



## Dr PK Warriier, man who brought Ayurveda to masses, dies at 100



KOCHI: Dr PK Warriier, a flag-bearer of Ayurveda who played a critical role in popularising Kerala's traditional mode of treatment across the world, passed away at the age of 100 at his home in Kottakkal. He was the chief physician and managing trustee of the Kottakkal Arya Vaidya Sala, one of the leading Ayurvedic healthcare chains in the country. In June, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had inaugurated via videoconference the centenary birthday celebrations of Dr Warriier, saying very few in the world would be as blessed as him. "It is a celebration of not only Arya Vaidya Sala, but of everyone who loves Ayurveda," he had said on the occasion. Dr Warriier, who took over the mantle of leadership at Kottakkal in the 50s, is considered a doyen of modern Ayurveda as a result of his extensive contributions to making the practice accessible to the larger public and his research in drug standardisation and development. He co-authored a five-volume treatise on 500 species of Indian medicinal plants and has published many research papers in the fields of Ayurveda and ethnopharmacology.



Chariots of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra near completion ahead of the annual Rath Yatra festival, at Grand Road in Puri on Saturday



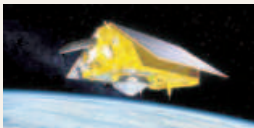
## ISRO to launch geo imaging satellite on Aug 12

BENGALURU

THE Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is getting back into launch activity fully at Sriharikota spaceport with the planned orbiting of geo imaging satellite GISAT-1 on board GSLV-F10 rocket on August 12.

GISAT-1 will facilitate near realtime observation of Indian sub-continent

It's going to be only the second launch of the Bengaluru-headquartered space agency in the Covid-19-hit 2021. ISRO successfully launched PSLV-C51 mission on February 28 with Brazil's earth obser-



vation satellite Amazonia-1 and 18 co-passengers, including some built by stu-

dents, on board. The 2,268-kg GISAT-1 was originally slated to be launched from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh's Nellore district on March 5 last year but was postponed a day before the blast-off due to

technical reasons. Thereafter the launch was delayed due to Covid-19-induced lockdown which affected normal work. It was scheduled for March 28 this year but a "minor issue" with the satellite forced its postponement.

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### UP POPULATION DRAFT BILL

# MORE THAN 2 KIDS? NO GOVT JOB, CAN'T CONTEST POLLS

Proposes stringent measures for violators

LUCKNOW

ANYONE violating two-child policy in Uttar Pradesh will be barred from contesting local bodies polls, from applying for or getting promotion in government jobs, and receiving any kind of government subsidy.

These are some of the proposals mentioned under the draft titled The Uttar Pradesh Population (Control, Stabilization and Welfare) Bill, 2021.

The UP State Law Commission (UPSCL) website says, "The State Law Commission, UP is working on control, stabilisation and welfare of the population of the



state and has prepared a draft bill." Public suggestions have been invited to improve the draft bill and July 19 is the last

date for it. Listing out benefits for public servants who adopt the two-child policy, the draft bill

says, "Public servants who adopt the two-child norm will get two additional increments during the entire service, ma-

ternity or as the case may be, paternity leave of 12 months, with full salary and allowances and three per cent increase in the employer's contribution fund under national pension scheme."

A State Population Fund will be formed to facilitate the implementation of the Act.

Announcing the government's responsibilities, the draft bill says that maternity centres will be established at every primary health centre. The centres and NGOs will be assigned the task of distribute contraceptive pills, condoms, and spread awareness about family planning methods through community health workers. Continued on Page 4

## Biden nominates LA Mayor Garcetti as US ambassador to India

WASHINGTON

US President Joe Biden on Friday nominated Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti as his ambassador to India.

If confirmed by the Senate, Garcetti, 50, would replace Kenneth Juster, who served as US Ambassador to India during the Trump administration. Early this week, Juster was appointed as distinguished fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Announcing the nomination along with several other ambassadors, the White House said Eric M Garcetti has been the Mayor of the City of Los Angeles since 2013, following 12 years as a member of the City Council, including six as Council President.

As Mayor, Garcetti oversees the busiest container port in the Western Hemisphere, the largest municipal utility in the country, and one of the busiest airports in the world. He led LA's successful bid to return the summer Olympic



Games to American soil for the first time in three decades. He currently chairs LA Metro, the country's second-busiest transit agency, which is building or extending 15 new transit lines, and shifting to an all-electric fleet.

Garcetti co-founded Climate Mayors and led more than 400 US mayors to adopt the Paris Climate agreement. He is the current Chair of C40 Cities - a network of 97 of the world's biggest cities taking bold climate action and has led the organization's engagement and expansion in India as well as C40's global response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the sharing of best practices and resources.

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## Farmers plan to protest near Parl from July 22

NEW DELHI: Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait on Saturday said that from July 22 onwards, 200 people will hold protests near Parliament, as part of the ongoing farmers' protests. "If the Centre wants a discussion on farm laws, we're ready for talks. But, if talks do not happen or reap fruitful results, then from July 22 onwards, 200 of our people will hold protests near Parliament," Tikait said.

## Cops seize 350 kg heroin worth ₹2,500 cr

PURNA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

THE Delhi Police Special Cell has seized 354 kg heroin worth Rs 2,500 crore and busted a huge international drug syndicate. Four people - three from Haryana and one from Delhi - have been arrested so far in the case.

This is one of the biggest consignments of drugs to ever be caught by the Special Cell and one of the largest drug syndicates to be ex-



Delhi Police Special Cell with three of the four accused in a drug syndicate of heroin pose for the media, at PHQ in New Delhi on Saturday

posed. The police are investigating an angle of narco-terrorism in the case. Interrogation of suspects is

currently underway.

In a press conference on Saturday, Neeraj Thakur of the Special Cell said the

operation had been going on for months. The drugs had come from Afghanistan. They were transported from Mumbai to Delhi by sea in hidden containers.

"The drugs were to be further processed at a factory near Shivpuri in Madhya Pradesh. A house was rented in Faridabad to hide them. The link operator was sitting in Afghanistan," he said. The drugs were to be supplied in Punjab.

## Pandemic isn't slowing down: WHO Raises concern over Delta variant

NEW DELHI

WORLD Health Organization's Chief Scientist Soumya Swaminathan has said that the Covid-19 pandemic has not been "slowing down", citing data on new infections and fatalities in a span of 24 hours.

"In the last 24 hours, close to 5,00,000 new Covid cases have been reported and about 9,300 deaths - now that is not a pandemic that is slowing down," Swaminathan said in an interview. "What we are seeing now...is



a diverging pandemic...there are parts of the world where vaccination coverage has reached a point where there

is a slowdown of severe cases and people being ill enough to be hospitalised..."

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## Messi, England, Djokovic eye history on blockbuster Sunday

NEW DELHI

SUNDAY, July 11, is a day of blockbusters as sports fans will find little time off their screens while witnessing what could turn out to be important events in sporting history. On Sunday morning, Argentina's Lionel Messi will lead Albiceleste in the Copa America final against arch-rivals Brazil in Rio de Janeiro's iconic Maracana Stadium. While the Copa final will start the day, the Euro 2020 final between England and Italy will wind up the day as England will look for their first ever major international trophy in football since the 1966 World Cup. They face Italy at the iconic Wembley Stadium in London in front of their home crowd. In fact, this will be their first-ever final at a major football tournament since 1966. The Euro final will begin late on Sunday night at 12.30 a.m. (Monday) India time, 11.00 p.m. UAE time and 8 p.m. British Summer Time.

In between these two football continental finals, Novak Djokovic will be playing at the Wimbledon final against Matteo Berrettini, eyeing his 20th Grand Slam title to draw level with Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal as players to have won most Grand Slam men's singles titles. Djokovic, the world No 1, has won 19 so



far and starts favourite against Berrettini, who is into his first Grand Slam final. The Wimbledon final will be played in the evening. Apart from football and tennis, there are cricket matches as well. The Indian women's cricket team, on tour in England will be playing the second T20 International on Sunday night. The match will begin at 7 pm India time. Australian men's team, on tour of the Caribbean, will play West Indies in the second T20 International after losing the first. The match will begin 5 am India time.

# Southwest monsoon revives; IMD predicts widespread rainfall

NEW DELHI

THE southwest monsoon revived on Saturday, with easterly winds intensifying and covering parts of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that a low-pressure area is likely to form over west-central and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal coasts by July 11. These conditions will result in widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfalls along the west coast and adjoining peninsular India during the next four days.

The IMD also said lower-level easterly winds from the Bay of Bengal have extended northwards, making conditions favourable for the further advancement of the monsoon.

The weather department has also predicted heavy rainfall from Saturday in several states and Union Territories, including Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Gujarat, and the Andaman



and Nicobar Islands, under the influence of the southwest monsoon.

"Strong winds between

the speed of 40-50 kmph gusting to 60 kmph over southwest, west-central Arabian Sea, northeast

Arabian Sea and along and off the Gujarat coast; Lakshadweep area and along and off the Kerala and

Karnataka coasts; south Bay of Bengal," the department said.

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## Thundershowers likely in Delhi for next 5-6 days

New Delhi: In a respite from the scorching heat in the national capital, the Indian Meteorological Department has predicted light rain or thundershowers in Delhi during the next 5-6 days and attributed the rain to the advancement of monsoon over the National Capital Region from Saturday onwards. According to IMD, the monsoon will reach Delhi on Saturday, making it the most delayed monsoon in the national capital in the last 15 years.





# TS seeks ₹8K cr RBI grant to make up for lockdown loss

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE cash-strapped Telangana likely to rely on borrowings again in the second quarter (July to September) of the present financial year 2021-22. The State government has sought Rs 8,000 crore from the Reserve Bank of India.

In July alone, the government requested the RBI to release Rs 3,000 crore through the sale of security bonds.

As the State was hit by second wave of Corona pandemic and lockdown-2, the government had borrowed more than Rs 12,000 crore in the first quarter (April to June) to meet the financial needs, mainly the payment of salaries

- The government requests RBI to release Rs 3,000 crore through the sale of security bonds
- Earlier, it had borrowed Rs 12,000 crore in the first quarter to pay salaries, pensions etc



to the government employees, Aasara pensions and for to

provide treatment to corona patients in the government

Covid hospitals.

Officials said that the State would borrow Rs 3,000 crore in July month alone. The RBI has been requested to mobilise Rs 2,000 crore by the sale of bonds on July 13 and Rs 1,000 crore on July 27. State Finance department has sent a request to the apex bank to release Rs 3,000 crore borrowed amount in August and Rs 2,000 crore in September.

The demand for requirement of funds is growing in Telangana after the State announced the new Pay Revision Commission (PRC) for government employees and new schemes like old age pension to poor above 57 years and Rs 5 lakh insurance scheme for weavers from next month.

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

THE Integrated Intelligence Training Academy (IITA), one of the state Police wings in the State, set to be a cent per cent green zone soon. The IITA is one of the finest, advanced centres in the country, where police dogs from other States are brought for training in assisting police in tracing drugs, explosives, identifying missing people, searching crime scenes for evidence and security of the VIPs etc.

TRS leader and Rajya Sabha MP Joginapally Santosh Kumar accompanied by Chief Minister's Special Secretary Rajasekhara Reddy, Intelligence IG Prabhakar Rao and DIG Tafseer Iqbal took part in planting saplings on the premises of the academy here on Saturday.



MP Joginapally Santosh Kumar planting a sapling on the premises of IITA on Saturday

During the interaction, the officials at IITA explained MP that special efforts were being made to improve greenery on the sprawling 80-acre campus. He was told that planting new saplings was a practice followed on the special days and the campus currently has more than 20,000 plants and trees. A few years back, when the academy

faced severe shortage of water, three tankers were commissioned on daily basis for watering the gardens on the campus, but eventually rainwater harvesting helped the premises to increase groundwater table. There are currently two big rainwater harvesting facilities at IITA and the water thus collected is being used for improving the greenery.

## Guv to take vax jab in tribal village

Through this, she hopes to dispel myths around vaccine hesitancy among tribals

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

WITH an objective to promote cent per cent vaccination among tribals in Telangana, Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan will take her second dose of Covishield vaccine in a tribal habitation in the State. She will take second dose of vaccine at KC Thanda, a tribal habitation in Maheshwaram mandal of Ranga Reddy district on Monday.

The Governor hopes her vaccination in a tribal village would help dispel vaccine hesitancy among tribals. Dr Tamilisai, earlier, called for cent per cent vaccination for all tribals in the State, including those in remote areas. She took her first dose of vaccine at Government Hospital in Puducherry.

## GHMC turns dumping yard into theme park

- Monolith Park, with a water fountain made from a single rock, has been inaugurated by City Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi
- GHMC developing 57 theme parks in city limits by spending Rs 137 crore

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

ONCE an open land with garbage dumped all over in Jubilee Hills has now been turned into a monolith theme park, all thanks to the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC).

Hyderabad Mayor Gadwal Vijayalakshmi inaugurated the Monolith Park on Saturday along with MLA Danam Nagendar and Deputy Mayor Mothe Srilatha.

Speaking on the occasion, the Mayor said that a total of



Hyderabad Mayor Gadwal Vijaya Lakshmi inaugurating the Monolith Park in Jubilee Hills on Saturday. MLA Danam Nagender also seen

919 parks were being developed in GHMC limits besides 504 tree parks in different parts of the city.

"The GHMC is developing 57 theme parks in its limits by spending Rs 137 crore, which will be thrown open to the public soon," the Mayor added. The park has been developed in an area of 1,100 square yards with a single large stone (monolith) turned

into a water fountain to attract the visitors. The civic body has set up artistic wooden benches with flooring designed in front of the waterfall for pleasant seating by the visitors. The walls at the park were painted multi-coloured with a Hyderabad theme representing historical places and lifestyle of city people.

To cover the park with greenery, the civic body has

planted different types of saplings on the park's premises. To attract the visitors and to add the attraction to the park in the locality, the civic body has also installed lights around the fountain and also in different parts of the park.

GHMC Zonal Commissioner (Khairatabad) P Pravina and other officials of the corporation were also present.

## CM to attend meet on vacant posts in all depts today

Calls for an emergency meet with officials ahead of Cabinet meeting on July 13

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

AHEAD of State Cabinet meeting on July 13, the Chief Minister, K Chandrashekar Rao, has called for an emergency meeting on Sunday with the Special Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries and Secretaries of all departments to finalise the number of vacant posts in each wing. The finalised list of vacancies would be submitted to the Chief Minister who would seek the State cabinet approval before issuing job notification.



The government already announced to fill up 50,000 vacancies through direct recruitment. State Secretary to Finance K Ramakrishna Rao would hold the meeting with top officials of all departments. The officials have been asked to furnish the details of vacant posts in every department in the meeting.

The vacancies have been identified in 23 wings including Police, Education, all Welfare departments, Industries, Irrigation, Legislature, Revenue, Municipal Administration and Urban Development, Transportation, Roads and Buildings etc.

## High Court summons Special CS in contempt case

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT  
HYDERABAD

THE High Court single bench headed by Justice MS Ramachandra Rao summoned Special Chief Secretary, Education PELIB department, Telangana to be present before the court during the next hearing.

Justice Rao hearing a contempt case filed by K Padma and 37 others, who sought to enhance wages of casual employees working in Zilla Grandhalaya Samstha (Libraries Department) in the undivided Ranga Reddy and Nalgonda Districts, as per GO's 841 and 33. They said the department was wilfully committing contempt in not implementing and obeying the orders of the High Court.

Justice MS Ramachandra Rao directed the Special Chief Secretary, Education PELIB Department to be present before the court on August 12 and adjourned the matter.

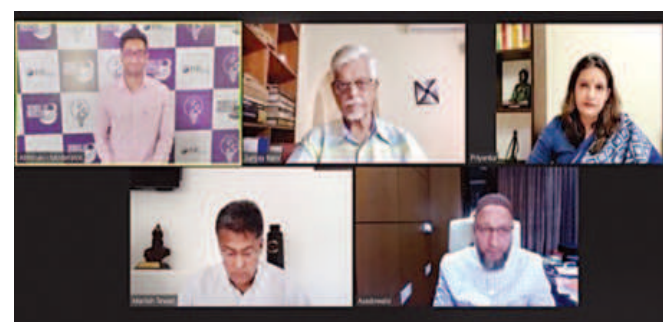
## ISB session on leadership calls for unity among oppn parties

Congress MP Manish Tewari, MIM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi and Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi say that opposition parties should keep aside their ideological differences and work towards nation-building

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

LEADERS from different political parties stressed for a more active and constructive role by the opposition parties in the country. They participated in the ISB Leadership Summit 2021, an online panel discussion on - 'Does India lack an effective opposition'.

Members of Parliament from Indian National Congress, AIMIM and Shiv Sena-Manish Tewari, Asaduddin Owaisi and Priyanka Chaturvedi respectively and political commentator Dr Sanjaya Baru spoke on the occasion. Sharing her insights at the session, Priyanka Chaturvedi, Shiv Sena MP, called on the need to keep aside ideological differences, bring opposition parties un-



Opposition parties MPs along with political analyst Dr Sanjaya Baru attending the virtual session of ISB on Saturday

der one umbrella and strengthen the Indian democratic set-up.

Dr Sanjaya Baru called on the need and importance of strengthening the foundational framework of the Indian Constitution and put aside ideological differences and work along with the structure and set-up of the

country.

AIMIM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi urged the opposition parties to work together and fight for what was right. Congress MP Manish Tewari underlined that coalitions have matured in the country over the years and would play a more important role in nation-building.

## Mohan Babu files complaint against videos on social media

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
HYDERABAD

VETERAN Telugu film actor Mohan Babu on Saturday lodged a complaint with the Hyderabad cybercrime police stating that some unknown persons were posting derogatory videos on social media against him.

In the complaint, he said that some persons had made videos against him and uploaded them on YouTube.

The videos were also being circulated on social media for the last few days. In one of the videos, he said a man and his family were seen using unparliamentary language against him. The actor said that his legal advisor had already submitted links of the said videos to the police.

Based on the complaint, police booked a case under Sections 504 and 506 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Section 67 of the IT Act and initiated the probe.

## REOPENING OF ZOO PARK: A FEW SAY YES, MANY NO

MOHSIN ALI  
HYDERABAD

THE citizens of Hyderabad shared mixed views over reopening of Nehru Zoological Park. One of the entertainment zones of the city, the zoo is all set for reopening on Monday, after two months of lockdown. To prevent the spread of Covid-19 from humans to wild animals, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change had shut the park for the public on May 2.

Though it could be good news for children, people from Hyderabad are not happy with the decision taken by the authorities. Not only people, but also the health experts who opined that it could be risky

- Many feel its not safe to reopen when the corona is still around
- Say the controlling crowds visiting zoo would be daunting
- Zoo authorities say it's a personal choice to visit or not
- No entry to children below 10 years and adults above 65 years

for public health.

Maryam Begum, a lecturer of a private degree college, expressing angst over the decision said, "The



Zoo authorities sanitising the entrance on Saturday

health experts across the country are repeatedly warning of third

wave, and it is heard that it could impact children. This is definitely

not the right time to reopen public places. Government should hold back its decision."

"Is it important to reopen entertainment zone when all educational institutions are closed due to pandemic? With schools and colleges closed, parents will easily give into their children demands. All the safety guidelines will go kaput and no staff can monitor huge crowds," she said.

Meanwhile, the authorities have issued strict guidelines restricting children below 10 years and elders above 65 years from visiting the zoo. Further, the authorities also announced penalties for violations.

Yasmeen Sultana, a resident from Bahadurpura said, "The zoo the park is very close to our locality

and as the children are at home, they might ask us to take them there. Since corona is not finished yet, the government should not open public places for some more time. Social distancing would go for a toss in public places, especially when children are around."

However, a few people who are in favour of decision, said that the government would not force anybody to visit the park and it would be people's wish to visit the place or not. They said those who think it's risky should not visit the park.

According to zoo authorities, thermal screening at the entry point would be mandatory for visitors and those with symptoms of cold and fever would not be allowed entry into the zoo.



# Delhiites to pay hefty fine for violating noise pollution

NEW DELHI

DELHIITES will have to pay Rs 10,000 to Rs 1 lakh for violating noise pollution norms by using loudspeakers without permission or DG sets as the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) has asked authorities to strictly implement revised rules.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) revised penalties, one will have to pay Rs 10,000 fine in case of noise violation by a loudspeaker or a public address system at a public place without permission or during night, and the equipment will also be confiscated.

A fine of Rs 1 lakh has been set for Diesel Generator (DG) sets of over 1,000 KVA, Rs 25,000 for DG sets between 62.5 KVA to 1,000 KVA and Rs 10,000 for DG sets upto 62.5 KVA, the DPCC order said. Permissible noise level in residential areas is 55 decibel during day time and 45 decibel during night. Similarly, in commercial areas, the permissible sound limit is 65 decibel during day time and 55 decibel during night.

In sensitive areas it is 50 decibel during the day and 40 decibel at night. Other than this, there are 'silent zones' that includes areas which lie within 100 metres of premises of schools, colleges, hospitals and courts. According



to the order, in case of bursting of fire crackers beyond the prescribed limit within premises of any RWA or at a marriage function, the organiser and the owner of the premises will have to pay Rs 20,000 for the first violation.

"For the second violation, the organiser and the owner will have to pay Rs 40,000. For more than two violations within a fixed premises or at a marriage function, the organiser and the owner will have to pay a fine of Rs 1 lakh.

The premises will also be sealed," the DPCC order stated. If noise pollution is caused by bursting of crackers beyond a limit at a marriage procession or public and religious rally, the organisers will have to pay Rs 10,000 fine and if it is in a silence zone then the fine will be doubled.

If an individual household bursts crackers in a residential or commercial zone, then the fine will be Rs 1,000. However, it will be Rs 3,000 in case of violation in

a silence zone. In case construction equipment emit sound beyond the permissible limit, a fine of Rs 50,000 will be imposed, the order said. DPCC officials said the penalties were revised by the CPCB in 2020 wherein recommendations were made that people have to shell out more money for going beyond noise pollution limits. The DPCC has issued directions to all DMs, SDMs, Delhi Police, and traffic police for strict compliance of these rules.

# India's Covid vaccination coverage exceeds 37 crore

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S cumulative Covid-19 vaccination coverage crossed 37 crore on Friday with 30,55,802 doses administered across the country in the last 24 hours. A total of 37,21,96,268 vaccine doses have been administered through 48,04,423 sessions, as per the provisional report of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) till 7 a.m. on Saturday.

In the ongoing massive vaccination coverage, 1,02,44,459 Healthcare Workers (HCWs) have so far administered first dose of the anti-Covid jabs and 73,84,439 of them have been provided second dose. A total of 1,76,51,159 Frontline Workers (FLWs) have received first dose of the vaccine and 98,42,138 have been administered the second dose.

The vaccination exercise, which is claimed to be world's largest drive, has so far covered 11,00,15,954 people aged between 18-44 who have got their first dose and 35,15,490 have received their second dose. In the drive, 9,29,29,982 people of the age group between 45-59 have got their first dose of vaccine and 2,27,96,218 have been administered the second dose.

This exercise has so far cov-



ered 6,99,01,188 people over 60 years of age having their first dose and 2,79,15,241 getting their second dose. India's vaccination exercise began on January 16 this year. To accelerate the pace and expanding the scope of Covid-19 vaccination throughout the country, the new phase of universalisation of the vaccination commenced from June 21 this year.

As per the Ministry data, more than 38.54 crore (38,54,01,150) vaccine doses have been provided to states and Union Territories (UTs) so far through all sources. Of this, the total consumption including wastages is 36,80,68,124 doses.

Amid vaccine crisis on government run health facilities with 'no slots available' indication showing on government's CoWIN App -- a platform to

made registration before approaching centres designated to vaccinate people -- despite Centre's all efforts to vaccinate people as soon as possible, the Minister further claimed that more than 1.73 crore (1,73,33,026) balance and unutilized Covid vaccine doses are still available with the states and the UTs and private hospitals to be administered.

As part of the nationwide vaccination drive, the Central government has been supporting the states and the UTs by providing them Covid vaccines free of cost. In the new phase of the universalization of the Covid-19 vaccination drive, the government is procuring and supplying (free of cost) 75 per cent of the vaccines being produced by the vaccine manufacturers in the country to states and the UTs.

# Helpline for healthcare workers facing mental health issues launched

NEW DELHI

A number of associations of doctors and psychiatrists from around the world have joined hands to launch a dedicated helpline for healthcare workers to address stress, depression and other psychological issues faced by them during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In an official statement issued on Saturday, the Global Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (GAPIO), one of the primary partners behind the initiative, said the move was particularly important as the second wave of the pandemic in the country has affected doctors, nurses and others in the sector in a big way.

This has led to significant challenges, with medical, nursing and allied healthcare workers experiencing stress, depression and distress while discharging their duties towards patient care, the GAPIO said in the statement. Ensuring mental wellbeing of healthcare workers is of prime importance, and GAPIO and Indian Psychiatric Society (IPS), along with other collaborating partners have launched a helpline for HCWs facing mental health issues to help them address it, said.

Other partners include, American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPD), the British Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (BAPIO), the Canada India Network Society (CINS) and the British Indian Psychiatric Association (BIPA), the statement said. Announcing the launch, Dr. Prathap C Reddy,

Chairman, Apollo Hospitals Group and Founder President, GAPIO said, "This is a very challenging and difficult time. An exponential rise in the cases of anxiety, post-traumatic stress and depression amongst healthcare and frontline workers has been seen.

With the support of psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and other mental health professionals, the mental health needs of HCWs needs to be addressed". The helpline, it is hoped, will ameliorate the stress and challenges that HCWs are facing amid this unprecedented crisis, he said. Dr. Anupam Sibal, President GAPIO, said, "Peer support sessions will be available to provide support. There will also be an opportunity for individual sessions and referrals, where needed, to be organised". In May, when the second wave was at its height, doctors and nurses had faced "nightmare in wards" seeing their patients die in large numbers. Prolonged duty shifts, watching patients die every day or family members pleading to save their lives, doctors on Covid duty in Delhi, had then opened up about their experiences and said they went through unimaginable mental agony during the worst phase of the second wave of the pandemic.

From government hospitals to private facilities, the calamitous second wave in Delhi had not only strained healthcare infrastructure to its limits, but also affected the physical and psychological well-being of doctors and other healthcare workers



A girl playing amid heavy downpour, in Jammu on Saturday

# Carcade to replace chariots on Rath Yatra in Kolkata

KOLKATA

IN a departure from tradition, Lord Jagannath and his divine siblings, amid the COVID-19 restrictions, will give the hand-pulled chariot a miss this time and instead travel in a cavalcade of 15 cars, covering a distance of three kilometres, as part of the ISKCON Kolkata's 50th year Rath Yatra celebrations. At the organisation's global headquarters in Mayapur, too, the annual festival will be a low-key affair, as just one tableau will be taken out on the premises with around 50 people pulling it in turns.

The city chapter of International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), which was supposed to

mark its golden jubilee this year with gala celebrations on the occasion of Rath Yatra, had to scrap its plans due to COVID-related curbs, its spokesperson Radharaman Das said on Saturday. The organisation, nevertheless, has made arrangements to ensure that the festival is observed with great fervour, he maintained. "On the day of Rath Yatra (July 12), around 12 noon, deities Sri Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadra Devi will be travelling from our Albert Road office to another centre on Gurusaday Road, where they will be putting up till July 20 evening," Das explained. He, however, rued the fact preparations to mark the golden jubilee had been underway for the past seven years, and the centre had

plans to deck up chariots and take out a huge procession on the occasion, but all that had to be cancelled in the wake of the pandemic. "We wanted to invite devotees from more than 150 different countries and 1200 ISKCON centres. But all plans stand cancelled. Also, with the threat of the pandemic's third wave looming, we appeal to people to stay at home and watch the live telecast of Rath Yatra rituals on our YouTube channel or Facebook page," Das stated. Last year, authorities had performed all rituals on the temple premises at Albert Road. "Three small chariots, similar to the ones pulled by children, were taken out briefly in the temple compound by the monks, as a symbolic gesture," Das added.

# Odisha to soon have beach shacks at six locations

BHUBANESWAR

LIKE Goa, tourists visiting Odisha beaches will very soon enjoy the best of food, chilled beverages, music and sea, all in one place. Accordingly, the state government has decided to introduce the facility of beach shacks at six beaches. The Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) has invited applications for the operation of shacks in six major beaches of the state, official sources said on Saturday. "This will not only attract tourists from outside Odisha, but the local tourists visiting the beaches will also have fun there. The beach shacks will have a refreshing ambience along with delectable food, chilled alcohol, and most importantly, the backdrop of white sands and gushing waves," state tourism secretary Vishal Dev told IANS.

Initially, shacks have been planned in six locations, which will be increased later, he said.

The government has decided to allow five shacks on the Puri-Konark marine drive in Puri district and five others in Gopalganj beach in Ganjam district.

Similarly, three shacks will be opened on the Talsari-Udaipur beach front in Balasore district while the same number of shacks will come up on the Paradeep sea beach in Jagatsinghpur district.

The Chandipur beach in Balasore district and Pati Sonapur in Ganjam district will have at least two shacks each. The tourism department, in consultation with the revenue and forest departments, is identifying suitable land for the shacks, which will be allotted on lease basis for a period of three years.

# 97L households to get tap water supply in 5 encephalitis-affected States

NEW DELHI

IN a short span of 22 months, the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has provided tap water supply to more than 97 lakh households in 61 Japanese Encephalitis-Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (JE-AES) affected priority districts in five states.

The five states with JE-AES affected priority districts are Assam, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. On August 15, 2019, when JJM was announced, only 8.02 lakh

(2.67 per cent) households in 61 JE-AES-affected districts across the five states had tap water supply.

In the last 22 months, tap water connections have been provided to additional 97.41 lakh households in these districts. "Now, 1.05 crore (35 per cent) households have assured tap water supply in JE-AES affected districts. This 32 per cent increase in household tap water connections in JE-AES priority districts is about 12 per cent higher than the national

average increase of 23.43 per cent in tap water supply across the country during the same period," the Ministry of Jal Shakti said.

Specific funds for JE-AES-affected priority districts are allocated on the basis of drinking water sources and the extent of water contamination.

JE-AES is a serious health hazard. The disease mostly affects children and young adults which can lead to morbidity and mortality. These infections

particularly affect malnourished children of poor economic backgrounds.

Union Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in his letters to the Chief Ministers of these five states has been constantly reiterating the Prime Minister's emphasis on providing tap water to all households in JE-AES affected districts, SC/ST majority villages and quality-affected areas on priority in next few months.

Among these five states, Bi-

har has performed well in providing tap water supply to rural households in its 15 JE-AES priority districts. On an average, 85.53 per cent tap water connections have been provided in these districts. Nalanda with 96 per cent tap water supply connections, followed by Saran and Gopalganj with 94 per cent, Vaishali and Siwan 91 per cent, Paschim Champaran 84 per cent, and Purvi Champaran 80 per cent are the leading performers in the state.





# PAC Chairman flays govt over ₹17,923 cr excess loans

AMARAVATI

ASSEMBLY Public Accounts Committee (PAC) chairman Payyavula Keshav on Saturday demanded the YSRCP government to explain whether or not the Union finance ministry had taken strong exception to loans of Rs 17,923 crore taken by the state government in excess of the ceiling imposed on it.

Keshav, a TDP MLA, also asked whether it was not a true that the Union finance ministry wrote a letter dated June 30 expressing its objections to the state government. In the letter, the assistant director of finance ministry, gave reasons why they were not conceding the AP's plea for raising the open market borrowings of over Rs 17,810 crore this year, he said.

In a statement here, the PAC chairman asserted that the objections of the Centre were

- Releases Centre's letter raising objections to AP loans beyond prescribed limit
- Demands govt to give its response to the Centre which sought clarification on the state's loans and their purpose



Payyavula Keshav

enough to understand how the AP finances and economy were crumbling under the Jagan Mohan Reddy's misrule. More and more objections were coming from the Union finance ministry to the AP government's efforts to make excess loans. It was high time that the Chief Minister, finance minister and the AP finance department explain to the public on the Cen-

tre's letters, he remarked.

Keshav demanded the YSRCP government to give its response to the Centre which sought clarification on the AP's loans and their purpose. It was alarming that the AP finances were slipping into a total mess. The Jagan Reddy regime was not giving correct and factual information to the Assembly, the Opposition and others in the state. At least,

the ruling party in AP should explain the factual position to the Centre, he said.

Keshav said that the Union finance ministry gave its response to a letter received from finance department, Government of Andhra Pradesh, requesting to issue the GoI consent for raising open market borrowing of Rs 17,810 crore for the first nine months of 2021-'22. The Centre clarified that an amount of Rs 17,923.94 crore was adjusted with the available borrowing space of AP on account of over-borrowing by the state during the earlier years.

The PAC chairman further said that the Centre's letter clarified that Rs 37,163 crore was considered for borrowing limit of AP for the first nine months of 2021-'22. This was as per the Central guideline to allow only 3.5 per cent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP).



DGP D Gautam Sawang at an awareness programme on Disha app and Mahila Mitra in Visakhapatnam on Saturday

## Women's safety tops govt priorities: DGP

- Says creating awareness on Disha app and Mahila Mitra among people is part of people-friendly policing
- States that focus is now on establishing Disha courts in each district of the State
- Notes that women in distress are feel much comfortable to lodge a complaint after Mahila Mitra is rolled out

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VISAKHAPATNAM

SAFETY of women tops the priority chart of the state government and initiating Disha police stations and Mahila Mitra are a step towards this direction, director general of police (DGP) D Gautam Sawang said.

Addressing the women police at Andhra University Convention Hall here on Saturday, the DGP laid emphasis on building awareness on Disha app and Mahila Mitra among people in order to strengthen people-friendly policing. He said women were airing their grievances and getting their complaints resolved through 'Span-dana' programme.

After setting up of Disha police stations, the DGP said the focus is now on establishing Disha women courts in each district of the state. "Earlier, not many found it comfortable to step into a police station to lodge a complaint. But it is not the case any longer. After the roll out of the Mahila Mitra, women in distress feel much comfortable to file a complaint. Soon, changes will be made to enhance the safety of women

across the state. This apart, each police station will form a Mahila Mitra committee," the DGP added.

Speaking on the occasion, city commissioner of police Manish Kumar Sinha informed that the service of Disha app sets an example to other states as it would take a week to 21-day to serve justice to the complainant through the platform. "Such platform to address women's grievances is nowhere to be seen in the world," the CP claimed.

Reeling out statistics, DIG Raja Kumari said 32 lakh persons have downloaded Disha app so far across the state.

DIG Vizag range L K V Ranga Rao, superintendent of police, Visakhapatnam district, B Krishna Rao, Disha ACP Prem Kajal, among others, took part in the event.

## Mandali opposes renaming of Telugu Akademi

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

FORMER Deputy Speaker of Assembly and former chairman of AP Official Language Commission Mandali Buddha Prasad expressed concern over changing the name of Telugu Akademi as Telugu and Sanskrit Akademi by the state government.

Buddha Prasad said that Telugu Akademi was set up in 1968 with Central government funds with an aim to develop research, modernisation of language and spreading of Telugu language. He said former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao served as first chairman of the Akademi. The Akademi developed and published textbooks from Intermediate to post-graduation level. He said Akademi was developed as a self-sufficient organisation with funds to a tune of Rs 300 crore.

Later, the state government failed to get funds for the Akademi after bifurcation. During Lakshmi Parvathi's tenure also no funds were allocated to the institution, he said.

Buddha Prasad said if the government is keen on developing Sanskrit language, it should set up separate Sanskrit Akademi instead of clubbing it with Telugu Akademi. He said Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy should give priority for Telugu language which is our mother tongue and should not kill it. He said the government was meting out injustice to Telugu language by introducing English medium in schools.

The government should set up separate Akademi for Sanskrit language and allocate funds for both Telugu and Sanskrit Akademis separately, he added.

## Narayana confident of ending BJP rule at the Centre

- CPI national secretary says already many regional parties are ditching the BJP
- Mentions ensuing UP Assembly elections and presidential poll as two major challenges for the BJP
- Describes the dispute between two Telugu states on Krishna waters a mere 'political drama'

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VISAKHAPATNAM

THE anti-BJP forces are gearing up to fight unitedly to end the rule of the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre by coming on to a common platform, said CPI na-

tional secretary K Narayana.

Speaking to the media here on Saturday, Narayana said the Central government has two major challenges ahead. One is the ensuing Uttar Pradesh elections and the other is the presidential poll, he said.

He said the presidential election would pave the way to fall of the anti-people rule of the NDA government. Already, several regional parties are turning against the BJP-led NDA government.

Further, he said the Union and state governments had acted in a similar manner in concealing Covid-19 deaths, and a survey by the New York Times revealed that 41 lakh people in the country had succumbed to the coronavirus. The tragic case of Ruia hospital in Tirupati was an example that Andhra Pradesh was hiding Covid deaths, he said.

In our country, he said, budget

allocation to the health sector is much lower compared to Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

On Krishna river dispute between the Telugu states, Narayana said it is nothing but a 'political drama' to divert people's attention. He stated that the Chief Ministers of both Telangana and AP have the opportunity to sit, discuss and resolve the issue amicably. "But, no such attempt was made," he added. Expressing his opinion on YS Sharmila's YSR Telangana Party, he alleged that AP Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is the 'producer' whereas Telangana Chief Minister KCR is the 'script writer' and screenplay director.

CPI state assistant secretary J V Satyanarayana Murthy, CPI city secretary M Pydiraju, CPI district executive committee members A Vimala and others took part in the press meet.



CPI national secretary K Narayana speaks at a press conference in Visakhapatnam on Saturday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

ARMY soldier Maruprolu Jaswanth Reddy, 24, who was killed in an encounter with terrorists at line of control in Jammu and Kashmir on July 8, was cremated with the state and military honours at a crematorium at Darivada Kothapalem under Bapatla mandal in the district on Saturday. Earlier, home minister Mekathoti Sucharitha, Assembly Deputy Speaker Kona Raghupati, district collector Vivek Yadav, Guntur rural SP Vishal Gunny apart from people paid floral

## Martyr Jaswanth Reddy cremated with honours

tributes to his mortal remains at his residence in Darivada Kothapalem.

The home minister, Deputy Speaker, the district collector and SP handed over the cheque for Rs 50 lakh towards the ex gratia announced by the state government to Jaswanth Reddy's father Srinivasa Reddy, mother Venkateswaramma. Speaking on the occasion,

Sucharitha and Raghupati said Jaswanth Reddy sacrificed his life for the sake of country and urged the youth draw inspiration from him. "People will never forget his sacrifice. The government led by Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy will extend all possible help and support to Jaswanth Reddy's family," they said.

## Pandemic isn't slowing down: WHO

Continued from P1

However, Swaminathan said that cases have been rising in five of six WHO regions - Africa, the Americas, South-East Asia, Europe, Eastern Mediterranean and Western Pacific. She also said that mortality rates in Africa have jumped by 30% to 40% in two weeks. The scientist listed the fast-spreading Delta variant, easing of lockdown restrictions, relaxation of safety mandates such as wearing of masks and physical distancing norms and the slow pace of vaccinations as the primary reasons for the continuing spread of the coronavirus.

Swaminathan's remarks came on a day when the World Health Organization's Director General Tedros Adhanom Ghebrey-

esus too sounded a note of caution over the new strains of the coronavirus. "I am worried about the emergence of a potent Covid-19 virus variant, like Delta," he said. "Unless we increase vaccine access to those who need them first and need them now, we are collectively at high risk of losing the gains we have made. Speed is very important."

The World Health Organization had designated Delta as a variant of concern on May 11 and predicted that it will rapidly become the dominant strain across the world. In June, Swaminathan had said the Delta variant was becoming the dominant variant globally "because of its significantly increased transmissibility".

## BIDEN NOMINATES LA MAYOR GARCETTI AS US AMBASSADOR TO INDIA

Continued from P1

During 12 years as an Intelligence Officer in the US Navy Reserve Component, Garcetti served under the Commander, US Pacific Fleet and the Defence Intelligence Agency, retiring in 2017 as a Lieutenant.

A Rhodes Scholar, he studied at Queen's College, Oxford and the London School of Economics and Political Science. Garcetti was selected as an inaugural Asia 21 Fellow of the Asia Society, and taught at Occidental College's Department of Diplomacy and World Affairs, as well as at the University of Southern California's School of International Relations.

## No illegal mining in state, says Dwivedi

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

PRINCIPAL secretary, mines and geology department, Gopal Krishna Dwivedi, refuted allegations of illegal laterite mining activity in the state. He said permission was given for mining of 5,000 tonnes as per court orders.

Speaking to media persons here on Saturday, the principal secretary said six laterite mines in Visakhapatnam district have mining permission. The lease period of one mine has expired, there was no mining activity in two mines and there were no approach roads for two other mines.

Dwivedi said the Indian Bureau of Mines gave a report on laterite mines in the state in 2004. The state government gave permission for mining as per the guidelines of Geological Survey of India.

The denial comes following TDP leaders' visit to the mining areas in Natavaram mandal of Visakhapatnam on Friday where they staged a protest alleging illegal bauxite mining under the pretext of laterite excavation.

## Southwest monsoon revives; IMD predicts widespread rainfall

Continued from P1

The IMD has sounded a red alert in Kannur and Kasaragod districts, warning of extremely heavy rainfall. Meanwhile, an orange alert has been issued in Kottayam, Idukki, Malappuram, Kozhikode, and Kannur, and a yellow alert in Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Pathanamthitta.

In Mumbai, the IMD has issued an orange alert for the Konkan region - Mumbai, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri, and Sindhudurg - indicating heavy to very heavy rains at isolated places for three days starting July 11.

Punjab will receive rainfall for three days starting from July 10, and Chandigarh, Delhi, and West Uttar Pradesh from July 11-13. Gujarat will see heavy rainfalls on July 11, and coastal & south interior Karnataka for two days starting from July 11.

## ISRO to launch geo imaging satellite on Aug 12

Continued from P1

The launch was later expected in April and then in May, but the campaign could not be taken up due to lockdown in parts of the country triggered by the second wave of the pandemic. "We have tentatively planned the GSLV-F10 launch on August 12, at 05:43 am, subject to weather conditions", an ISRO official said on Saturday.

According to ISRO, GISAT-1 will facilitate near real-time observation of the Indian subcontinent, under cloud-free conditions, at frequent intervals.

GISAT-1 will be placed in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit by GSLV-F10 and, subsequently, it will be positioned in the final geostationary orbit, about 36,000 km above earth's equator, using its on-board propulsion system. The earth observation satellite will provide the country near real-time images of its borders and enable quick monitoring of natural disasters.

Experts said positioning the state-of-the-art agile earth observation satellite in geostationary orbit has key advantages. "It's going to be a game-changer in some sense for India," a Department of Space official said.

## More than 2 kids? No govt job, can't contest polls

Continued from P1

They will also ensure mandatory registration of pregnancies, deliveries, births and deaths within the state.

As per the draft bill, the government will introduce a compulsory subject related to population control in all secondary schools. Justifying the proposals, the draft bill says: "In Uttar Pradesh, there are the limited ecological and economic resources at hand. It is necessary and urgent that the provision of basic necessities of human life including affordable food, safe drinking water, decent housing, access to quality education, economic/livelihood opportunities, power/electricity for domestic consumption, and a secure living is accessible to all citizens."



# Mega cabinet raises massive expectations from Modi

AS the cabinet super haul by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi is undoubtedly an image makeover by taking extra and great care in age and gender balancing while inducting more number of women in important ministries after the government had come under severe clout during the second wave with thousands succumbing due to poor health infrastructure and economy sliding to a new low making lives miserable. However, as the reconstitution of cabinet is also guided by both political and administrative considerations, the fact that at the same time, it has sent a clear and loud message to non-performers that they cannot take their place for granted after badly mis-handling the pandemic.

Obviously, by crafting new members into the ministry comprising professionals, intellectuals, civil servants, aca-



demicians who are competent enough to execute the tasks with greater care and responsibility, a positive message is also been sent to the ministers that collective responsibility of the cabinet is the need of the hour where work and performance matters the most than individuals. Further, as caste invariably plays a decisive factor in all polls, prime minister's attempt to

accommodate caste combinations reflecting regions and social constituencies in order to make his council more diverse and representative while keeping in view assembly elections in crucial states scheduled in 2022 and 2023 and the Lok Sabha polls in 2024 is not only well balanced but expected to bring much gains to the NDA government. With the mega exercise said

to be Modi's biggest council of ministers since coming to power on 2014 with an average of 56, expectations on governance from new and young ministers and former Babus are high since quite a number of them possessing talent and administrative skills could prove valuable in enhancing ministries performance. Though the new team has its task cut out at a critical time, yet it is expected that they would come up to the expectations of people by concentrating on delivering governance with full accountability and transparency giving no room for any complaints. All in all, choosing ministers and allocating portfolios was done with great care, government looks forward with confidence to face the challenges on all fronts successfully

K R Srinivasan, Secunderabad

## Twitter row: India takes no-nonsense approach

THE new foolproof, no-nonsense approach adopted by IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, to take on the wayward US-based company Twitter, to make it fall in line with India's rules and regulations, without mincing words is a path breaking move, in taming social media organisations operating in the country that were earlier, following their own principles and logic, caring two hoots for Indian IT.

Time has come for India to dig in the heels to be firm as things are appearing to go out of hand as evident from posts and comments on Twitter and Facebook, in the guise of right to opinion and freedom of expression that in the first very first glance, fail to conceal their true motive and agenda behind such comments being overtly and unwarrantedly anti-social and anti-national.



This has become a regular pattern by some individuals and organisations, against the country that is far from truth to berate and undermine the sovereignty of the country, having the potential to poison the minds of the

gullible ones with such sort of misinformation.

This doesn't mean that regular and level headed individuals who have been using these social media platforms have nothing to fear, and they can continue to air their views and opinions without any fear or control as long as this is in the good of the country, to be constructive and to point out at shortcomings and lapses on part of the government.

K R Parvathy, Mysuru



## Cut tenure of TV serials

IT is observed that many TV serials continue for years after years with even change in generations of the characters shown in such TV serials. It makes viewers TV-addicted with unimaginable number of total man-hours viewing TV-serials only adversely affecting studies of students and proper attention to children by mothers who are victims of such addiction. Already social media has ruined life-style and working-efficiency of all including office-goers. Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should regulate maximum number of episodes in a normal TV serial to say 52 (one year). However such a restriction may not be there on epic-serials. Even TV serials with single story in each episode can also be exempted.

Madhu Agrawal, Delhi

## Policy on renaming of airports must

BOMBAY HC has given a directive to Minister of Civil Aviation to bring out a policy regarding naming of airports across the country. It is a fancy of various state govts to go for naming airports, railway stations etc to please religious, factional and casteist or-



ganisations. Further one can see a plethora of statues, all over every place, of casteist leaders. These create a law and order problem as the pro and anti of these statues get into street fights damaging public property and enormously inconveniencing citizens. The political parties across the spectrum encourage this concept. On several

occasions these statues are damaged either by accident or by design, adding fuel to fire, resulting in police protection to these statues. It is sheer insult and waste of manpower for the already over-worked police personnel.

Taking a cue from the Bombay HC order, governments will have to stick together and ensure to put a full stop to this nonsense. Possibly the Supreme court could, suo moto, issue a directive in the matter and stem the rot. The state is not duty bound to offer any security to these statues. If any organisation wants to erect any statue for any of their leaders, let them do it in their own premises. Our new minister of Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia should rise to the occasion and ensure proper naming of airports, preferably the names of the city.

J Kannan, Mumbai

## The unmatched first superstar of Hindi cinema

THE veteran thespian Dilip Kumar who conquered the hearts of millions of cinegoers has been finally conquered by the inevitable leveller - death. He lived full life and fell like a proverbial star at the ripe old age of 98 years. Dilip the doyen of Indian film industry passed away into history.

The man who began his career as a canteen manager for pay of Rs.35 a month with the British army scaled the rungs of ladder of success and attained evergreen hero image. Bimal Roy's 'Devadas' earned him name as a tragic hero (tragedy king) and 'Madhumati' turned him a romantic hero, both films were runaway hits. He revelled playing a wide variety of roles his long career of 60 years.

He enacted 'patriotic revolutionality' in Shaheed, a lover boy in Jogan, Hulchal and Madhumati, a victim of society



turned dacoit in 'Ganga Jamuna' and variety dual role in 'Ram aur shayam' and Dastaan, triple role in 'Bairaag, a probing reporter in 'Leader', a revolutionary in 'Kranti', a conscientious police officer in 'Shakti', a god father in 'Vidhata', the head of a cult in 'Dharm Adhikari' and a jailer in 'Karma' and a passionate lover in historical movie Mughal - E-Azam and so on so forth. His style of

action and delivery of dialogues and his unruly tuft of hair style and dignified behaviour on and of the sets made him a peer less actor. The ever shining glory of his life to be emulated by all is Dilip kumar and Saira bhanu remained a most doted couple, the film industry notorious for breaking of marriages has to trust that Dilip and Saira make a lovely and respected couple, as a devout wife Saira rendered service to Dilip kumar until he breathed his last.

Another significant point is thank god the central government awarded him with 'Dada Sahib Phalke' award apart from awarding 'Padma Vibhushan' when the actor was alive and in fit condition to rejoice the honours. Dilip Kumar as a mortal may shed his mortal coil but the Dilip Kumar he actor remains immortal in our hearts.

Rama Krishna M, Kakinada

## Rein in pharma companies, PM Sir!



COVID-19 has spelt doom for lives and livelihood. But it has come as a godsend for pharmaceuticals through millions of vaccine doses. It must be remembered that most of the vaccines being used globally including India have been rolled out on Emergency Use Approval, without proper human trials on large number of volunteers, as they ought to have been.

This has been brought about by mortality associated with the pandemic mounting rapidly forcing nations to use these 'half-baked' vaccines on emergency basis to

save lives. India manufactures Covishield, which has been accepted by 9 of 27 EU nations after initial hiccups, and Covaxin, which is vying for WHO's approval. India has also included Russia's Sputnik and US' Moderna in her vaccine bandwagon.

Drug firm Zydus Cadilla has now applied for Emergency Use Authorization for its vaccine candidate, ZyCoV-D. The Centre must not allow pharmaceuticals' unregulated foray into the lucrative vaccine industry intending to make 'hay when the sun shines' sulling the credibility of Indian vaccines and India's battle against the pandemic, as it has enough vaccine candidates in its armamentarium already. India's drug regulator did well in that direction to turn down a proposal by Serum Institute to test Covovax vaccine on children, which it will permit only after evaluating safety and immunogenicity data from ongoing trials on adults.

Dr George Jacob, Kochi

## We have no statesmen, only politicians

WE are aware that Indian Constitution was till now amended 104 times. Why? Is there any flaw or lack of forethought by the geniuses involved while adopting and enacting the comprehensive constitution?

The political party system is also different from US and UK where only two major parties are existing making their governments strong without significant upheavals. A large portion of our Constitution was drawn from unwritten British constitution. The parliamentary system in England had evoked admiration from all quarters largely because of the existence of two major parties. Professor Harold J. Laski says: "In a parliamentary system of government, if the power struggle is between two political parties that system continued to function well...." As per statistics, in India, political parties are: 8 national, 52 regional, 2698 registered and 2638

unrecognised parties which are sharing power directly and indirectly often heading to defections for the sake of power and pelf. Politics should not be the last resort of.....

Thousands of crores is spent by each party during elections only for amassing multiples in return but not for the sole cause of service orientation. If service is the only motive, India would have been a developed country long ago. Secondly if service to people is the core goal, earmarked election fund can be utilised for many welfare schemes. Billionaires like Bill Gates, TATAs, Wipro Premji have donated huge sums to government for protecting the needy. Movie idol Sonu Sood is a glaring example.

Coming to political players in Telugu states, repugnant sister of AP CM, Sharmila already launched YSR Telangana party is startling as to why she has cho-

sen this state instead of AP. Her political opponents will cavil on her political presence in Telangana. Both YSRTP and Congress party are propagating the propensity of late Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy. Two swords cannot be malleable in one scabbard and it may lead to utter befuddling to political watchers. Now Telangana is infested with TRS, BJP, Congress, TSRTF and other low profile ones while Andhra Pradesh with TDP, YSRCP, BJP, Janasena, Congress and others.

This trend is not at all healthy and prosperity will be at stake. Expressing such heart throbbing essays by right thinking people may not yield desired payoffs. Politicians plan for next elections while statesmen think of next generations. Do we have the latter tribe in the present political environment?

Dr NSR Murthy, Secunderabad

## Stan Swamy's demise was unfortunate

IT is highly disturbing to learn that Fr. Stan Swamy, the 84-year-old Jesuit priest arrested in connection with the Elgar Parishad case last year and accused of having Maoist links, died in custody at Mumbai's Holy Family Hospital on Monday.

Senior Counsel Mihir Desai appearing for Fr. Stan Swamy, a tribal rights activist, claimed the NIA have been negligent in providing timely and adequate medical aid to Swamy and urged the HC to initiate a judicial inquiry into the circumstances that led to the under-trial activist's death. Stan Swamy was arrested on October 8, 2020 and yet the NIA did not seek Swamy's custody even for a single day, but kept opposing his bail pleas.

After hearing the news about the demise of Stan

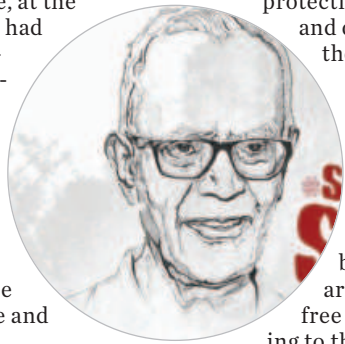
Swamy, the HC Division Bench noted, "With all humility at our command, we really are shocked by hearing this news. Therefore, at the last hearing, we had immediately allowed him to remain in hospital of his choice. We have no words to express." Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said, "He deserved justice and humaneness."

Being a philanthropist and an altruistic person, Stan Swamy had been working for the welfare of tribals in Jharkhand for than 30 years. He used to question the non-implementation of the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution,

which stipulated setting up of a Tribe's Advisory Council with members solely of the Adivasi community for their protection, well-being and development in the state.

Just before the NIA took him into custody, Swamy also opposed to the setting up of land banks, which he argued would free up land belonging to the community.

Swamy expressed his displeasure with several policies of the government and laws enacted in violation of the Constitution. Perhaps, this was the reason why the state was keen to put him out of the way. Swamy said, "I would just



add that what is happening to me is not unique. Many activists, lawyers, writers, journalists, student leaders, poets, intellectuals and others who stand for the rights of Adivasis, Dalits and the marginalised and express their dissent to the ruling powers of the country are being targeted."

In short, Swamy was a true lover of mankind especially of those who are Adivasis and the tribes, and he won the hearts of the marginalised and downtrodden with his 30 years of services to these people. Therefore, it was improper on the part of the NIA to treat him like a Naxal or a terrorist. Moreover, they should have applied their wisdom to see the greatness of this man.

TK Nandanam, Kochi

# AFGHANISTAN CAUGHT IN CROSSFIRE

PROPOS 'The confused US withdrawal from Afghanistan', by Maj Gen Mandip Singh. It is clear beyond any doubt that the US zeal on fighting a Global War on Terror (GWOT) is getting progressively diluted and weakened as evident from its plans to leave Afghanistan for good, leaving the responsibility and burden of protecting country's territory to Afghans, who are not yet trained fully to take on the deadly onslaught of ISIS and Taliban. The US and European forces leaving Afghanistan in limbo, without meaningfully ensuring the Afghan army to be ready for any eventuality, is akin to the exit of the Russians from Afghanistan, few decades ago, in the wake of unprecedented Taliban attack against the occupied forces that seemed im-

possible to tackle and overcome, in view of the terrain and weather conditions prevailing in the region.

The Taliban attacks were routine, even when the well-entrenched US forces presence in Afghanistan, innovative ways of destruction were selected by ISIS to target building, military and police training camps and women's educational intuitions, with impunity and deadly precision. In fact, ISIS and Pakistan based Taliban abetted these jihadi activities, in Afghanistan as Taliban wanted no development and progress to take place in Afghanistan, in order to spread fear, and expand the terror zone well beyond Pakistan, so as to make its entry easy into India. There is news that J&K will witness Taliban orchestrated terror



activities in a big way, to place a heavy burden and responsibility on the security forces.

It cannot be forgotten that Indian stakes are enormous in Afghanistan in terms economy, in revamping and revitalising the country, not to be a perennial battle ground for sectarian clashes and warlords in the region who are ready to leap at one another's throat for whimsical reasons - and the flourishing 'arms bazaar' in the region where it is easy to get any latest automatic rifle and RPG for a price, to make terror and jihadi activities more easy.

One can clearly follow the happenings in Afghanistan, watching Al Jazeera new channel about the progress that is being made by the Taliban forces that are succeeding in capturing one village after another in the

aftermath of US and British soldiers leaving Afghanistan. There is also news of some Afghan soldiers joining Taliban, while the Afghan army is poised for a long battle with Islamists and other radical forces who are hiding in the hills.

The task proves extremely onerous as a result of no air support available to the forces, the control of which had rested with the US forces. The situation definitely brings mirth to Pakistan's face as it is along expected agenda, that is being contrived and worked out it, since India is involved in Afghanistan irretrievably. India has established itself as a reliable partner of Afghanistan in improving infrastructure in the country - building schools, hospitals and the parliament there.

K R Venkata Narasimhan, Madurai



# Building better calendar time

JYOTHI GOSALA

HABITS are a way to improve our overall personality. When it comes to managing our time with good routine management by keeping scheduled flow on calendar time, it will do a lot of good. Good routines whether planned or unplanned are definitely a boost to our mental makeup and in turn build our habits. Our regular routines can be converted to a stimulating and efficient pattern by adhering to simple rules. When we practise, we are more accountable and can do better by planning our schedules more efficiently.

Scheduling time and managing calendar routine calls for some swift management of regular routines in a consistent way to maintain the tempo. Today in the age of technology it's easier to manage routines with technical devices. Everything can be planned online and on devices. Earlier it was mandatory to have a written plan to adhere to the routine tasks. This process thereby builds efficiency in planning and adhering to tasks. This keeps the process simple and one can better the action plan or calendar time to roll out activities smoothly.

## Scheduling calendar

- Planning Projects
- Productivity Improvement
- Better Routines
- Allocating Tasks
- Email and Messages
- Phone, Apps, Diary
- Time Management
- Maintaining Diary
- Accountability
- Personal Development

Most times when we schedule our meet with others, either it is unplanned or planned. Several meets that include in the calendar could be varied from one-on-ones, speed meeting, group meets or professional engagements as meet time. These need a bit of planning and that's when having an extensive calendar will work in meeting obligations. It's also important to focus on the expected level of flow on the meetings on a daily, weekly and monthly basis.

Good focus is a crucial ingredient when it comes to planning and execution. So, managing the calendar for peak productivity is crucial to meet the calendar timelines for enhanced work quality and efficiency. When we look at today's youth, most are a dedicated lot to the online platform and manage everything on apps,



gadgets or phones for calendar engagement. The generation that went by were mostly comfortable with notepads, diaries and calendars for planning their tasks. That speaks of the generation gap and the way the planning and execution was carried.

Why do we need to focus on our routines and what makes a better routine. For good quality output, allocating good time is crucial. Routines help us in identifying the important tasks which makes the planning better. Good habits take time but are pivotal for all

round wellbeing. Some habits that brace up one are early risings, good exercise, setting calendar time for important tasks, reflecting on aspects of importance, evaluating our commitment to activities planned and executed.

We should all know what drives productivity which in turn is related to our habits. As we know we should identify the pattern of our working habits, what differentiates us from the rest, focusing on the important, setting goals and time for ourselves and our varied interests. And what makes our victory's so important and how we can maintain good activity should be the parameters for living a holistic life.

Goal setting should be part of the regular routines. Just as we are nurtured by the seasons of nature, let's analyse our springs and autumns. If we stick to the calendar it comes once a year. If we are creating authenticity and habit, it comes frequently. We have our own story, our own calendar. We have to calendar time for ourselves, even if we haven't planned anything. Good things happen not by managing time, but by prioritising.

# TS govt adopting innovative, inclusive green practices

MOHAN CHANDRA PARGAIEN

THE recent devastating spread of pandemic coupled with biodiversity loss and climate change has reminded mankind to introspect its broken linkages with nature. The physical and mental well-being and capacity to counter the climate change challenges is therefore closely associated with the health of nature.

As per the 2011 census, though the urban population of Telangana is 1.36 crore (38.9 per cent) it has grown by 38.12 per cent in comparison to the rural population growth of 2.13 per cent indicating the prevalence of very high rural-to-urban migration. An increase in the number of panchayats in the state from 8846 (2014) to 12768 (2021) is also testimony to this rapid pace of urbanisation. Coupled with burgeoning needs of development and individual greed, this has same time resulted in depletion and degradation of natural resources like tree cover, water bodies, community land etc at a greater pace.

For a civilised society, protecting nature either by preventing it from being destroyed or by way of bringing it back to cities and towns is the need of the hour for overall sustainability. This has necessitated the need of exploring various mechanisms to manage existing nature and also to replenish the damaged environmental resources.

As climate change is one of the major drivers of degradation of natural resources, environmentalists and foresters advocate tree planting as well as rejuvenation approaches as low-cost, easy to adopt and a high-impact intervention to restore nature and rejuvenate degraded forests and biodiversity and sequester carbon as well.

Acknowledging the multifarious role of environmental conservation including the green cover, Telangana Government launched Telangana Ku Haritha Haram (Green Garland to Telangana) in 2015 as one of the flagship programmes. The main object of the programme was bringing green cover from 24 per cent to 33 per cent duly formulating strategies to tackle the challenges of environmental conservation and protection with the participation of all active stakeholders.

As creating green space outside notified forest area warrants active participation of people for the success of environmental conservation, an enabling environment was created by the state of Telangana for the first time by bringing historic amendments to existing Panchayat and Municipal acts. These policy changes ensured active roles and responsi-



bilities among panchayats and municipalities for planting and protection of trees, their survival (85 per cent) and provision for the green fund thus reflecting strong political will with care and concern for the much-neglected sector of the environment.

The recently adopted approach of integrated development of villages and urban areas of the state under the banner of Palle Pragathi (Village Development) and Pattana Pragathi (Town Development) respectively now has become an excellent platform to fulfil the much-needed demand of environmental conservation including tree planting as one of the major components.

The core concept behind this inclusive approach of Palle Pragathi and Pattana Pragathi is to take up the developmental activities in the areas of health, sanitation, waste management, energy conservation, community infrastructure, environmental conservation including tree planting and environmental awareness duly involving all stakeholders for effective participation.

To increase green cover in all 12769 gram panchayats of the state, mini-park-cum-forests (Prukriti Vanams) are being developed in each village depending upon the availability of lands to ensure the green cover availability for villagers. Besides planting trees in blanks lands various institutions like schools, colleges, government offices, houses of individuals including agricultural lands are being taken up for planting.

Adding more strength to the ongoing mission of increasing greenery in villages, the government has recently decided to develop Bruhat Palle Prikriti Vanam (BPPV) in all the 540 mandals of the state. Spreading over nearly 10 acres of land, the major activity under Brihad Palle Prukriti Vanam is to take up tree planting under Yadadri Model (Modified Miyawaki method).

One of the major environmental concerns in the urbanized world is the degraded environmental conditions affecting the health and psychological well be-

ing of citizens which are getting impaired day by day. To meet this challenge of degrading the environment, the Government has identified 109 locations across the state for developing urban parks covering 30377 hectares.

Fulfilling the long term goals of climate resilience and ecosystem services to citizens, 53 urban parks are completed and opened for the public. The remaining 56 urban parks are getting much focus for their development and priority under the ongoing "Pattana Pragathi" programme. Ultimately with these interventions, these urban parks are turning into excellent nature-based solutions for counteracting the challenges of climate change and other benefits to the citizen. The participation of active stakeholders under the Pattana Pragathi is helping to bring much-needed resiliency and sustainability to our cities.

The specific approaches and interventions of the government are generating opportunities for the urban and village communities not only to develop green spaces but also to protect and maintain the natural environment of the local area. Further various initiatives in the area of health, sanitation and employment generation under integrated manner are helping the communities to connect with nature and assisting them to fulfill a range of social, psychological, economic and environmental benefits.

The innovative and inclusive approaches of Palle Pragathi and Pattana Pragathi are bringing the development and the environment together to ensure a balanced and sustainable model of village and urban development which is worth emulating model of development of the Telangana government. It is expected that this model of partnership with people will usher in a new era of equitable socio-economic development with environmental conservation for the benefits of all including posterity.

(The author is a senior IFS officer in Hyderabad. Views are personal)

# The G20 faces three big tests

ANTONIO GUTERRES

SINCE the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we've heard a lot about global solidarity. Unfortunately, words by themselves will not end the pandemic – or curb the impact of the climate crisis. Now is the moment to show what solidarity means in practice. As G20 Finance Ministers meet in Venice, they face three crucial solidarity tests: on vaccines, on extending an economic lifeline to the developing world, and on climate.

First, vaccines. A global vaccination gap threatens us all. While Covid-19 circulates among unvaccinated people, it continues to mutate into variants that could be more transmissible, more deadly, or both. We are in a race between vaccines and variants; if the variants win, the pandemic could kill millions more people and delay a global recovery for years.

But while 70 per cent of people in some developed countries are vaccinated, that figure stands at less than 1 per cent for low-income countries. Solidarity means delivering on access to vaccines for everyone – fast.

Pledges of doses and funds are welcome. But let's get real. We need not one billion, but at least eleven billion doses to vaccinate 70 per cent of the world and end this pandemic. Donations and good intentions will not get us there. This calls for the greatest global public health effort in history.

The G20, backed by major producing countries and international financial institutions, must put in place a global vaccination plan to reach everybody, everywhere, sooner rather than later. The second test of solidarity is extending an economic lifeline to countries teetering on the verge of debt default.



Rich countries have poured the equivalent of 28 percent of their GDP into weathering the Covid-19 crisis. In middle-income countries, this figure drops to 6.5 percent; in least developed countries, to less than 2 percent.

Many developing countries now face crippling debt service costs, at a time when their domestic budgets are stretched and their ability to raise taxes is reduced.

The pandemic is set to increase the number of extremely poor people by some 120 million around the world; more than three-quarters of these 'new poor' are in middle-income countries.

These countries need a helping hand to avoid financial catastrophe, and to invest in a strong recovery. The International Monetary Fund has stepped in to allocate \$650 billion in Special Drawing Rights – the best way to increase the funds available to cash-strapped economies. Richer countries should channel their unused shares of these funds to low and middle-income countries. That is a meaningful measure of solidarity.

I welcome steps the G20 has already taken, including the Debt Service Suspension Initiative and Common Framework for Debt Treatment. But they are not sufficient. Debt relief must be extended to all middle-income countries that need

it. And private lenders must also be brought into the equation.

The third test of solidarity concerns climate change. Most major economies have pledged to cut their emissions to net zero by mid-century, in line with the 1.5 degree target of the Paris Agreement. If COP26 in Glasgow is to be a turning point, we need the same promise from all G20 countries, and from the developing world.

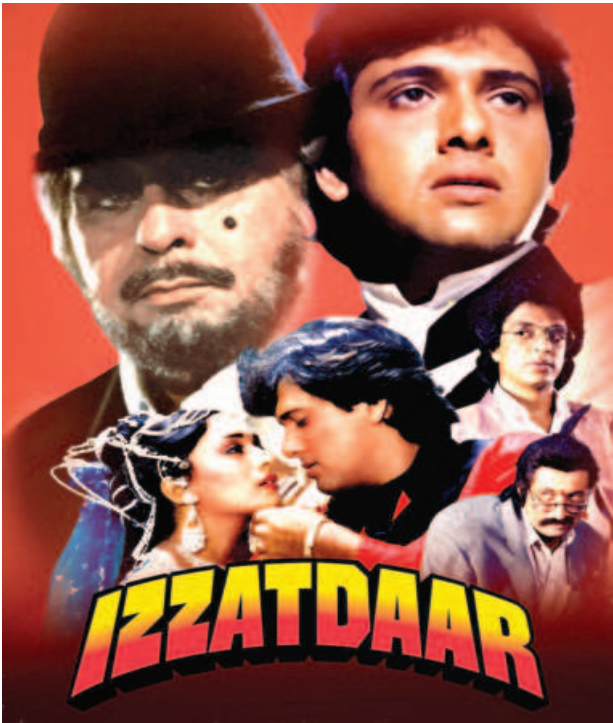
But developing countries need reassurance that their ambition will be met with financial and technical support, including \$100 billion in annual climate finance that was promised to them by developed countries over a decade ago. This is entirely reasonable. From the Caribbean to the Pacific, developing economies have been landed with enormous infrastructure bills because of a century of greenhouse gas emissions they had no part in.

Solidarity begins with delivering on the \$100 billion. It should extend to allocating 50 percent of all climate finance to adaptation, including resilient housing, elevated roads and efficient early warning systems that can withstand storms, droughts and other extreme weather events.

All countries have suffered during the pandemic. But nationalist approaches to global public goods like vaccines, sustainability and climate action are a road to ruin. Instead, the G20 can set us on the road to recovery. The next six months will show whether global solidarity extends beyond words to meaningful action. By meeting these three critical tests with political will and principled leadership, G20 leaders can end the pandemic, strengthen the foundations of the global economy, and prevent climate catastrophe.

(The author is Secretary General, United Nations)

# About one-fifth of Dilip Kumar movies were southern remakes



In 1945, at the age of 23, he acted in his second film 'Pratima' directed by debutante Telangana actor Paidi Jairaj

Kamal Haasan, then getting noticed in Hindi cinema industry, rejected an offer to star in a hit Dilip Kumar venture – Mashaal - directed by Yash Chopra in 1984 which went Anil Kapoor's way

K NARESH KUMAR

HIS was a career which began at the age of 22 before India attained Independence and stopped short before the beginning of the new millennium in 1998. Mohammed Yusuf Khan, known more as Dilip Kumar for more than seven decades in Indian cinema world stopped short of scoring a century as he passed away on July 7, at the age of 98. It was a marathon journey which began with the 1944 release 'Jwar Bhata' and ended with the 1998 flick 'Qila'. Ironically, both his first and last films failed to click at the BO. Very notably, in

a career of more than fifty years, he has been featured in just 60-odd films, out of which two were cameo appearances.

The 1950s was the decade when the maximum number of Dilip Kumar movies – 21, in all – was released. Notably, Dilip Kumar's association with the southern film industry began with the 1955 release 'Azaad' directed by S M Sriramulu Naidu, who also helmed the Tamil original starring MGR. He had one more release in the same year – Insaaniyat - directed by the iconic S S Vasan, who remade a Telugu film 'Palletoori Pilla' released in 1950. This was the only film in

which Dilip Kumar was seen with his contemporary Dev Anand. This was a rare combo like that of his with Raj Kapoor, who costarred with him only once in the 1949 film 'Andaz'. Interestingly, one of his Hindi films of 1955 – 'Uran Khatola' was dubbed into Tamil as 'Vaananatham' and released a year later.

In the 1960s, three hits from the then Madras film industry were remade – two from Tamil and one from Telugu. The 1967 release 'Ram Aur Shyam' was a successful Hindi version of 'Ramudu Bheemudu' which featured NTR and released three

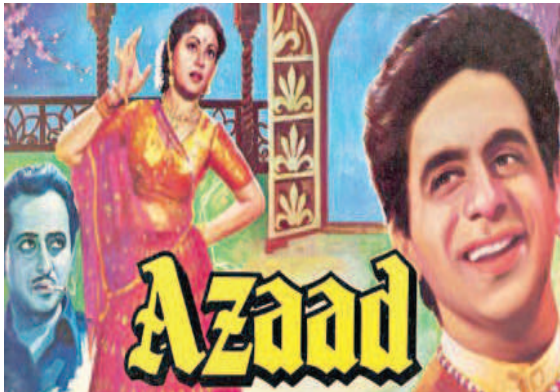
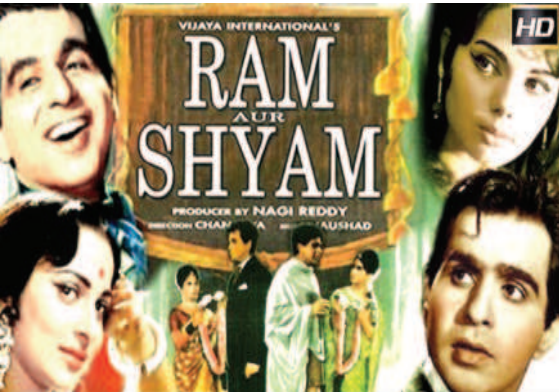
years earlier. It was also the most successful remake overtaking the Tamil ones which were average grossers.

After 'Gopi', the only remake in the 1970s out of a total of eight releases in the decade, Dilip Kumar had to contend with the rise of the new gen like Rajesh Khanna and Amitabh Bachchan and could return to circulation only gradually. Surprisingly, despite the advent of industry insiders from Sanjay Dutt to Aamir Khan in the 1980s, Dilip Kumar had three releases, out of which one was the 1982 release 'Shakti' directed by Ramesh Sippy, a remake of a 1974 Sivaji Ganesan

smasher 'Thangapadhakkam'.

This was the only film in which he had Amitabh Bachchan playing alongside his pivotal role. The two Telugu remakes by K Raghavendra Rao (Dharam Adhikari) and B Gopal (Kanoon Apna Apna) were very well received by the Hindi film patrons. Kamal Haasan turned down a film with Dilip Kumar in 1984 – Mashaal - directed by Yash Chopra – which accelerated the career of a new star, Anil Kapoor.

The 1990 film 'Izzatdaar' was his last film in which a southern film director – K Bapaiah – was involved. In his long career of 31 films in 18 years in Hindi cinema, that was the only time he had featured Govinda, then a rising star and Dilip Kumar along with Madhuri Dixit, who had dethroned Sridevi as the super-starni of Hindi cinema. Interestingly, Raghuvaran, the well-known character artiste who also excelled in villainous roles made his debut in the same film.





## Cipla Health rolls out new hygiene products



### HANS BUSINESS

HYDERABAD: In the wake of increasing demand for hand hygiene products, Ciphands, the hand and surface hygiene brand of Cipla Health Ltd, has launched a new range of products including hand sanitiser spray and germ protection soap.

These products join the Ciphands' extensive portfolio serving this central principle of a healthy lifestyle which goes beyond the Covid-19 pandemic.

The significance of hand hygiene against the coronavirus has been widely discussed over the past year, with the World Health Organisation repeatedly stressing that hand washing stands as the most effective means to keep the virus at bay alongside wearing masks, and following social distancing etiquette.

The 200ml pump unit of Ciphands total germ protection hand wash is being offered at Rs 79. The Ciphands smart germ protection soap is priced at Rs 32 and the Ciphands plus mist spray hand sanitiser is a WHO recommended formulation available in 100ml spray bottle priced at Rs 50

Shivam Puri, CEO, Cipla Health Ltd, said: "Cipla Health Ltd is committed to providing consumer healthcare solutions, and Ciphands caters to the most fundamental building block of healthy living – hand hygiene."

# WE ARE GOING GLOBAL WITH FOCUS ON US, EUROPE: FLUENTGRID CEO

We're slowly transforming from a domain-centric company with power utility focus into Actilligence platform-driven company

SANTOSH PATNAIK

**TELL us something about your journey and how you started Fluentgrid. Which domains do you serve?**

Immediately after my college, I joined my family's steel business where electricity used to be our key input. And you know those days of huge electricity demand supply gap, unscheduled power cuts, captive power generation, etc., which got me thinking. I started to dig deeper and came to know of the distressed state of electricity boards and became aware of the reasons behind their state of affairs including their lack of consumer data inventory, lapses in metering, billing and collection processes resulting in huge losses, because of which they are unable to invest in additional generation capacity, while the demand was steadily climbing.

It appeared that adoption of IT applications to streamline their commercial business processes is the key to their revival. Mature power utility billing software products were not available in India. Foreign software products were not suitable for our needs and had to be customised and hence very expensive, which the loss making utilities could not afford.

Around the same time, Indian government was introducing electricity sector reforms and Andhra Pradesh was one of the States where the erstwhile electricity board was unbundled into generation, transmission and distribution companies by roping in global consultants. And there was talk of infusing technology to transform distribution business processes.

That was my calling. I didn't just see an opportunity there, but I felt like I should do it from deep within. Since then we have been building great software products and solutions for power distribution utilities (also known as DISCOMs in India). Our software products span most of the core utility business functions includ-

Fluentgrid Limited, an energy utility and city ICT solutions company with industry standard software products, is spearheading IT modernisation with a resilient ecosystem by enabling development of smart cities. It is striving for seamless digital transformation of utilities and cities for a sustainable future. Founded in Visakhapatnam in 1998, the company's MD and CEO **Murali Krishna Gannamani** in an exclusive interview to *Bizz Buzz* said they are proud to be facilitating the global movement towards smart grids and smarter cities for a sustainable future through seamless digital transformation of utilities and cities for a life with a high happiness index



Murali Krishna Gannamani, MD & CEO, Fluentgrid Limited

ing customer acquisition, metering, billing, payments, customer care, smart metering, smart grids, enterprise analytics and so on. Our products and solutions are implemented for electricity consumers in more than 15 states in India, and 10 countries outside.

We also ventured into smart cities where we offer city command and control center and urban governance solutions leveraging our next generation IoT and analytics platform Actilligence.

**What are the challenges you have faced throughout this journey and how do you think Visakhapatnam can emerge as a prominent IT hub?**

Abundant availability of right talent is the key requirement for any IT company, especially for software product companies like us. Since there aren't enough IT companies in Vizag, it was quite difficult to attract and retain good talent. Our approach was to hire local talent and train them to serve our needs. That worked well

and we have scores of associates who have been with us for more than 10 years including those who have been with us right from inception, more than 20 years ago.

Another challenge is the connectivity. When we started, our only connectivity with the outside world was a couple of flights connecting to Chennai/Delhi and a few trains connecting us to Hyderabad, Chennai and Kolkata. Even Internet connectivity wasn't that great when compared to other popular IT destinations. I still remember those lost opportunities where we couldn't submit our bids in time. To overcome this problem, we had to open a branch office in Hyderabad and move the entire sales and marketing team there. That has been serving us well.

**Are you planning to expand your operations? If yes, any new business vertical that you are planning to foray into?**

We are slowly moving from a domain-centric company with power

utility focus into a platform driven company with our Actilligence platform. Our IoT and analytics platform is capable of integrating with a multitude of business applications and smart devices to realize an integrated operations center for any business domain offering real time situational awareness, extract actionable intelligence leveraging AI and ML and facilitating incident resolution through automated standard operating procedures (SOPs). We have already signed several projects and are negotiating with others in the areas of thermal power generation, oil refining, airports, etc.

**What made you start your company in Visakhapatnam? Please explain how you could transform Fluentgrid into a global company?**

As any other Vizagite I believed in the notion of Vizag being the City of Destiny. It had everything going for it to become an alternative destination for IT. If not for connectivity issues, I believe it would have made it.

We invested heavily into building software products for power utilities. Unlike other IT companies of those days who were content with delivering force-fit foreign software products, we were intent on developing these products ground up suiting their business needs, which gave us an edge over others. With our own software products and the value we were able to deliver as a one-stop-shop, we were able to differentiate ourselves in global bids and won several nationwide projects in Asia, Africa and Europe.

**Do you face any problem with regard to availability of skilled manpower-a reason being pointed out as a dampening factor by many investors in the field of IT?**

Yes, especially in Visakhapatnam. And we had to take the difficult route of hiring youngsters and training them which is a bit of a time taking and expensive process, but there are several advantages to that as well; like for example we get to train them and mould them to our specific needs and so on.

**How do you train and retain your employees? What are the measures you take in rewarding loyal employees to ensure a high retention rate?**

Every fresh hire goes through a systematic training program, post which he/she is associated with a team and a mentor who takes responsibility for integrating him/her into the organizational fabric to become productive and also show them a path for progressing their career depending on their strengths and aspirations.

While performance appraisals take care of career progression and course correction, they are continuously appreciated and rewarded for their good work and appropriately guided by their mentors if they are slipping.

And most importantly we work on smart utility and smart city projects which directly impact customer busi-

nesses and in turn the citizens offering them a good quality life. This in itself is a big reward for all of us working in this space, which keeps us together.

**What are your plans to take your company to the next level?**

Having proved ourselves in India and emerging markets, our next target is to reach our target customers in North America, Europe and Australia. We have the business plan ready and we will be taking some initial steps in this direction during this year.

**Do you think Atmanirbhar Bharath can benefit entrepreneurs in achieving their goals?**

Yes indeed, the intent is good. But, we didn't see much in terms of compliance by public-sector organizations like power utilities and smart cities who happen to be our major customers.

**Having seen IT growth for such a long time, which technologies do you think will be the most sought after in the next five years?**

Anything to do with data will be in vogue for the next five years; starting with data generation using sensors, data acquisition using IoT, data processing using ETL and similar tools, data storage, data analysis using AI/ML, data visualisation and so on. As every human and things will start generating more and more data, which will be used to monitor them and deliver services needed by them, these data related technologies will be the core skills required going forward.

**What is your message to those establishing startups to become successful entrepreneurs?**

Find a niche and persevere to excel in that niche against all odds. It worked for me and I am sure it is relevant even today.

## How *trust* is key to accelerate economic recovery amid Covid

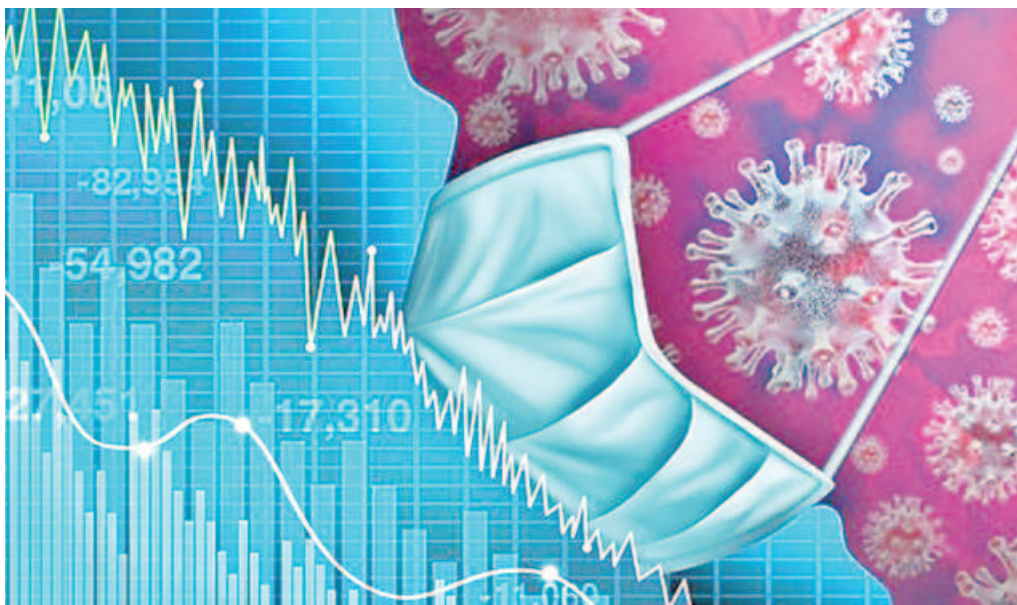
'Trust' has been essential in creating an environment of cooperation, credibility and coordination. It is all the more necessary today to rejuvenate businesses and their capacities to deliver



Viiveck Verma

With the Covid-19 pandemic disrupting all possible avenues in life, hopes are set for an economic resurgence to help people tide over the devastation and loss which have occurred in the wake of the viral spread. Yet, after several promises by governments and rhetorical optimism by various entities, an economic rebound seems to elude us. Where do we look for our possible contribution in an attempted revival then? The answer lies in a seemingly unlikely word - trust.

Tim Harford insightfully wrote for Forbes in an article fifteen years ago, "Trust operates in all sorts of ways, but above all, trust enables people to do business with each other. Doing business is what creates wealth." While trust has always been essential to knitting an environment of cooperation, credibility and coordination, it is all the more necessary today to rejuvenate businesses and their capacities to deliver. For instance, how are firms supposed to attract employees upon an unlock with the threat of the virus looming large? How are restaurants supposed to attract customers when they open up to provide dining experiences? How is business supposed to take place from both the side of the employees and customers in the new uncertainties of the present? The short answer again, is by building a scenario of trust, for transactions to take place.



**Reliance on trust is a most necessary pathway to envision an economic recovery from the ravages of the pandemic and businesses and individuals must fashion ways to cement the same. While it is incumbent upon governments and firms to provide trustworthy services, it is also necessary for us to vigilantly engage in transactions and facilitate substantial networks of trust. An economic rebound is on the horizon, and trust, most crucially, can propel us to it**

In a 2016 World Bank working paper, economist John Helliwell and his co-authors argued that since social trust can potentially enlarge future incomes, it should be treated as a capital asset. The paper derived an income equivalent of social trust by using data from the Gallup World Poll, a survey conducted in 132 countries, to compare changes in the well-being levels associated with a change in income and trust levels and had remarkable findings - for example, in Sweden and Denmark, the income equivalent of social trust translated into asset values of more than 50 per cent of the existing national wealth. It is crucial to understand the vast economic differences trust can

make and harness it accordingly.

Trust is shouldered on communication, transparency and security and all of these are indispensable in the co-Covid world. Crucial information shared in time, details being fleshed out for credibility and the safety of individuals being guaranteed have all been part of an endorsed, safe way of life during the pandemic. The same need has to be built into the foundations of business to galvanize trust. Businesses must endeavour to create an informational highway that keeps the employees aware of the risks and benefits of, and protections in doing their jobs and the clientele, in tune with the same with regards to the products they seek. This

culture is easier to speak of than to achieve but several Asian countries have led by example.

As a May 2020 article by the Boston Consulting Group observes, the Western world can learn from Asian countries in terms of balancing transparency with privacy and ensuring trust. For instance, in South Korea and Taiwan, societies heavily invest in digital applications and consequently share more information than required through voluntary apps. This exemplifies that increased transparency can be ensured without breaching trust. While citizens made concessions on privacy during times of epidemics and crises, they did so explicitly, with a clear tradeoff on transparency in return, and

with specific timelines on the more flexible privacy regulations. Furthermore, after the crisis, they still owned their data, which is demonstrated by the right to "be forgotten" in South Korea.

This example provides a worthy outline to go about trust in the heavily digitised and globalised present. Companies must remain committed to laying out what they are providing in exchange of what and governments must regulate these transactions with a view to protecting individual dignity, privacy and security. This is likely to have strong economic repercussions, as it enhances trust in the long run, enabling business. Other ways of increasing trust can be keeping consumers happy with additional perks during difficult times and suppliers satisfied with incentives. As the same article mentions, while ASUS extended the product warranty for its products by 30 days, Samsung provided more than \$2 billion in no- or low-interest loans to suppliers affected by the Covid-19 crisis. These are ways to bolster and sustain trust in the long run, keeping businesses afloat, thriving and credible.

Reliance on trust is a most necessary pathway to envision an economic recovery from the ravages of the pandemic and businesses and individuals must fashion ways to cement the same. While it is incumbent upon governments and firms to provide trustworthy services, it is also necessary for us to vigilantly engage in transactions and facilitate substantial networks of trust. An economic rebound is on the horizon, and trust, most crucially, can propel us to it.

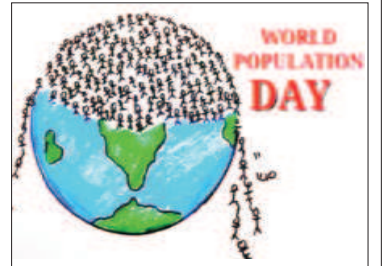
*(The author is Founder, Upsurge Global, and Senior Advisor, Telangana State Innovation Council)*

QUIZ NO.  
179

## HANS BIZ QUIZ

### 'World Population Day'

1. World Population Day is observed on 11 July every year. When did the United Nations Development Programme establish World Population Day?  
a) 1978  
b) 1989  
c) 1999  
d) 2011



2. At the peak of the Baby Boom between 1946 and 1964, the US fertility rate reached almost double the current US fertility rate. Find the fertility rate during the Baby Boom era?  
a) 5.6  
b) 4.8  
c) 3.7  
d) 2.8

billion by 2100, becoming more densely populated than China?  
a) Mediterranean & Middle East  
b) South-East Asian Region  
c) Central and Eastern Europe  
d) Sub-Saharan Africa

3. The average number of children per woman is known as the National Fertility rate. What is the National Fertility rate for the US in 2020?  
a) 1.8  
b) 2.1  
c) 2.9  
d) 3.3

7. In which year did the United States conduct its first decennial census?  
a) 1714  
b) 1920  
c) 1802  
d) 1824

4. In 2021, the global population reached the 7.7 billion mark, and it is expected to grow to around 8.5 billion in 2030. When is the world population expected to reach 11 billion?  
a) 2040  
b) 2050  
c) 2100  
d) 2130

8. The current population of the United States of America is 332 million. How many people were counted in the first decennial census of the United States of America in the 1790s?  
a) 4 million  
b) 24 million  
c) 32 million  
d) 40 million

5. By 2050, More than half of the world's population growth is expected to occur in which continent?  
a) Asia  
b) Africa  
c) South America  
d) Europe

9. Today, there are more than 30 megacities. New York and Tokyo were only megacities in 1950. The term 'megacity' refers to metropolitan areas with a total population of?  
a) Over 2 million people  
b) Over 5 million people  
c) Over 10 million people  
d) Over 20 million people

6. According to the United Nations, the population in which region could quadruple to nearly 4

10. What is the Global Replacement level fertility rate, a rate at which a country will maintain its current population size?  
a) 3.6  
b) 2.1  
c) 1.6  
d) 1.3

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

KEY

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





EURO 2020 C'SHIP

# England look to end 55-year title wait



England 1966 World Cup winner Geoff Hurst stands on top of a pod on the London Eye wearing a replica 1966 World Cup final kit and looking out towards Wembley Stadium, where the England football team will play Italy in the Euro 2020 final on Sunday, in London

LONDON

FACING Italy on Sunday evening in the Euro 2020 final, England looks to end Italy's 33-game unbeaten run and its 55-year wait for a major international football title. Wembley was the venue when England won the 1966 World Cup, beating Germany 4-2. England's 2-1 win over Denmark on July 7 ended a run of semifinal defeats in the World Cup in 1990 and 2018 and in the 1996 European Championships, reports Xinhua. England coach Gareth Southgate has developed a young side since 2018,

working on showing his players to develop and grow into a major tournament and England have done just that. They began their campaign with solid, if unspectacular performances in the group stage, built on being tough to score against, but with players such as Raheem Sterling and Mason Mount and Harry Kane able to produce a moment of magic in attack. Southgate was pragmatic as they beat Germany 2-0 in the last 16 showing he can adapt his system from a three-man defence to one with three central defenders

and two wing-backs. England showed they can attack with a 4-0 quarter-final thrashing of Ukraine. Denmark were tough rivals in the semifinals and there is still controversy over the penalty that allowed Kane to score the winning goal, but there is also no doubt that after a difficult first 45-minutes, England were the better side, with Denmark keeper, Kasper Schmeichel, keeping his side in the game. Now comes the chance to make history again and Southgate is unlikely to make too many changes to his starting 11. There is a chance he could return to three at the back to frustrate an impressive Italian attack of Lorenzo Insigne, Ciro Immobile and Federico Chiesa, who scored their goal against Spain in the last-4. Italy have looked good throughout the competition, with coach Roberto Mancini swapping their defensive game for a more expansive style of football, but they found it hard to deal with Spain's high pressing game. Southgate's decision will be whether to try and repeat the Spanish tactic or to rely on pace on the break, with Kane, who has improved as the competition has progressed, dropping deep to try and open space for the runs of Mason Mount, Sterling and Bukayo Sako or perhaps Phil Foden or Jadon Sancho, whose pace could be a factor if he starts.

(IANS)

# Harleen's jaw-dropping catch dwarfs India's loss in first T20I

NORTHAMPTON

HARLEEN Deol's stunning catch at the boundary provided a rare moment of joy for the Indian women's cricket team during England's innings in the opening T20 International, which it lost by 18 runs under DLS method. The catch was good enough to become a rage on social media.

Wicketkeeper Amy Jones was looking ominous, batting on 43 runs off 26 deliveries. On the fifth ball of the 19th over, she danced the pitch and went for a heave off pacer Shikha Pandey. It looked like the ball would go for a six. But Harleen summoned all her athletic ability.

The 23-year-old, positioned at long-off, timed her jump well and took a reverse-cupped catch above her head. As she was losing her balance,



she threw the ball up in the air before crossing the boundary. She then regained balance and jumped in time to make a full-stretch dive to complete the catch inside the boundary. Harleen's effort was also acknowledged by some of the players in the England camp, who applauded it. It earned rave reviews on Twitter as well. "As good a catch one will ever see on a cricket field, from Harleen Deol. Absolutely top class," said former India batsman VVS Laxman. "A fantastic piece of fielding [emoticon: clapping hands]," tweeted England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB).

This isn't the first time Indian women have impressed with their fielding. Three balls before Harleen's jaw-dropping effort, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur came in from long-on and dived

forward to complete a low catch to send back Natalie Sciver (55 off 27 balls) to pavilion.

In the third and final ODI at Worcester last Saturday, Smriti Mandhana had pulled off an extraordinary catch to dismiss Natalie in the 38th over. Smriti ran towards her left and dived full length at the cow corner to complete the catch.

Harleen and Harmanpreet's efforts were the few bright spots for India in the rain-hit match. England lead the multi-format series 8-4 on points with the second T20I scheduled to be played at Hove on Sunday.

Brief scores: England Women 177/7 in 20 overs (Natalie Sciver 55, Amy Jones 43, Shikha Pandey 3/22) beat India Women 54/3 in 8.4 overs (Smriti Mandhana 29, Harleen Deol 17 not out). (IANS)

# Final: A new chapter in an old rivalry

RIO DE JANEIRO

AS much as both managers tried not to discuss it, the recent tournament history of Copa America finalists Brazil and Argentina is a study in contrast. Argentina will be aiming to win their first major title since the 1993 Copa America when they battle for glory at Rio de Janeiro's Maracana stadium on Sunday morning (IST). Since that time, Brazil have stood on the Copa America champions' podium five times and won the World Cup twice, reports Xinhua.

"That is history. Looking at the past is not a reference," Brazil head coach Tite told a virtual news conference on Friday. "We are undefeated in the last two Copa Americas and we have better numbers but I don't see that having much importance." Likewise, Argentina boss Lionel Scaloni preferred to avoid answering questions about Argentina's trophy drought and denied that his players were under pressure to end it. "We have to take it easy and with caution," Scaloni said. "We have to do everything possible to win, without any anxiety. This pandemic has shown that football is important but not that important."

The duel will not only pit what are clearly South

America's two best teams against each other, but also the two best players. Brazil idol Neymar has lived up to expectations by scoring twice and providing three assists in a free-roaming attacking midfield role.

Lionel Messi has been even more devastating for Argentina, leading the competition for both goals (four) and assists (five). The six-time Ballon d'Or winner has made no secret of his desire to end Argentina's major tournament heartache and he has looked a man on a mission here. Teammate Rodrigo De Paul gave an insight into how Messi is revered by his peers after the team's quarterfinal victory over Ecuador when he described the 34-year-old as being "one step ahead of all of us". While many opposing sides have re-

sorted to assigning two or even three players to mark Messi during the competition, Tite appeared to rule out a master plan to counter the talisman.

"I know (what we'll do), but I'm not going to tell you," he said. "We don't neutralise, we reduce their actions." The showdown will provide a chance for Argentina to atone for their 2-0 defeat to Brazil in the semifinals of the 2019 Copa America, which was also played in Brazil. Not that Scaloni seemed to care. The 43-year-old said his top priority was to help ensure the quality of the spectacle by keeping his players in a positive frame of mind.

"Tomorrow is a final and we have to play it as if it were in Buenos Aires, Santiago de Chile or Barranquilla," the former wing-back said. "In addition, Brazil are playing at home, at a mythical stadium. The football world will come to a standstill," he added.



## Siva Kumar named ambassador of Intermnia WC

HYDERABAD

SIVA Kumar, a handball coach in St. Francis College for Women and Joint Secretary of Hyderabad District Handball Association, has been named the South Asian Ambassador of 49th Intermnia World Cup. The world largest youth handball tournament will be held in Teramo, Italy next year.

# Pacer Pankaj Singh retires from all forms of cricket

JAIPUR

FORMER India and Rajasthan pacer Pankaj Singh on Saturday announced retirement from all forms of cricket. The 36-year-old player, who represented India in two Tests and an ODI, made the announcement through a letter sent to the Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA). "It's not an easy decision to make, however, there comes a time in every sportsperson's life where one has to call it a day. With a heavy heart and mixed emotions, I officially announce my retirement from all forms of cricket," Singh said in the statement. The right-arm pacer represented Rajasthan for almost a decade before moving to Pondicherry in 2018. He returned to play for Rajasthan a year later with his last appearance being at this year's Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy and Vijay Hazare Trophy. "Today is the most difficult day for me but it is also a day of reflection and gratitude. Playing for RCA, BCCI, IPL, and CAP [Cricket Association of Pondicherry] has been a tremendous honour for me," said Singh. "I have been part of RCA for close

to 15 years and reached many milestones and gained incredible experience under the roof of RCA. My journey with RCA has always been memorable and will always remain first priority for me." In 117 first-class matches, Singh picked 472 wickets, including 28 five-wicket hauls. He also has 118 List A scalps to his name from 79 matches. In 57 T20 matches, he took 43 wickets. He was instrumental in Rajasthan winning the Ranji Trophy title in 2010-11 and 2011-12 season. Singh's maiden ODI appearance came against Sri Lanka in the tri-series in Zimbabwe in 2010. His two Test outings came against England in 2014 when he took two wickets. (IANS)








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