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KCR to sort out Dharani issue

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao has called for a high-level meeting on Saturday to take a call on registration of non-agriculture properties in view of the High Court order.

A division bench of the Hyderabad High Court on Thursday had directed the state government to delete all references to caste and social categories, Aadhaar numbers of family members from the user manual for non-agriculture properties and in application forms for the Property Tax Identification Number.

Against this backdrop, the Chief Minister will take stock of the situation with officials from revenue, law and registration departments at Pragathi Bhavan.

According to the CMO, the order copy of the High

Court order was yet to be received by the government.

The CMO said Chandrashekhar Rao would discuss whether to file an appeal against the court orders or prepare guidelines in accordance with the court's directive.

SC BLAMES LACK OF SOPS FOR COVID SPREAD

New Delhi, Dec. 18: It is a "world war" against Covid-19 and the unprecedented pandemic has spread like a "wildfire" due to lack of implementation of guidelines and standard operating procedure (SoPs) issued by authorities to contain it, the Supreme Court said on Friday while expressing concern that the treatment for coronavirus was not affordable to the common people.

The apex court, which suggested either more and more provisions are to be made by the state governments and the local administrations or there shall be a cap on the fees charged by the private hospitals, observed that states must act vigilantly and work harmoniously with the Centre as safety and health of citizens must be the first priority rather than any other considerations.

It said "strict and stern action" should be taken against those who are violating guidelines and SoPs as they cannot be permitted to play with the lives of others.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan while noting that right to health is a fundamental right and it includes affordable treatment, said treatment has become costlier and is not affordable to common people at all.

Advocating that states must work harmoniously with the Centre, it said, "It is the time to rise to the occasion". It also said that any decision to impose curfew or lockdown must be announced long in advance so that people may know and make provisions for their livelihood. — PTI

KUNAL KAMRA, RACHITA TANEJA GET SC NOTICE

New Delhi, Dec. 18: The Supreme Court on Friday issued show-cause notices to stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra and cartoonist Rachita Taneja on Friday for their alleged scandalous tweets against the apex court.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R.S. Reddy and M.R. Shah sought response from both in six weeks on the notices issued in two separate cases. It, however, exempted them from personal appearances in the cases.

"Issue notice returnable within six weeks. The contemnor respondent not to appear in person," the bench said in its order passed in a plea against Kamra. Similar order was passed by the bench in the plea against Taneja.

The top court in its two orders noted that Attorney-General K.K. Venugopal has given his consent to initiate contempt proceedings against both the comic artists in separate cases.

Venugopal had granted consent for initiation of criminal contempt proceedings against Kamra, saying the comedian's tweets were in "bad taste" and it was time that people understand that attacking the apex court brazenly would attract punishment.

The Attorney-General had also given consent to initiate contempt proceedings against Taneja, stating that the caricatures posted by her on social media were intended to denigrate the Supreme Court. — PTI

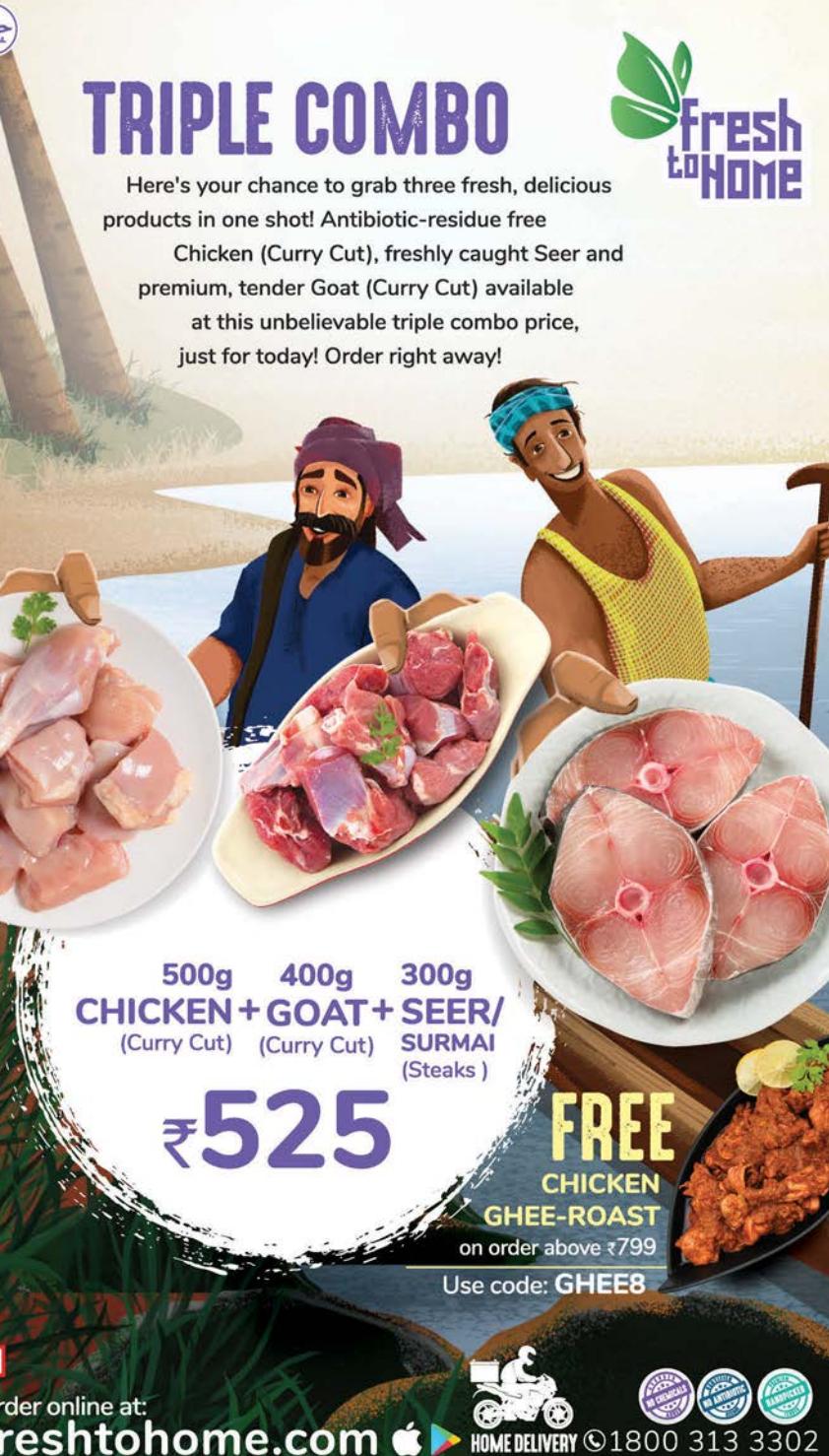
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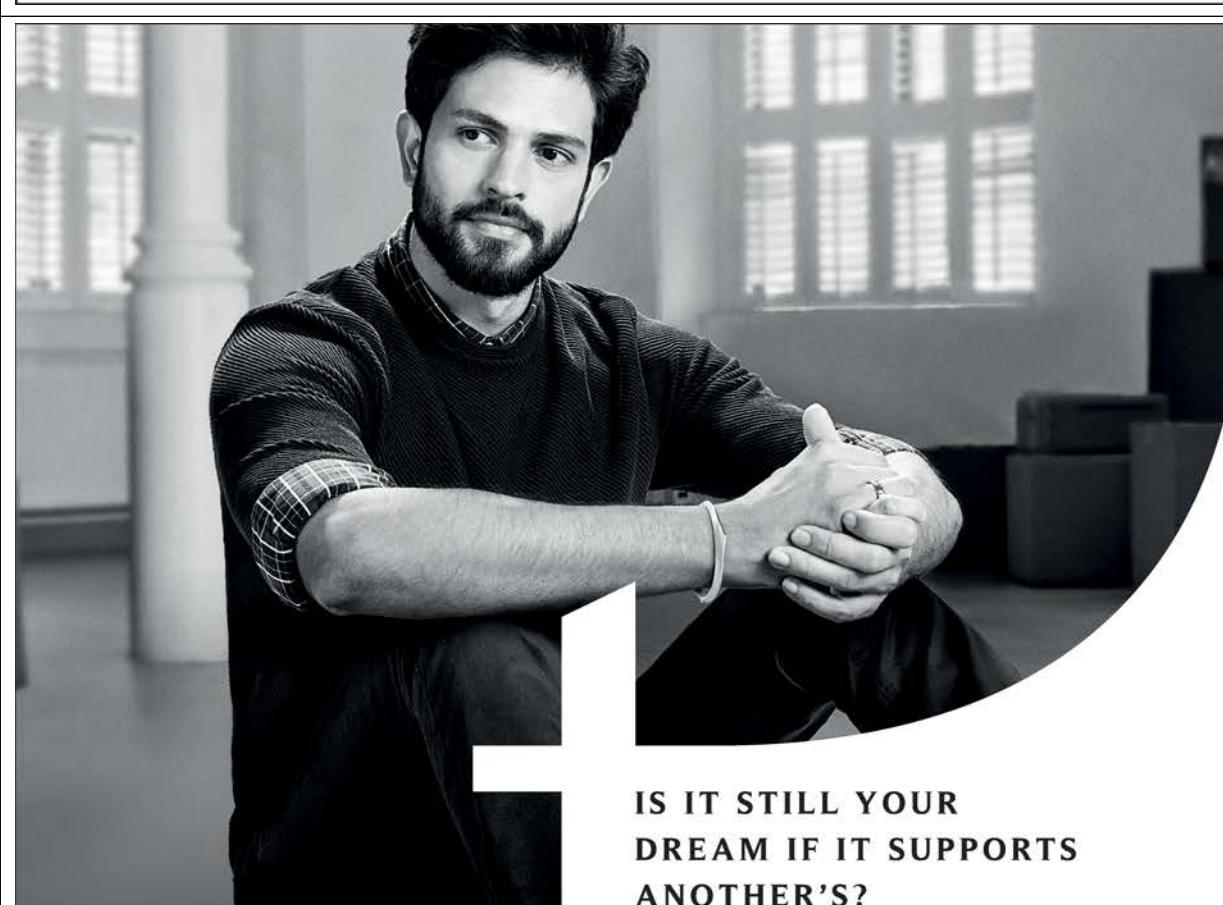
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IN BRIEF
4 cruise boats
for city lakes

Hyderabad: Two cruise boats have been acquired for the Hussainsagar which will be launched soon, minister for tourism and youth affairs V. Srinivas Goud said on Friday. Two boats have been acquired for Durgam Cheru and they will also be launched soon. The launch of the boats had been withheld due to the fall in tourist traffic amid the Covid-19 pandemic. The government is gearing up to see more tourists visiting the state next year and is working out packages and adding attractions to cater to them.

Students miss face-to-face class

From Page 1
Dr Preeti Swaroop, senior psychiatrist, said, "The fear of not excelling like they were the last few years is unsettling them. Face-to-face interaction is something that they are missing and that is also causing loss of interest in studies. This is leading to disorders, low self-esteem and anger. Parents are reaching out to doctors as an obedient child is behaving badly which is causing worry."

While schools want to reopen, fear of the disease is making them continue with online classes.

HC puts off hearing after stay

From Page 1
When the High Court division bench comprising justices Rakesh Kumar and Justice Urmadevi continued the hearing on the issue earlier in the day, government pleader Y.N. Vivekananda said that the government had appealed in the Supreme Court. When the court resumed the hearing in the afternoon, Justice Kumar asked about the development in the apex court. Vivekananda informed that the Supreme Court had issued a stay order. Based on this, the judge adjourned the hearing on the issue of constitutional breakdown.

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Loan apps' threat turns ugly

Apps label borrower as defaulter in social circle for non-payment of loan

Harassed by recovery agents, techie ends life

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Desperate citizens who, during the lockdown, opted for 'get quick cash' schemes from money-lending mobile apps and are unable to repay the money are facing mental harassment from the agents.

At least three persons have committed suicide, unable to bear the harassment and humiliation meted out by the 'collection agents'.

The rules drawn up by the lenders allow them to access their borrowers' contact data from the mobile phones. They can message every one on the contact list and brand the borrower a 'fraud' or 'defaulter', police said, while booking cases of abetment to suicide against the companies. It is not clear if the borrowers read the terms, or understood the implications.

On Thursday, K. Mounika, 24, a newly-recruited agricultural extension officer in Siddipet, ended her life a lending company branded her a defaulter in messages sent with her photo and name to her contacts and on social media.

Finance minister T. Harish Rao visited Mounika's family and said that he would direct the police to initiate action against app-based finance firms as per the laws for exploiting those vulnerable. "Several apps claiming to be instant loan enablers are reaching out to people, especially to the specific, digitally educated youngsters with small-scale jobs with high interest rates. The application seeks permission access to the user's location, contacts and storage at the time of installing it even before availing the loan," police sources said.

Six more cases of suicide are suspected to be linked to such humiliation, though they have not been

He allegedly kept availing fresh loans from different mobile applications to pay his lenders. "After availing loans from about 40 such apps, he failed to repay the loans. The representatives of these apps accessed his phone contacts and rang up his friends and family to step up pressure on him to pay up," added Prakash Reddy, deputy commissioner of police, Shamshabad, adding that the police are yet to determine the total amount that Sunil availed as loans.

Police have gathered details on the apps and their representatives and have also sought help from the cybercrime cell to take the investigation forward. "We will be investigating all those applications and also be

linked with default of these micro-loans.

Speaking about the police action, Prakash Reddy, the Shamshabad deputy commissioner of police, said one should not answer calls from agents and must report the numbers to the police.

"We will be taking action against them under Section 306 (abetment to suicide) of the IPC and will also be charging the call centres running this business," said a police official, with regard to the companies outing the borrowers in their social circles. City police officials appealed to the public not to install the loan-based application, or borrow from them. Police in an advisory said that all apps offering micro loans appear to be built upon one software development kit, which is suspected to be provided by a foreign country.

Police said three persons had ended their lives, unable to bear the harassment by personnel from the companies running these apps in the last one month. "People should not accept terms and conditions of any loan app. They should be more cautious as all the phone con-

cracking down on these call centres making repeated calls to harass the lenders," added the DCP.

According to the police, Sunil could be the third person who has ended his life in the face of harassment by companies looking to recover their loans.

A police advisory said that Eddu Sravan Yadav, 23, from Narsapur in Medak district and Kirni Mounika, 28, from Siddipet are known to have taken their own lives in separate incidents in the last one month.

The police advisory said that calling up friends and relatives is a violation of the Information Technology Act. All the apps have uncanny commonality in their methods, the police said.

In cases where their social circle is being accessed, such as in the case of operators from quick loan app companies, their personal space is encroached upon. This makes them feel alienated and naked in their weakness, psychologists said.

Meena Hariharan, professor in health psychology at the University of Hyderabad, said that the mental health of people is already weak due to the Covid-19 related lockdown and the many adjustments that were required to be made. Experiencing such things can be an easy trigger, Prof. Hariharan said.

"It becomes a question of an individual's self esteem and values. When someone is causing a dent on these, the mental status can become very unstable. When their social life is targeted, with all of their contacts accessed, there is no way one can rectify his or her image. For any self-respecting person, if the image is damaged beyond repair, he or she can be shattered," said Prof. Hariharan, who is president of the Association of Health Psychologists.

She said, "We should encourage people to love themselves and only then, regardless of what the others claim them to be, one can be at peace."

HARASSMENT MAY TRIGGER DEPRESSION

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

A person who suffers from severe humiliation could experience major depression, suicidal states and severe anxiety such as post-traumatic stress disorder.

In cases where their social circle is being accessed, such as in the case of operators from quick loan app companies, their personal space is encroached upon. This makes them feel alienated and naked in their weakness, psychologists said.

This follows the man-handling law student Suresh Yadav on Wednesday night, which is being stated as one of the reasons for the decision to shut the hostels.

The university has also noticed that a few people in the guise of students have occupied hostel rooms. Due to this there was a law and order problem in the campus recently. Academic activity has stopped on the campus from March onwards but a few had occupied hostel rooms.

The university has now decided to completely shut down the hostels. If the students do not leave there will be police and legal action taken against them according to the order issued by university officials.

After ruckus, OU to shut hostels

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Following trespassing on the campus, the Osmania University administration has decided to shut all its hostels and disconnect water and power supply. The orders were issued on Friday.

This follows the man-handling law student Suresh Yadav on Wednesday night, which is being stated as one of the reasons for the decision to shut the hostels.

The university has also decided to completely shut down the hostels. If the students do not leave there will be police and legal action taken against them according to the order issued by university officials.

MIM man opens fires after quarrel

DC CORRESPONDENT ADILABAD, DEC. 18

A petty quarrel between boys while playing cricket took a serious turn and resulted in a MIM leader opening fire in Tatiguda Colony here on Friday.

Police said that after the children began quarrelling, their parents came out. Suddenly Farooq Ahmed, MIM leader and former Adilabad municipal vice-chairman, opened fire with his licensed revolver.

Syed Zameer and Syed Mothesin received bullet injuries and Syed Mannan, 52, father of 16-year-old Mothesin, sustained head injury. Videos posted on Facebook showed that Ahmed had opened fire from close range.

Ahmed also used a sharp weapon in the attack. News doing the rounds is that the incident was not accidental but stemmed from an old enmity between the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) and the MIM.

Ahmed was subsequently arrested.

Adilabad Two Town police booked Ahmed under Section 307 IPC and Section 27/30 of Indian Arms Act. Police also set up picketing to maintain peace in the colony.

Giving details to the media along with Two Town circle inspector P. Srinivas, Adilabad OSD Rajesh Chandra said on receipt of information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control.

The injured persons were shifted to RIMS Hospital. He said as Mothesin's condition was critical he was shifted to Hyderabad. They said Ahmed has been arrested.

Adilabad Zilla Parishad chairman Rathod Janardhan and MLA Jogi Ramanna visited the Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Medical Sciences and interacted with the victims.

Ahmed had contested as a councillor and lost to a TRS candidate. Ahmed's wife was elected as councillor in the last municipal elections. Ahmed is also Adilabad district president of the AIMIM.

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Police says loan apps are illegal

DC CORRESPONDENT HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

The police has issued an advisory stating that most loan apps were fraudulent and not sanctioned by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). At least 60 such apps available in Google Play Store.

Police said three persons had ended their lives, unable to bear the harassment by personnel from the companies running these apps in the last one month. "People should not accept terms and conditions of any loan app. They should be more cautious as all the phone con-

tacts, photos, locations and memory will be compromised by these money lenders and can be used to harass or blackmail later. The money lenders might threaten stating that a criminal case would be registered against you. Contact police in such cases," the police said.

"The hosting of these applications also violates certain conditions laid by Google App store. Google can be asked to take these down. Almost all of them have similar privacy policies which gather almost every bit of data available on a user's phone," the advisory said.



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IN BRIEF

Railways plans to boost freight share

Hyderabad: Indian Railways has come up with a draft plan to address the inadequacies of capacity constraints and improve its share in the freight ecosystem. The plan is being circulated among ministries and the Railways aim to finalise the plan by January next. The objectives are to forecast growth of traffic in freight and passenger year on year up to 2030 and on a decadal basis up to 2050. Also it plans to increase the modal share of the railways in freight to 45 per cent by 2030 and increase the average speed of freight trains from 22 kmph now to 50 kmph. It looks to map the growth in demand and simulate the capacity behaviour of the network in future.



Telangana BJP president Bandi Sanjay and the newly elected BJP corporators take an oath promising to work honestly for the citizens at Bhagya Laxmi temple at Charminar in Hyderabad on Friday.

— P. SURENDRA

Bandi says TRS MLAs in touch to jump ship

Warns KCR against trying to lure new BJP corporators

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Alleging that Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao was trying to lure BJP corporators, BJP state president Bandi Sanjay on Friday warned him that if he went ahead with such a devious plot, the BJP would open the floodgates for TRS legislators, many of whom were already in touch with him.

Sanjay, along with MLA T. Raja Singh and 46 corporators, visited the Bhagyalakshmi temple at Charminar and offered special puja. Later, he administered pledge to the corporators to contribute to development in all possible ways while always being available to the public.

Sanjay said that BJP's aim was to work for a Hyderabad free from TRS and MIM. Speaking to the media, he said that Hyderabad was called Bhagyanagar because of Goddess Bhagyalakshmi. He said that the people of Bhagyanagar gave them a great opportunity to develop the city and serve the people. Asking the Old City people to realise why their areas were not developed, he said the BJP was committed to develop Old City.

He slammed MIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi and told him not to consider the Old City as his personal domain. BJP has penetrated into it and they would score an encore in the next Assembly elections, he said.

Repeating that Chandrashekhar Rao would go to jail, the BJP leader wanted to know why, despite holding the GHMC elections in a hurry, he has not conducted elections to the posts of Mayor and deputy Mayor.

Farmers decry forcible takeover of their land for proposed Pharma City

**SANJAY SAMUEL
PAUL | DC**
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Farmers belonging to villages in Yacharam, Kadthal and Kandukur mandals of Ranga Reddy district are worried ever since the government began "forcing" them to hand over their land for the proposed Pharma City. Speaking to *Deccan Chronicle*, Panga Maniamma, a farmer, said her family consumes poison if the government goes ahead with the takeover. "In my 22 acres I produce all kinds of vegetables and sell them in Hyderabad. It is our only source of livelihood."

Kundrapur Narayana Yadav from Talipati village said, "More than one lakh people who are dependent on agriculture will be affected in 18 villages because of Pharma City. We are three brothers and we together cultivate crops in our four acres.

PROTESTERS URGE MODI NOT TO ATTEND CEREMONY

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao inviting Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the ground-breaking ceremony of Pharma City has drawn flak from farmers belonging to almost 18 villages in Ranga Reddy district. What has infuriated them is the CM's assertion that 11,000 acres of land had been acquired and shortly the remaining land would be acquired.

Those protesting under the banner of Pharma City Vyathireka Porata Committee told reporters on Friday that in his bid to build the world's largest

pharmaceutical city, the state government has sounded the death-knell of Yacharam, Kadthal and Kandukur mandals in which 19,333 acres of land the project is coming up.

Committee office-bearers Dr D. Narasimha Reddy and Saraswathi Kavula said, "The Chief Minister has been telling lies. The villagers have not sold their land. We are united on this issue and we will not surrender our land."

Saraswathi Kavula said, "Not only farmers but all people staying in the area are openly opposing the project. Despite such a determined stand taken by us, the government is trying to bulldoze its way. We

have brought the critical nature of the project to the notice of the Union Government. We urge Modi not to come for the ground-breaking ceremony respecting the sentiments of the people."

Dr Narasimha Reddy said, "There are too many red category industries in Telangana state, and this government is inviting most of them in blatant violation of environmental laws. Already, pollution levels are high in the state. It has become easy for corporate houses to establish units and pollute the atmosphere in the state. The government seems unconcerned about the well-being of the people."

Pharma companies will not only deprive us of livelihood but will also pollute environment. This is our ancestral property.

What are we supposed to do after that?" Anusuya of Kurniada village stated, "My three sons and I are into agricultu-

ture. The crops that I sow are like my children. Now, they want to take over our lands, which is nothing but killing us."

CAUTION NOTICE-VOOTY GOLF COUNTY

THIS IS A CLASSIC TEXT BOOK CASE OF CRIMINAL BREACH OF TRUST (409 IPC PUNISHABLE WITH LIFE IMPRISONMENT); CHEATING (420 IPC PUNISHABLE WITH 7 YEARS IMPRISONMENT) READ WITH CRIMINAL CONSPIRACY (120 B) REPORTED BY MY CLIENTS M/S HIRA MULTI CONSTRUCTION VENTURES (P) LTD AND OTHERS AGAINST ALL WHO PURCHASED PLOTS IN VOOTY GOLF COUNTY AND THE DEVELOPER KANCHARLA CONSTRUCTIONS (P) LTD, AND ITS DIRECTORS KANCHARLA PRITHVI REDDY, KANCHARLA AKASH REDDY, SHLOKA EPUR AND KANCHARLA SANTOSH REDDY, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF DREAM VALLEY GROUP. MY CLIENTS WHO ARE NRIs LIVING IN KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA SINCE THE 1970s ARE OWNERS OF LAND ADMEASURING AC. 176-33 GTS IN MANNEGUDA VILLAGE OF VIKARABAD. DEVELOPER APPROACHED MY CLIENTS AND REQUESTED MY CLIENTS TO GIVE THE SAID LAND TO DEVELOP INTO A GOLF RESIDENTIAL GATED COMMUNITY WITH A 9 HOLE GOLF COURSE WHICH MY CLIENTS REFUSED AS A 9 HOLE GOLF COURSE IS NOT VIABLE. EVEN THOUGH THE DEVELOPER HAD NO PAST EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPING A GOLF COURSE AND LAYOUT STILL MY CLIENTS GAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO KANCHARLA PRITHVI REDDY & KANCHARLA AKASH REDDY BOTH SONS OF KANCHARLA SANTOSH REDDY BECAUSE OF THE TRUST AND RELATIONSHIP THEY HAD BUILD WITH MY CLIENTS AND MY CLIENTS ENTRUSTED THE SAID LANDS BY EXECUTING 3 SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT CUM GENERAL POWERS OF ATTORNEY (DAGPA) 3600/2016 DT: 29/04/2016, 4843/2016 & 6365/2016 BOTH DT: 24/5/2016 WITH A CONDITION THAT ONLY IF THE DEVELOPER BUILDS / DEVELOPS AN 18 HOLE GOLF COURSE OF PGA STANDARD AND RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL PLOTS AS PER THE NORMS OF DTPCP AND SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS WHICH WERE TO BE STRICTLY MET BY THE DEVELOPER 1. DEVELOPER MUST SECURE A SANCTIONED LAYOUT FROM DTPC WITHIN 3 MONTHS OR 90 DAYS WHICHEVER IS EARLIER IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE EXECUTION OF THE DAGPAs AND ALSO FIRSTLY SECURE ALL OTHER STATUTORY PERMISSIONS FROM ALL GOVERNMENT BODIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GOLF COURSE AND THE LAYOUT. 2. DEVELOPER HAS TO BUILD AND CONSTRUCT CEMENT CONCRETE ROADS, UNDERGROUND ELECTRICITY, UNDERGROUND SEWERAGE, CENTRALIZED SECURITY CAMERA (CCTV), COMPOUND WALL TO THE TOTAL LAND, RAIN WATER HARVESTING PITS FOR EVERY 10 ACRES, SEWERAGE TREATMENT PLANT, DOMESTIC WATER LINE, HORTICULTURE WATER LINE, SOLAR STREET LIGHTS, SPECIAL AVENUE PLANTATIONS TO THE ENTIRE LAND & FOOTPATHS. 3. DEVELOPER HAS TO BUILD AN 18 HOLE GOLF COURSE OF PGA STANDARD WITH A 15,000 SQ. FT CLUBHOUSE. 4. DEVELOPER HAS TO PAY A SECURITY DEPOSIT OF RS. 2.50,00,000 (TWO CRORE AND FIFTY LAKHS) TO MY CLIENTS WITHIN 120 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF EXECUTION OF THE DAGPAs OR 30 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF OBTAINING DTPC APPROVAL, WHICH EVER IS EARLIER. ALL THE ABOVE COSTS WILL BE PAID ONLY BY THE DEVELOPER AND IN CASE IF THE DEVELOPER FAILS TO DELIVER / PERFORM WITHIN THE STIPULATED TIME FRAME THE 3 DAGPA WILL BECOME NULL & VOID. AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE ENTIRE LAND DEVELOPMENT THE DEVELOPER'S SHARE WOULD BE DEFINED BY A SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT WHICH IS AN AMMENDATORY DOCUMENT, AS AGREED UNDER THE 3 DAGPA. ONLY AFTER FULFILLING THE ABOVE CONDITIONS, TO THE FULLEST SATISFACTION OF MY CLIENTS AND AFTER EXECUTION OF A REGISTERED SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT THE POWER OF ATTORNEY GIVEN TO SELL OR MORTGAGE DEVELOPERS SHARE WILL COME INTO FORCE. TILL SUCH SATISFACTION AND SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT THE DEVELOPER HAD NO RIGHT TO SELL ANY LAND OR PLOTS.

EVEN WITHOUT SATISFYING THE AFORE CONDITIONS DEVELOPER SOLD AWAY 80,000 SQ. YARDS OF UNDIVIDED LAND WITHIN FEW MONTHS OF THE EXECUTION OF THE 3 DAGPA WITHOUT INVESTING A SINGLE RUPEE ON THE SAID LANDS AND ALSO WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF MY CLIENTS AND THEREFORE BREACHING THEIR TRUST. DEVELOPER HAS TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF MY CLIENTS ABSENCE WHO LIVE IN KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND BECAUSE OF THE FAITH AND TRUST THE DEVELOPER GAINED FROM MY CLIENTS, THEY DID NOT EVEN APPOINT A MANAGER ON THEIR BEHALF TO CHECK AND CROSS CHECK THE PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AS THE DEVELOPER ASSURED TO UPDATE MY CLIENTS ON DAY TO DAY BASIS. THEREFORE THE DEVELOPER CRIMINALLY BREACHED THE TRUST OF MY CLIENTS. FOR VIOLATING THE TERMS & CONDITIONS AND FOR BREACHING THE TRUST MY CLIENTS CANCELLED / TERMINATED THE 3 DAGPA ON 01/06/2018 AND THE DEVELOPER ACKNOWLEDGED SAME BY REPLYING ON 18/06/2018 AND INSITE OF THE SAME DEVELOPER FURTHER SOLD SEVERAL PLOTS DISGUIISING HIMSELF AS THE OWNER AND THEREFORE CHEATING MY CLIENTS IN CONSPIRACY WITH SOME BUYERS. DEVELOPER SOLD AWAY LAND AND PLOTS EVEN BEFORE ANY OF THE AFORESAID CONDITIONS WERE FULFILLED, WITHOUT ANY SUPPLEMENTARY AGREEMENT BEING EXECUTED AND WITHOUT ANY DIVISION OF SHARES. DEVELOPER FALSELY CLAIMED THAT THE DEVELOPER HAS RIGHTS OVER THE SAID LANDS. DEVELOPER FABRICATED SALE DEED NO. 4410/2018 DT. 06/10/2018 IN WHICH THE DEVELOPER HIMSELF SOLD PLOTS TO HIMSELF CREATING ILLEGAL RIGHTS OVER THE PLOTS TO WHICH THE DEVELOPER HAD ABSOLUTELY NO RIGHT THEREBY COMMITTING OFFENCES UNDER IPC.

NOW THE DEVELOPER IS SELLING PLOTS IN SURVEY NO. 79, 100 & 102 TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC WITH THE HELP OF A FAMOUS EX CRICKET PLAYER, PROMISING THAT THESE PLOTS HAVE LIFE TIME GOLF MEMBERSHIP AT VOOTY GOLF COURSE. THIS IS A COMPLETE FALSE PROMISE AS THE ENTIRE LAND OF THE VOOTY GOLF COURSE IS OWNED BY MY CLIENTS AND THE DEVELOPER HAS NO RIGHT OVER THE SAID LANDS AS TO GIVE ANY SUCH LIFE TIME GOLF MEMBERSHIP. THE ENTIRE AC. 176-33 GTS LAND OWNED BY MY CLIENTS IS SUBJUDICE AND UNDER LITIGATION. PUBLIC AT LARGE ARE WARNED NOT TO BUY ANY LAND OR PLOTS OR GOLF MEMBERSHIP IN THE SAID VOOTY GOLF COURSE & COUNTY COMMUNITY. CRIMINAL BREACH OF TRUST U/S 409 IPC IS PUNISHABLE BY LIFE IMPRISONMENT AND THEREFORE CRIMINAL CASES FOR CRIMINAL BREACH OF TRUST, CHEATING AND CONSPIRACY HAS BEEN LAUNCHED AGAINST THE DEVELOPER AND WILL ALSO BE LAUNCHED AGAINST EVERY SUCH PURCHASER.

PAPPY NAGESWARA RAO, ADVOCATE
6-3-8569/A, Lane Opp. Hotel Green Park, Ameerpet, Hyderabad-500016.
E-mail:nageshwararaopappu@gmail.com Cell: 9951747928, 9246151928

Date : 19-12-2020

OFFICIALS SEIZE 40 QUINTALS OF RATION RICE IN HYDERABAD

Hyderabad: Civil supplies department officials along with the Chaderghat police seized around 40 quintals of rice which was meant to be sold under the public distribution scheme in the city. The team stopped an autorickshaw at Shankarnagar,

Chaderghat, and found the rice. Upon questioning, the driver told the officials that the commodity was procured from card holders.

Officials seized the rice bags and detained the man for further questioning.

SAD DEMISE

NARAYANAPURAM NARAYAN RAO
S/o MALLIAH

Has passed away on Friday 18 Dec 2020

Funeral today 19-Dec-2020 from Hematala Residency, Somajiguda to Panjagutta, Hindu Smashana Vatika for Cremation from 12.00 Noon.

- By -
Children, Grand Children & Great Grand Children

FOND FAREWELL

Dr.B.SRINIVAS RAO

Former Vice President: Exhibition Society
Former Secretary: Economic Committee & Exhibition Society

Cremation will take place on 19th Dec 2020 at 11.30am at Royal Leesha Convention, Murtuzaguda Village, take left turn at JBT, Moinabad, RR Dist.

WE MOURN HIS SUDDEN DEMISE AND STAND BY HIS FAMILY IN THIS HOUR OF GRIEF

Members of :Exhibition Society, Economic Committee AP & Osmania Graduates Association

Rev. V. ASHER

PASTOR, BAPTIST CHURCH HYDERABAD

DOB 04-07-1938 DOD 17-12-2020

Inserted by

Mrs. Sheeba Asher (Wife), Mr. Calvin (Son), Mrs. Sunitha (Daughter in Law), Grand Children, Pastors, elders and members of Baptist Church Hyderabad

Memorial SERVICE will be held at Baptist Church Hyderabad on Saturday at 6 pm

REV.V. ASHER

PASTOR, BAPTIST CHURCH HYDERABAD

DOB 04-07-1938 DOD 17-12-2020

Inserted by

Mrs. Sheeba Asher (Wife), Mr. Calvin (Son), Mrs. Sunitha (Daughter in Law), Grand Children, Pastors, elders and members of Baptist Church Hyderabad

SHRADHANJALI

We are very sorry to inform the sudden demise of Dr. B. Srinivas Rao on 18th Dec 2020. Cremation will take place on 19th Dec 2020 at 11.30am at Royal Leesha Convention, Murtuzaguda Village, take left turn at JBT, Moinabad Mondal, RR District.

B. Anuradha
B. Abhinay Chakravarthy- Sukanya
B. Pranay Chakravarthy
Dr. B. Prabha Shankar - Leelavathi

Ph: 9849 164 095

Dr. B. Srinivas Rao Left for his Heavenly Abode on 18th Dec 2020

Memorial Service will be held at St. John's Church, Hyderabad on Saturday at 6 pm

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Blessed is the memory of the righteous! Proverbs 10:7

Capt U. Jayakumar (Retd Master Mariner)

28-09-1943 - 14-12-2020

Request your presence to celebrate the life of Capt U. Jayakumar on 19-12-2020, 11 AM at St. Paul's Ebenezer Church, Road #2, Rajiv Gandhi Bhavan, Nizamuddin Nagar, Via Lokutkula, Sec-Bd-15.

Inserted by: U. Sampath Kumar & V. Azraiah Babu Families.

Ph: 8790158499, 0440390045, 9963922339

FROM : Joseph & Son's

OBITUARY

Capt U. Jayakumar

(Retd Master Mariner)

28-09-1943 - 14-12-2020

DEWAN BALUSA Date of Death: 19th December 2005

Inserted by:

SONS: Dewan Srihari, Dewan Gopi, Dewan Arjun, Dewan Shyam, DAUGHTER: Gudas Nagamani

KALAKONDA RAMA RAO DOD: 16-12-2020

May his divine soul attain Utmost Sadgati OM SHANTI!

Inserted by: GUMEDELLY FAMILY

PH:9959967271 / 9100019191

OBITUARY

NAWAB MOHAMMED ZAKIUDDIN KHAN

Sis. Nawab Mohammed Khairuddin Khan Bahadur (Paternal Uncle of Kishore Jali) / Maternal Uncle of Umrah

DOS: 31-03-1947 - DOD: 18-12-2020

Name & Janaza offered @ Jame Masjid Iqbal-ud-Daulah, Begumpet.

Buried in Paigah Town, Santosh Nagar.

Fatihah on 20.12.2020 after Asar Prayer in Masjid Iqbal-ud-Daulah, Begumpet.

Ph:9844 164 095

SOJI JOSEPH

IN BRIEF

Mukarram Jah school bags 2nd rank

Hyderabad: The Mukarram Jah School, administered by the Mukarram Jah Trust for Education and Learning, has been ranked No. 2 in India and first in the state among budget schools for 2020-21.

This rating was issued by Education World India.

Mukarram Jah School won the top ranking for infrastructure provision, safety and hygiene and sports education. Owing to Covid-19, trustee M.A. Faiz Khan and Rekha Wadhe, Principal of Mukarram Jah School, received the award, presented by Bhavin Shah of Education World in a ceremony at the school at Purani Haveli Palace in Hyderabad.

Woman run over after being hit by biker

Hyderabad: A woman was killed in a road accident at Filmnagar in Jubilee Hills when a speeding biker crashed into her after which a tipper lorry ran over her early on Friday. According to the police, the deceased, Jyothi, was crossing the road when the accident occurred. "Jyothi fell on the road after being hit by the motorcyclist and a speeding tipper lorry ran over her, killing her on the spot," said the police. The driver of the motorcycle and lorry fled from the spot after the accident. A case has been booked by the police and efforts are on to identify the vehicles.

Macca Masjid gates reopen after 8 months

Contractors' laxity results in delay of masjid renovation works

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

was imposed in March.

The masjid comes under the direct management of the minorities welfare department. The department has imposed restrictions on attendance at prayers during the lock-down which continued even after the lockdown was lifted. The department has restricted the

worshippers to 100 even for Juma prayers.

Speaking to the media, Ahmed Pasha Quadri said masjid superintendent Moulna Abdul Quadeer was instructed to open the gates on Friday. He said the main gate was closed before the lockdown for renovation but this was also opened on Friday.

Mumtaz Khan said there was a delay in reconstruction of the cistern for ablution. He clarified that the contractor has started the renovation work of the cistern without keeping in mind of leakage and it was being redesigned. He said the work of constructing lavatories was under progress.

Will probe all TRS irregularities: BJP

CONGRESS A THING OF THE PAST, SAYS MURALIDHAR RAO

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

BJP general secretary Tarun Chugh called Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao 'Raja Babu' and said that the TRS was like a HUF (Hindu Undivided Family). He said there would be a full-fledged inquiry into the corrupt dealings of TRS leaders and all those found guilty would be punished, in course of time. Chugh, the in-charge of Telangana BJP affairs, was received on his maiden visit to the city by party state chief Bandi Sanjay, MP D Arvind, former MP Vivek Venkatasamy and others.

Chugh conducted a review meeting with key

leaders of the TRS from the Secunderabad Cantonment, including former vice-president Jampana Prathap and board member Laxman joined the BJP in the presence of state president Bandi Sanjay and Muralidhar Rao at the party headquarters. Muralidhar Rao said sev-

eral leaders are waiting to join BJP, particularly after the Dubbalki and GHMC elections.

He said that the party was getting stronger in Telangana state and expressed confidence of triumphing in the ensuing Warangal and Khammam Municipal elections.

leaders and informed them that he will conduct regular meetings and interact with each and everyone to work on developing the party in Telangana.

He said that in the first phase, he will conduct meetings with district presidents, general secre-

taries and Morcha committee presidents.

Later, addressing a press conference, Chugh said that the family members "were in the race to emerge as the most corrupt" in the family. He challenged the Chief Minister to come for a debate

on the measures taken to contain Covid-19. He flagged the Chief Minister for not visiting a single village, town or hospital during the lockdown. He wanted to know when Rao would give double bedroom houses and Nirudyoga Bruthi.

ATHER MOIN I DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Jalpally Municipality is finding it nearly impossible to drain out water that is stagnant on the roads at Osman Nagar. Several streets remain completely inundated. The municipality is neither getting any cooperation

in rehabilitation works nor any financial assistance. Despite its keenness to get heavy-duty motors from Visakhapatnam to discharge the water, it could not procure the same for want of budget. Left with no choice, they began diverting water from Burhan Khan Talab to Pedda Cheruvu by opening

the sluice.

Municipal Chairman Abdullah bin Ahmed Saadi said the Burhan Khan Talab, which is spread over 250 acres, has shrunk to 72 acres.

He said "our Municipality is comparatively small and has a total budget of ₹4.5 crore. We have spent ₹32

lakh for discharging rainwater and disbursing aid to flood victims."

He said "We have urged the Municipal department to allocate housing units under a two-bedroom housing scheme to those families whose houses were submerged. We have also demanded allocation of spe-

cial funds to the tune of ₹5 crore to avoid such situations in the future. However, we did not get any response from the government. We have started the work of draining out water from the pond using pipelines from Thursday. We hope to clear the water from the streets within the next 10 days."

Civic body struggles to clear stagnant water

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₹2 crore collected as fine for violating mask norms

NAVEEN KUMAR I DC
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Those who did not wear masks paid a total of ₹2.26 crore in penalties in the Cyberabad and Rachakonda police commissionerates.

While the Cyberabad police commissionerate booked 5,620 cases, 17,022 violators were booked in the Rachakonda police limits from May 11 to December 15, police data revealed. The Rachakonda police booked 4,408 cases in the Malkajgiri Zone, 9,891 in LB Nagar and 2,723 in the Bhongir zone.

The use of computer vision and deep-learning techniques linked to surveillance cameras and implementing artificial intelligence (AI) to track

violating the rule were booked under Section 51(b) of the Disaster Management Act, which was amended in view of the prevailing Covid-19 pandemic," an official said. Apart from ensuring that they wore masks, a fine of ₹1,000 was imposed on them.

Explaining how the system worked, officials said that after identifying violators in a particular area, the staff at the Command and Control Centre would pass on the information to either a Rakshak or a Blue Colt police patrol team, who would track down the person.

down the 'mask on' rule violations was first done by the police since May 8.

According to police sources, AI was used to identify and book the violators. "The tech was used to use surveillance cameras to track down those not wearing masks and alert mobile patrols in the local area to trace such persons. Those caught vio-

CBI registers ₹7,926-crore fraud case on Transstroy

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

The CBI has registered bank fraud case to the tune of ₹7,926.01 crore on Friday, the biggest so far in India, against the Hyderabad-based Transstroy India Ltd. of former MP Rayapati Sambasiva Rao.

The CBI booked Transstroy's CMD Cherukuri Sridhar, additional directors Sambasiva Rao and Akkineni Satish, among others on a complaint filed by Canara Bank.

Searches were conducted at the premises of Transstroy and the accused at Hyderabad and Guntur, which led to recovery of incriminating documents, the CBI stated.

"It was alleged that the private firm based at Hyderabad and its directors had availed credit fac-

ilities on multiple banking arrangements. It was further alleged that the accused had involved in falsification/fabrication of books of accounts, fudging of stock statements, tampering of balance sheets, round tripping of funds etc," the CBI said.

The accused misappropriated bank funds and allegedly diverted the loan amount sanctioned by the banks and caused loss of approximately ₹7,926.01 crore to Canara Bank and other member banks. The account had become a non-performing asset and the fraud was reported.

According to the CBI, diamantaire Nirav Modi had allegedly siphoned off ₹6,000 crore while his uncle Mehul Choksi had swindled ₹7,080.86 crore.

The CBI said it had carried out simultaneous

searches on the premises of the former TDP MP at his native place in Guntur district and in Hyderabad in connection with a bank fraud case booked against him, wherein he was charged for allegedly siphoning around ₹3,822 crore.

Special teams from New Delhi with support from their colleagues in the regional offices in Telangana state and Andhra Pradesh conducted the searches in Guntur and Hyderabad. The company allegedly obtained a bank loan from a consortium of banks led by a nationalised bank and allegedly diverted the funds for other purposes.

The company has earlier taken up the construction of Polavaram project funded by the Central government. Further investigations are underway.

QUARTERLY RETURN MONTHLY PAYMENT SCHEME

This scheme will further enhance ease of doing business for Taxpayers having annual turnover upto ₹ 5 Crore

- File GST statements/Retuns in FORM GSTR-1 & GSTR-3B just once in a Quarter
- Pay monthly tax conveniently using Fixed Sum Method (Pre-filled Challan) or Self-Assessment Method (actual tax due after adjusting ITC) in first two months of a Quarter
- Easily opt in and opt out of the Scheme
The choice to opt in and opt out of the scheme can be exercised by the taxpayer throughout the year at the common portal
- Enjoy the convenience of a Flexible Invoice Filing Facility
You can upload and file selected B2B invoices in first two months of a quarter to enable flow of ITC to the recipients. The remaining invoices can be reported/filed in quarterly FORM GSTR-1
- Self Assessment of ITC & Tax once every Quarter
Reduce your compliance cost significantly by assessing Tax liability & ITC admissibility on quarterly basis instead of monthly basis

File your GST returns just once a quarter w.e.f. 1st January, 2021

GST Returns file karna, ab hua aur aasaan!



Ministry of Finance
Government of India

For more details, visit our website: www.cbic.gov.in



dayp 15/02/13/0004/2021

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SHORT TAKES
**PM'S VARANASI
OFFICE LISTED FOR
'SALE' ONLINE**

Varanasi (UP), Dec. 18: Four people have been arrested for allegedly posting an online advertisement listing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Varanasi office for "sale", police said on Friday.

The accused had taken a picture of the "Jansampark Kaaryalay" (public relations office) of Modi, who represents Varanasi in the Lok Sabha, and put it "up for sale" on OLX website, they said.

The office is located in the Jawahar Nagar locality of the city, and it falls under the Belapur police station limits, Varanasi Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Amit Pathak said. "Yesterday, it came to our notice that the Prime Minister's office here has been put up on sale on OLX website. An FIR was immediately lodged at the Belapur police station, and the matter is being investigated," Pathak said.

"Four people involved in the case have been taken in custody," the SSP said, adding that the person who took the picture and put it on the website is among them. The accused are being questioned, and further legal proceedings are being carried out, he said.

**SHIV SENA MAY
OPPOSE PM'S PET
PROJECTS IN MAHA**

PRASAD PATIL | DC
MUMBAI, DEC. 18

The Shiv Sena, rattled by the Bombay High Court's stay on the construction of Metro car shed at salt pan land in Mumbai, is preparing for direct confrontation with the Union government led by the BJP.

The HC stayed the Metro car shed work after the Centre's salt pan department challenged the state's decision in the court. Now, as part of its strategy to take on its erstwhile alliance partner head-on, the Uddhav Thackeray-led party has decided to oppose the proposed port in Palghar district. The ₹65,000 crore project was approved by the Narendra Modi government in February this year.

The Maharashtra government is also considering moving the Metro car shed to a site earmarked for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project — another pet project of PM Modi.

The locals are opposing the Vadhan port project, which is part of Centre's Sagarmala initiative, in Palghar district. According to reports, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray met groups opposing the Vadhan port as well Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train project — another pet project of PM Modi.

We should remain alive

TMC exodus irks Bengal BJP

Babul Supriyo, Agnimitra Paul want TMC deserters' past to be assessed

RAJIB CHOWDHURI | DC
KOLKATA, DEC. 18

The sudden trend among heavyweights deserting the ruling Trinamool Congress to join the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ahead of the Assembly election in West Bengal has triggered strong dissent within the saffron party in the state.

Prominent BJP leaders like Babul Supriyo and even state president Dilip Ghosh are up in arms against the TMC deserters' overnight induction to their party without any assessment of their

past.

They have started voicing their displeasure openly after Jitendra Tiwari, Pandabeshwar MLA and former Asansol Mayor, left the TMC on Thursday.

Referring to Tiwari, Supriyo, Asansol MP and Union minister, wrote on Facebook, "What my Top Bosses decide is a different thing but I will try my very best with all my might & honesty to ensure that NO #TMC leader who tormented, tortured (both physically & mentally) my grass root level BJP colleagues in Asansol, don't get an entry in BJP!!"

Paul, the state BJP women wing chief, said, "Suddenly after nine years Tiwari felt that he could not do his welfare work for Asansol as crores of money for projects were returned.

Where were these thoughts in him? These came to his mind four months before the Assembly elections. He opposed Supriyo. Moreover the people of Asansol do not like him. Many told me to ensure he does not come to our party (sic)."

Ghosh, the Midnapore BJP MP, said, "There is a rift between Supriyo and Tiwari because when

Tiwari was the Asansol Mayor and TMC district president, he did not allow Supriyo to work in his Lok Sabha constituency. Bricks were hurled on Supriyo on the road. So Tiwari was his rival there. Now when he shows a prospect to join the BJP, it is natural for Supriyo to voice his complaint against him."

Tiwari, however, claimed that he had no plan to join the BJP.

On Barrackpore MLA Silbadra Datta's prospect Ghosh observed, "Quitting the TMC and joining the BJP are two different issues. We have

seen that many leaders left the TMC earlier. That does not mean all of them came to the BJP or they were roped into our party."

In Bankura, a group of BJP workers came out on road and organised a demonstration near their party office after former state textiles minister Shyamapada Mukherjee quit the TMC on Thursday evening and hailed his ex-party colleague Shubhendu Adhikari as his leader with a hope to join the BJP.

They made it clear that Mukherjee should not be allowed to join the BJP.

Mobile phones now have longer reach than missiles, says Rajnath

DC CORRESPONDENT
With agency inputs
NEW DELHI, DEC. 18

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, while referring to the impact of social media on conflicts between nations, on Friday said the reach of the mobile phone now is bigger than that of a missile.

Addressing the annual Military Literature Festival here, Singh warned that different kinds of security threats may emerge in the future. This event is important from another point of view, he said through video conference.

"As times change, the nature of threats and wars is also changing. In the future, other security-related issues may come before us."

He added that conflicts are gradually becoming comprehensive in the manner never imagined earlier.

Possibly alluding to the power of social media and mobile apps, he said, Today the range (*marak Kshamta*) of a mobile has crossed even the reach of a missile, he said. He added that the enemy can now reach people even without crossing any borders, and urged everyone to play the role of a soldier.

The apex court also directed dedicated Covid-19 hospitals to take a no objection certificate (NOC) from the fire department within four weeks and said that failure to do so will invite punitive action.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said that those hospitals, whose fire NOC has expired, will have to get it renewed within four weeks.

The top court said that all the states will follow Covid-19 guidelines, including on wearing of face mask and adherence to social distancing measures, and the standard operating procedure issued by the competent authority.

The SC had earlier taken cognisance of a fire incident in a designated Covid-19 hospital in Gujarat's Rajkot in which several patients had died.



Defence minister Rajnath Singh presents the Border Surveillance System (BOSS) to Chief of Army Staff General M.M. Naravane, during the DRDO awards function, in New Delhi on Friday.

— PTI

to these dangers and save ourselves from wrong and misleading information and save others too, and festivals like this can play a key role in this, he said, urging literary figures to make use of their talent to the full for this. The defence minister did not specifically refer to China.

But in recent months, since the standoff between the two sides began at the Line of Actual Control, India has

banned several Chinese mobile apps, citing concerns related to national security and privacy. These included the popular TikTok and WeChat apps.

Meanwhile, a satisfactory resolution on the ground to the situation in the Ladakh sector between deployed Chinese and Indian troops still remains elusive despite several rounds of talks at the diplomatic and military

level in the past several months.

Nevertheless, India and China on Friday decided to "continue to work towards ensuring complete disengagement in all friction points along the LAC in the Western Sector" at the earliest

and noted that the 7th and 8th rounds of Senior Commanders meetings held recently "had also contributed to ensuring stability on the ground".

— PTI

DAGGERS OUT IN KERALA'S CONG, BJP UNITS

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
DEC. 18

Blame game has begun in the Kerala units of Congress-led UDF and BJP following the defeat in local body elections.

The Congress-led UDF which expected to do well riding on the anti-government sentiments, ended up with a disappointing performance.

In the political affairs committee meeting held a day after the results were announced, the leadership drew flak for its failure to cash in on the favourable political conditions.

Quite understandably, daggers are out in BJP as well. At least two factions in the party have demanded the removal of state president K. Surendran.

The said party, which was thrown by Johar in 2019, came in the eye of the storm after Shiromani Akali Dal leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa tweeted the video, which went viral, which he also sent to the NCB later. The filmmaker had later issued a statement then stating the allegations of drug consumption were slanderous asking why he would tweet a video if it was a drugs party.

The NCB has now sought for further clarity on the said party and the behaviour of the actors that was captured in the video. The agency sent a notice to Johar and may question him soon in connection with the same.

"The response will be looked into and further action will be decided upon based on the findings in the probe in the case of alleged drugs consumption in the film industry," said an officer.

The NCB has already questioned actors Deepika Padukone, Shraddha Kapoor, Sara Ali Khan and Rakul Preet Singh over drug consumption.

● CBI HAS slapped IPC sections pertaining to rape, murder, gangrape apart from those under the SC/ST Act against the four accused.

grape apart from those under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act against the four accused men from the village, they said. The maximum sentence in the above charges is capital punishment.

The agency has based its findings on the dying statement of the woman in which she is understood to have named the accused, besides scientific and forensic evidence collected by the CBI and statements of witnesses and the victim's family members recorded by it.

The findings submitted

by the CBI have left red-faced the top officials of Uttar Pradesh Police who had claimed that no evidence of rape was found in forensic tests.

Uttar Pradesh's additional director general (law and order) Prashant Kumar had said, "The report of the FSL has come. It says clearly that samples did not contain semen. It makes clear that there was no rape or gangrape".

The ADG had also claimed that the woman in her statement to police "did not mention rape but talked about 'maar-peet' (beating) only". An embarrassed UP government had to hand over the case to the CBI after the incident triggered massive public outrage and a political slugfest.

— PTI

CBI confirms Hathras gangrape, murder

New Delhi, Dec. 18: The CBI on Friday filed a chargesheet against the four men accused of the gangrape and murder of a 19-year-old Dalit woman in Hathras district of Uttar Pradesh, officials said.

After nearly two months of probe, the agency concluded in its final report that the accused — Sandeep, Ravi, Luv Kush and Ramu — allegedly gangraped and murdered the woman when she had gone to the fields to collect fodder on September 14 in her village Bhulgarhi, they said.

In its findings submitted before the competent court in Hathras, the agency has slapped Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections pertaining to rape, murder and gan-

grape apart from those under the SC/ST Act against the four accused.

The agency has based its findings on the dying statement of the woman in which she is understood to have named the accused, besides scientific and forensic evidence collected by the CBI and statements of witnesses and the victim's family members recorded by it.

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— PTI

INTERNAL | TIFF 23 leaders had written to Sonia demanding changes in the party

Sonia to meet 'letter writers' today

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, DEC. 18

After four months of wait, Congress president Sonia Gandhi will be meeting with a core group of letter writers.

After the demise of senior leader Ahmed Patel who was the go between the leadership and the group of 23 letter writers, the role is now taken up by Kamal Nath.

Rahul Gandhi and his sister and General Secretary of Uttar Pradesh Priyanka Gandhi are also expected to be at the meeting.

Insiders claim that apart from five or six members from the letter writers camp there will also be General Secretary Organisation K.C. Venugopal, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and the senior leader Kamal Nath who played the role of a mediator between the leadership and the group of 23 letter writers.

approaching the demand to make Rahul Gandhi the president again has gained momentum.

General Secretary Randeep Singh Surjewala said, "party will soon start the procedure to elect a new party president. 99.9% including me want Rahul Gandhi to be elected as Party president."

Interestingly, the Congress is downplaying the entire exercise and is just calling it a meeting with senior leaders as there will also be leaders who are not signatories to the letter that was written

in August this year. Several issues are expected to find mention in the meeting regarding the functioning of the party especially the demand for an active and visible leadership.

The meeting also assumes significance as the Congress has been facing electoral debacles not only in state Assembly elections and by-elections but also in local body elections.

Several leaders have come out in the open and have said that there is no remedy available within the party hence they are

constrained to speak out in the open. Some have gone ahead and said that the time for introspection is over and now its time for action.

In August this year, 23 leaders of the party had written to Congress president Sonia Gandhi demanding sweeping changes in the functioning of the party.

The letter writers include former union minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, Anand Sharma, Kapil Sibal, Shashi Tharoor, Veerappa Moily, Manish Tewari among others.

**GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA
ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT**

"e" Procurement Notice

1. Online tender is invited under e-procurement platform for one (1 No) road work in Narayanpet District, vide Engineer-in-Chief(R&B) State Roads & CRN, "e" CTN No. 37/CREN/DCR(E)/2020-21; Dt: 17.12.2020.

2. Tenderers can download the tender schedules and have further details from e-market place i.e., <https://eprocurement.telangana.gov.in/>, The last date of receipt of tenders is 28.12.2020 up to 3:30 PM.

DIPR No.: 823-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 For Engineer-in-Chief (R&B) SR & CRN, Hyderabad

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

7th Floor Swarnajayanti Commercial Complex, Ameerpet, Hyderabad.

G.O.Ms.No.186, dated 31-10-2020

(G.O.Ms.No.186, dated 31-10-2020)

In exercise of powers conferred by Sub-Section (1) of Section 15 of Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority Act 2008 (Act No.8 of 2008), the Government hereby makes the following variation to the land use envisaged in the Notified Master Plan-2021 vide G.O.Ms.No.288 MA, dt.03.04.2008 as required by sub-section(1) of the said section. The site in Sy.No.79/P of Bowmanki (M) Dondupur/Gandimaisamma (M), Medchal-Malkajgiri Dist., to an extent of 1930 Sq Mtrs which is presently earmarked for Conservation use zone in the Notified Master Plan-2021 vide G.O.Ms.No.288 MA, dt.03.04.2008, is now designated as Residential Use Zone. The details of the above are available in Web sites <http://gazette.telangana.gov.in/> and <http://mda.telangana.gov.in/>.

DIPR No: 1269-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 For Metropolitan Commissioner, HMDA

HYDERABAD METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Swarnajayanti Commercial Complex, 4th Floor Ameerpet, Hyderabad -500038

PUBLIC NOTICE
Planning Department
File No. 34639/SKP/R/UGH/1/2020-21

It is to inform that, M/s. Vazharaa Nirman Pvt.Ltd applied for Revision of /Addition / Alteration of High Rise Building permission, covering an area of 2 Cellar + Ground + 9 Upper Floors in Sy.No. 182 and 184 of Manikonda Jagir (V) Gadipet (M) R.R. District to an extent of 1930 Sq Mtrs may file their objections/ suggestions in writing within 7 days to this office from the date of publication of this notice. If no objections / suggestions are received within the above period the request of the applicant of High Rise Building permission consisting of 2 Cellar + Ground + 9 Upper Floors in Sy.No. 182 and 184 of Manikonda Jagir (V) Gadipet (M) R.R. District to an extent of 1930 Sq Mtrs will be considered basing on the material papers available with this office.

R.O. No: 1279-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2020-21 Sd/- DIRECTOR PLANNING-I

ICAR-INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MILLETS RESEARCH

ICAR – Indian Institute of Millets Research, Kondapalli, East Godav

SHORT TAKES
15 KIDS KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN BOMB BLAST

Ghazni, Dec. 18: At least 15 children were killed when a motorbike laden with explosives blew up near a religious gathering in eastern Afghanistan on Friday, officials said.

The children had gathered at a home in Ghazni province to recite Quran verses, a regular activity on the Islamic holy day of Friday when the blast happened. "Unfortunately, as a result of this incident 15 people, all children, were martyred," said Wahedullah Jumazada, spokesman for the province's governor.

Ghazni police confirmed the blast and that all victims were children. Twenty other people, including some children, were wounded. Interior ministry spokesman Tariq Arian earlier said the group had gathered in Gilan district to recite the Quran.

KIDNAPPED BOYS RELEASED IN NIGERIA

Katsina, Dec. 18: Exhausted and dishevelled, several hundred Nigerian schoolboys seized in a mass abduction claimed by Boko Haram experienced their first full day of freedom on Friday after a nearly week-long ordeal.

But relief at their survival mingled with concern that many others could still be captive, and the circumstances of their release remained unclear.

Looking dirty, worn-out and distraught, and most of them without shoes, the boys were brought to the governor's office in Katsina, the capital of Katsina state in northwestern Nigeria, after being released late Thursday.

One boy broke down in tears as he was being led into the hall for the reception by state governor Bello Masari. An official took a handkerchief and wiped the tears. "I am happy, very happy that I will see my father, mother and junior brothers," said another, 14-year-old Ibrahim Sani, smiling but looking tired.

UN SAYS 'DEEPLY TROUBLED' OVER THAI DETENTIONS

Geneva, Dec. 18: The UN human rights body expressed alarm on Friday over Thailand's detentions of democracy activists, including a minor of 16 years, under royal defamation laws.

"We are deeply troubled by the move by Thai authorities to charge at least 35 protesters in recent weeks, including a 16-year old student protester, under Article 112 — the less majestic provision of Thailand's criminal code," the UN Human Rights Committee said in a statement.

The activists are facing charges for headlining recent demonstrations demanding reforms to the monarchy and more scrutiny of the royal family's financial arrangements. The kingdom's less majestic laws shield the super wealthy King Maha Vajiralongkorn and the royal family from criticism.

"The offence carries sentences of between three and 15 years' imprisonment for defaming, insulting or threatening the country's royal family," the committee's spokeswoman, Ravina Shamdasani said.

MEGHAN SETTLES CASE OVER ARCHIE PHOTOS

London, Dec. 18: Meghan Markle has settled a claim against a news agency which took photographs of her and her young son Archie in a Canadian park, the High Court in London was told on Friday.

The Duchess of Sussex brought privacy and data protection claims against the Splash News and Picture Agency in March over the long-term photographs.

A lawyer for the American former television actress, who married Prince Harry in 2018, said Splash UK went into administration after the claim was issued and served. Judge Matthew Nicklin told the hearing: "In light of the administration, the parties have agreed to settle the claim against Splash UK."

"The administrators of Splash UK have undertaken that, should the entity come out of administration, Splash UK will not take any photographs of the duke and duchess or their son in the future." The photographs were taken on January 20 this year, showing Markle walking with Archie in a baby sling, and her two dogs, in North Hill Regional Park on Vancouver Island.

Pence gets Covid jab, Don sparks confusion

Trump jumps gun on FDA, says Moderna vaccine 'approved'

Washington, Dec. 18: The US vice president received a Covid-19 vaccine shot live on television on Friday in a public display designed to boost national confidence in the drug even as President Donald Trump sparked confusion over approval for a second anti-Covid drug.

"Building confidence in the vaccine is what brings us here this morning," VP Mike Pence said after being injected at the White House, quipping: "I didn't feel a thing." Pence, his wife Karen and the lead public health official in the country, Surgeon General Jerome Adams, were all given the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in the annex to the White House.

Signalling the importance given to the event, top infectious diseases Anthony Fauci and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention director Robert Redfield were also in the room.

The notable absence was Trump himself. He has sent mixed messages about the seriousness of Covid-19 throughout the crisis, even as the US death toll topped 3,00,000 this month.

However, he has been keen to take credit for the historic speed of vaccine development. Early Friday he tweeted that a second drug made by Moderna had been "overwhelmingly approved" and that "distribution to start immediately." This sparked some confusion — while an advisory panel recommended emergency use approval for Moderna's vaccine on Thursday, the Food and Drug Administration has yet to give the final verdict allowing distribution — expected later Friday.

US President-elect Joe Biden's incoming White House senior advisor, congressman Cedric Richmond, has tested positive for Covid-19 after having open-air "interactions" with Biden, the transition team said on Thursday.

Richmond traveled independently to the state of Georgia to campaign Tuesday with Biden for a pair of Democrats in tight runoff elections against incumbent Republican senators.

Biden, 78, tested negative for Covid-19 on Thursday, his team said.

The head of the World Health Organisation said on Friday that the UN health agency's programme to help



Sao Paulo Governor Joao Doria, state health secretary Jean Gorinchteyn and Butantan Institute director Dimas Covas pose for photographs holding doses of the CoronaVac vaccine against Covid-19 next to a container unloaded from a cargo plane that arrived from China at Guarulhos International Airport in Guarulhos, Sao Paulo state, Brazil, on Friday. Brazil on Thursday recorded more than 1,000 deaths from Covid-19 over a 24-hour period for the first time since September. — AFP

Macron rides out virus, fever at Versailles retreat

Paris, Dec. 18: As French President Emmanuel Macron rides out the Coronavirus in a presidential retreat at Versailles, French doctors are warning families who are heading for the holidays to remain cautious because of an uptick in infections — especially at the dinner table.

While Macron routinely wears a mask and adheres to social distancing rules, he hosted or took part in multiple group meals in the days before testing positive on Thursday.

Critics say that's a bad example for compatriots advised to keep their gatherings to six people.

Macron is suffering from fever, cough and fatigue, offi-

cials with the presidency said on Friday.

They wouldn't provide details of his treatment. He is staying at the presidential residence of La Lanterne in the former royal city of Versailles. Macron's positive test comes as French health authorities are again seeing a rise in infections and warning of more as French families prepare to get together for Christmas and New Year festivities.

France reported another 18,254 new infections on Thursday and its death toll is just under 60,000. France's Pasteur Institute released a study on Friday suggesting that meal times at home and in public are a major source of contamination. — AP

get Covid-19 vaccines to all countries in need, whether rich or poor, has gained access to nearly 2 billion doses of several "promising" vaccine candidates.

WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus said the agreements mean that some 190 countries and economies taking part in the COVAX initiative will have access to vaccines "during the first half of next year."

— AFP/AP

— AFP/AP

LOCKDOWN LOOMS OVER CHRISTMAS IN BETHLEHEM

Ramallah (West Bank), Dec. 18: The Palestinian prime minister announced a two-week lockdown in the West Bank that appears certain to curtail Christmas celebrations in the town of Jesus' birth. Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh said that with a Coronavirus outbreak raging, there will be a nighttime curfew from 7 pm to 6 am throughout the West Bank.

On Fridays and Saturdays, the local weekend, the lockdown will be around the clock. The restrictions, which are to be in effect through January 2, will greatly restrict travel throughout the West Bank. Most businesses, with the exception of pharmacies and bakeries, will be forced to close during the curfews, Shtayyeh said.

The lockdown appears to mean that public celebrations in Bethlehem, revered by Christians as Jesus' birthplace, will be greatly scaled back. — AP

Human error behind oil spill in Mauritius: Japan

Tokyo, Dec. 18: The Japanese operator of a bulk carrier that struck a coral reef and caused an extensive oil spill off the coast of Mauritius said Friday that the accident occurred after the ship shifted its course two miles (3.2 kilometers) closer to shore than planned so its crewmembers could get cellphone signals.

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines said its investigation showed the accident was caused by human error, including inadequate nautical charts, navigation systems and risk awareness, and a lack of

supervision and safety monitoring. The company said the tanker's nautical chart provided little information about depth and other necessary information.

Crewmembers on duty also failed to conduct safety checks visually or by radar, it said. The

captain and crewmembers were also using their cellphones while on duty, the company said. It said it will invest about 500 million yen (\$4.8 million) to provide electronic nautical charts, training to strengthen safety culture and other systems to enhance safety.

The environmental disaster began July 25 when the ship MV Wakashio strayed off course and struck a coral reef a mile (1.6 kilometers) offshore.

After being pounded by heavy surf for nearly two weeks, the ship's

hull cracked and on Aug. 6 began leaking fuel into a lagoon, polluting a protected wetlands area and a bird and wildlife sanctuary.

The company apologised for the damage and in September offered 1 billion yen (\$9 million) to fund environmental projects and support the local fishing community in Mauritius.

The environmental disaster began July 25 when the ship MV

Wakashio strayed off course and struck a coral reef a mile (1.6

kilometers) offshore.

About 3,000 tons that remained on the ship was pumped into barges before the Wakashio

broke in two several days later. — AP

Peace, sustainability award for Ratan Tata

Jerusalem, Dec. 18: Veteran industrialist Ratan Tata will be honoured by the Indo-Israel Chamber of Commerce for promoting innovation that supports sustainability and peace in the region, including with the Palestinians.

The chairman emeritus of the Tata group will be honoured with 'Global Visionary of Sustainable Business and Peace' award during the launch of the Federation of Indo-Israel Chamber of Commerce's international chapter in Dubai on December 21.

The virtual ceremony

will be attended by senior officials from Israel, India and UAE. "Tata has done a lot for India-Israel ties. He has generously contributed towards promoting innovation that supports sustainability and has been a promoter of peace in the region, including with the Palestinians. He has visited Israel a few times which has been extremely beneficial in promoting ties between the two countries. He very well deserves this honour," Raviv Byron, President of Israeli-India Chamber of Commerce, said.

The 82-year-old indus-

EXAMINATIONS FOR MINE MANAGER'S CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY UNDER THE METALLIFEROUS MINES REGULATIONS, 1961 & THE COAL MINES REGULATIONS, 2017

The Chairman, Board of Mining Examinations and Director General of Mines Safety, Dhanbad is holding Computer Based Examinations for Manager's Certificate of Competency (Restricted & Unrestricted), under the Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 1961 and the Coal Mines Regulations, 2017 in February, 2021 at Ajmer, Asansol, Bengaluru, Bhilai, Bhubaneswar, Bokaro, Cuttack, Dhanbad, Ghaziabad & Delhi/ NCR, Goa, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Jaipur, Jamshedpur, Nagpur, Raipur, Ranchi and Udaipur centres.

Candidates who desire to appear in the examination are required to submit their application ONLINE by using the link provided in the DGMS website. No other mode for submission of application shall be accepted.

SCHEDULE OF EXAMINATION: The Computer based examination is scheduled to be held from 19th to 23rd February, 2021. Copy of admit card/ authorisation letter shall be sent by mail and applicants are required to download it.

FEES: (i) First Class Manager's (Metal): ₹ 100/- (ii) Second Class Manager's (Metal): ₹ 75/- (iii) First Class Manager's (Coal): ₹ 1200/- (iv) Second Class Manager's (Coal): ₹ 900/-

The fees shall be payable online only through Bharatkosh website ([i.e. www.bharatkosh.gov.in](http://www.bharatkosh.gov.in)). Candidate can apply for appearing in examinations for the following certificates:

CERTIFICATE	REGULATIONS
1. First Class Manager's Certificate — Unrestricted / Restricted	Coal Mines Regulations, 2017
2. Second Class Manager's Certificate — Unrestricted / Restricted	Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 1961
1. First Class Manager's Certificate — Unrestricted / Restricted	
2. Second Class Manager's Certificate — Unrestricted / Restricted	

Before applying for examination, applicants are requested to ensure that they possess the qualification & experience prescribed under the Metalliferous Mines Regulations, 1961 and the Coal Mines Regulations, 2017, read with applicable byelaws. Any applicant who does not possess the prescribed eligibility criteria shall not be considered for the examination. For further details and information on the above please visit the DGMS website.

Last date for filling and submitting the online application form along with scanned copy of required original documents and fees is 18th January, 2021 (up to midnight 00:00 Hrs.). **Notified on 16.12.2020 (in DGMS website i.e. www.dgms.gov.in)**

Dav 23102/11/0002/2021

US warships to be 'more assertive' against China

U.S. PRESIDENT
 Donald Trump's administration on Thursday announced it had imposed export controls on China's biggest chipmaker, SMIC, restricting its access to US technology over its alleged ties to the Chinese military.

In a document setting

objectives for the US Navy, Marines and Coast Guard for the coming years, the Pentagon stressed that several countries, notably Russia and China, "are contesting the balance of power in key regions and seeking to undermine the existing world order." Our globally deployed naval forces interact with Chinese and Russian warships and aircraft daily, the document said, noting their "growing aggressiveness" and calling China "the most pressing, long-term strategic threat."

The latest incident between the US and China naval forces took place in late August, when Beijing said it had driven an American warship from the disputed Paracel archipelago. To maintain strategic advantage over the Chinese Navy whose "battle force has more than tripled in size in only two decades," the US Navy plans to modernize with smaller, more agile and even remotely piloted ships. US ships will also "accept calculated risks and adopt a more assertive posture in our day-to-day operations," the Asian power

statement said. For Navy Rear Admiral Jay Bynum that means being "more responsive, more assertive." — AFP

TELANGANA STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD REGIONAL OFFICE, Warangal

H.No. 1-8-269, Balasamudram, Hanamkonda, Warangal District - 506 001

ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION

In accordance with the Notification No. S.O.1533(E), dated 14th September 2006 of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Govt. of India, it is to notify that "M/S. TELANGANA STATE MINERAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED" has proposed Mining of Ordinary Sand at Godavari River Bed, Yakanagudem Village, Venkatapuram Mandal, Mulugu District, Telangana and Capacity of 4,44,000Cum of sand in 3 years over an extent of 22.20Ha to have an Environmental Public Hearing to Obtain Environmental Clearance(EC) from SEIAA, Telangana, MoEF & CC, Gol. The details of the proposed project activities as given by the proponent are as follows;

1. Name of the Company and address with telephone number	M/s. Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation Limited 6-2/95 HMWSB Premises, Rear Block, 4 th Floor, Khairatabad, Hyderabad, Telangana, India - 500004.
2. Proposed Location	Godavari river bed, Yakanagudem Village, Venkatapuram Mandal, Mulugu District, Telangana.
3. Name of the authorized persons to be contacted	Smt. G. Deepthi (General Manager), M/s.Telangana State Mineral Development Corporation Limited, Phone: 7693336459, 040_2323150 e-mail : smdcitd@gmail.com
4. Capital Cost	Rs. 45.00 lakhs
5. Line of activity and Mining Capacity	Mining of Ordinary sand - 4,44,000Cum of sand in 3 years over an extent of 22.20Ha.
6. Date / Time / Venue	

DECCAN Chronicle

19 DECEMBER 2020

Kerala: Big triumph for LDF, Cong rudderless

The brilliant show put up by the Left Democratic Front (LDF) in Kerala in the elections to the local bodies is sure to offer the ruling front a solid base to prepare for the state Assembly elections hardly four months away while raising the bar higher for the Opposition, United Democratic Front (UDF), to win the race. The LDF has won 11 of the 14 district panchayat councils, 108 of the 152 block panchayats (the state has 140 assembly seats), 42 of the 86 municipalities and five of the six municipal corporations. Among the gram panchayats, the leftists won 514 of the 941, leaving 37 to the UDF and 23 to the National Democratic Alliance (BJP).

That the LDF has improved its own tally of 2015 local bodies elections when it was in the Opposition indicates that it faces little anti-incumbency threat in a state which alternates its ruling dispensation in every election without fail ever since 1977. While the Pinarayi Vijayan government's creditable performance in fighting virus attacks, first by Nipah in 2018 and by the coronavirus in 2020, its successful handling of two successive floods in 2018 and 2019, its focus on improving infrastructure especially in education and healthcare, its determined efforts to push through mega projects which includes the natural gas pipeline and the national highway project gave it the image of a government that works, its focus on welfare measures, which includes the construction of 2.5 lakh homes for the poor, the timely distribution of enhanced welfare pensions for the elderly and food kits during the pandemic, Covid-19, convinced the people that it is a government that cares.

This image, coupled with the failure of the central investigation agencies to come up with a credible case against people associated with the government vis-a-vis gold smuggling, has helped the LDF. This image, coupled with the failure of the central investigation agencies to come up with a credible case against people associated with the government vis-a-vis gold smuggling, has helped the LDF.

central investigation agencies to come up with a credible case against people associated with the government vis-a-vis gold smuggling, has helped the LDF keep its head above water. The smart political manoeuvring with which it got a section of the Kerala Congress which held sway in central Kerala to its side has paid rich dividends for the LDF while denting the prospects of the UDF of which the regional party was a major part for the last 50 years.

The Congress, which leads the UDF, has party machinery that covers the entire spectrum, starting from the booths but a rudderless leadership squandered them all away, thinking that the relentless and one-sided media scrutiny of the government will carry the day for them. The UDF, which recorded a spectacular victory in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections on the back of the entry of then Congress president Rahul Gandhi from Wayanad constituency and the Sabarimala issue which put the LDF in a dock, was a house divided this time. It would take enormous efforts on the part of the leadership to put it in order and take on the resurgent LDF if it were to keep its hope of returning to power. As for the NDA, its hopes replacing the Congress after decimating it lie shattered with the poor showing, especially in the capital Thiruvananthapuram. The party needs to cover a lot of ground before it gains a critical mass to emerge a major force in the state politics.

'Punishing' a state

While it is not yet clear what elements attacked the car convoy of BJP president J. P. Nadda at Diamond Harbour near Kolkata recently — one theory points the finger at hooligans sponsored by the ruling Trinamul Congress and the other says it is an internal BJP job to discredit the Mamata Banerjee government as an excuse for punitive action — the Union government brought the hammer down on three IPS officers of the West Bengal cadre. Their services have been compulsorily requisitioned by the Union home ministry.

Chief minister Mamata Banerjee has responded with fury. She has threatened to take recourse to legal action. Ordinarily, the Centre requests a state to release a particular officer when there is special need since an officer of the IAS or the IPS is assigned to a state on being selected.

There may be scope for emergency procedures if a particular officer is badly needed with the Centre. But here the Union home ministry is forcing three IPS officers out of the state in one go. Is this dictatorial? Is it a "colourable" exercise of power, as the CM has observed? How the judiciary deals with the issue will be keenly watched if Ms Banerjee goes to court. It will be a precedent-setting order and will have a bearing on the broader question of Centre-state relations.

Before the 2019 Lok Sabha election, there was an instance of violence at a rally of then BJP party chief Amit Shah in Kolkata. The police commissioner was relieved of his charge by the Election Commission and subsequently asked by the state to report to the Centre. The officer who replaced him was also changed, along with three other IPS officers. These were not decisions of the Union home ministry as in the present instance, but of the EC. And yet it is the bulk nature of transfers, which makes these cases look like punishment.

Political antagonism between the Centre and a particular state government has probably not gone in this direction before and it is not a good sign for federalism, "cooperative" or otherwise, although Prime Minister has made renewed avowals of cooperative federalism.

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Farrukh
Dhondy



Cabbages & Kings

*"If our hands bent both ways
There'd be lines marked on
the back.
We'd call them life, fate and fortune
Predicting ruin and rack.

With our palms already foretelling
It'd be a sort of heads and tails
And palmists would be confounded
Not knowing which fortune
prevails."*

— From Come, Say 'Come'
by Bachchoo

Researching Wikipedia on the origins of toxic words

Idle days, my friend, idle days in terms of worldly commerce, but busy as a woodpecker tapping the imagined computer keys of a tree-trunk. And as random questions occur, sometimes pertaining to work. Sometimes thoughtful wanderings from questions about how one dodges British tax by registering companies in Nassau, to the origins of phrases one has used and never stopped to etymologise.

And now Wikipedia corrects my lifelong notions and says the phrase is "Whoopsy Daisy". There are several notes on the origin of the phrase, and they contradict each other and still leave the attribution of alarm, at an accidental slip, or as an encou-

rage to a child as you fling it into the air, mysterious. The appearance of this Daisy, presumably a girl and not a flower, doesn't figure in the explanations.

And in my idle researches I find that there are places where Wikipedia doesn't fear to tread. Today it occurred to me that I had never investigated the origins of the phrase "oopsy daisy"! I am now fairly knowledgeable about the meanings of certain nursery rhymes such as Humpty Dumpty which wasn't an egg as mistakenly portrayed by cartoonists, but a cannon in the service of His Majesty's artillery. I also proudly know that ring-a-ring-a-roses is about the plague that swept Britain and nothing to do with necklace of blossoms as I had imagined when we played holding hands and forming a ring, at the age of three in the joyous hours of infant birthday parties.

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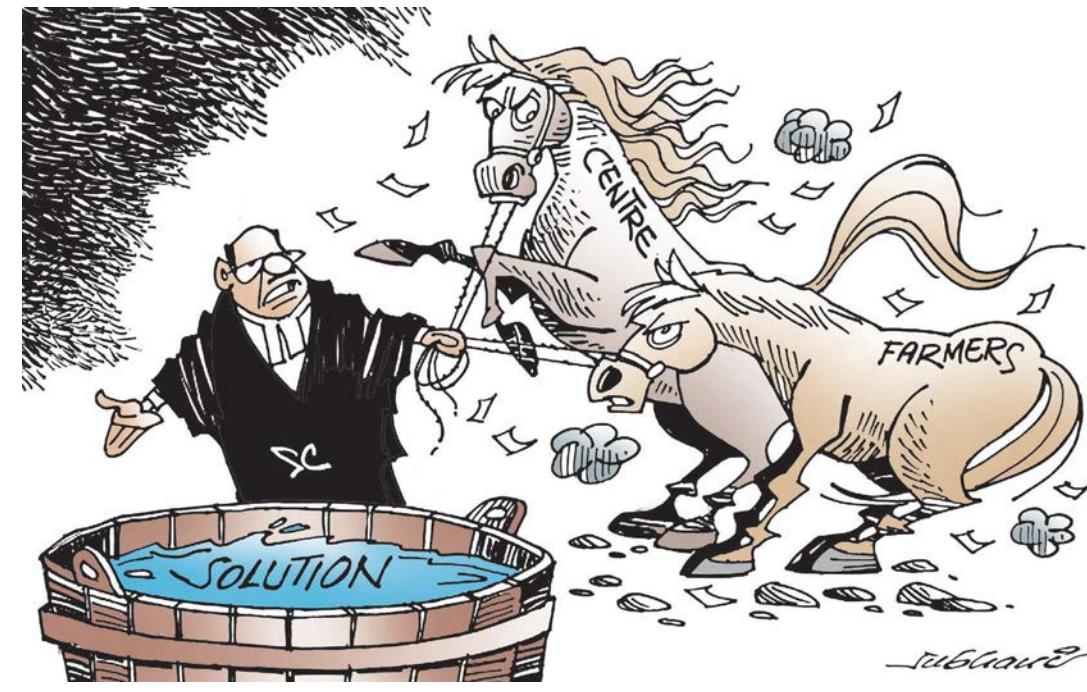
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Subhani



As schools reopen, try to bridge digital divide

Rukmini Banerji



The digital divide is layered on to existing divisions in our society

By January 2021, schools will have been closed for almost 300 days. Even when school systems reopen, it will take time for parents to feel comfortable in sending children daily to school. The longer schools stay shut and the more uncertain we are about the next steps, concern grows about the impact and implications of what looks like a year-long closure.

Starting 2005, every year in mid-January India sees the release of the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER). From 2005 to 2014, the ASER report tracked the status of schooling and provided estimates of basic reading and arithmetic skills. After 2014, the nationwide ASER report is done every other year and in the gap year we look in depth at a specific age group. For example, ASER 2017 focused on the 14-18 age group, while ASER 2019 dealt with the 4-8 age group. The year 2020 would have seen the regular country-wide report. But given the Covid crisis, it was appropriate to change the focus and timing of ASER to explore what children were doing while the schools were closed.

ASER 2020 Wave 1 was anchored around a set of interconnected questions. These included: what resources did families have, who in the family was able to help children, what inputs and learning opportunities did children receive and what were children able to do with respect to learning. Many of these questions were designed not only to explore how families dealt with the Covid crisis on the education front, but also to provide inputs into thinking about opportunities that could be leveraged beyond the crisis. Close to 120,000 households were sampled. Approximately 58 per cent households were reached, of which 75.8 per cent completed the survey. Thus, the ASER 2020 Wave 1 survey obtained information for about 60,000 children.

Here are some of the highlights. First, the availability of ASER 2018 data allowed comparisons to be made. For example, the proportion of households who own televisions or motorised vehicles remained similar from 2018 to 2020, but a sharp increase in smartphone ownership is visible across states. Nationally, in 2018, 29.6 per cent families whose children went to government schools owned smartphones. This number rose to 56.4 per cent by 2018. For families who send their children to private schools, the figure in 2018 was 49.9 per cent, which increased to 74.2 per cent in 2020. A significant rise in access to smartphones in rural families is a striking feature of the last two years.

Timing-wise, September seemed the right time to do the ASER 2020 survey. Many schools have summer holidays in April-June-July. This year, July and August was used by state governments to plan and implement their Covid response. By September, school systems across India had settled into providing whatever support they could to their students.

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Five major takeaways from this year's ASER exercise: First, the situation is likely to remain fluid for some months. With the clear inequities in our society, it is essential to track who is getting what opportunities and to assess what kind of learning loss is experienced.

Second, ASER 2020 gives clear evidence of parental engagement and willingness to support children's learning. This family support must be leveraged by the school system in a systematic way. Third, traditional teaching-learning methods should be combined effectively with newer ways of reaching/learning. Fourth, in-depth assessments of "what works and how" is needed to improve digital content and delivery for the future. Just because families have devices and connectivity doesn't automatically mean learning is happening effectively. Finally, the digital divide is layered on to existing divisions in our society.

Mechanisms to reach and teach children who are on the dark side of the divide must be worked out so their educational disadvantage can be ameliorated over time.

ASER 2020 completed the first wave in September. It's likely that a follow-up wave may be planned later in the current school year to track how children's learning journeys are progressing.

Rukmini Banerji is the CEO of Pratham Education Foundation

LETTERS

WINTER SESSION

The reason for scrapping the Winter Session of Parliament has not gone down well with the public (*Covid not a good reason to scrap Winter Session*, DC, Dec. 18). The same politicians were going on road shows in Bihar and Hyderabad for poll campaigns. Now, it is suspicious that they are citing Covid.

Dr Mohammed Abdul Mujeeb Siddiqui
Hyderabad

SATELLITE LAUNCH

ISRO's consistent achievements come as a pleasant surprise to a nation where people are fed up with negative news like agitations, crimes, hate speeches, political challenges, etc (*PSLV places comm satellite in orbit after perfect launch*, DC, Dec. 18). ISRO's efficiency, team work and planning are an inspiration for political parties, governments and various institutions to resolve the burning issues the country is facing.

Kshirasagara Balaji Rao
Hyderabad

COVID VACCINE

Thanks to doctors for enlightening us about taking Covid vaccine. The government should ensure that all phases of tests are cleared and that there are no side effects. Dr Gavande has rightly said it is a risk versus benefit situation and depends on immunity of people.

Ausaf Butool
Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Probe into Shastri's death rejected

NEW DELHI, Dec. 18. The Government today rejected the demand for a probe into former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's death in Tashkent five years ago. The demand for setting up a commission of enquiry was made in the Rajya Sabha by Opposition Members of Congress(O), BKD, Jana Sangh and SSP while seeking clarifications on government statement relating to Shastri's death laid on the table of the two Houses of Parliament in the morning.

Minister of State for Home Affairs R.N. Mirdha said that no facts had come to light which called for an enquiry and that there was no question of any doubt in this case.

we punctuate our sentences with the MC and BC words. I sincerely protest that my family and their acquaintances never fell into the particular linguistic habit, but a friend in college was universally known as Adi "MC" Manekshaw. He would freely use the expletives and was famous for his expression of surprise or disbelief, which was "Good Lord MC!" — (the mouth-filling words not just initials).

The intriguing word, which I grew up hearing in the Parsi and wider Indian community, was "saala". The word literally means

quick BITES

INDICATORS	%
Sensex	46,960.69
Nifty 50	13,760.55
S&P 500*	3,699.28
Dollar (₹)	73.56
Pound Sterling (₹)	99.31
Euro (₹)	90.10
Gold (10gm)* (₹)	49,644.21
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	52.17
IN 10-Yr bond yield	5.959
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	0.926
* As of 8:30 PM IST	-0.004

India Inc's FY21 FDI outflow at \$12.25 billion

Indian firms have committed overseas investments worth \$12.25 billion between April and November this year. Of this actual outflow would be \$6.35-2.97 bn through equity and \$3.38 bn in loan commitments. The rest, \$5.90 bn, would be in guarantees. Main investors are OVL (\$1852 million), JSW Steel (\$865 mn), Haldia Petro-chem (\$599 mn), HCL Tech (\$587 mn), M&M (\$551 mn) and Adani Properties (\$391 mn), Care Ratings said.

No cane price cut; Goyal asks mills to be efficient



Food minister Piyush Goyal said the government cannot reduce the fair and remunerative price (FRP), the minimum price at which sugar mills buy cane from farmers, and asked the industry to be efficient, profitable and diversify product portfolio with less dependency on the central subsidy. Addressing Isma, Goyal said the central subsidy of Rs 3,500 crore for exports will help in liquidating surplus sugar stocks.

Bank credit rises 5.73%, deposits move up 11.34%

Bank credit grew by 5.73 per cent to Rs 105.04 lakh crore while deposits increased by 11.34 per cent to Rs 145.92 lakh crore in the fortnight ended Dec. 4, RBI data showed. In the fortnight ended Dec. 6, 2019, bank credit had stood at Rs 99.35 lakh crore and deposits at Rs 131.06 lakh crore. In the previous fortnight ended Nov. 20, credit grew by 5.82 per cent to Rs 104.34 lakh crore and deposits by 10.89 per cent.

Forex reserves down by \$778 mn to \$578.56 bn

The country's foreign exchange reserves declined by \$778 million to \$578.56 billion in the week to Dec. 11, RBI data showed. In the previous week, the reserves had touched a lifetime high of \$579.346 bn after increasing by \$4.525 bn. Foreign currency assets dropped by \$1.042 bn to \$536.344 bn. The gold reserves rose by \$284 mn to \$36.012 bn. The SDRs with IMF dipped by \$3 mn to \$1.503 bn.

Instructed to clear goods fast, credit drawback in 3 days Customs asked to behave

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, DEC. 18

In a major relief to exporters and importers, customs officials have been asked to credit duty drawback to the exporter in three days. They have also been asked to reduce unnecessary delays and arbitrary practices during the custom clearance of imported goods.

The Action Plan of CBIC 2020-21 directs officials that at least 90 per cent of the duty drawback should be credited within three days. Further, the refund may be deposited into the customer account in T+2 days.

"The government's instruction to further reduce the timeline for crediting at least 90 per cent of the duty drawback claims to the exporters from seven days to three days, will definitely help



improve the cash flow of various industry players involved in exporting goods out of India, especially in these Covid times when a large number of businesses are still facing liquidity crunch," said Abhishek Jain, tax partner, EY.

Moreover all the remaining duty drawback claims should be positively disposed of by March 31, 2021 and while doing so the target of disposing of draw-

back in seven days should be achieved, said Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

A major cause of worry for importers has been the delay in clearances.

Exports, after a positive growth in September, once again started de-growing in October and November. Delays in the clearance of goods at the customs department have been one among the various reasons for this. "Most of the

imports from Free Trade economies have been receiving queries and were getting delayed for days as well as months," said the Federation of Indian Exporters Association.

The customs officials have now been advised to ensure judicious application of Carotar 2020, which are rules pertaining to country of origin, without causing disruption to the supply chain. They were also advised to review the function of customs ports to ensure that unnecessary delays and arbitrary practices are not being resorted to during custom clearance of goods.

The CBIC observed that importers are often asked to directly seek clarifications of the exporting country on country of origin verifications. "Officers under your charge may also be sensitised to ensure that enquiry on origin of

imported goods is initiated only where there are sufficient grounds to suspect origin of a good, or where the same has been identified as a risk by the Risk Management System. They should be suitably supervised to ensure that unnecessary queries are not raised on account of goods origin," said CBIC.

"In order to resolve industry concerns around the Carotar 2020, CBIC has issued instructions to ensure that queries under the said rules are issued only when sufficient grounds to question the origin of goods are present. This is a smart move on the part of the government and will be much appreciated by the industry, as this, while preventing revenue leakage, will ensure that the shipments are not unnecessarily delayed at customs ports," said Jain.

Logistics' competitiveness gap may cost \$500 bn by 2030

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, DEC. 18

With the supply chain inefficiencies remaining high, the competitiveness gap of the Indian logistics sector is expected to go up from \$180 billion to \$500 billion in 2030.

The logistics cost in India stands at 14 per cent of GDP, compared to the global average of about 8 per cent, creating a competitiveness gap of \$180 billion and this could increase to \$500 billion by 2030, finds a report by global management consultancy Arthur D. Little.

India's supply chain and logistics sector is valued at \$215 billion and is growing at a CAGR of 10.5 per cent. It is marred by an unbalanced logistics modal mix, high indirect costs, poor infrastructure,

fragmented networks and lack of technology adoption. The pandemic further accentuated supply chain weaknesses.

Indirect logistics costs in India are four times the average of those in developed countries. The main reasons are excessive layers in distribution channels and inventory mismanagement. Inadequate demand forecasting due to lack of technology adoption leads to inventory mismanagement. It also leads to high inventory carrying costs, which include costs for holding and storing unsold goods. These costs alone amount to 15-25 per cent of inventory costs or \$120 per \$180 billion.

Transportation by road is at the root of the unwarranted logistics costs. Transportation represents

about 40 per cent of logistics costs, and heavy dependence on the road networks, combined with poor transportation infrastructure, makes transportation costs balloon. India's rail and sea network are highly under-utilised due to lack of supporting infrastructure.

Failing to address India's competitiveness gap of \$180 billion could expand it to \$500 billion by 2030. Greenfield manufacturing will not be viable because high logistics costs are a barrier to entry. High logistics costs will continue to impede local manufacturing and reduce demand for Indian products in the global markets.

To bridge the current competitiveness gap of \$180 billion, India needs to halve logistics cost from 14 per cent of GDP to 7 per cent."

said Barnik Chitrani Maitra, managing partner of Arthur D. Little India and South Asia.

The study finds that India will have to optimise the logistics modal mix to global benchmarks, with roads constituting 25-30 per cent, railways comprising 50-55 per cent and waterways accounting for 20-25 per cent of transportation modes. It will have to reduce indirect or "hidden" costs to 20-25 per cent through efficient inventory management and monitoring. In addition, turnaround time should be optimised to 700-800 km per day, with the target of increasing truck trips by 50 per cent. The throughput of the road network has to be raised with better quality roads and a higher proportion national highways in the road network.

ly short-term funds, which could fly out on monetary policy tightening by global central banks like the US Fed.

Large-scale foreign buying continued, with Rs 2,720.95 crore net purchase reported by the exchanges on Friday.

"The Fed's decision to keep rates unchanged will help FIIs to maintain a positive view on emerging markets like India," said Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Financial Services.

Strong first quarter FY21 performance by IT major Accenture led to a rally in Indian IT stocks.

The BSE IT index gained 1.70 per cent, led by gains for Infosys (2.64 per cent), Wipro (1.89 per cent), HCL Technologies (1.32 per cent) and TCS (0.87 per cent).

"Accenture's Q1 performance and guidance came in well ahead of expectations largely due to continued strong demand in outsourcing and recovery in the consulting business," said Emkay Global Financial Services. "A broad-based demand recovery and sustained healthy growth momentum in revenue/order booking of the outsourcing business augur well for Indian IT peers."

Europe, US top markets for Indian IT contractors



Mumbai, Dec 18: The United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United States and South Africa are among the top countries attracting and retaining high-skilled Indian workers in the contracting marketplace, says a survey.

The survey titled 'Global Demand for Indian IT Contractors' has been done by contractor hiring platform Techfynder that a majority of companies from these regions on the platform have shown an interest in hiring for core domains that include cloud, cyber and digitisation.

The findings are based on the survey of 52,000 contractors from across the country between January and December 2020, to find out the trends in the contractual job marketplace in India.

Due to the pandemic, many businesses are going online to offer their products and services, which has further increased the demand for IT contractors in roles such as software engineers, senior java developers, cyber security engineers, data scientists, web developers, and UI/UX designers, it noted.

As per the survey, the

UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United States and South Africa are the top five countries attracting and retaining a highly skilled Indian workforce.

Further, it said since March this year there was a staggering 610 per cent growth in job postings for IT contractors across the Philippines, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Canada, Kenya and Brazil.

The information technology sector tops the charts with 48 per cent hiring of the contractual workforce. It is followed by insurance (18 per cent), banking and finance (16 per cent), telecommunications (12 per cent) and pharmaceuticals (6 per cent), the survey said.

"The IT contractual job market has always seen good traction. However, the growth for contractors in India has only been exemplified during the pandemic, which massively impacted the global job market.

"Gradually, companies in India, and around the world are making a shift in talent acquisition and embracing contractual hiring. As a result, there is a rising demand for our services," Techfynder Founder and CEO Praeven Madire said. —PTI

TS DEET TIES UP WITH EQUIFAX FOR STAFF VERIFICATION

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Digital Employment Exchange of Telangana (DEET) has officially collaborated with consumer credit rating agency Equifax to streamline the process of employment verification.

"This strategic collaboration, through the introduction of new digital services on DEET app, will open gates for swift employment & ID verification for employees, easing out the tedious process of hiring," DEET said in an official release.

The current system of employee verification takes upto 10 days. With this collaboration, DEET and Equifax aim at enhancing the employment ecosystem in Telangana and make the process of recruitment and verification instant.

Equifax Analytics is the only significant employer-contributed employment data repository in the country, enabling instant employment verification.

Speaking on the collaboration, IT minister K.T. Rama Rao said, "I see this collaboration of DEET and Equifax as another stepping stone by the government towards a brighter future for the employment sector."

Copper tops \$8,000 as Goldman points to commodities super-cycle

Dec. 18: Copper topped \$8,000 a tonne for the first time in more than seven years, with Goldman Sachs Group Inc and BlackRock Inc pointing to the start of a new long-term bull market as supply lags an expected demand boom.

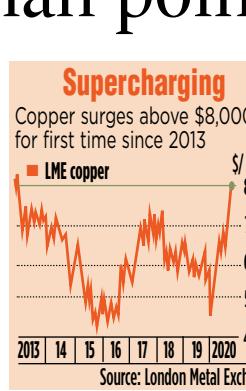
The market is witnessing the sharpest rally in more than a decade, with China's appetite for commodities and supply snags early on in the Covid-19 pandemic

lifting copper about 80 per cent from its March lows. Expectations for a deficit, the weaker dollar, and its role in green technology have also fuelled gains. Some banks and investors are now drawing comparisons to the spike in the early 2000s, when a jump in Chinese orders ushered in the last super-cycle for commodities.

"You have all the tell-tale signs of a super-cycle," Jeff

Currie, head of commodities research at Goldman Sachs, told Bloomberg TV. He cited metals hitting multidecadal highs, the weaker dollar, crude oil reaching \$50, and rising global liquidity.

Copper spiked to \$8,028 a tonne, the highest price since 2013, on Thursday, on the London Metal Exchange. Most other metals also gained, with aluminum rising 0.5 per cent.



Singapore iron ore futures pushed above \$160 a tonne, hitting the highest level since trading began in 2013.

Goldman pointed to a positive feedback loop between commodities, the dollar and emerging-market growth that has driven past structural bull markets. At the centre is strong, synchronized, policy-driven demand focused on wealth redistribution

and renewables and, with commodity supply-side spending outside of renewables still at very low levels, this demand growth should keep markets tight for the foreseeable future, it said in a December 17 note.

BlackRock expects copper to hit new all-time highs in the upswing of the cycle, Evy Hambro, the firm's global head of thematic investing, said.

China's success at containing the pandemic and optimism about global economic growth next year is fuelling gains across industrial commodities from iron ore to oil. It's been a remarkable turnaround for copper, which fell more than 50 per cent from a record high in 2011, trading below \$5,000 a tonne during a slump in 2015-16 and again earlier this year.

—Bloomberg



Srihitha Amritha

Srihitha, Amritha end runners-up

Hyderabad: Hyderabad golfers Srihitha Mandava and Amritha Mandava secured second positions in the South Tour junior championship at the Eagleton Golf Resort in Bengaluru.

Srihitha was tied for the top spot in the girls 12-14 age group with Saanvi Soma after both players scored 73 and 75 in the two rounds. However, Saanvi won the play-off on the second hole to emerge winner. Lavanya Jadon finished third with scores of 82 and 83 in the two rounds.

In the girls 15-18 age group, Amritha came up with scores of 81, 78 and 80 in the three rounds to lag behind winner Vidushi Keni of Bengaluru who scored 77, 76 and 77 in the three rounds. Nishma Patel of Mumbai was third with scores of 77, 84 and 79.

Rooney's son Kai signs for Man U

London: Wayne Rooney's son Kai has followed in his father's footsteps by signing for Manchester United.

United's record goalscorer posted a picture on social media of the 11-year-old, the oldest of Rooney's four sons, signing a contract at his father's former club.

Rooney accompanied the image with the caption: "Proud day, Kai signing for @manchesterunited. Keep up the hard work son."

Rooney, 38, now in interim charge of Championship club Derby, joined United from Everton in 2004 as a teenager. The former England striker had a glittering 13-year career at Old Trafford, scoring 253 times in 559 appearances and breaking Bob Charlton's long-standing goals record in January 2017. — AFP

Smith gears up for Alvarez bout

Los Angeles: Britain's Callum Smith will be out to prove that size does matter on Saturday when he defends his World Boxing Association super-middleweight crown against pound-for-pound king Saul "Canelo" Alvarez in Texas.

The unbeaten Smith (27-0, 19 knockouts) will take sizeable height and reach advantages into the ring at the Alamodome in San Antonio against the naturally smaller Alvarez (53-1-2, 36 KOs). Alvarez is favourite for Saturday's bout. — AFP

ASHWIN ON FIRE

Spinner takes four to tie Aussies in knots on Day 2

Adelaide, Dec. 18: Ravichandran Ashwin bagged four wickets as a dominant India held a 62-run lead at stumps on day two of the Adelaide day-night Test after Australian captain Tim Paine ran out of batting partners.

Paine was left stranded on 73 not out when the Australian innings ended at 191 to trail India's 244 by 53 runs.

Ashwin had figures of 4-55 while Umesh Yadav took 3-40.

At stumps, India in their second innings were one down for nine with Mayank Agarwal on five and night-watchman Jasprit Bumrah yet to score. The under-pressure Prithvi Shaw, who was out for a duck in the first innings, was bowled by Pat Cummins for four.

Fifteen wickets fell on the day which started when Cummins and Mitchell Starc took just 25 deliveries to knock off the final four India batsmen.

Australia in turn struggled to make headway as Bumrah, Ashwin and Yadav worked their way through the batting order. Even with India spilling five chances, they never allowed Australia to settle apart from a determined



Paine who plugged on to his eighth half century, aided in part by being dropped by Agarwal on 26.

It was Paine's only misstep and he brought up his 50 off 68 deliveries with an assured cut to the boundary. As his confidence grew he produced a reverse sweep to move into the 60s with a four off Ashwin.

After Australia took 28 balls to get their first runs on the board, Bumrah stepped up to remove Matthew Wade and the out-of-form Joe Burns for eight each before dinner.

Ashwin's spin captured the wickets of Steve Smith, Travis Head and debutant Cameron Green between dinner and tea. — AFP



Ravichandran Ashwin (second from left) of India celebrates with teammates after dismissing Australia's Steve Smith on the second day in Adelaide on Friday. — AFP

SCORECARD

India 1st Innings: (overnight 233 for 6): Saha c Paine b Starc 9, Ashwin c Paine b Cummins 15, Yadav c Wade b Starc 6, Bumrah not out 4, Shami c Head b Cummins 0. Extras (B-2, LB-8, NB-7, WD-1) 18. Total (all out in 93.1 overs) 244. FoW: 1-0, 2-3, 3-100, 4-188, 5-196, 6-206, 7-233, 8-235, 9-240, 10-244. **Bowling:** Starc 21-5-53-4, Hazlewood 20-6-47-1, Cummins 21-7-48-3, Green 9-2-15, Nathan Lyon 21-2-68-1, Marnus Labuschagne 1-0-3-0.

Australia 1st Innings: Wade lbw b Bumrah 8, Burns lbw b Bumrah 8, Labuschagne lbw b Yadav 47, Smith c Rahane b Ashwin 11, Head c&b Ashwin 7, Green c Kohli b Ashwin 11, Paine not out 73, Cummins c Rahane b Yadav 0, Starc run out 15, Lyon c Kohli b Ashwin 10, Hazlewood c Pujara b Yadav 8. Extras (LB-3) 3. Total (all out in 72.1 overs) 191. FoW: 1-16, 2-29, 3-45, 4-65, 5-79, 6-111, 7-139, 9-167, 10-191. **Bowling:** Yadav 16.1-5-40-3, Bumrah 21.7-52-2, Lyon 17.4-41-0, Anderson 18.3-5-2.

India 2nd Innings: Paine c Cummins 4, Mayank not out 5, Bumrah not out 0. Total (1st wicket in 6 overs) 9. FoW: 1-7. **Bowling:** Starc 3-1-3-0, Cummins 3-2-6-1.

NUMBERS GAME**R. ASHWIN'S BEST BOWLING IN AUSTRALIA:**

● Ravichandran Ashwin recorded the best bowling performance in Australia by taking four for 55 off 18 overs. It was only second time when this off-spinner took four wickets in an innings in Australia. His previous best in Australia was 4 for 105 off 19 overs at Sydney in January 2015.

● Ashwin also became the third highest wicket taker for India against Australia in Tests after Anil Kumble (111 wickets in 38 innings of 20 Tests) and Harbhajan Singh (95 wickets in 35 innings of 18 Tests). He took 81 wickets at an average of 31.00 in 29 innings of 16 Tests by end of the Australian first innings. — S. PERVEZ QASIER



Mickil makes it a triple ton

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, DEC. 18

Mickil Jaiswal converted his double century into a triple hundred to become the first batsman to achieve the 300-run mark in the 2020-21 season of the Hyderabad Cricket Association's A-1 Division three-day league matches.

Resuming his innings on 292 on Friday, the MP Colts batsman finished with 305 not out. His knock comprised 24 boundaries, 16 sixes and came off 271 balls. Mickil continued his form in the second innings to hit an unbeaten 75 that took his match tally to a whopping 380 without being dismissed, and achieved an astronomical average indeed.

For the record, the Colts beat Enscore by four wickets to take six points from their opening game of the season.

MR Charan was the other performer of the day. He hit 109 in a losing cause for the Income Tax team. Charan's run-a-ball knock included nine fours and two sixes but Sporting XI went on to win the match by nine wickets.

In other matches, Deccan Chronicle defeated EMCC, Jai Hanuman beat Budding Star, Gemini Friends proved too strong for Cambridge XI and Continental zapped Zinda Tilismath.

● Cambridge XI 182 & 163 in 34.2 overs (Shreyas Valsala 10, A. Varun Goud 68 n.o., B. Anirudh 4/33) bt EMCC 359/9 in 89.3 overs & 153/9 in 33.3 overs (Mohit Bhowmick 53, Aman Raou 42, C. V. Milind 32, Ravi Teja 3/23). Points: Deccan Chronicle 6, EMCC 0.

● Day-2: BDI 202/9 in 90 overs (B. Revanth 78, R. Yeshwanth Reddy 51; B. Tejohar 38) vs R. Dayanand.

Duffy, Seifert win match for Kiwis

Auckland, Dec. 18: New Zealand cruised to a five-wicket win over Pakistan in the first Twenty20 international at Auckland's Eden Park on Friday.

The Black Caps ended on 156 for five with seven balls to spare after losing the toss and being set a target of 154.

Tim Seifert top-scored for the hosts with 57, while debutant paceman Jacob Duffy took four for 33.

Pakistan never recovered from a slow start, despite a fighting 42 from stand-in captain Shadab Khan.

Haris Rauf was the tourists' best bowler, taking three for 29.

Pakistan had a rocky preparation for the match when 10 of their touring party tested

positive for Covid-19 during quarantine after arriving in New Zealand.

In contrast, New Zealand were coming off a 2-0 series win over the West Indies and playing in home conditions.

Man of the match Duffy made a sensational start, dismissing opener Abdullah Shafique for a duck in his first over. He then claimed the scalps of Mohammad Rizwan and Mohammad Hafeez in his second over. Khan tried to rescue his side's innings, smashing 42. — AFP

Brief scores: **Pakistan** 153/9 in 20 overs (Shadab Khan 42; Jacob Duffy 4/33) lost to **New Zealand** 156/5 in 18.5 overs (Tim Seifert 57; Haris Rauf 3/29).

Los Angeles: Britain's Callum Smith will be out to prove that size does matter on Saturday when he defends his World Boxing Association super-middleweight crown against pound-for-pound king Saul "Canelo" Alvarez in Texas.

The unbeaten Smith (27-0, 19 knockouts) will take sizeable height and reach advantages into the ring at the Alamodome in San Antonio against the naturally smaller Alvarez (53-1-2, 36 KOs). Alvarez is favourite for Saturday's bout. — AFP

Man U ride on Rashford brace

Sheffield (United Kingdom), Dec. 18: Manchester United mounted yet another rescue mission on Thursday, beating Sheffield United 3-2 to maintain their perfect away record in the Premier League this season.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's Jekyll-and-Hyde team now have 18 points from six matches on the road — coming from behind to win each one of them.

Two goals from Marcus Rashford and an Anthony Martial strike lifted United to sixth in the table, five points behind leaders Liverpool with a game in hand.

But Sheffield United are staring into the abyss — with just one point to their name, Chris Wilder's side have fewer points after their first 13 games of a league season than any other team in English top-flight history.

The visitors outclassed Sheffield United for long periods at Bramall Lane but faced a nervy final few minutes before celebrating their 10th consecutive away victory in the league.

Sheffield United started brightly as Manchester United struggled to find their rhythm and it was no surprise when they scored just their sixth league goal of the season in the fifth

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THE RESULTS

Manchester United	3
Rashford 26, 51, Martial 33)	
Sheffield United	2
(McGoldrick 5, 87)	
Aston Villa	0
Burnley	0

minute.

United appeared to be in control but McGoldrick headed home from a corner in the 87th minute to make life uncomfortable and Henderson had to dive to his right to keep out a powerful shot by substitute Lys Mousset. But the visitors clung on for the win.

VILLA HELD BY BURNLEY
Aston Villa squandered multiple chances as they were held to a frustrating 0-0 draw by battling Burnley on Thursday.

The hosts dominated without being at their best but were thwarted by the Clarets, who climbed out of the Premier League relegation zone.

Anwar El Ghazi and Kortney Hause hit the woodwork while Matt Lowton cleared a deflected strike from Ahmed Elmohamady off the line.

— AFP

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