, the events could have taken any ugly turn...,” Gupta said.

Sirsa police had earlier said the rear windscreen of Gangwa’s SUV broke as stones were pelted. Farmers carrying black flags had assembled outside Chaudhary Devi Lal University in Sirsa on Sunday during the day and raised slogans against the government. While Gangwa, who is a BJP MLA from Nalwa in Hisar, was coming out of the varsity after attending a function, protesters targeted his car, the police had said.

Two held with morphine worth ₹2.25 crore in UP’s Barabanki

BARABANKI

TWO people were arrested in Uttar Pradesh’s Barabanki district with morphine worth over Rs 2 crore in the international market, police said on Tuesday. The arrests were made at the Chowkaghat railway crossing on Barabanki-Bahraich road on Monday night based on intelligence inputs, they said.

A total of 2.25 kg of morphine, whose value in the international market is estimated to be Rs 2.25 crore was seized from the accused, police said, adding Rs 2.10 lakh cash and a luxury car were also recovered from their possession. A joint team of Ramnagar Police and the Narcotics Control Bureau arrested Mohd Imran and Wahid Ali, both residents of Barabanki, police said. A case has been lodged against the two under relevant sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, they added.

The accused told police during interrogation that they used to smuggle the contraband to Gonda, Bahraich and Balrampur and named one Taj Mohammad of Bansa as the main drug smuggler, police said. Barabanki SP Yamuna Prasad has announced a cash prize of Rs 20,000 for the police team making the arrests, they added.

Kanwar Yatra: RT-PCR test can be made mandatory

LUCKNOW

UTTAR PRADESH Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has urged that only a minimum number of people should participate in the annual Kanwar Yatra and directed strict implementation of the COVID-19 protocol, an official spokesman said here on Tuesday.

The state government, which has allowed the yatra from July 25 despite concerns raised in various quarters over the risk posed by such events in triggering a possible third wave of the

pandemic, said a negative RT-PCR test report can be made compulsory for pilgrims, if required. Every year, tens of thousands of ‘Kanwariyas’ (devotees of Lord Shiva) from northern states travel on foot or by other means to collect water from River Ganga at Haridwar to offer at Shiva temples in their areas as part of the yatra. The traditional Kanwar Yatra will be taken out as per the COVID protocol, the official spokesman said.

“The RT-PCR negative report could also be made necessary for the yatra, if required,” the

spokesman said. In view of the COVID-19 situation, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed that Kanwar Sanghs should be requested for the participation of a minimum number of people in the yatra, the spokesman said.

He also said that necessary guidelines should be issued for travel by holding a dialogue with the states of Delhi, Rajasthan, Haryana and Uttarakhand. In a meeting with all the divisional commissioners of the state and senior officers of police zones last week, the chief minister had

reviewed the preparations and security arrangements for the yatra and directed the officials to reach out to Kanwar Sanghs to ensure that there is no unnecessary crowding.

“Complete adherence to the COVID protocol should be ensured. There should not be any hesitation regarding the safe and successful operation of Kanwar yatra,” the UP CM had said. He said special attention needs to be paid regarding cleanliness and proper lighting in all Shiv temples, shivalayas and travel routes.



Social media influencers in demand

THE age of celebrity may be passé. This digital era is the age of social media influencers. Without being a celebrity, these social influencers have huge followings on various social media platforms. This phenomenon has given rise to the ‘influencer economy’. Through the power of their sheer followings, these influencers mould the world views of their followers by their content. We see various influencers relating to niche domains such as fitness, cooking, travel and many more emerging each passing day. No wonder, brands are increasingly taking the help of these social influencers to popularise the new products that they launch or bring traction in the existing portfolio.

But the question arises, when marketing spend of big brands run into millions of dollars, why do they take the help of these micro-influencers with around 50,000 followers to make the brand popular? The answer is consumers like to get the real experience of people rather than blindly believing what the company says about its products.

Social influencers usually give this real-life experience about a product or a service or even give their honest views on a particular topic. This trust factor binds the influencer with his or her followers. And each established brand or even social and political groupings are eager to tap this trust factor to attract more users under their fold. That’s the reason we see many influencers on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and many other such platforms are being actively engaged by the brands.

In the Indian context, the social influencer market is very relevant as the user base of social media platforms are growing every day. India has more than 100 million active monthly users on Instagram, around 425 million active monthly users on YouTube, and 330 million users on Facebook among others. As internet penetration grows, this number is also expected to grow manifold in the coming years.

Meanwhile, the advertisement spend on digital platforms is also rising at a rapid pace. According to Dentsu’s

Digital Report 2021, advertising budget spent on digital media has increased from 20 per cent in 2019 to 28 per cent in 2020. It is expected to reach 34 per cent by the end of 2022. As the spend on digital media grows, companies are likely to engage more with social influencers in coming days.

When brands and users are following the social influencers, investors can’t stay away for long. The trend of fund inflows has already started in the US. For instance, the social network app Clubhouse, which requires an invitation to join, raised \$200 million in a funding round led by Andreessen Horowitz in April, putting its valuation at around \$4 billion. Not only in the US, even many such India-born apps are creating a lot of buzz with investors keen to fund these ventures.

The ongoing pandemic has seen migration of users to digital platforms in droves. Such rapid migration has led to more influence of these social influencers in recent times. However, the competition is intense with many joining the race to emerge as social influencers. Some analysts even started talking about saturation in the social influencer market. Whether the market has attained the peak or not, social influencers are realities of the digital world and brands can ignore them at their own peril.

A vision for centre of excellence studies in Classical Telugu



PROFESSOR K YADAGIRI

(For the enrichment of the Telugu language, a few more pertinent points for the perusal of central and state authorities are as follows. The earlier viewpoints appeared on Tuesday. This is the concluding part)

4. Master book on ancient nature of Telugu Language
Several researchers published scholarly articles on the ancestry of Telugu language based on various Shasanas. All such publications need to be published in the form of a comprehensive single book with permission from the scholars concerned.
5. Master book on Telugu racial history and culture
Several Telugu researchers published scholarly articles on the above topics based on Shasanas. All such articles can be published at one source with additional and relevant commentaries on the same by distinguished scholars.
6. Classical Telugu Literary History book
Several available books on the above topics need to be published by a distinguished Centre in consultation with the writers concerned and the same should be made available at a much cheaper price for the benefit of students and Telugu literary admirers.
7. Compile Modern Telugu Literary History (1800-2000)
Establishment of a Council and an Editorial Board comprising senior writers, scholars and poets need to be constituted for taking note of the changes which have been happening since 1800 in the interpretations of the history of Telugu Literature for the purpose of constructing a comprehensive Telugu Literary History book.
8. Telugu Shasana Research Book
Several language scholars collected a number of Shasanas, de-codified them and published the same. Similarly, several essays surfaced on these in the recent past. A few Shasanas might have missed the attention of scholars so far. Such Shasanas should also be identified and the entire corpus of the same need to be published as a ‘Telugu book of Shasanas’ with relevant commentaries in a simple language.
9. Preparation of a comprehensive dictionary
In view of the need for a comprehensive Telugu dictionary taking in to consideration the usage of several non-Telugu words which have become an integral part of Telugu language, several Telugu dictionaries published by various organisations need to be compiled in to a single dictionary under the academic leadership of one like Prof Ravva Srihari. An advisory council and an editorial board need to be constituted for this purpose.
10. Preparation of modern vocabulary
Several new words including English words have been making their way into the usage of Telugu language for several reasons. This happens to be a continual process in the fast-changing dynamics of any language usage. Several Telugu scholars like late Dr C Narayan Reddy and several others felt the need for the composition of a distinct Telugu language glossary to resolve this problem. Hence, the Centre needs to establish a special wing for this purpose.
11. Symbolic (Sanketha) Telugu glossary
There is an imperative need to coin new words/vocabulary while compiling books related to Sciences, textbooks and for the purpose of translation from other languages into Telugu. Telugu Akademi has already carried out this mission. However, there is a need to take a fresh look at this exercise in the light of the fast-changing dynamics of language. Our centre needs to address this problem with the creation of an expert Council for this purpose. CSTT under the jurisdiction of the Central government is willing to bear all the expenses for this purpose.
12. Classical Telugu monthly national journal/paper
There is an imperative need for the establishment of the above Journal in order to familiarise all the Telugu people with the developments in the areas of Telugu language, literature, sciences, arts and other areas in different parts of the world. Our centre needs to take care of this. The journal will be very useful to all the students from the school stage to the university level, teachers, researchers and the language lovers.
13. Establishment of a Telugu TV channel
There is a need for the establishment of a TV Telugu channel for introducing the ancient character of Telugu language, its distinct values, cultural patterns, poets and their works to the Telugu people all over the world. The Telugu channel under the control of the government caters its activities to the Telugu people in different parts of the world. Moreover, the channel can publicise well the multiple contours and distinct nature of the folk performances of our ancestors. Such a channel will also bring name and fame to the CESCT.
14. National and international Telugu awards
It is possible to provide impetus and due respect to the Telugu language by awarding due rewards in terms of cash to the extent of Rs. One lakh annually to five distinguished Telugu writers, researchers and scholars living in different parts of the world including both the Telugu states.
15. Organising seminars and workshops
The Centre can conduct about 25 Seminars/Conferences every year on ancient folklore based on the events in different Telugu departments in various universities and elsewhere in respect of the trends in folklore and folk performances. Moreover, such Conferences will be very beneficial to the students in respect of different forms of Telugu language and literature.
16. Orientation courses for Telugu teachers
Expert senior Professors need to organise periodic Orientation programmes for the benefit of teachers drawn from schools and colleges for the enhancement of their teaching abilities.
17. Digitalisation of Telugu dictionaries
Digitalisation of Telugu dictionaries is imperative for learning and understanding Telugu language with ease and comfort. It is very essential for students at different levels as well as those who want to learn Telugu language newly. Services of one like Prof. G. Uma Maheshwar Rao, known for his proficiency in the usage of Computers, for inculcating to the Telugu learners about the nuances of Telugu syntax and sentence structures can be requisitioned for this purpose.
18. Implementing Telugu as official language
Expertise of Telugu language scholars is a must for running the administration through Telugu in the offices of the two Telugu states. Moreover, such scholars are useful in providing the necessary links between the government and the people concerned. *
19. Publicity through translations
The distinct character of the Telugu language, literature, Telugu classics and rare Telugu books on various topics under the sun can be known to the people of non-Telugu nations through translations alone. For realizing this purpose, expert translators need to be identified and encouraged with incentives to carry out translations of important Telugu books in to Indian languages and then to English later. Such activities will bring due recognition to the Government of India as well as the Language Centre concerned.
- The New Education Policy (NEP) approved by the Union Cabinet proposes the setting up of an Indian Institute of Translation and Interpretation (IITD) while also laying significant emphasis on Sanskrit and other Indian languages in Particular Telugu. As per the NEP 2020, India is a country with a treasure of cultural heritage in the forms of arts, custom, literature, tradition, artefacts, and much more. This makes India one of the most visited countries for tourists who come to the country to experience the rich culture and heritage. That is why it is important to preserve the culture and wealth of India for the nation’s identity and its economy. In the realm of that, NEP 2020 consists of some major changes in context to Promotion of Indian Languages, Multilingual Education, Arts and Culture.

(Writer is a former Director of Telugu Akademi (Andhra Pradesh State Institute of Telugu Language) and former Vice-Chancellor (In-charge) of Telugu University, Hyderabad)

Sans dissent, democratic deficit!



MOOT POINT
Dr Ramu Suravajjula

The elected governments of all hues, however, are nursing a grudge and developing hatred against the people who sincerely wish to participate in the process for the common good. Governments, in fact, expecting citizens to limit their role to watch the proceedings, whatsoever bad-worse-worst, with their mouths shut because their role ended after voting them to power. Those who defy the official line of thinking, dare to point chinks in the system or lend voice to the voiceless are loosely dubbed as anti-nationals. Stifling of voices, especially that of media and academia, with brute force is posing a great danger to democracy.

In his book, titled, Chomsky on Miseducation, a great philosopher and thinker of our times Noam Chomsky quoted Thomas Jefferson, the principal author of the Declaration of Independence (1776), and the third President of the United States (1801-1809), as making a parallel between aristocrats and democrats. The aristocrats are ‘those who fear and distrust the people, and wish to draw all powers from them into the hands of the higher classes.’ The democrats, in contrast, ‘identify with the people, have confidence in them, cherish and consider them as honest and safe depository of the public interest.’ From democracy to aristocracy, where are we heading? Even as India is all set to enter a milestone of 75 years of Independence, this pertinent question will continue to come under increased scrutiny.

The passing away of two public figures representing two diverse fields and two different generations this month provide a context to discuss this vital topic. The horrendous drama that led to the death of the 84-year-old undertrial prisoner, Father Stan Swamy in a hospital on July 5, 2021 exposes the brutality of governments and the insensitivity of the other key pillars of democracy; while the reactions of a section of people following the death of the 44-year-old Dalit intellectual Katti Mahesh, who succumbed to his grievous injuries in a road accident on July 10, 2021, laid bare inhumanity and irresponsibility in society. Both the sad demises present us dangerous levels of intolerance exhibited by the two key stakeholders of democracy-the rulers and the ruled.

Though the colossal contribution of Stan Swamy, who stood for the cause of tribals for more than five decades, can’t be compared with the works of Mahesh, a film critic and director, the barbaric action of the government and the reaction of a section of society troubled many. The common features shared by the duo are, love for humanity, quest for justice, concern for marginalized and penchant for participatory democracy.

Katti Mahesh’s voice

Mahesh, a communication professional and pioneer of crowdfunding in Telugu films, took film criticism to a next level while mincing no words on political, social and cultural issues. He was critical of the national anthem being played in theaters, political maneuvers of the film-star Pawan Kalyan and the BJP’s attempts to hijack Hindutva. Of all, Mahesh’s ‘disparaging remarks’ against the Lord Rama attracted criticism and threats. Police booked a case against him under various Indian Penal Code sections, including 295A (Deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings) and extorted from Hyderabad city for six months in 2018.

After Mahesh was grievously injured in a road accident at Nellore on June 26, a section of self-proclaimed ‘Ram Bhakths’ made posts on social media attributing the mishap to God’s will. Debate, discussion and criticism on Mahesh’s ideas and opinions are welcome but, comments like ‘Mahesh is paying for his sin,’ ‘God takes care of such fellows,’ ‘The accident is a result of retribution,’ are not acceptable. The so-called spiritual groups on WhatsApp and other platforms expressed joy over Mahesh’s misery. Is it not ridiculous and illogical?

If Lord Rama is so keen on taking revenge, He would have done great harm to a writer Muppalla Ranganayakamma, who was critical of Rama in her 3-part book, titled: Ramayana Vishavriksham, between 1974-76. Those who criticised Rama much before Ranganayakamma didn’t die in road accidents. Going by the blind belief of the jubilant anti-Mahesh brigade, worshippers and devotees of Rama must have defied death and lived forever happily.

Media and academia

Calling a spade a spade, even without malice, alas, is seen as anti-societal, antinational and anti-peace now-a-days. The place for the concerned citizens and critical thinkers is drastically shrinking with each passing day.

The vibrancy of democratic form of governance depends on how the rulers deal with assent and dissent. First of all, all political parties confused the concept of assent with sycophancy. Political parties bestow positions based on loyalty factor and hence there is no scope for the second opinion within. Barring Communist parties, there is no internal democracy and hence no discussion and no dissent in the mainstream political parties. The regional parties are flatteringly plagued with the personality cult and the sole voice of the supreme leaders is projected as the consensus decision.

Secondly, the primary vehicles of dissent, media and academia are systematically silenced. The ruling class is implementing a two-pronged strategy in dealing with media, the fourth estate. The first strategy is to control media houses that dare to question its anti-people policies and corrupt practices. Apart from weakening such media houses financially by denying legitimate advertisement revenue, troublesome journalists are harassed till they are thoroughly sidelined. In this process, a majority of media houses with cross-commercialism interests toed the line and a strong platoon of



The passing away of two public figures representing two diverse fields and two different generations this month provide a context to discuss this vital topic. The horrendous drama that led to the death of the 84-year-old undertrial prisoner, Father Stan Swamy in a hospital on July 5, 2021 exposes the brutality of governments and the insensitivity of the other key pillars of democracy; while the reactions of a section of people following the death of the 44-year-old Dalit intellectual Katti Mahesh, who succumbed to his grievous injuries in a road accident on July 10, 2021, laid bare inhumanity and irresponsibility in society

government-friendly editors and journalists are groomed through the corporates. The second strategy, buying the media houses entirely. The political parties that rule some States are directly controlling majority of the regional media houses. Both the Telugu States remain a solid example to drive this point home.

The other institute, which is instrumental in deepening democratic ideology is academia. Historically, dissent was encouraged as a scholarly discourse and the voice of intelligentsia was heard for course correction. Professors and students are ought to energize democracies with debate and discussion. In India, the politicization of campuses in an unprecedented scale is causing enormous damage.

Slacktivism at its best

Powers-that-be at all times trample down the Article 19 (1) (A) to exterminate the Freedom of Expression by vesting sweeping powers to the investigative agencies through which they covertly silence human rights activists.

Some powerful provisions of the laws made to neutralize terrorists, such UAPA, TADA, POTA, are blatantly applied against the voices in the civil society besides, the Articles like Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code (sedition) are indiscriminately applied. State governments too made necessary statutory arrangements to control the voices and ideas that go against the establishment. These tactics are primarily aimed at terrorizing those who wish to raise their voices.



Call it the conspiracy of silence or bystander effect, majority of Indians have apparently succumbed to these tactics. They are unwilling to hit the streets in protest against the government’s anti-people policies or decisions fearing witch-hunting or incarceration. Habituated to suffer in silence, the modern concerned citizens, apparently due to lack of time, energy and guts to physically join the protesters, show their solidarity through slacktivism, the practice of supporting a political or social cause by means such as social media or online petitions, characterized as involving very little effort or commitment.

In the fast-paced materialistic world, it is not easy to organise dissent. Governments successfully destabilised the forums available to express dissent. Covid-19 has provided an alibi for the official machinery to deny permissions to meet or express dissent. The tech-savvy political parties are armed with a strong mechanism to phoo-phoo the secular-democratic voices online.

I have observed that the dissenters dumb down the whole exercise with near-impossible demands. Instead of continuing a concerted fight against an unjust policy or the most troublesome current issue, dissidents often demand for the resignation of the elected governments in the form of lengthy verbose articles and mass signature campaigns or online petitions.

The internationally acclaimed historian, Romila Thapar, rightly pointed out in a virtual talk on the topic ‘Voice of Dissent’ on June 26, 2021. Dissent is central to social change, but dissent has to be non-violent and all inclusive. Governments should realise the fact, as she opined, that only the elected representatives don’t constitute democracy entirely and voicing dissent is also part of democracy.

Nelson Mandela, in his auto biography ‘Long Walk to Freedom’ pointed out that as a young boy he had learnt about the importance of democracy from the practice of local African meetings where all voices were heard. “Everyone who wanted to speak did so. It was democracy in its purest form.”

It’s time to take a leaf out of Mandela’s observation and Lincoln’s suggestion to safeguard the wonderful form of governance, democracy, we inherited. Civil Society Organisations and intelligentsia should take initiatives to inculcate the culture of dissent for the benefit of a healthy democracy.

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

‘gone’ and there are abundant stocks of vaccines available to treat the infection even if they are attacked by the virus of different strains. It is to be noted that governments have lifted the lockdowns mainly to enable livelihoods, not for mass enjoyments, gatherings either for spiritual or for other non-spiritual purposes. Unfortunately, it is still our habit to wake up only when the fire occurs but we never prefer to prevent any likely event of a fire.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao, Hyderabad.

Stop super spreader events

DESPITE the warnings from Indian Medical Association, eminent doctors and scientists that the third wave of Covid-19 are eminent, State governments have relaxed restrictions, especially on travel, tourism, pilgrimages and religious functions. This is a dangerous trend when only one-third of the Indian population got both doses of vaccine. Under these circumstances, mass gatherings would create potential super-spreaders of a third wave. Even now also there is time to review the relaxations and save the public lives.

TSN Rao, Bheemavaram

LETTERS

NEET: Allow tutorials to run

THIS refers to the report ‘NEET on Sept 12’ (13 July). It is high time the government allowed the opening of study centers and libraries in a calibrated manner for the benefit of lakhs of students to attend offline classes and also get some extra coaching to supplement online classes. The libraries of course would help them refer to more study materials. When temples of gods can be opened, why not temples of learning as many students have already managed to get their first shot of vaccine and in fact, they can also be allowed to their Covishield second shot if they have completed 4 weeks (28 days) in the same way as those going abroad for studies. After all, those who are keen to pursue studies in India are also equally important to remain safe while taking their highly competitive examination. With all aspirants vaccinated, the government would not require to further postpone the NEET exam to another date.

N Nagarajan, Hyderabad

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Colonial mindset killed Stan

MADABHUSHI’S article, ‘Justice minus humanity is injustice’ (THI, July 13) is rather a narration of a civil rights activist and campaigner for tribal rights as to how he was booked by NIA and imprisoned on trivial grounds and as to how a ripe aged Parkinson’s disease patient was mercilessly denied the basic needs – no sipper and straw – and the fateful end with Covid due to recklessness meted out to him. It aptly fits the title. The NIA didn’t find their sweet convenience to answer the queries of the court to the appeals by his well-wishers and right thinkers. Alas, he is no more but the institutional lacunae that killed him should be brought to book and others like Stan still languishing should be let off. In Pre-Independent India, freedom fighters used to be sent for incarceration till death in Andaman. The colonial mindset still prevails.

Dr T Ramadas, Visakhapatnam.

Open invitation to Covid

IT is utterly shocking to note that people have completely thrown to the wind the Covid-19 appropriate behaviour, presuming that Covid infection is just

AP CM mulls filling up of nominated posts soon

PV KRISHNA RAO
AMARAVATI

CHIEF MINISTER Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is likely to fill nominated posts with some key party functionaries in a day or two to boost their morale as they strived hard for the victory of the YSRCP and eagerly waiting for such postings.

According to sources, the nominated posts are finalised based on the future Cabinet changes and MLC posts to be filled under local bodies and MLAs quota. It is learnt that pri-

ority is being given to those leaders who worked for the party and got defeated in 2019 elections. It is said that around 32 chairperson posts of various corporations were already finalised.

The government had decided to announce the nominated posts on YSR birth anniversary (July 8), however, it was deferred as the list was not finalised. As the Chief Minister had announced earlier that he would replace 50 percent of the ministers during the proposed reshuffle after two and half

years of governance, speculations are rife that priority will be given to those leaders who would be more useful for the election point of view so that the party can come back to power.

According to the sources, priority will be given to Visakhapatnam district leaders in the nominated posts as the city is going to emerge as the executive capital of the state soon. Giving priority to Visakhapatnam district, chairman posts were offered to 11 YSRCP leaders and director posts were offered to other leaders.

TRS executive meet today amid rise in Oppn voices

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

THE ruling TRS has decided to go in for a serious introspection into the present political situation vis a vis the party and work out strategies to counter the Opposition parties which are now hitting the roads in one form or the other.

While BJP state president Bandi Sanjay would soon be launching his padayatra from Hyderabad to Huzurabad, newly-elected TPCC president A Revanth Reddy is also contemplating to take up similar padayatra.

In the backdrop of this situation, the TRS state executive committee is meeting here on Wednesday. The meeting would be chaired by TRS working president KT Rama Rao.

It is learnt that party general secretaries have been asked to attend the meeting with ground reports. The meeting will discuss various issues, in-

cluding the present political situation, membership drive and insurance for members. The last meeting of the executive was held in February this year.

According to party general secretary Palla Rajeshwar Reddy, the TRS working president would also review the party membership drive and the digitalisation process. The membership drive was halted because of the lockdown imposed in the state in the wake of rising corona cases. The party leaders would also discuss the insurance cover to the members of the party. So far, the party has given insurance claims to the family members of 2,342 party workers. During the previous year, the party provided claims to the tune of Rs 47 crore to the kin.

The party leaders would also discuss the status of construction of party offices in the districts and the functioning of the party offices, which have already been inaugurated.



TTD EO K S Jawahar Reddy and other staff cleanse as part of Koil Alwar Tirumanjanam at Tirumala on Tuesday

Koil Alwar Tirumanjanam held ahead of Anivara Asthanam

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUMALA

THE traditional temple cleaning fete, Koil Alwar Tirumanjanam was performed at the hill shrine of Sri Venkateswara Swamy at Tirumala on Tuesday. The Tirumanjanam was performed as a prelude to the Anivara Asthanam which will be conducted in the shrine on July 16. The fete commenced at 6 am and lasted for over three hours.

All the utsava idols, puja utensils were temporarily removed from the sanctum sanctorum and the main idol was provided with a water-proof covering before the priests carried out the cleansing rituals covering the entire temple complex. A herbal mixture 'Pari-malam' made of refined camphor, sandalwood powder, vermilion, turmeric, a tuber Kichilgadda that acts as disinfectant was applied to all the walls, smeared on roofs and pillars inside the sanctum sanctorum as well as at other sub-temples inside the temple after thorough cleaning with water taken by the temple staff including priests and officials. Speaking on the occasion, EO Dr K S Jawahar Reddy said, this cleansing fete will be observed four times in a year before Ugadi, Anivara Asthanam, Brahmotsavam and Vaikunta Ekadasi.

Keep villages clean, Jagan directs officials



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy reviews Panchayat Raj and Rural Development at his camp office in Tadepalli on Tuesday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy directed the officials to complete the works of village secretariats, village clinics and digital libraries by year-end.

During a review on panchayat raj and rural development departments at his camp office here on Tuesday, the Chief Minister instructed the officials to complete geo-tagging and review the progress of construction of those buildings. He asked them to start the works related to development of infrastructure facilities in YSR Jagananna colonies on priority basis and added that importance should be given to the cleanliness drive programme to keep the villages clean.

The Chief Minister said solid and liquid waste management system in villages and towns should be carried out properly and Clean Andhra Pradesh would be possible only if municipal and panchayat raj departments work in coordination on it. He directed officials to make arrangements to collect wet wastage in rural areas and added that special number should be

- Orders completion of village secretariats, clinics and digital libraries by year-end
- Suggests coordination between Municipal Administration and Panchayat Raj departments to achieve clean Andhra Pradesh goal
- Wants more focus on YSR Jala Kala which is immensely beneficial to the farmers

displayed in villages for collection and shifting of garbage to treatment plants.

The Chief Minister said six lakh women were benefitted with sustainable livelihood under YSR Cheyutha and YSR Asara schemes this year and directed the officials to ensure they face no marketing problems. He made it clear that the officials should only contract with companies that have a wide range of marketing capabilities.

Noting that YSR Jala Kala project, a prestigious one, will be helpful to lakhs of farmers, he

asked the officials to focus on effective implementation of the project. He said check-dam type structures should be constructed near bridges on small rivers across the state so that water can be stored up to 3-4 feet. He said these structures will help in increasing the ground water level and directed the officials to prepare an action plan in this regard.

He said a committee with three ministers will be set up for effective implementation of YSR Jagananna Saswatha Bhoomi Hakku-Bhoomi Rakshana scheme. The committee will comprise panchayat raj, revenue and municipal administration ministers and focus on effective implementation of comprehensive land survey.

The officials explained to the Chief Minister the progress of various works under rural development department. Jagananna Pacha Thoranam, Nadu-Nedu works in schools and hospitals were also discussed.

The officials also informed the Chief Minister about the progress of YSR Bima, Jal Jeevan Mission and progress of rural highways construction works.

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

FARMERS in Andhra Pradesh are a worried lot nowadays. Those who welcomed the timely onset of the monsoon are now facing problems in tilling the land as they face a shortage of labourers.

Last year too, the farmers faced the problem due to the pandemic. This year the situation has not improved and continued restrictions and other preventive measures have not been good for farm activity.

Every year, AP sees a steady flux of farm labour into it from the neighbouring states. But, those who had left for their native villages last year are not back in full numbers yet. The problem is common to several employment avenues like the hotel industry, manufacturing unit, factories aquaculture companies and other similar organisations.

Although labour scarcity affects the agriculture sector, the impact is more pronounced in case of certain crops which require a significant amount of labour hours per unit area cultivated and are also widely grown in the country.

Andhra Pradesh along with Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh has the highest area under cultivation of major crops like paddy, cotton, chillies, sugarcane and groundnut (with a higher share of paddy).

Thousands of labourers from the neighbouring states come to Andhra Pradesh for a work opportunity and help farmers in the farming activities during the season and return to their native



- Workers from neighbouring States who returned to their native places last year during pandemic have not returned
- Impact is more in case of certain crops which need high amount of labour hours per unit area
- Moreover, labour are opting industries and other vocations in cities instead of farm sector

places after the end of the season. But this time, the labourers have left for their home in April last due to the fear of the coronavirus pandemic and have not returned yet. Reports of the impending third wave also have their impact on their movement now, it is said.

Reports from across the districts suggest that the mood is downbeat among farmers due to the acute shortage of labourers. Hundreds of middlemen used to earn their livelihood by providing labourers to sugarcane and other farmers.

Rami Reddy, 45, a progressive farmer from Tadepalli in the erstwhile capital region of Amaravati, is frustrated now. He owns 10 acre fertile land and has been reaping both paddy as well commercial crops all along. Yet, it has become difficult for him now to find sufficient labour despite doubled wages.

"There is no end to their demands even if they are available. Earlier, the labour used to come for Rs 200 per day or so. Now even double the amount won't guarantee us the workforce," he said.

"In addition, several factors also are keeping the labour away from the farm work. Migration to cities is fetching them more. Several are switching their work too as workers in construction sites due to higher wages and other facilities like accommodation, etc.," adds another farmer, Karothu Nani of Pamaruru.

Janakaiah, 34, who migrated to Vijayawada from Visakhapatnam with family, says, "I could secure the job of a watchman in an apartment in Patamata a couple of months ago. I have two children. Here I can get them a good education." He is one of the few lucky ones who had a brother-in-law in the city to help him shift.

Retrenched nurses denied permission to go on fast

Request the government to allow them to work for one more year

MOHSIN ALI
HYDERABAD

THE specially-appointed outsourcing nurses whose services were terminated recently by the State government were not given permission to take up a hunger strike against the 'injustice' meted out to them.

A group of 1,640 nurses who are fighting for their rights have no leader and facing difficulties to assemble on a common platform to arrive at a solution for their problems. They alleged that the police have been rejecting their pleas to allow them to stage a protest. Decrying the attitude of the government, Health and police departments, an outsourcing nurse, Anitha, speaking to the The Hans India said, "All the government bodies are against us. The concerned head of the department of Medical education is not allowing us to meet him. He is stopping us from entering the premises. The policemen also keep monitoring our activities and not allowing us to meet. The department is rejecting our request for staging a hunger strike. We have applied to at least five police stations in city, including Cyberabad Commissioner's office. But, all our requests have been rejected."

Adding that protesting against injustice was a basic right, she criticised the police for their intervention. "The police followed us to the State Human Rights

Commission and they followed us to Gandhi Bhavan when we went to submit our representation," she claimed. "We are feeling helpless as there is no support from any union or NGO. Nobody is coming forward to help us. We are not forcing the government to regularise our services; we just want us to be allowed to work as per the contract that was extended by the government till 2022. How far is it correct to terminate us suddenly?" she questioned. According to nurses, the sudden termination has resulted in financial problems as majority of them have not been paid for three months. A few of them have been paid two months' salary, with dues of one month.



According to officials, the contract mentions that the nurses were being appointed on outsourcing for one year during the pandemic. It is clear that they were appointed on contract and could be removed post-pandemic. Yet everybody had signed the contract.

Delay in Aasara leaves disabled dejected

- Beneficiaries accuse the government of treating urban residents differently from their rural counterparts
- Officials concerned point out at non-release of funds for the delay

ESA BIN ABDUL REHMAN
HYDERABAD

DELAY in disbursement of Aasara pensions continues to add to the misery of the poor and the disabled, especially in urban areas, who feel dejected. They have accused the government of treating people living in rural and urban areas differently when it came to distributing the pension money.

It is learnt that beneficiaries in rural areas received their pensions for June four days ago, while their urban counterparts, especially those in Hyderabad and Rajendranagar, are still waiting to get the amounts which are supposed to be disbursed on or before fifth of every month.

While the beneficiaries in Narsingi and other neighbouring municipalities started receiving the pension money from June 10, those in Rajendranagar, under GHMC limits, are still waiting. It is said that over 1,600 disabled are registered for the Aasara scheme.



A Srinivasulu, a disabled from Gaganpahad, said: "We have been given pensions only after 15th of every month which ought to be disbursed on or before 5th for the last many months. A majority of beneficiaries are from poor and marginalised sections, for whom even a penny holds a great worth. We are living through the pandemic and the changing weather conditions. The seasonal diseases require timely treatment."

"It is not at all appropriate on the part of the government and the district machinery to behave in such a prejudiced manner when it comes to distribution of Aasara pensions. Disabled suffer several health issues that need proper medica-

tion and food on time. Delay in pension disbursement will in no way help them in their survival, but add to their misery. While the delay in pension has a bearing on us, we are forced to sit like a duck in the homes," rued Nagani Arjun of Rajendranagar. When contacted the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) officials, they informed that the issue of delay in pension disbursement lies with the government. While the disbursement begins in rural areas from July 5 onwards, the same can't be done in urban areas due to non-release of funds. We are just an implementing agency and could be able to act only when funds are released for disbursement.

BJP slams KCR over Musi beautification project

Rally demands early completion of works

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

BHARATIYA Janata Party leader and former MLA NVSS Prabhakar on Tuesday slammed Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao over Musi River Beautification Project. He alleged that the CM's promises on the project had turned out to be "writings on water". He made the observations while addressing a party rally demanding completion of the project at the earliest.

The rally was held from Moosarambagh crossroads to Moosarambagh bridge. Former MLA Chintha Ramachandra Reddy, BJP central district president Gautam Rao, Ranga Reddy urban party president Sama Ranga Reddy and several corporators took part. The leaders inspected the Musi river as part of the rally.

Addressing the gathering, Prabhakar alleged that the Musi River Front Development Board had been turned into a political platform by the government. He charged that several irregularities were taking place in the board. The party would raise its voice against the irregularities along with the city corporators, he said. Adding that the beautification work was not progressing even after seven years, the ex-MLA alleged that the government had not constructed even a single sewage treatment plant even after promising to spend Rs 5,000 crore on the project.



TIRUPATHI SMART CITY CORPORATION LIMITED
TIRUPATI [A.P.] E-mail: tsccitirupati@gmail.com

E- TENDER NOTICE Ref. Number : TSCC/LN/IT/48, Dated: 13-07-2021
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
Tirupati Smart City Corporation Limited, Tirupati invites online bids from interested and eligible bidders to participate for e-procurement vide IFB No: 6(2nd Call)/21-22 & 13-18/21-22/smart city / To, Dt. 13-07-2021 of 7 Works. Bidders are advised to visit e-procurement market place at <https://tender.aperprocurement.gov.in> from 20-07-2021 to download the tender document and detailed instructions. For any assistance regarding participation in the e-tender contact, Superintending Engineer, e-mail: tsccitirupati@gmail.com. The duly completed documents have to submit tender on online and that only be considered.
All other details including any extension, clarifications, amendments, corrigendum, addendum etc., will be uploaded on the above-mentioned website only and shall not be published in any other sources.
The TSCL reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tender offers in part or full without assigning any reasons therefor.
Sd/- Sri P.S.GIRISHA, I.A.S.,
Managing Director, Tirupati Smart City Corporation Limited, TIRUPATI.

Pak authorities confiscate books on Nobel laureate Malala

LAHORE

Pakistan authorities have confiscated copies of a school textbook in Punjab province for printing the picture of Nobel laureate Malala Yousufzai in the list of important personalities, apparently unhappy with the UK-based activist's controversial views on Islam.

The youngest Nobel Prize laureate, Malala, who turned 24, is known for human rights advocacy, especially the education of women and children in her native Swat Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in northwest Pakistan, where the local Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan had at times banned girls from attending school.

Pakistan's private schools' association had launched a documentary on Malala for her controversial views on Islam, marriage and her pursuit of the Western agenda.

On the same day, the Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board (PCTB) confiscated the social studies book for grade 7 published by the Oxford University Press (OUP) for printing the picture of Malala alongside that of military officer Maj Aziz Bhatti, who was killed in the 1965 war with India, in the list of important personalities, the Dawn newspaper reported on Tuesday.

Besides Malala and Bhatti, pictures of some other important personalities were published on page 33 of the book that included Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah, poet Allama Iqbal, educationist Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, first prime minister Liaquat Ali Khan and legendary philanthropist Abdul Sattar Edhi.

Malala at the age of 17 was the co-recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize for her struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to educa-



A documentary on Malala was launched for her controversial views on Islam, marriage and her pursuit of the Western agenda

tion. She shared the prize with Kailash Satyarthi, a children's rights activist from India.

Quoting sources, the report said the books were already circulated in various educational institutes and the PCTB, police and other agencies were conducting raids on shops to confiscate copies of the book. A team of officials conducted a raid on the OUP office in Mini Market, Gulberg area of Lahore and confiscated the entire stock of the book. They also handed over a letter to the press, stating that the book had not been issued a No-Objection Certificate (NOC). Quoting

a publisher, the report said the book was submitted to the PCTB for a review and to seek an NOC in 2019. The board, after reviewing its contents, did not approve it for publishing. The Oxford University Press has published the book despite not being issued the NOC, the publisher said.

Addressing a press conference at his office in Gulberg in Lahore on Monday, the All-Pakistan Private Schools Federation president Kashif Mirza had said: Through this documentary film -- I am not Malala - we will tell 20 million students in 200,000 private schools across the country about her controversial views on Islam, marriage, pursuing of Western agenda."

The idea behind this is we want to expose Malala among the youth as it does not get impressed by her so-called story of struggle for women's rights, he said.

WINDOWS

Deuba becomes Nepal's PM for 5th time

KATHMANDU: Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba on Tuesday became the country's Prime Minister for the fifth time after the Supreme Court's intervention. President Bidya Devi Bhandari appointed the Opposition leader as the prime minister in accordance with Article 76(5) of the Constitution. This is the fifth time that 75-year-old Deuba is returning to power as the Prime Minister of Nepal. His appointment is in line with the ruling issued by the Supreme Court on Monday to make way for his claim to premiership, replacing incumbent K P Sharma Oli

Kerala Govt to join fast against dowry

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan will join a protest against dowry abuse on Wednesday here. Deeply saddened after several women in the state committed suicide due to dowry abuse, the Kerala Governor had last month promised to work as a volunteer against the evil of dowry abuse.

He had also promised to join a group of people who will sit on a fast to highlight the issue. Gandhian organisations are organising the fast from morning to evening at the Gandhi Bhawan to create awareness against the giving and taking of dowry.

8K tourist vehicles sent back from Mussoorie

Serum to produce Sputnik V from Sept; Covid cases at 31,443, lowest in 4 months

MUSSORIE

AS part of the Uttarakhand government's efforts to reduce crowding at tourists' places like Mussoorie and Nainital, about 8,000 tourist vehicles were sent back over the weekend.

According to Uttarakhand Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Nilesh Anand Bharane, check-posts have also been set up at the state border. Tourists have been informed that they must have negative RT-PCR tests, prior hotel bookings and registration on the online portal.

"After videos went viral of huge crowds bathing in Kemty falls, the Uttarakhand government has taken steps to control the number of tourists. People have been given notices to carry negative RT-PCR reports and register on the online portal," Bharane said.

"Tourists were also informed that if they had not booked hotels prior to their visit, they could be sent back. Border check posts have been put up at the state border and about 4,000 vehicles each from Mussoorie and Nainital were sent back," he added.

Russian vaccine Sputnik V will be produced at the manufacturing units of Pune-based Serum Institute of India from September. The Russian RDIF (Russian Direct Investment Fund) said they "intend to produce over 300 million doses in India per year". Technology transfer has already started and the first batch of vaccines is expected in September.

"As part of the technical transfer process, SII has already received cell and

vector samples from the Gamaleya Center. With their import approved by the Drug Controller General of India, the cultivation process has begun," read a statement from RDIF.

"I am delighted to partner with RDIF to manufacture the Sputnik vaccine. We hope to make millions of doses in the coming months with trial batches starting in the month of September," said Serum Institute chief Adar Poonawalla.

"With high efficacy and a good safety profile, it is critical that the Sputnik vaccine is accessible in full measure for people across India and the world. Given the uncertainty of the virus, it is important for international institutes, and governments to collaborate and further bolster up our fight against the pandemic," he added.

At least 68 inmates and an employee of the central jail in Maharashtra's Raigad district have tested positive for COVID-19, an official said on Tuesday. The inmates and jail staffers were administered COVID-19 tests on Monday, following which 68 prisoners tested positive for the infection, the jail superintendent said.

India's COVID-19 death toll climbed to 4,10,784 with 2,020 new deaths recorded after Madhya Pradesh reconciled its fatality data, while 31,443 new coronavirus cases were reported, the lowest in 118 days, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Tuesday. India's total tally of COVID-19 cases mounted to 3,09,05,819. The active cases have declined to 4,31,315 and comprise 1.40 per cent of the total infections.



Beneficiaries not adhering to social distancing norms, wait in queues to receive Covid-19 vaccine dose, at Bhartiya hospital in Fatehpur on Tuesday

Provide 1 cr vaccine doses to TN, Stalin tells Modi

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu has not received COVID-19 vaccines proportionate to its population, resulting in its acute shortage, Chief Minister M K Stalin told Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday and sought a special allocation of one crore vaccine doses to correct the 'imbalance.'

Till July 8, 2021, Tamil Nadu received only 29,18,110 vaccine doses from the Centre for people in the 18-44 years category and 1,30,08,440 for the above 45 years category.

As the allocation of vaccines is very inadequate, the state is finding it extremely difficult to meet the huge demand for vaccination throughout Tamil Nadu, Stalin said in a letter to Modi.

"The success of my government's efforts to eliminate vaccine hesitancy and make the vaccination drive a mass movement now squarely rests on the doses made available to us."

The Union Health Ministry apprised the Supreme Court that states have been allocated vaccines in proportion to the population between 18 and 44 years of age to ensure equitable distribution, he said.

However, Tamil Nadu has not received vaccines proportionate to its population size, resulting in the current acute shortage of vaccines, he said.

Anti-terror laws should not be misused to quell dissent: SC judge

NEW DELHI

SUPREME Court judge Justice D.Y. Chandrachud has said that criminal laws, including the anti-terror law, should not be misused for quelling dissent and courts must act as first line of defence against deprivation of liberty.

Justice Chandrachud made these remarks in his address at the Indo-US Joint Summer Conference on Indo-US legal ties on Monday evening. He emphasised that no law can be employed to harass citizens and take away their freedom.

"Criminal law, including anti-terror legislation, should not be misused for quelling dissent or harassment to citizens," he said, citing his judgement in Arnab Goswami case to emphasise that courts must ensure that they continue to remain the first line of defence against the deprivation of liberty of citizens.

Justice Chandrachud underscored that deprivation of liberty for even a single day is "one too many" and that judges must always be mindful of the deeper systemic issues of their decisions.

"Today, the world's oldest and largest democracies

represent these ideals of a multicultural, pluralist society where their constitutions are focused on a deep commitment and respect for human rights."

Justice Chandrachud's remarks have come amid the outrage over the death of 84-year-old activist Stan Swamy, who was arrested under the anti-terror law, Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), in the Elgar Parishad case last year. Swamy died last week in Mumbai while fighting for bail on health grounds.

Many other cases where the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act has been invoked have also been seen controversies.

After spending 17 months behind the bars, Assam leader Akhil Gogoi walked out of jail. He was jailed under the UAPA in connection with a case against him over violent protests against the contentious citizenship law.

Recently, the Delhi High Court granted bail to student activists Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita and Asif Iqbal Tanha booked under the UAPA in connection with February 2020 Delhi riots, making strong observations against the indiscriminate invocation of UAPA by the government and police.

Currency notes worth ₹5 lakh go missing from Nashik Press

PUNE: Currency notes worth Rs 5 lakh have gone missing from the Currency Note Press in Nashik, Maharashtra, according to the police. The Upnagar police have started an inquiry after the press officials approached them with a complaint.

According to the police, the press officials realised recently that currency notes of denomination Rs 500, worth Rs 5 lakh, are not being tallied and conducted an internal investigation to ascertain the notes were missing.

"We are in the process of registering an FIR in the matter and the inquiry has begun," Anil Shinde, the inspector of Upnagar police station said.

The Nashik Currency Note Press has high levels of security and thus the incident of notes going missing has baffled the press officials as well as the police.

Sidhu cozying up to AAP?

'AAP always recognised my vision for Punjab'

NEW DELHI: Amid attempts by the Congress high command to resolve the infighting in the party's Punjab unit, party leader Navjot Singh Sidhu on Tuesday said the opposition Aam Aadmi Party has always recognised his vision and work for Punjab. His remarks came a day after AAP Punjab unit chief Bhagwant Mann took a dig at the cricketer-turned-politician and asked him to tweet about the "funds" allegedly accepted by the ruling Congress from private power companies in the state.

"Our opposition AAP has always recognised my vision & work for Punjab. Be it Before 2017-Beadbi, Drugs, Farmers Issues, Corruption & Power Crisis faced by People of Punjab raised by me or today as I present 'Punjab Model', it is clear they know - who is really fighting for Punjab," Sidhu said in a series of tweets. He said, "If the Opposition dares to question me, yet they can't escape my Pro-People Agenda ... This means they have resigned to their fate!"

Sidhu also shared old videos of AAP leaders praising him for raising his voice on several issues including the drug mafia and corruption during the previous SAD-BJP regime.

AAP leader Mann had alleged that the Punjab government was not scrapping the power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed by the erstwhile SAD-BJP government as the ruling Congress had accepted "funds" from the three private companies that have set up thermal plants in the state. He asked Sidhu to tweet on this issue.

"@sherryontopp Saab, If not anything else, we hope you could bother to at least tweet on the issue as you are used to," he said in a tweet.

Sidhu, who has been raising power supply-related issues through social media, had demanded that a white paper on PPAs signed during the previous SAD-BJP regime be released to make the Badals "accountable" to the people for these "corrupt agreements".



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TODAY'S QUOTE

AWS unveils programme to nurture startups

“We are excited to announce the launch of ‘AWS Startup Ramp’ an India-first programme that will help early-stage startups in the public sector build solutions on Amazon Web Services platform. In India there is incredible opportunity for startups to solve public sector challenges through innovative solutions

— **Sandy Carter**, VP, AWS



SALES

Patanjali clocks ₹30k cr turnover in FY21

Baba Ramdev-led Patanjali Group on Tuesday said it has achieved a turnover of around Rs 30,000 crore in the fiscal 2020-21, helped by a revenue boost of Rs 16,318 crore from Ruchi Soya - a company it had acquired last fiscal through insolvency resolution. The Patanjali Group is aiming to make its companies debt-free in the coming 3-4 years

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)			
US Dollar	75.43	South	
Euro	89.35	African Rand	5.45
UAE Dirham	20.69	Hong Kong Dollar	10.07
Thai Baht	2.4	Japanese Yen	0.78
British Pound	104.55	New Zealand Dollar	52.65
Australian Dollar	56.41	Saudi Riyal	21.84
Canadian Dollar	60.49	Swedish Krona	9.2
Swiss Franc	82.33	Singapore Dollar	56.07

DELHI WEDNESDAY 14 JULY 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

iQoo crosses 25mn sales

Smartphone brand iQoo has announced that it had sold over 25 million smartphones globally. The brand celebrates the success by initiating ‘iQoo Quest Days’ from July 13 to July 16. This offers fans to enjoy unbelievable offers of upto 4000 off on iQoo 7 series and iQoo Z3 smartphones. The iQoo 7 promises with features such as top of the line Qualcomm Snapdragon 8 series processor coupled with an Intelligent display chip, 66W flash charge. Gagan Arora, Director, Marketing, iQoo India, said: “We want to thank our consumers for such an overwhelming response for our products. This milestone is a testament to the trust that our consumers have placed in us. Staying true to our brand philosophy, iQoo India, we will continue to deliver products with unmatched performance.”

Cuemath's survey

Cuemath, an after school live-class programme in math, has published its findings of a survey report which reveals that around 82 per cent of students between grade 7-10 fear math. The survey explored the key factors spread across perception, performance and confidence for mathematics. Grade 7 students are in the warm-up phase for high school. However, the fear of math continues as they progress to higher classes. In grade 7, one in seven students have negative perceptions about Math concepts. Manan Khurma, First Teacher, Founder CEO, Cuemath said: “Cuemath believes every child can develop their own sense of comfort for math. This can be achieved by incorporating innovative methods of teaching. Knowing the ‘why’ behind applying a formula makes problem solving easier for a growing child.”

Bosch unveils campaign

Bosch Power Tools has launched the affordability campaign in India. This initiative lowers the overall cost of ownership of tools. The price of key spare parts has been corrected across a range of tools. With this campaign on affordability it aims to address the demand with reduced pricing of spare parts enabling access to safe, quality tools. This initiative will also ensure tradesmen can easily own and operate tools, thereby improving their productivity. The campaign aims to communicate the easier accessibility of spares across different trade segments. Nishant Sinha, Regional Business Director, Bosch Power Tools for India & SAARC said: “We have taken a great stride by combining quality with affordability, and expand our vision - Fascinate users with affordable solutions for a better life.”

Fast and Furious 9 collects \$500 mn

Universal Pictures has announced the release date of one of its awaited movies, Fast and Furious 9 which collected \$500 million worldwide so far. The movie will officially release in India on 5th August and is the first big-budget action spectacle being released exclusively in cinemas this year. The film will be released in English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada languages. The Fast and Furious saga started as a story about illegal street racing and evolved into the tale of a close-knit team involved in heists and espionage. It is one of Hollywood's most successful franchises in India and has collected over \$5 billion worldwide since the first film released in 2001.

S&P affirms India rating at ‘BBB-’

Lowest investment grade for 14th year in a row

NEW DELHI

S&P Global Ratings on Tuesday affirmed India's sovereign rating at the lowest investment grade of ‘BBB-’ for the 14th year in a row with a stable outlook, and said that the country's strong external settings will act as a buffer against financial strains despite elevated government funding requirements over the next 24 months.

The sovereign credit ratings on India reflect the economy's above-average long-term real GDP growth, sound external profile, and evolving monetary settings, S&P Global Ratings stated. “India's democratic institutions promote policy stability and compromise, and also underpin the ratings. These strengths are balanced against vulnerabilities stemming from the country's low per capita income and weak fiscal settings, including consistently elevated general government deficits and indebtedness,” it said in a statement.

S&P Global Ratings has forecast economic activity in India to begin to normalise throughout the remainder of fiscal 2022, resulting in real GDP growth of about 9.5 per cent. A significant proportion of this rebound will be due to the very weak base in the prior fiscal year, when the economy contracted by a record 7.3 per cent. India's fiscal settings are



Global ratings agency says India's strong external settings will act as a buffer against financial strains. The sovereign credit ratings on India reflect the economy's above-average long-term real GDP growth, sound external profile and evolving monetary settings

weak, and deficits will remain elevated over the coming years even as the government undertakes some consolidation. The country's strong external settings help buffer the risks associated with the government's high deficits and debt stock, S&P said while affirming ‘BBB-’ long-term and ‘A-3’ short-term unsolicited foreign and local currency sovereign ratings on India. “The stable outlook reflects our expectation that India's economy will recover following the resolution of the Covid-19 pandemic, and that the country's strong external settings will act as a buffer against financial strains

despite elevated government funding needs over the next 24 months,” it added. The sovereign credit ratings on India reflect the economy's above-average long-term real GDP growth, sound external profile, and evolving monetary settings. India's democratic institutions promote policy stability and compromise, and also underpin the ratings. These strengths are balanced against vulnerabilities stemming from the country's low per capita income and weak fiscal settings, including consistently elevated general government deficits and indebtedness.

Sensex, Nifty rebound on global cues

MUMBAI

EQUITY benchmark BSE Sensex logged its best session in over six weeks on Tuesday on account of hectic buying mainly in financial stocks as investors cheered steady economic data and favourable global cues. At the closing bell, the BSE Sensex was 397.04 points or 0.76 per cent higher at 52,769.73 - breaking its three-session losing trek. This was also the best single-day gains for the benchmark since May 31. Likewise, the broader NSE Nifty surged 119.75 points or 0.76 per cent to settle at 15,812.35.

“Following favourable economic outcome and positive Asian markets, domestic bourses traded positive today. Asian shares sparked a rally after better-than-expected Chinese economic data and a bounce back in Chinese tech stocks. Though June CPI in-



flation continued to remain above RBI's tolerance level at 6.26 per cent, giving some relief to the market. Industrial production (IIP) in May grew 29.3 per cent Y-o-Y essentially due to a lower base,” said Vinod Nair, head (research) at Geojit Financial Services. On the Sensex chart, ICICI Bank was the top gainer, surging 2.83 per cent, followed by HDFC, Axis Bank, Sun Pharma, NTPC and M&M. On the other hand, HCL Tech, Dr Reddy's, Maruti and Tech Mahindra were among the laggards. Of the Sensex constituents, 21 shares closed with gains and 9 logged losses. Sectorally, BSE banking, finance, metal, energy and basic materials ended up to 1.41 per cent higher, while BSE IT, tech and FMCG indices ended in the red. Broader midcap and smallcap indices underperformed the benchmark, settling up to 0.46 per cent higher.

Mindtree logs strong Q1 on record deal wins, revenue growth

DEBASIS MOHAPATRA
BENGALURU

MID-TIER IT services company Mindtree posted better than expected first quarter results on the back of broad-based growth across verticals coupled with healthy deal wins.

For the first quarter ended June 2021, Mindtree reported a net profit of Rs343.4 crore, which was 61 percent higher than the same period of last fiscal. Revenues of the firm stood at Rs 2,291.7 crore, a rise of 20 per cent over a year ago. In dollar term, revenues were at \$310.5 million, a growth of 22.6 per cent over last fiscal. In sequential term, revenues increased 7.7 per cent, beating the expectation of the street. “We are pleased to report a strong start to FY22 with broad-based first-quarter growth across all service lines and industry segments,” said Debashis Chatterjee, CEO and MD of Mindtree. The L&T group company reported its highest ever order book

With \$500-mn TCV, it posts its highest ever deal wins for any quarter, records broad-based growth in April-June



of \$504 million during the April-June period. The order book size was 34 per cent higher than the previous quarter.

During the quarter, the company added one client in the \$20 million plus category and five clients in the \$10 million plus category, indicating traction for its service offerings. “Our highest-ever order book of \$504 million affirms the focused execution of our strategy,” Chatterjee said.

However, the company saw dip in its operating margin owing to wage hike given to employees. The operating margin for Q1 of FY22 stood at 20.3 per cent, a fall of 160



BPCL plans to set up ethanol plant in TS

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

BHARAT Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) has evinced interest in setting up a first generation ethanol production plant in Telangana, at an investment of Rs 1,000 crore.

A high-powered team of the public sector company called on Telangana Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce, Jayesh Ranjan, here on Tuesday to express interest in setting up the plant with a capacity of 5 lakh litres per day. This meeting came after the Central government announced a favorable policy to increase ethanol production in the country. The BPCL team was led by its Executive Director, Bio Fuels, Anurag Saraogi, and included ED, Engineering and Products, LR Jain, and Project Leader, KHPL Project, B Manohar.

Saraogi pointed out that Telangana is ethanol deficient as on date, considering 10 per cent blending requirements in motor spirit. In view of 20 per cent blending targets by 2025-26 as per the road map document released by

The company has evinced interest in setting up a first generation ethanol production plant at an investment of ₹1,000 cr

Niti Aayog and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry in June 2021, the BPCL is planning to set up a 500 KLD capacity grain based first generation ethanol plant. This will not only facilitate the production of first generation ethanol and contribute revenue to the State, but will also generate huge direct and indirect employment in the state. This project will also go a long way in reducing air pollution. The delegation told the official that for setting up the project, they need about 100 acres of land having proximity to source of water as the plant requires about 4,000 KL day of water for its regular operations.

Ranjan assured that the Telangana government will extend all necessary support to set up the plant and allotment of land along with necessary clearances will be fast tracked.

Amit Jhingran takes charge as SBI Hyd CGM

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

AMIT Jhingran assumed charge as Chief General Manager, State Bank of India (SBI), Hyderabad Circle.



Jhingran joined SBI as probationary officer in 1991 in Lucknow Circle and has rich experience in all facets of commercial banking such as retail credit, deposit mobilization, international banking operations and branch management. He is a banker with three decades of experience.

Prior to being posted as Chief General Manager, Hyderabad Circle, he was the CEO (Chief Executive Officer), SBI Chicago, USA and had steered the international banking operations at Chicago to greater heights. He took charge from OP Mishra, who has been elevated as Deputy Managing Director of the Bank and posted at Corporate Centre, Mumbai as DMD (HR) & CDO.

Startups, pharma cos face tax liability on new goodwill rules

NEW DELHI

IN what can increase tax liability on companies that have undergone mergers and acquisitions in recent years, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has notified new set of rules on tax treatment of goodwill where depreciation provisions have been used.

The new rules that frame guidelines for computation of short-term capital gains (STCG) gives prescription for arriving at written down value (WDV) of intangible assets such as goodwill where depreciation had been availed earlier, has created potential where tax liability on past deals would increase.

The CBDT notification had said that in cases where goodwill was the only asset in the block, there won't be any tax impact, but in others, where the value of net goodwill removed



from the block is in excess of the opening WDV as on April 1, 2020, such excess will now be offered to tax as STCG.

The move is expected to impact companies in the pharma, life sciences, start-ups lining for IPO that have seen lot of M&A activities in the past and carry goodwill without much depreciation of its valuation. In all

such cases, goodwill will fall much above the WDV computed as per the new rules and such excess would be charged to STCG.

Indian firms have witnessed a record number of M&A deals and emergence of Indian unicorns with intangibles fetching substantial value in these transactions.

The move is expected to impact companies in the pharma, life sciences, start-ups lining for IPO that have seen lot of M&A activities in the past and carry goodwill without much depreciation of its valuation

A PwC note on the changes said that only if the goodwill of the business or profession was the only asset in the block of ‘intangible’ asset and no other intangible asset is acquired in FY 2020-21, then no capital gain would be charged on the cessation of such block of asset. In other cases, excess STCG would apply under section 50 of the Income Tax Act.

What the new rules have is that companies should need to calculate their STCG first before filing returns for FY21.

Mahindra drives in Bolero Neo at ₹8.48L

NEW DELHI

MAHINDRA & Mahindra (M&M) on Tuesday said it has launched seven-seater model Bolero Neo in the country with price starting from Rs 8.48 lakh (ex-showroom).

The new Bolero Neo will cater to the evolving customers looking for an SUV that is tough and authentic yet modern and trendy, the automaker noted. The existing Bolero will continue to sell along with the Bolero Neo in the market, it added.

“The Bolero Neo combines the new age customer's affinity towards a tough, powerful, go-anywhere capable SUVs with their persona and aspirations for a modern and trendy SUV,” M&M CEO Automotive Division Veejay Nakra said in a statement.

The addition of Bolero Neo to the brand portfolio will help the Bolero range to retain its



position amongst the top 10 selling SUVs in the country, he added.

The Bolero Neo comes with interiors which have been crafted by Italian automotive designer Pininfarina. It also features standard dual airbags, anti-lock braking system (ABS) with electronic brake distribution (EBD) and cornering brake control (CBC) and ISOfix child seat.

The vehicle is built on third generation chassis shared with Scorpio and Thar and it comes with the proven Mahindra mHawk engine, which generates 100 HP of power.

2026 BWF World C’ships allotted to India

NEW DELHI

THE Badminton World Federation has allotted the BWF World Championships to India for 2026, it was announced on Tuesday.

This will be the second time that India will host the premier tournament, which is held every year except for the Olympic year. India had hosted the BWF World Championships in Hyderabad in 2009.

Since then, India has played host to various major badminton tournaments including the 2014 Thomas and Uber Cup Finals, the Asian Championships apart from the annual BWF Super 500 event, the Yonex-Sunrise India Open.

Badminton Association of India (BAI) president Himanta Biswa Sarma is confident that hosting the World Championships in 2026 would help Indian badminton take bigger steps towards becoming a world powerhouse.

“Staging a tournament of the stature will be a great achievement for us at the Badminton Association of India as well as for the country.

“We are thankful to BWF for considering India for bad-



minton’s most prestigious and premier tournament and I believe with world-class shuttlers coming to participate will not only be a great opportunity and motivation for the enthusiasts of the game and for the sport to see a huge growth across the country,” added Sarma.

The Covid-19 pandemic, which brought sporting activities to a halt in 2020, has forced the BWF to rejig its international tournament calendar, with the sport’s

governing body shifting the 2021 Sudirman Cup from Suzhou, China to Vantaa, Finland. The 2023 Sudirman Cup, which was originally allotted to India, will now be hosted in Suzhou, China.

India has so far won 10 World Championships medals with reigning champion PV Sindhu leading the chart with a gold, two silver, and two bronze medals, while Prakash Padukone won India’s first medal at the World Championships in 1983.

In 2019, Olympic-bound B Sai Praneeth had ended a 36-year-long wait for a men’s singles world championships medal at Basel, Switzerland. Apart from that, 2012 Olympic bronze medallist, Saina Nehwal had won silver and bronze in 2015 and 2017 editions, respectively, while the women’s doubles combination of Ashwini Ponnappa and Jwala Gutta had bagged a bronze medal in 2011 at London. (IANS)

Midfielder Bidyananda Singh joins ATK Mohun Bagan

KOLKATA: Indian Super League’s finalists in 2020/21 ATK Mohun Bagan on Tuesday signed 23-year-old midfielder Bidyananda Singh on a one-year contract.

Bidyananda was with Mumbai City FC last season but didn’t get any games in what was a trophy-winning campaign for the Islanders under Sergio Lobera. It will be the second time that Bidyananda will be representing a Kolkata-based ISL club. He was also part of the ATK FC team that won the title in 2016 under Spaniard Jose Francisco Molina. After featuring in six matches that season, he moved to Bengaluru FC in 2017 and played for their B team. He made a solitary appearance for the senior team in an AFC Cup game. Bidyananda was also part of the Bengaluru FC squad during the 2018/19 ISL season. He, however, didn’t get any games. Bidyananda featured in 10 games for Mumbai City FC in the 2019/20 season and scored a goal as well as provided an assist in his brief appearances. After no opportunities coming his way in the 2020/21 season, he left the Islanders in May earlier this year. ATK Mohun Bagan are due to play in the AFC Cup (Group D, South Zone).

1983 World Cup winner Yashpal Sharma no more Teammates shocked; say we have lost the backbone

NEW DELHI



In this file photo on Jan 28, 2010, former cricketer Yashpal Sharma arrives at BCCI headquarters to select the Indian team for India-South Africa Test series, in Mumbai.

FORMER India batsman Yashpal Sharma, a member of the 1983 World Cup-winning side, passed away on Tuesday at the age of 66 leaving his former champion teammates in disbelief.

“Our team has been broken. We have lost the backbone of our team. He was the backbone of the middle-order. He was a simple man, very disciplined. He had neither a major vice, nor a minor vice. He was the fittest of us all. Used to be particular about fitness, would exercise regularly. Hard to believe he is no more,” said former India all-rounder Kirti Azad, his teammate in the 1983 World Cup, to IANS.

Another 1983 World Cup teammate of his, all-rounder Madan Lal, is in a state of shock.

“I have just heard the news. I am in a state of shock. I still can’t believe it. I can’t say anything at the moment,” said Lal to IANS before rushing to Sharma’s home.

Pace bowler Balwinder Sandhu, who opened the bowling with skipper Kapil Dev in the tournament, was also in a state of disbelief.

“Absolutely shocking news. Never thought he would pass away. We had met on June 25 (at the launch of a book). He looked absolutely fine and fit and was happy to share his [two] daughters’ achievements. He was more worried about my health, asked me to reduce weight,” said Sandhu to IANS.

“I find it shocking that a lively man is not here with me. It is hurting me deeply that a member of the [1983 World Cup winning] team has passed away,” added Sandhu.

Kapil, the skipper of that team, broke down during a TV show on news channel ABP.

“I can’t accept it,” Kapil said in tears. “I love you Yash,” he added.

Kapil was in Mumbai and has rushed to Delhi to pay his last respects. The entire team, including Sharma, had gathered in Gurugram on June 25 -- last month -- for the launch of Opus, a luxury limited-edition book which will capture India’s 1983 World Cup win.

Sharma had suffered a heart attack after returning from morning walk and collapsed at around 7.30 am. The right-handed batsman, who was the backbone of India’s middle-order in the 1983 World Cup, played 37 Test matches scoring 1606 runs and 42 ODIs scoring 883 runs. He also played 160 first-class matches, representing Punjab, Haryana and Railways, and scored 8933 runs. But he was best remembered at international level for his performances in India’s first World Cup win, in 1983. He aggregated 240 runs at an average of 34.28 to return as the second highest-scorer for India behind skipper Kapil Dev in the tournament.

Sharma had top-scored with 89 (off 120 balls) to help India make 262/8 in their 34-run victory over West Indies in their first match of the 1983 World Cup. That win in Manchester is said to have given India the self-belief to go on and win the tournament. He also served as a match referee and umpire.

Windies’ Stafanie tops again in ICC Women’s ODI Player Rankings

DUBAI

WEST Indies captain Stafanie Taylor has reclaimed the No. 1 spot in batting as well as in the list of all-rounders in the ICC Women’s ODI Player Rankings after a fine effort in the first ODI in Coolidge (West Indies) that helped the hosts win by five wickets against Pakistan.

Stafanie’s Player of the Match effort of 3/29 and an unbeaten 105 have helped her ascend all three lists. She has gained four positions and displaced India captain Mithali Raj from the top of the batters’ list, has gained three places to reach 16th position among bowlers and is up two places to first

among all-rounders, replacing Ellyse Perry of Australia.

Stafanie, who has been No.1 in all three lists in the past at different points in time, first attained number position among batters in March 2012 and the last time she was at the top was in November 2014. In the all-rounders’ rankings, she was last number one in July 2017.

The latest weekly update, which includes performances in the first two ODIs of the West Indies-Pakistan series, also sees all-rounder Deandra Dottin re-enter the rankings in 28th position among batters and 47th among all-rounders. Kyshona Knight is up seven places to 53rd among batters while spin-

ner Anisa Mohammed (up two places to 26th) and fast bowler Shamila Connell (up four places to 39th) have moved up among bowlers.

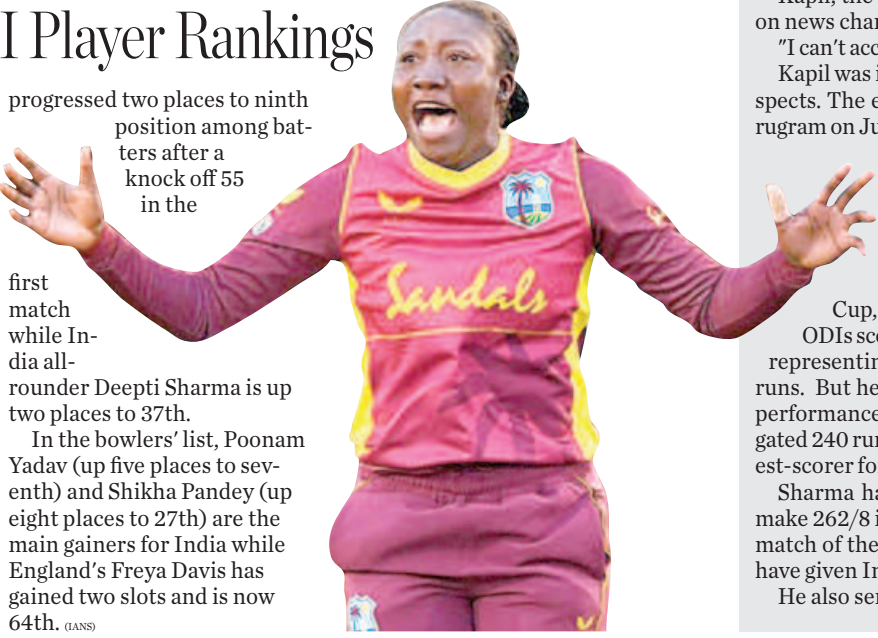
For Pakistan, spinner Nida Dar has gained three places to reach 29th position and pace bowler Diana Baig is up one place to 32nd. Aysha Zafar has re-entered the batting rankings in 83rd position after scores of 46 and four in the two matches and opener Muneeba Ali is up 47 places to 88th after scoring 36 and 37.

In the ICC Women’s T20I Player Rankings, carried out after the first two matches of the ongoing England-India series, Natalie Sciver of England has

progressed two places to ninth position among batters after a knock off 55 in the

first match while India all-rounder Deepti Sharma is up two places to 37th.

In the bowlers’ list, Poonam Yadav (up five places to seventh) and Shikha Pandey (up eight places to 27th) are the main gainers for India while England’s Freya Davis has gained two slots and is now 64th. (IANS)



Gayle going strong at 42, hits 67 as WI win T20I series

NEW DELHI

BIG-HITTING West Indies batsman Chris Gayle crossed a milestone -- of being the first to get to 14,000 runs in T20 cricket -- which proves that neither age, nor a troublesome back that disallows him to move freely on the field, can stop him from hitting massive sixes and quickfire knocks in T20 cricket.

The Jamaican, who will turn 42 in just over two months, still remains the key to West Indies’ fortunes in the T20 World Cup this year.

He powered to a 38-ball 67, hitting seven sixes and four fours, helping West Indies win the third T20 International against Australia by six wickets to secure their first series win in a multi-match bilateral series in any format against the visitors since March 1995 here on Tuesday.

West Indies have taken an unassailable 3-0 lead in the five-match series. The hosts had won the opening match by 18 runs and the second by 56 runs at the same venue.

In a low-scoring match, Australia, after a confident start from Matthew Wade (23) and skipper Aaron Finch (30), could muster only 141/6 in the allotted 20 overs after the visitors elected to bat. A tight bowling spell by Hayden Walsh (2/18 in 4 overs) and Dwayne Bravo (1/17 in 3 overs) didn’t allow the visitors the freedom to play their strokes.

Gayle was declared Player of the Match.

The knock helped him be-

come the only batsman to get to 14,000 runs. He has scored these many while playing for 28 teams across the world.

The left-handed opener is also the only batsman in the world to have hit over a 1,000 sixes and over 1,000 fours. He has hit 1,028 sixes and 1,083 fours.



The left-handed batsman is 3,202 runs ahead of Kieron Pollard, who is second placed in the list of run-getters in T20 format.

Gayle has played 430 matches, averaging 37.55 and has scored at a strike rate of 146.06.

He has 22 centuries, which are the most in T20 format. David Warner and Aaron Finch, who have eight, are next best on the list. He also has 87 half-centuries which are five more than David Warner’s 82 in T20 format.

Brief scores: Australia 141/6 in 20 overs (M Wade 23, A Finch 30, M Henriques 33; H Walsh 2/18) lost to West Indies 142/4 in 14.5 overs (C Gayle 67, N Pooran 32, R Meredith 3/48) by 6 wickets.

In England, Ashwin & Jadeja need to get the drift

NEW DELHI

LEFT-ARM spinner Ravindra Jadeja was asked ahead of the first Test against New Zealand in Kanpur in 2016 about the difference in bowling on India’s spin-friendly and England and New Zealand’s seam-friendly pitches. He replied, “Wahaan England mein toh spinner ki ball bhi hawaa mein hi swing hoti hai (There in England, even spinner’s deliveries swing in the air).” The swing he was talking about is the drift, explains former India left-arm spinner Maninder Singh.

Both Jadeja and off-spinner R Ashwin will be the key to India’s fortunes in the five-Test series in England that begins next month. And more than turn, they will look for drift.

“The most important thing for Indian spinners in England will be the drift. There won’t be as much turn there as it is in India. It (using drift) will be one way of out-thinking the English batsman. Because of the atmosphere there, the ball does drift and any spinner who can take the advantage of that drift will get wickets consistently,” said Maninder, who played 35 Test matches and was part of the 1986 India side that won the Test series in England.

“If you have the ability to drift, you will be able to deceive the batsmen in England,” Maninder told IANS.

Ashwin, who has picked 14 wickets in six Tests against England in England, is touring the country for Tests for the third time. It could be the last Test series trip for the 34-year-old. He hasn’t had great success there and has also missed matches due to fitness issues.

Jadeja has picked 16 wickets in five matches in England over the same two tours -- in 2014 and 2018. He too hasn’t been threatening in England. This time though they are going there with the benefit of more experience and a psychological advantage of having dismantled England batting (through Ashwin and Axar Patel) at home in February-March this year. Jadeja was injured then but his all-round ability and experience makes him first choice.

“Both drift the ball, Jadeja is a natural at that. Ashwin is a very clever bowler,” said Maninder. Former India Test spinner Narendra Hirwani, who has also been coaching the current generation of spinners, says handling the shiny part is the key for drift.

“If you see former Australian leg-spinner] Shane Warne’s bowling, his deliveries would drift into the [right-handed] batsmen and then move away from the batsmen after pitching. The batsmen would feel the ball is coming to them but then it would move away, beating them,” Hirwani told IANS.





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