



THE HANS INDIA

• Simultaneously published from Hyderabad | Warangal | Tirupati | Amaravati | Visakhapatnam | Khammam | Kurnool | Delhi: RNI No: DELENG/2017/74095 •

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WINDOWS



Paresh Rawal new NSD chairman

New Delhi (IANS): Veteran actor Paresh Rawal has been appointed the new chairman of National School of Drama (NSD). The prestigious institute announced the news on Thursday on its verified Twitter account. "We are glad to inform Hon'ble President of India @rashtrapatibhvn has appointed renowned actor & Padma Shri @sirpareshrawal as chairman of @nsd_india. NSD family welcome the legend to shower his guidance to NSD for achieving new heights," read the tweet. Rawal, also a politician affiliated with the Bharatiya Janata Party, started his acting career in the eighties. Widely respected for his versatility, he has impressed with numerous award-winning arthouse performances as well as roles as the villain and the comedian in mainstream Bollywood films. Rawal was honoured with a Padma Shri in 2014, and he won the National Film Award in 1994 as Best Supporting Actor for "Woh Chokri" and "Sir". Among his many popular roles are "Naam" (1986), "Shiva" (1990), "Tamanna" (1996), "Aitraaz" (2004), "OMG: Oh My God!" (2012), and "Table No. 21" (2013). He is particularly loved for his comic roles in commercial entertainers including "Andaz Apna Apna" (1994), "Chachi 420" (1997), "Hera Pheri" (2000), "Aankhen" (2002), "Awara Paagal Deewana" (2002), "Hungama" (2003), "Hulchul" (2004), "Garam Masala" (2005), "Phir Hera Pheri" (2006), "Bhagam Bhag" (2006), "Malamaal Weekly" (2006), "Welcome" (2007), and "Atithi Tum Kab Jaoge?" (2010).

SPORTS



Manohar undid severe damage ICC's 'Big Three' formula inflicted: PCB chief Mani P8



Rafale inducted in IAF

Can be deployed at LAC at short notice: Rajnath

Ambala/New Delhi (IANS): Five Rafale combat aircraft made by French company Dassault Aviation can be deployed at a short notice at the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh, said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at the Ambala Air Base in Haryana on Thursday during the induction ceremony. "This induction is important considering the kind of atmosphere at our borders or the kind of atmosphere created at our borders," said Singh as Rafale aircrafts became operational in Indian Air Force.

He also said, "The speed with which the Indian Air Force deployed its assets on forward bases creates a trust that our Air Force is fully prepared to fulfill its operational obligations."

Singh also stated that during his recent foreign trip to Moscow, he had clearly stated the view of India in front of the world. "I also made everyone aware of our resolve to not compromise our sovereignty and territorial integrity under any circumstances. We're committed to doing everything possible towards this," Singh said. He was in Russian capital earlier this month to participate in a joint meet-



IAF pilots board a Rafale fighter aircraft during its induction into the IAF fleet, at the Ambala air base on Thursday

ing of Defence Ministers of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Collective Security treaty organisation and Commonwealth of Independent States countries.

The defence minister said, "Rafale induction is a big and stern message for the entire world, especially to those eyeing our sovereignty."

Singh said that there is vibrant defence cooperation between India and France. "Rafale deal is a game changer. I am confident our air force has acquired a technological edge

with Rafale," the minister pointed out.

French Defence Minister Florence Parly who was also part of induction ceremony said that today is a stellar achievement for both countries. "Rafale means gust of wind if you are poetic and can also means burst of fire in a battlefield," the French Defence Minister said.

Addressing the gathering Indian Air Force Chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhadauria said: "What we see is a result of decisive action by the government to

break the impasse over the MMRC deal. Today the Rafale has been operationally inducted. We are good to go."

"Golden Arrows are singularly blessed to be equipped with Rafale. Squadron has undergone intense integrated training with aircraft of other fleets. They are good to go and deliver," the Air Chief said.

He also thanked French Air Force for their support and providing tankers for the ferry.

Rafale is a 4.5 generation aircraft and has latest

weapons, superior sensors and fully integrated architecture.

At Ambala, the programme started with ceremonial unveiling of the Rafale aircraft, then a traditional 'Sarva Dharma Puja'. Then Air Display by Rafale and Tejas aircraft as well as by 'Sarang Aerobatic Team'. Afterwards, a traditional water cannon salute was given to the Rafale aircraft. The programme culminated with the ceremonial induction of Rafale aircraft to 17 Squadron.

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Consider dropping interest on interest during moratorium: SC to Centre

New Delhi (IANS): The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Centre to consider a plea for not charging interest on interest on deferred EMIs during the moratorium period and also not downgrade the credit/asset classification of the borrowers.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R Subhash Reddy and MR Shah asked the Centre, the Reserve Bank of India and the banks to put their heads together within two weeks to decide on crucial issues -- sector-specific loan restructuring, charging of interest on interest, etc -- and then come up with a concrete decision. Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, submitted that an expert committee at the highest level has been set up to take decisions on the issue of moratorium extension, interest on interest during moratorium and other connected issues.

Senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing for the Indian Bank Association, submitted that the RBI and other banks be given time to respond on the prayers made on Thursday. He submitted that the banks have been following

a broad system of banking and without considering their stand, no interim order be passed at this stage. The top court said it is inclined to grant two weeks to the Centre to file an appropriate affidavit and it will consider different prayers made by petitioners on the next date. "In view of the aforesaid request made by Tushar Mehta, Solicitor-General, and counsel for banks, we grant two weeks time to file appropriate affidavit to reply the issues which have been raised before us. All decisions taken by the government of India, Reserve Bank of India or the different banks should be placed before the court for consideration," said the bench. The top court observed that its interim orders, where it had said that accounts not declared NPAs on August 31, shouldn't be declared NPAs till further orders, shall continue till the next date of hearing.

Counsel for the petitioners also expressed their concern with regard to individual loans, apart from other sectors, contending that individuals are more adversely affected during this period of pandemic.

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Serum Institute pauses Covid vaccine trials in India

New Delhi (IANS): The Serum Institute of India (SII), which was conducting the India trials for the coronavirus vaccine being developed by Oxford University, on Thursday paused the clinical trials of the vaccine in India.

In a statement, the Serum Institute of India said: "We are reviewing the situation and pausing India trials till AstraZeneca restarts the trials. We are following DCGI's instructions and will not be able to comment further on trials."

The declaration by the Pune-based vaccine manufacturer came a day after the Drug Control General of India (DCGI), VG Somani, issued a show-cause notice to them asking for an explanation as to why the institute decided to go ahead with the clinical trial of Covid-19 vaccine candidate while doubts about patient safety are yet unclear.

The notice was issued in the wake of an advert inci-

dent where one of the participants in the UK reported a suspected severe adverse reaction when administered a booster dose of Covishield, a vaccine candidate developed jointly by pharma giant AstraZeneca and University of Oxford, on Tuesday.

"Whereas, Serum Institute of India Pvt Ltd, Pune, till now has not informed the Central licensing authority regarding pausing the clinical trial carried out by AstraZeneca in other countries and also not submitted casualty analysis of the reported serious adverse event with the investigational vaccine for the continuation of phase 2 and 3 clinical trials of the subject vaccine in the country in light of the safety concerns," the notice by DCGI read.

The DCGI further asked the institute why the authority does not suspend the permission given to the SII for the clinical trials of Covishield.

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Red Line, Violet Line, Green Line services on

New Delhi (PTI): Delhi Metro's Red Line, Violet Line and Green Line resumed services on Thursday after being closed for 172 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said.

Yellow Line and Rapid Metro were the first to reopen on Monday, followed by Blue Line and Pink Line on Wednesday. "Seven lines of the Delhi Metro network are now open! Thank you dear commuters for following the safety guidelines and helping us maintain good service. #MetroBackOnTrack," the DMRC tweeted after the three new lines resumed services. Services on Red Line, Violet Line and Green Line resumed at 7 AM, officials said.

On Monday, the Delhi Metro resumed partial services on the Yellow Line. The Delhi Metro services were suspended on March 22. The Ministry of Home Affairs recently issued guidelines allowing the Delhi Metro to resume operations in a graded manner, following which the DMRC said it would be done in three stages from



A security official at Kashmere Gate Metro Station after services resumed on Red, Green and Violet line with certain restrictions in New Delhi on Thursday

September 7-12. Under stage one, Yellow Line or Line 2 and Rapid Metro were made operational with restricted service hours.

Trains are operating in batches of four hours each from 7-11 AM and 4-8 PM. On Wednesday, Blue Line and Pink Line were made

operational with the same schedule. Red Line (Rithala to Shaheed Sthal New Bus Adda, Ghaziabad); Green Line (Kirti Nagar/Inderlok to Brig. Hoshiar Singh, Badli/Badli); and Violet Line (Kashmere Gate to Raja Nahar Singh, Ballabhgarh), resumed services on September 10 with the same

time schedule, the DMRC said.

With the services available on multiple lines now -- Yellow, Blue and Pink Lines -- the total ridership on Wednesday was nearly 53,400 till 8 PM, the DMRC said in a statement. The approximate figures for the three corridors were -- Yel-

low Line (26,900), Blue Line (22,600) and Pink Line (3,900), it said. "DMRC will be running 35 trains on Red Line (Rithala-Shaheed Sthal New Bus Adda) performing around 413 train trips during morning and evening hours on 10th September 2020. Similarly, 40 trains with approx. 344 trips will be put into service on the Violet Line (Kashmere Gate-Raja Nahar Singh)," the DMRC said on Wednesday.

On the Green Line (Kirti Nagar/Inderlok - Brig. Hoshiar Singh), 20 trains with 268 train trips will be put into service, the statement said. "The trips will be subsequently increased as the operational timing of services get extended on September 11-12 with the opening of other lines in a graded manner," it added.

The list of gates which will remain open for entry of passengers at each station along with all necessary updates are available on the home page of Delhi Metro's official website www.delhimetrorail.com for easy access of the passenger information. Continued on Page 5

India, Japan ink mutual military logistics deal

New Delhi (PTI): After years of negotiations, India and Japan have inked a landmark agreement that will allow their militaries to access each other's bases for logistics support, a key development that comes in the backdrop of growing concerns over China's military muscle flexing in the region.

The acquisition and cross-servicing pact was signed by Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar and Japanese Ambassador Suzuki Satoshi, a defence ministry spokesperson said on Thursday. The agreement provides for creation of an enabling framework for closer co-

operation and interoperability, besides allowing militaries of the two countries to use each other's bases and facilities for repair and replenishment of supplies, the official said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe, who held a telephonic conversation earlier in the day, welcomed the signing of the "Agreement on Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services" between the Indian Armed Forces and the Self-Defence Forces of Japan.

The two leaders concurred that the pact will further enhance the depth of defence cooperation be-

tween the two countries and contribute to peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region, according to a release from the external affairs ministry here.

The signing of the agreement comes at a time India is locked in a bitter border row with China, and rising concerns among countries in the region over increasing Chinese assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific region.

A statement by Japanese foreign ministry said the agreement will promote closer cooperation between the militaries of the two countries, and enable them to actively contribute to international

peace and security. "It is expected that the agreement will facilitate the smooth and prompt provision of supplies and services between the Self-Defence Forces of Japan and the Indian Armed Forces," it said.

The defence ministry said the pact will enhance the interoperability between the armed forces, resulting in further expansion of bilateral defence engagement under the Indo-Japan special strategic and global partnership. "The agreement establishes the enabling framework for closer cooperation between the armed forces of India and

Japan in reciprocal provision of supplies and services," it said.

In June, India and Australia sealed a similar Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) while resolving to scale up their overall defence cooperation. India has already signed similar agreements with the US, France and Singapore. India has been signing MLSAs with countries primarily eyeing deeper maritime cooperation which is important considering China's rapid military expansion in the Indo-Pacific, Indian Ocean and South China Sea.

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Womenia



Tarun presents virtual fashion show

Ace designer Tarun Tahiliani kick-starts the first-ever digital premiere of Blenders Pride Fashion Tour, showcasing 'INFINITE', My Identity, My Pride

With over 15 years of presence, Blenders Pride Fashion Tour (BPFT) has spearheaded fashion and established a definitive name in the industry. By focusing laser sharp on fashion, the tour presented festivals of fashion and created a universe of pride through its three themes; Craft, Blend and Identity, in collaboration with Fashion Design Council of India.

Taking this idea a notch higher, BPFT is back in full-swing with its 16th edition to narrate a new story. Through this collaboration, BPFT will support fashion designers to showcase their creativity in design, especially amidst the challenges presented by the pandemic.

The striking experience uncovered the idea of 'INFINITE' possibilities in one's lives by setting an example for the world to follow. The one-of-a-kind hybrid fashion experience encapsulated all the glamour and glitz with an impactful story through an on-ground set-up brought alive through a digital premiere.

Through a theatrical representation of fashion, 25 muses donned 25 stunning looks, both menswear and womenswear, in a larger-than-life custom set designed by Tarun Tahiliani, showcasing his 25-year journey. The storytelling was a salute to the wheel of life, the designer's inspirations, the studio's past and its evolution



Designer Tarun Tahiliani and model Lakshmi Rana at Blenders Pride Fashion Tour X Tarun Tahiliani

influences that have inspired its course over the years. I take immense pride in expressing who I am and where I stand today, and in my association with Blenders Pride Fashion Tour 2020, because it gives me the opportunity to celebrate my identity with Pride."

Tarun shares that the more one is local the less you need to source from various places.

He adds, "One of the worst things that we have seen during the pandemic is that we have seen the migrant labourers and workers are consciously moving lots of our embroidery back to villages and small towns we do use the clause from various parts of India and those people have a different way of living we are working with a lot more Indian fabrics. I think the price barrier is not for brides. Everyone who comes is bargaining hard which was never like this. People are now thinking there is a lot of stock in the market. You need to have a product that no one else has and for this you will have to pay."

into the future – a true representation of the brand.

Weaving a seamless story around 'My Identity, My Pride', Tarun said, 'There is nothing more important than one's identity, an expression that defines you as being distinct from the world. This collaboration is a celebration of my journey and the myriad and varied

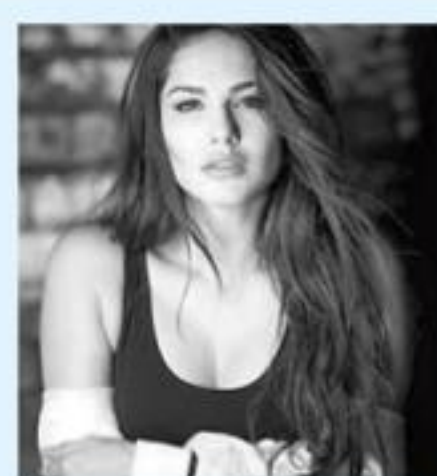
TWEET PATROL



SUNNY LEONE
@SUNNYLEAONE

Best thing about LA is the sunshine ☀ and this guy...lol

@DanielWeber99



Dolly Kumar

Unleashing the power of 'Superfoods for Superskin'

TEJAL SINHA

The saying 'Every girl is beautiful in her own unique way' goes well with the concept of Dolly Kumar and her skin brand Skinella.

Dolly is the Founder and Director of Cosmic Nutracos Solutions Private limited, the parent company to Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) brands Gaia and Skinella. Gaia is a health and wellness brand, while Skinella is a skin-care brand.

Sharing about her journey, Dolly says, "Before starting Cosmic Nutracos Solutions in 2007, my entrepreneurial venture in the health and wellness, and beauty space. I have worked with corporate houses and with many cosmetic brands where my role inspired me to take the organisation's growth to new heights. After 3 years of extensive research & development, conceptualization and market surveys, we finally launched Skinella in the year 2017. Every product goes through stability and compatibility processes for 6 months and is also tested under extremely high temperatures."

Skinella offers skin care products for the young Teenage Group (15-25 years). Skinella products are made with the power of superfoods and contain no harsh chemicals. Skinella products are certified by PETA for cruelty-free and vegan. Having been part of the cosmetic

industry for almost her entire life, it was always her dream to contribute something for the industry.

"I wanted to launch a brand that will not only be different, but also hold strong values and ethos. We started doing our research almost 6 years back from today and we realized that there are endless

There are a lot of brands in skin care in India today and every other day there is a new brand being launched in the market. Skinella is still at a nascent stage, but in only three years we have been successful to establish ourselves as a promising brand for the young target group.

Being relevant during the initial stages of the pandemic was a challenge as people were more concerned with their well being, and skin care is something nobody was bothered with.

Pandemic impact

With the sales being affected due to the pandemic, they started working on contingency plans in terms of marketing and launched 'The Best Face Mask This Season' campaign which was issued in Public Interest.

Dolly says, "We slowly began to do consumer promotions where we gave free face masks and hand sanitizers on purchase of Skinella products. Although, unfortunately the pandemic is still prevailing, but our sales have picked up and we are back on track. There are a lot of trends over things like Maskne; mask induced skin irritations, so skin care is something everyone is looking for now and skin care is again very much in. We will be launching more products this year and expand our distribution both in retail as well as e-commerce platforms."

With not many skin care products for teens, Dolly Kumar brings out a range of skincare products that are made with superfoods, that can feed your skin pure beauty without the baggage of chemicals

numbers of skin care products in the market. However, very few were talking to the teens and making products especially designed for their needs. Moreover, there was not any brand that had a complete range of skin care products for the young group girls," adds Dolly.

Their products include Mandarin gel body wash, Coffee Chocolate face mask, Blueberry face wash, Juicy Fresh de-tan face mask, Pink Guava body polish scrub, Watermelon sunscreen and many more

No more excuses for domestic, sexual violence: Shabana Azmi

The Commonwealth Secretariat has launched a new campaign to tackle the alarming rise in domestic and sexual violence during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Bollywood actress Shabana Azmi, who is supporting the campaign, said in a video message: "Violence against women and girls is a pandemic that destroys families, communities, and economies."

"For far too long, society has not done nearly enough. For far too long, people have said it is a private matter of blame the victim or said she

must have done something to deserve it.

"My name is Shabana Azmi, I'm a film and theatre actress from India. And I say no more. No more shame. No more blame. No more excuses. Join me in taking the pledge 'Commonwealth Says NO MORE'."

The Commonwealth Secretariat and the NO MORE Foundation launched the campaign.

The launch was held at a special virtual event on Wednesday, which was attended by representatives and advocates from across the Commonwealth nations, representing nearly one-third of the world's population.

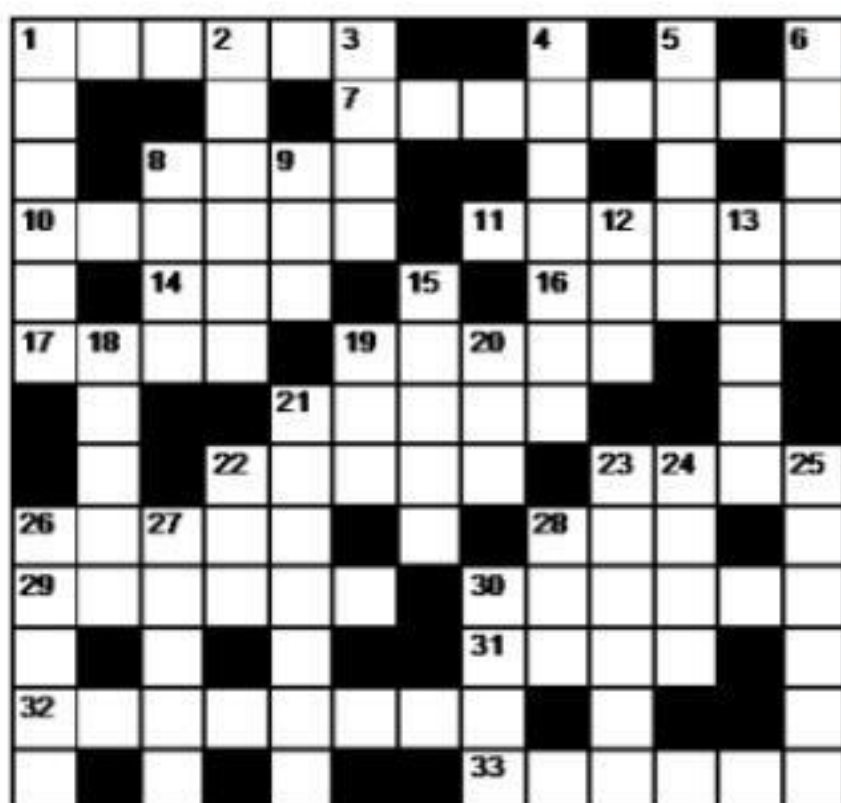
The 'Commonwealth Says NO MORE' campaign came at a time when organisations across the globe have seen calls to hotlines for victims of abuse and demand for support services rise by

25 per cent to 300 per cent during the Covid-19 lockdowns.

Even before the pandemic, one in three women across the world were beaten or sexually abused within their lifetime, making it a leading cause of death in women and girls.

Besides Shabana Azmi, other celebrities who joined the campaign included Kiribati President Taneti Maamau, Antigua and Barbuda's Governor-General Rodney Williams, New Zealand's former Prime Minister Helen Clark, British singer and Royal Commonwealth Society's Ambassador Geri Horner, UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed, Pakistani actress Mahira Khan, Ghanaian actress Joselyn Dumas, British actor Colin Salmon and Australia actor Ryan Johnson.

The digital portal provides easy-to-use tools and resources to help governments and community-based organisations strengthen their efforts to support victims of domestic and sexual violence and those at risk.



SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER 10

CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Mystery (6)
- 7 A disease of the eye (8)
- 8 Construction toy (4)
- 10 German prison camp (6)
- 11 Group of fish (6)
- 14 Front part of an apron (3)
- 16 Injures (5)
- 17 Flat circular plate (4)
- 19 Scour (5)
- 21 Summation (5)
- 22 A person or thing which entices another person (5)
- 23 The foam of the sea (4)
- 26 Invigorate (5)
- 28 Call to the ____: what a lawyer gets ? (3)
- 29 Constant (6)
- 30 Walk like a duck (6)
- 31 Island of Hawaii (4)
- 32 Tolerated extent of freedom (8)
- 33 Six-line stanza (6)

Down

- 1 Obliterated (6)
- 2 Celtic or Erse (6)
- 3 Highly excited (4)
- 4 Fistfight (5-2)
- 5 Giver (5)
- 6 Cries like a baby (5)
- 8 Experiment rooms, in short, for science students (4)
- 9 Chatter (3)
- 12 Centre of a wheel (3)
- 13 Aquatic creature (5)
- 15 "Star Trek" doctor (5)
- 18 Bay (5)
- 19 Not sweet and dry for wines (3)
- 20 A shaft of light (3)
- 21 Abundantly supplied (7)
- 22 Invest with a nickname (3)
- 23 Ascetic holy men (6)
- 24 Language similar to Hindi (4)
- 25 Most independent (6)
- 26 A sacred hymn (5)
- 27 Separates (5)
- 28 Pastoral sound (3)
- 30 Misfortunes (4)

SUDOKU



NEWS ROUNDUP

Kavita Seth: Wherever I perform, fans always request me to sing 'Iktara'

Singer Kavita Seth says she feels incomplete without soulful music. Kavita is best known for her evergreen number "Iktara" in the 2009 coming-of-age drama, "Wake Up Sid". She has gone onto carve a niche in the contemporary pop and film music scene with her soulful Sufi style of singing.

Kavita says, "Iktara is one of my special songs. Wherever I perform, my fans always request me to sing the song. I am incomplete without 'Iktara'. I have received immense love and fame after the song."

She also recalled how she cried when she heard the song in the cinema hall, while watching the film with the audience.

"I remember it was the first day of the film's release. I went to a theatre to watch it and I was so overwhelmed with the audience's reaction. People were literally singing 'Iktara'. It made me emotional and tears were rolling down my cheeks. I never thought 'Iktara' would become such a big hit. I returned to the studio and told (composer) Amit Trivedi that I was not happy with the way I had sung the song and I wanted to record it once more. Amit Trivedi said the song had already gone for editing. When the song was released, I realised how well it had been received by the people," ends Kavita. -



Pushkar case: HC questions Arnab for running a parallel probe, trial

On the channel's claim that they have evidence with them, the judge questioned them saying 'were you at the spot? Are you an eye witness? There is some sanctity attached to the investigation'



New Delhi: The Delhi high court on Thursday questioned Arnab Goswami for running a parallel investigation and trial in the Congress leader Shashi Tharoor's wife Sunanda Pushkar's death case and directed the journalist to be bound by his undertaking on showing restraint and bringing down the rhetoric while covering the matter.

Justice Mukta Gupta said the court was not saying that anyone will gag the media but at the same time, sanctity of investigation must be maintained.

tion must be maintained.

"Please show restraint. Once the police investigation is going on in the criminal case, there cannot be a parallel investigation by the media," the judge said and remarked that people must take a course in criminal trial and then get into journalism.

The High Court referred to December 1, 2017 order in which it was stated that "press cannot 'convict anyone' or insinuate that he/she is guilty or make any other unsubstantiated claims.

Press has to exercise care and caution while reporting about matters under investigation or pending trial."

It has been noted in the 2017 order that the counsel for the journalist and channel has assured the court that in future they would exercise restraint as well as bring down the 'rhetoric'.

On Thursday, the judge said, "Defendants (Goswami and his channel) are thus directed to be bound by the statement made on their behalf by their counsel till

the next date of hearing."

On the channel's claim that they have evidence with them, the judge questioned them saying "were you at the spot? Are you an eye witness? There is some sanctity attached to the investigation."

To this, advocate Malvika Trivedi, representing Goswami, said there was evidence from AIIMS, based on which certain broadcast was aired.

The judge said it was for a court of law to decide what was

evidence in a criminal trial and there are statements from here and there which are not evidence.

"Can the media sit in appeal against the chargesheet filed by an investigating agency?" the judge asked.

"It is not a reflection on the Plaintiff (Tharoor) but the investigating agency. Can there be a parallel investigation or trial?.. Would you not like the courts to take their own course?" the judge said.

Bengaluru police bust drug racket, seize 1,350 kg ganja

Bengaluru (IANS): The Bengaluru City police busted an inter-state ganja sale network and seized a whopping 1,350 kg of the drug worth nearly Rs 4 crore on Thursday. The police arrested four persons in this connection.

Preliminary investigations revealed that the ganja sale network was spread over Odisha, Telangana and Karnataka.

The alleged drug smugglers had dug a huge pit (like a silo) in a sheep-rearing farm situated at Kamalapur Taluk in Kalaburagi district which was located nearly 750 km from Bengaluru in the uppermost northern part of Karnataka.

"These accused had stored as many as 600 packets totalling 1,350 kg of ganja in this pit," the police said.

The pit was filled with the ganja packets and covered with a wooden plank which was then covered with a thick layer of mud.

Speaking to reporters, Bengaluru City Police Commissioner Kamal Pant said this was the biggest such seizure in the history of Bengaluru Police.

"A day-to-day investigation led to a small clue of an accused selling ganja within Seshadripuram Police station limit, where the police had seized two kg of ganja from the accused. But detailed investigations threw light on how the ganja trade was flourishing as far as Odisha to Bengaluru," the Police Commissioner explained.



According to him, the ganja was allegedly grown in the interior forests of Odisha and transported through Telangana in trucks or vehicles carrying vegetables.

"These accused used to store it in a pit in a sheep-rearing farm, as nobody could suspect that any such activity was happening in

such a remote area. The packets were systematically packed and stacked in this pit," he added.

Responding to a question and heaping praise on the Seshadripuram Police, Pant said two young officers Nabisaheb and Rajasab Tehsildar "worked day and night relentlessly and approached these

drug mafia members playing decoys to bust this racket".

These drug sellers were seasoned smugglers, and initially did not fall prey to our efforts but prolonged and consistent efforts yielded results. It paved the way for their arrest and the record seizure of drugs, he added.

Covid put strain on mental health: AIIMS Director

New Delhi (IANS): Director of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Randeep Guleria, has said that coronavirus pandemic, lockdown, and communicating through technology rather than physically is straining mental health of people.

The remarks hold importance on the day the world is observing the 'Suicide Prevention Day'. According to the data of the National Crime Records Bureau, a total of 1,39,123 suicides were reported in India in 2019, an increase of 3.4 per cent in comparison to 2018. According to the WHO, we lose about 8,00,000 people to suicide every



year.

"Important aspect which has emerged both because of the pandemic, lockdown, and the whole issue of physical distancing and communicating through

technology rather than physically, is strain on mental health," said Guleria while addressing AIIMS's National Grand Rounds.

He added, "The mental health issues have also become something which have affected not only those who have had Covid-19, but even sometimes the normal individuals who are sort of at home."

He said that students, old people, have now been confined to a small space and are communicating only through technology rather than physically. "So, this has also caused a lot of mental health issues."

India sees highest single-day spike

New Delhi: India saw a record single-day spike of 95,735 infections and 1,172 fatalities taking the COVID-19 caseload past 44 lakh and death toll to 75,062, while recoveries surged to 34,71,783 on Thursday, according to the Union Health Ministry. The total cases mounted to 44,65,863, the ministry data updated at 8 am showed. The COVID-19 fatality rate has further dropped to 1.68 per cent while the recovery rate was recorded at 77.74 per cent. There are 9,19,018 active cases in the country which comprise 20.58 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated. India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20 lakh mark on August 7, it went past 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5. According to ICMR, a total of 5,29,34,433 samples have been tested up to September 9 with 11,29,756 samples being tested on Wednesday.



Cats may be catching virus at far higher rates

Beijing (IANS): Chinese researchers have found that cats may be catching the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) at far higher rates than thought before, which could mean they have unique ways of fighting off the virus. Researchers from Huazhong Agricultural University, in the Chinese city, took blood samples from 102 cats. Nasal and anal swabs were also collected. The study, published in the journal Emerging Microbes & Infections, shows Covid-19 antibodies present in 15 of the blood samples taken from the cats. Of these, 11 cats had neutralizing antibodies - proteins that bind so successfully to a virus they block the infection. None of the cats actually tested positive for Covid-19 or displayed obvious symptoms and, according to the results of return visits, none of these felines have died, the study said.

The sample of cats looked at included 46 abandoned from three animal shelters, 41 from five pet hospitals, and 15 cats were from Covid-19 patient families.



Trial by media: HC wants State to control TV news channels

Mumbai: The Bombay High Court on Thursday said it was surprised to know that the government had no control over the electronic media and asked why television news should not be regulated by the State. The observation was made by a bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice G S Kulkarni while hearing a bunch of petitions that sought various reliefs related to the case of the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, including a direction to restrain the press in its coverage of the case.

The bench impleaded the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting as a party in the matters. It also directed the ministry to file a reply in court indicating the extent of state control that is exercised in respect of telecasting news, particularly such news that "may have serious ramifications".

The petitions, filed by activists, and eight retired senior police officers, allege, among other things that several TV channels were running a parallel probe into the case, and that they were running a malicious campaign



Shiv Sena has become Sonia Sena: Kangana

Mumbai: In yet another attack on Shiv Sena, actor Kangana Ranaut on Thursday accused the party of compromising its ideology and transformed into 'Sonia Sena'.

Taking to Twitter, the Queen actor wrote, "The ideology on which Shri Balasaheb Thackeray had built Shiv Sena, today they have sold that ideology for power and have become Sonia Sena from Shiv Sena. Don't call the goons who broke my house in my absence a civic body. Don't insult the Constitution in this manner."

against the Mumbai police through their current reportage in the case.

On September 3, another

bench had heard the same pleas and had passed an order urging the press to show restraint while covering the developments of Sushant Singh Rajput's death case. On Thursday, senior advocate Milind Sathe, who appeared for the former police officials, told the bench that despite the order, TV channels were continuing with their slander against the Mumbai police.

The Union government, meanwhile, pointed out that the petitioners should

have approached the Press Council of India, a statutory body which regulates the print media, and the News Broadcasting standards Authority (NBSA) with its grievances against the TV news channels. At this, the bench noted that the NBSA wasn't a statutory body. "We are surprised that the state has no control over the electronic media. Why should it (TV news) not be regulated in case they may have serious ramifications," the bench said.

Maha Governor bats for Kangana

Mumbai: Maharashtra Governor BS Koshiyari has expressed displeasure over the handling of the Kangana Ranaut episode and the manner in which the Mumbai civic body razed "illegal alterations" at her bungalow, sources close to him said on Thursday.

The governor summoned Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's principal advisor Ajay Mehta on Wednesday, when the demolition was carried out, and conveyed his displeasure over the entire matter, the sources said.

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Longer wait for coronavirus vaccine

Drug giant AstraZeneca announced on September 9 that it had paused global trials of its coronavirus vaccine because of an “unexplained illness” in one of the volunteers. No doubt, it is a standard precaution in vaccine trials that is meant to ensure experimental vaccines don’t cause serious reactions among participants. The company is testing its vaccine, developed by Britain’s University of Oxford, in the United States as well as the UK, Latin America, Asia, Europe and Africa.

Of course, when large trials happen, illnesses would happen. But, it is important that it is checked and rechecked carefully and properly. The review of the ‘single event’ is bound to take place to minimise any potential impact on the trial timeline. The nature of the adverse reaction and when it happened were not immediately known, though the participant is expected

to recover. Researchers have been told the hold was placed on the trial out of “an abundance of caution.”

The finding is having an impact on other AstraZeneca vaccine trials underway — as well as on the clinical trials being conducted by other vaccine manufacturers. It’s unclear how long AstraZeneca’s might last. But the progress of the company’s trial — and those of all Covid-19 vaccines in development — are being closely watched given the pressing need for new ways to curb the global pandemic.

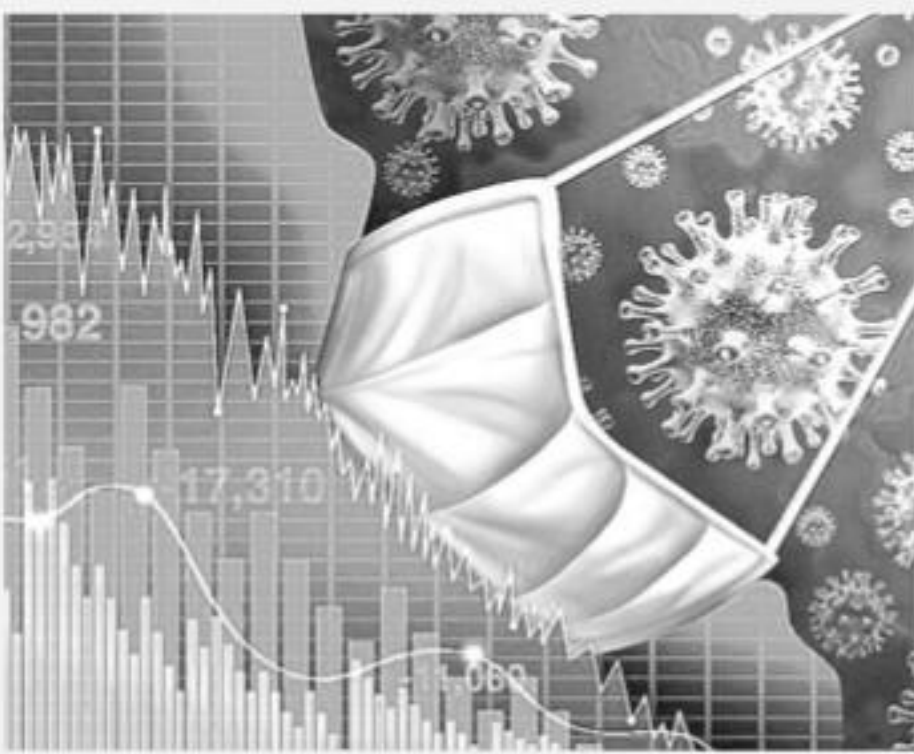
There are currently nine vaccine candidates in Phase 3 trials. AstraZeneca’s is the first Phase 3 Covid-19 vaccine trial known to have been put on hold. AstraZeneca is unlikely to share the details of the “unexplained illness” until it thoroughly investigates if it was indeed the vaccine — or any other factor — that triggered it. Its shares have tanked by 10 percent since the announcement because this revelation is bound to raise questions about the safety of its vaccine and nearly makes certain that the Oxford vaccine won’t be the first in the world to be approved by drug regulators.

The Oxford vaccine has been widely seen as one of

the leading global candidates against the coronavirus, and the suspension of the trial dims prospects for a potential year-end rollout its lead developer had signalled earlier. The mad rush to procure a vaccine that had not been completely tested has hit a major hurdle now. After promising early results in smaller Phase 1 and 2 trials, AstraZeneca’s vaccine moved to a large-scale trial in the United States in late August.

Late-stage trials for the drug had already begun in the U.K., Brazil, and South Africa. While it’s not immediately clear what side effects presented in the single participant, during Phase 1/2 trials, 60 per cent of 1,000 participants given the drug experienced mild to moderate side effects, including fever, headaches, muscle pain and injection site reactions, according to a study published in July.

As for India, the Serum Institute of India is conducting the clinical trials - a combined Phase 2 and Phase 3 - which is covering 1,600 participants and the product here is known as Covishield. Well, with this happening now, there is little hope that the country or the world could have an early solution to the COVID-19 problem.



Coverage of SSR death, Covid, unemployment spark suicidal thoughts

ASHISH SRIVASTAVA

Declared on March 24, 2020, the lockdown ensured that hundreds of millions of people were confined at home, except when they ventured out, armed with a self-attested affidavit, to stock up on essentials. While this may have been effective in curbing the spread of the severe acute respiratory syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in India, it has not, perhaps, been conducive to the emotional and mental health of many. Psychiatrists are getting more patients with suicidal tendencies during this period. The reasons vary from loss of employment and livelihood, break-ups to incidents of violence at home. However, in the last two months, the situation has exacerbated monumentally.

Aakash Healthcare, a super speciality hospital in New Delhi, noted 33 per cent of patients battling mental health issues exhibit suicidal thoughts. One of the biggest instigators has been the extensive coverage of Sushant Singh Rajput’s death, who allegedly died by suicide. Meanwhile, the Indian Spinal Injury Centre (ISIC) say they see at least 10 patients every day who complain of suicidal thoughts due to various reasons.

“One of the biggest triggers can be the talking about suicide, and since the death of Sushant Singh Rajput and the constant media discussion on it, many people are coming to us who feel intrigued by suicide and are curious about it. About 150 people approached us with clinical mental health issues in the past two months, and 50 had serious suicidal thoughts. Children as young as 15 are showing suicidal thoughts. One of the patients was a man in his 30s who tried to commit suicide through medicine overdose. Those who have anxiety or bipolar disorder may also be prone to committing suicide,” says Dr Loveleen Malhotra, Psychologist, Aakash Healthcare & Super Speciality Hospital, Dwarka.

Apollo Telehealth, a telemedicine service by pharmaceutical and healthcare giant Apollo, say they have given as many as 2000 consultations to people suffering from mental health issues. Dr Tabassum Sheikh, Psychologist at Apollo Telehealth, noted that many among them exhibited suicidal tendencies.

“A variety of issues and underlying situations were observed in the patients, which led up to suicidal thoughts. But the majority faced the fear of catching an infection, social isolation, loss of loved ones often exacerbated by the distress caused due to unemployment and loss of income,” Sheikh said. Sheikh also classified her patients based on the issues they faced, which led to the onset of suicidal thoughts in them. Emotional: Grief, anxiety due to prevalence of COVID-19, loneliness, depression.

Employment issues: Unemployment, lack of job security and satisfaction, distress and demotivation leading to lack of focus and concentration.

Inadequate sleep due to work pressure.

Interpersonal Relationship Issues: Marital issues, including lack of compatibility, trust, commitment, and compassion towards each other. Lack of communication and break-ups.

Problems with Parenting: Difficulty in making a fair decision among two kids or more kids and issues in understanding the psychology of a kid with separated parents

Personality and Habits: Increase in aggressiveness of obsessive-compulsive disorders, overthinking, and anger.

Physical: Lack of sleep and concentration, lethargy, loss of energy, and issues due to chronic illness and recent surgery.

Dr Shanu Shrivastava, a senior psychologist at ISIC, said that in patients exhibiting suicidal thoughts, she had observed issues such as domestic violence, substance abuse, and alcoholism. “The workload has increased a lot for psychologists due to several stressors in the lives of people such as a change in lifestyle, change at work, lack of balance between work and personal life, no social interactions, meetings and hanging out. Many problems are between spouses as husband and wife are not getting proper space due to prolonged work-from-home, resulting in fights. We can say fear of COVID is a major factor, but non-acceptance of changing scenarios is also an important factor,” she explained.

Meanwhile, Dr Malhotra advised that to mitigate suicidal thoughts, it is imperative to provide the affected persons with an environment in which they can talk. Most cases occur due to lack of communication between the affected person and the people around them. “We should work towards providing comprehensive, integrated, and responsive mental health and social care services in community-based settings while implementing strategies that promote mental well-being and prevent mental health deterioration. We also must strengthen leadership and governance for mental health through robust information systems, evidence- and research-based treatment modalities,” he said.

Dr Malhotra adds that there is a need to re-evaluate categorising suicide as a crime. “Suicides should be considered a socio-medical problem, not a crime,” he said.

Vikram Thaploo, CEO of Apollo Telehealth, also said mental health should be treated as a core element in our response to the pandemic. “There is already considerable social stigma attached to seeking psychiatric assistance and a number of people who need help right now but are not getting it. The bottled up cases are surely going to cause a surge in mental health cases going forward. Unless mental health is treated as one of the core elements in our response to the pandemic, the long-term social and economic costs will be severe. Lack of access to mental health care and shortage of qualified mental health professionals is already a big problem in India,” he added.

JAMIA MILLIA'S WEBINAR ON ‘DISCIPLINE IN UNIVERSITIES’

Control and surveillance will be key part

ANGSHUMAN CHOUDHURY

On Tuesday, Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) University hosted a webinar titled “Discipline in Universities: Issues and Challenges” with representatives from five other central universities — Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Delhi University’s Department of Social Welfare (DSW), and Haryana University.

Also present in the meeting as speakers, were Delhi Joint Commissioner of Police, Devesh Srivastava, and another Deputy Commissioner of Police in the city, MI Haider.

The online conference produced some very shocking discourses on disciplining university students and keeping a check on their behaviour, as this report by The Indian Express suggests. In fact, the press release put out by JMI before the conference and the discussion reported read like some kind of Foucauldian handouts on social control, discipline and surveillance.

As per the JMI press release, the conference was premised on the understanding that universities are mandated to undertake “not just teaching learning activities”, but also “the highly valued task of character formation for the generations to come.”

For long, regulation of students’ “character” has been the bedrock of India’s primary and secondary educational regimes. Schools, through their self-imposed disciplinary norms and ‘moral education’ routines, have attempted to domesticate its students and ‘rectify’ their behaviour. The French philosopher, Michel Foucault, calls it “governance of the self.”

Here too, the idea is to schoolify universities and institutionalise its student communities. But it is also something more than that.

The press release talks about exploring the “pitfall when the focus on knowledge gathering shifts to participation in activities that are non or counterproductive and carried out at the very cost of learning.” Such activities, according to the organisers, contribute to “deviating from the premise with which the student actually entered the temple of learning — the university in the first place.”

With temples, come rituals. And that is precisely the attempt here — to ritualise the university space into a site of mechanical, depoliticised learning. By “non or counterproductive” activities, the JMI administrators and their companions mean what they mean — political or ideological activities, such as protests. In the current political

context, that denotes anti-BJP campus politics.

Thus, what really lies at the heart of this is an attempt to completely depoliticise the university space and put in place a bureaucratic, socially-reclusive and docile regime of learning. Such a system of education aims to cut off student communities from social and political realities of the world around them, and turn them into mere rote-learners.

The JNU chief proctor,

ising judgment.” First, a certain gold standard of ideal social behaviour is set and then, the “deviants” are weeded out. Eerily, Singh even directly speaks to this idea by proposing that such individuals be “marginalised, segregated and kept out of the campus at any cost.”

What is even more concerning is Singh’s proposition for university administrators to work closely with the police. In fact, the presence of two senior police officers

dents or tighter clampdowns on student critics of the ruling party.

In other words, he seems to propose a greater militarisation of the campus to deter political resistance. But this isn’t all.

What the JMI vice-chancellor, Najma Akhtar, said about the police’s role during the webinar is even more startling. While praising the police, Akhtar said that she is “happy to see the role of police has changed drastically in recent years.”



At a time when a new National Education Policy proposes to make education “well-rounded, useful, and fulfilling to the learner”, administrators of India’s top Central universities only want to tame their students

in the meeting itself suggests the central role that hard policing will play in this new disciplinary regime.

“No university campus would like the police to intervene and take over. But we are not capable, as teachers and administrators, to deal with serious law and order situations. So it’s important to have more interactions with the police,” Singh said during the webinar.

This comes nearly eight months after masked goons, reportedly affiliated to right-wing organisations, went on a rampage in JNU, injuring 36 people. The police, at that time, was widely accused of failing to stop the attacks despite being present in the campus.

It was also accused of doing the ruling party’s bidding and going after Left student parties, despite overwhelming evidence of right-wing organisations, like the RSS-linked Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), being involved in the attacks.

So the key issue here isn’t ‘law and order’ in university campuses, but the politicisation of the police force. When the JNU chief proctor, who is a part of the Central government’s administrative apparatus in JNU, talks about “having more interactions with the police”, one wonders if he means creating a safer and more democratic campus for common stu-

According to her, “before, or after the problem, they are friends of the students” and they “know how to handle (the problem) in a more humanistic way.” Akhtar further said that the police is “no longer feared by students” and are “softer” than before.

There cannot be a more stinging insult to the Jamia students’ community than this. The V-C’s sunny remarks come nine months after Delhi Police barged into the university’s library and brutally assaulted students during an anti-CAA protest.

CCTV footage from the library showed cops in riot gear baton-charging students at random, many of whom appeared to be simply studying, and smashing security cameras before assaulting students. One fact-finding report by PUDR also claimed that the police barred injured students from seeking medical attention. Later that day, Aligarh police launched a similar attack on protesting AMU students, causing grievous injuries.

Thus, for the Jamia V-C to claim that the police are “softer than before” is simply preposterous. It is far detached from the hard reality of growing police violence in India’s universities at the moment.

Notably, one day after the police action in JMI, Akhtar had said that the police entered the campus

Remembering Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda’s Chicago speech delivered at the World Parliament of Religions on September 11, 1893, is remarkable in many aspects. The speech was known for its simplistic nature in style and substance and shall be credited largely for having introduced the noble concepts and ideals of the Vedanta to the Western world.

A speech full of wit has also turned out to be highly informative for the so-called western intelligentsia in whose eyes the man in saffron has come from a highly uncivilized land of elephants and snake charmers. Swamiji’s scintillating speech has demystified the very notion of western supremacy and has reminded them of the need to educate the people who had been recklessly enslaved by their hunger for power.

His idea of equality of all religions and Universal tolerance stands tall amidst various perceptions and propagations on the existence of God. Through the very same speech, Swamiji has cautioned the world on religious fanaticism, one of the greatest threats to universal brotherhood in the 21st century. It is through this speech the visionary monk introduced the ancient Indian ethos to the world and laid foundations for the introduction of Yoga to a bigger domain in the form of International Day of Yoga in the later stages. (September 11 marks the 127th anniversary of that historic speech)

Satish Kanaganti, Tippiarthy, Nalgonda



LETTERS

Modi and street vendors

It was commendable that Prime Minister Narendra Modi found the time to interact via videoconferencing with street vendors who got loans under the PM Street Vendors Atma Nirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme to tide over the financial hardships due to the pandemic and lockdown. The one-time loan amount was pegged at Rs.10,000, by all means a big amount for people living in penury.

It is no small service that in this time when the ruling elites wish to project India as a land of affluence Prime Minister Modi whose humble beginnings are proverbial recognises that impoverished people exist in our country. His pledge to ease the problems of the poor must be translated into action.

Time alone will reveal what his promise to provide a new digital platform for street vendors holds out for them on the ground. Given his fondness for digital technology, Prime Minister Modi’s advocacy of digital transactions by street vendors is perfectly understandable. But a lot more is needed to improve their economic condition and quality of life.

The “turnover” in their “business” is too meagre to

make the transition from cash payment to digital payment worthwhile.

Street vendors have few material resources at their disposal and subsist on very small incomes. They have to climb up many rungs to be put on a par with restaurant owners which Prime Minister Modi did. What Modi meant by “street vendors have access to easy capital” needs elaboration.

Normally capital is not a term associated with people who eke out a living by manual labour. Prime Minister Modi was right in saying that the poor bear the brunt of any crisis. But his claim that his government is focussed on easing their problems is belied by the absence of any concrete measure towards this end.

PM Modi’s suggestion to a broom-making couple to recycle the “pipe” is unlikely to make a big difference in their means of livelihood; still it could be done for what it’s worth.

On being told that the “pipe” too gets spoilt, the Prime Minister put the onus of keeping it unspoilt and returning it on the customers.

The Indian economy is not amenable to a simple-minded approach. Broomonomics falls far short of what is needed to be done to boost the economy and battle the scourge of poverty.

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Centre asserts capital for AP need not be single

- In an additional affidavit filed before AP High Court, an official of Union Ministry of Home Affairs dismisses the contention that three capitals move is against the provisions of AP Reorganisation Act, 2014
- The affidavit argues in Central laws, words in singular can also be taken as plural
- It also makes it clear that President's Order on constitution of a separate High Court with principal seat at Amaravati does not amount to declaring it as the capital city

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Nelapadu (Amaravati): In an additional affidavit filed in the Andhra Pradesh High Court on Thursday, the Centre categorically stated that there is no stipulation in the law that requires Andhra Pradesh to have only one capital. It may be recalled that a bunch of petitions were filed in the High Court against the move of the government to introduce three-capital plan. The additional affidavit was filed in response to the writ petition filed by a farmer Done Sambasiva Rao and another which claimed that the three-capital plan was a violation of the AP Re-



organisation Act, 2014.

Lalita T Hedao, undersecretary in the Union ministry of home affairs, refuted the argument that Andhra could not have three capitals because the AP Reorganisation Act, 2014 mentioned "a capital for the state of AP" and not "capitals". She pointed to Section 13 of The General Clauses Act, 1897 that makes it clear that in all Central Acts and regulations, words in the singular shall include the plural and vice versa unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context.

On the argument that the Centre only gave grants for the development of capital city at Amaravati, the under secretary said the Centre had extended financial assistance to AP for creation of essential facilities in their new capital such as Secretariat, Raj Bhavan, High Court and to further facilitate denotification of degraded forest land, if necessary, for the same. "This provision is only for extending financial assistance to the capital city, but not to decide its location," she clarified.

Hedao pointed out that under Article 3 of the Constitution, there is provision only for creation of new states and other related matters. No provision in respect of capital is laid down in this article.

The MHA official refuted the argument that the Centre had endorsed Amaravati as the capital city while locating the state High Court as per the Presidential order. "Notification of President's Order regarding constitution of a separate High Court with principal seat at Amaravati by the Centre cannot be construed as its decision to declare Amaravati as capital, as the principal seat of High Court need not necessarily be in the capital city of the state," she asserted.

In an earlier affidavit, too, the MHA official made it clear that the Centre had no role whatsoever in the location or relocation of the state capital. "It is completely the state government's prerogative to decide where the capital city of the state should be located," she said.

Sate Covid tally touches 5.37 lakh

10,175 new cases and 68 deaths reported in 24 hrs

Amaravati: The number of deaths due to coronavirus in the state have been showing a declining trend over the past few days though the positive cases were increasing by over 10,000 daily, government data revealed.

The Covid-19 tally increased to 5.37 lakh in AP with the addition of 10,175 cases in 24 hours ending 9 am on Thursday, the latest bulletin said. Also, 10,040 patients got cured and discharged while 68 succumbed in 24 hours, the bulletin said.

From over 90 a day till a few days ago, the state's Covid-19 mortality count has been just around 70 per day this week and on Thursday it further fell to 68.

The overall mortality rate dipped to 0.87 per cent against the national average of 1.68 per cent. While the infection positivity has been constantly climbing up, reaching 12.27 per cent on Thursday, the recovery rate too showed an improvement to 81.02 per cent.

Kurnool district, which was once the major Covid-19 hotspot in the state, crossed the 50,000 gross cases mark but more than 45,000 of the infected had already recovered. Srikakulam district crossed the 30,000 mark, having over 6,600 active cases, according to the bulletin.

In 24 hours, East Godavari, Prakasam and West Godavari reported more than 1,100 fresh positive cases while Chittoor had more than 900 additions.

With nine new casualties, Chittoor crossed the 500 mark in overall toll, topping the state chart.

Kadapa and Nellore districts also reported nine fresh fatalities each, Krishna and Prakasam seven each and Anantapur six.

PURUSHOTTAPATNAM LIFT IRRIGATION SCHEME

Environmental nod must: NGT

- A bench of the NGT orders that a committee comprising Central and Sate PCBs, EIA Authority and collector should assess the damage and the compensation to be paid
- It says EC and other clearances need to be obtained for the scheme as it is intended for not only for drinking and industrial uses but also irrigation
- The bench passes the order based on a report by a committee comprising members of Expert Appraisal Committee of Environment Ministry on River Valley Projects, CPCB and IIT, Roorkee



compliance of the statutory clearances before going ahead with the project. "Since it has been found that EC is necessary, a committee of Central Pollution Control Board, state Pollution Control Board, state Environment Impact Assessment Authority and district magistrate may determine the extent of damage caused and the amount of compensation liable to be paid to the affected persons and furnish a report to this tribunal within six months by e-mail," the bench said.

The state pollution control board will be nodal agency for coordination and compliance, the tribunal said.

The bench passed the order after perusing a report by a committee comprising members of Expert Appraisal Committee of Environment Ministry on River Valley Projects, CPCB and IIT, Roorkee.

The committee told the NGT that the present set up is not only for drinking and industrial use

but also for use of irrigation. "Therefore, the committee felt that since there is an irrigation component, environmental clearance for the scheme should be obtained as per the EIA Notification, 2006," the NGT noted.

The committee also told the tribunal that consent to establish and consent to operate for the present lift scheme be obtained by the project proponent and necessary permission/clearance be obtained for water extraction. The NGT was hearing a petition filed by Jammula Chowdariah, Madicharla Satyanarayana and Ramakrishna against the project on the ground that environment clearance was mandatory for the scheme.

The plea filed through advocate Sravan Kumar contended that the project is located at the Akhanda Godavari Left Bank at 40.800 km near Purushottapatnam village in Seethanagar in East Godavari district which involves diversion of flow of Godavari river to Yeluru river. (PTI)

Head constable dies as gun goes off

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Kurnool: A head constable after his gun went off accidentally in the district on Thursday. The deceased has been identified as Salman Raju, 49, discharging duties at APSP 2nd battalion. He was a native of Vaddeman village of Nandikotkur mandal and belonged to 1992 batch. He was working under the control of the APSP DIG Venkateswarlu.

According to IV Town CI Srinivasa Reddy, the incident occurred while the head constable was cleaning the weapon on Thursday morning. Generally the police personnel clean their weapons once in a while. When Salman Raju was cleaning his gun, it accidentally went off with bullets going into his body, resulting in his death, the CI said. The body was shifted to Kurnool government general hospital for post mortem. The deceased survived by wife and two children.

TDP questions delay in distribution of house sites

Amaravati: TDP leader and former minister Alapati Rajendra Prasad on Thursday advised the state government to distribute land to the poor without making any excuses that litigation in the courts was delaying it. "Stop making baseless allegations and start distributing the house sites that were not stuck in any sort of litigation in the courts as of now," said Prasad.

The court's stay applied to only 4,000 of 40,000 acre land, leaving the balance 36,000 acre free for the government to distribute to the poor, the TDP leader added.

Rajendra Prasad demanded that the government explain why it was delaying the distribution.

He alleged that the Jagan Mohan Reddy government was using the house site dis-

- Party leader Alapati Rajendra Prasad tells the Jagan govt to stop making excuses that TDP is stalling the process with litigations
- Points out that the court stay applies only to 4,000 acre land, out of the total 40,000 acre proposed to be distributed
- Alleges Rs 10,000 cr scam by the YSRCP leaders in the name of house sites



Alapati Rajendra Prasad

tribution programme as a means to indulge in corruption, starting from land acquisition to identification of beneficiaries.

"Thousands of crore of public funds were misused in this. The YSRCP leaders had looted more than Rs 10,000 crore which comes to nearly 40 per cent of the funds spent by the

government," he claimed.

Promising to give one cent land to each poor family, the TDP leader alleged that the YSRCP leaders were grabbing three cents of land.

Recalling the setbacks the state government has been facing in the courts such as in the state Election Commissioner case, English medium

and others, Prasad said the government order allowing poor families to sell their sites after five years also faced "rough weather".

"Just like in Amaravati capital issue, the Jagan regime was making all sorts of illegal policies in each and every programme which was eventually drawing adverse orders from the courts," he observed.

He questioned the Chief Minister as to why he was also not handing over more than 3 lakh houses which were already completed under the poor people's housing programme.

"Another six lakh houses were at various stages of completion but this government did not bother to spend a single rupee to complete them for distributing the same to the poor beneficiaries," he said.

Four women labourers die as lorry hits auto

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Anantapur: Four women were killed and eight others were injured when the autorickshaw in which they were travelling was hit by a lorry at Vadiyampeta village in the district on Thursday. All the victims were NREGS workers who were returning home from work.

Fourteen NREGS workers, all women from Vadiyampeta village, were said to be travelling in the autorickshaw when it was hit by a lorry on National Highway-44. Police on learning of the mishap had reached the place and shifted the injured to the government general hospital and the deceased to the mortuary.

- Eight others are injured in the mishap on NH-44
- All the victims are NREGS labourers who were returning home from work

The news of the accident and death of four women workers landed the village in a pall of gloom. The women who were supposed to alight at the Vadiyampeta and reach home met with the ghastly accident just within the sight of the village.

District collector Gandham Chandrudu on learning of the mishap rushed to the government hospital and consoled the injured women.

Act tough against economic offenders: CS

- Reviews the status of various criminal cases against companies at the 19th State-level coordination committee meet
- Asks officials to focus on finance companies that offer high interest on deposits

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Chief secretary Nilam Sawhney instructed the officials to deal economic offenders with iron hand to do justice to the victims while presiding over the 19th State-level coordination committee virtual meeting at the Secretariat here on Thursday.

The chief secretary enquired about the progress on the decisions taken during the 18th meeting. She asked about the status of the criminal cases filed on various economic offenders. She sought stern action against the offenders who had robbed the hard-earned money of people. At the same time the victims

should be given relief.

The CID and the police officials informed the chief secretary of the status of criminal cases filed against several companies including AgriGold, Akshaya Gold, Abhaya Gold, Heera Group and Sahara and others. A number of criminal cases are being filed in the cities like Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam and Guntur, it was pointed out. The chief secretary told the officials to concentrate on finance companies which offer high rate of interest on the deposits.

Principal secretary (finance) S S Rawat, secretary Sunita, RBI AP&Telangana regional director Subrota Das, the Police and the CID officials were also present.

Consider dropping interest on interest during moratorium: SC to Centre

Continued from P1

"It is submitted that individuals are more adversely affected during this period of pandemic. Counsel for the petitioners have also submitted that banks are debiting interest as well as interest on interest from the accounts of the creditors. It is further submitted that credit rating is also being downgraded which may have adverse effect, with regard to various account holders," the bench noted.

The top court will now take up the matter on September 28. "As noted above, on the next date of hearing, the specific instructions with regard to charging of compound interest and credit rating/downgrading during moratorium period shall be obtained, so that appropriate order be issued on the next date of hearing," it said.

Red Line, Violet Line, Green Line services on

Continued from P1

The entire metro network is planned to be made operational for passenger services throughout the day from September 12 onwards as it was before March 22 with all social distancing norms and guidelines to be followed by the passengers during the travel due to the ongoing pandemic.

Wearing masks is mandatory inside train coaches and at station premises. The DMRC has appealed to people to use the rapid transport only if urgently needed.

Rafale inducted in IAF

Continued from P1

Earlier in the day, Singh had received Parly at Palam Technical Area in New Delhi and thereafter flew to Ambala.

Rafale is an omni-role aircraft which means it can carry out at least four missions in one sortie. The fighter aircraft have HAMMER missiles. It will also be armed with beyond visual range missiles like Meteor, SCALP and MICA, increasing their capability to take on incoming targets from a distance.

India, Japan ink mutual military logistics deal

Continued from P1

The pacts signed with the US and France provide for accessing various crucial bases by Indian military in Djibouti, Guam and the Reunion Islands among others. India is also expanding overall strategic cooperation with Japan in the Indo-Pacific region under the framework of four nation coalition 'Quad'.

In November 2017, India, the US, Australia and Japan gave shape to the long-pending "Quad" to develop a new strategy to keep the critical sea routes in the Indo-Pacific free of any influence.

Serum Institute pauses Covid vax trials in India

Continued from P1

"In view of the above, I, Dr V G Soman, Drugs Controller General of India and Central Licensing Authority hereby give you an opportunity to show cause as provided under rule 30 of the New Drugs and Clinical Trials Rules, 2019, why the permission granted to you August 2 shall not be suspended till patient safety is established," the notice further said.

SII is the partner of the University of Oxford's Jenner Institute's to conduct the vaccine trials. SII is currently progressing the second and third phase study of the vaccine candidate at 17 trial sites across India.

HC CJ OPENS VIT-AP SCHOOL OF LAW

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: It is very important to have new law schools to provide holistic legal education and to prepare the global legal professional, said Andhra Pradesh High Court Chief Justice Jitendra Kumar Maheshwari while virtually inaugurating VIT-AP School of Law (VSL) here on Thursday.

"I appreciate and congratulate the management of VIT University for taking this initiative and to launch a law school in Andhra Pradesh," he said. Justice C Praveen Kumar, Justice T Rajani inaugurated the Legal Aid Clinic and Moot Court Hall respectively.

While inaugurating the school, the judges highlighted the importance of clinical legal education and training to the students of law. They also insisted that students must prepare themselves to undertake the legal profession seriously and start practicing in litigation, along with the other opportunities that are available for students in present days.



High Court Chief Justice J K Maheshwari speaking during virtual inauguration of VIT-AP School of Law

Principal district and session judge of Guntur district G Gopichand inaugurated the Law School Library. G V Selvam, vice-president of the VIT University said, "We are sure our new law school will

meet the expectation of the students, parents and legal fraternity. Today's world is facing many challenges such as pandemic and emergence of new technologies, which requires keen legal analysis."

Dr. D Subhakar, vice-chancellor of VIT-AP University also spoke and registrar Dr C L V Sivakumar proposed a vote of thanks.

The students, parents, lawyers from reputed legal firms, senior advocates of the High Court and the Supreme Court, and university faculty and staff were present in the virtual inauguration.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Industry should embrace quality in infra projects

Indian industry needs to reduce construction cost and improve quality. Cost reduction should be made without any compromise on quality. It's high time to adopt innovative methods and new technologies


— Nitin Gadkari, Union Transport Minister



CROP LOAN OUTLAY FOR 2020-21

Nabard to disburse ₹1.20 lakh cr

New Delhi: In a bid to support agri sector amid Covid-19 crisis, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development on Thursday said it aims to disburse Rs 1.20 lakh crore crop loan to farmers for meeting production expenses this fiscal. Apex agriculture financial institution Nabard annually disbursed Rs 90,000 crore crop loan at a concessional rate.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)				
US Dollar	77.86	South		
Euro	91.27	African Rand		5.04
UAE Dirham	21.99	Hong Kong Dollar		10.9
Thai Baht	2.7	Japanese Yen		0.8
British Pound	99.46	New Zealand Dollar		51.46
Australian Dollar	56.08	Saudi Riyal		21.54
Canadian Dollar	58.6	Swedish Krona		9.66
Swiss Franc	84.04	Singapore Dollar		56.36

DELHI FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

States' startup ranking today

New Delhi: The Union Commerce Ministry will release the second edition of ranking of states and union territories (UTs) based on their startup ecosystem on Friday. The rankings are based on the initiatives taken to develop the startup ecosystem for promoting budding entrepreneurs. "The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) conducted the second edition of the states' startup ranking exercise with the key objective to foster competitiveness and propel states and Union Territories to work proactively towards uplifting the startup ecosystem," the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in the statement.

Gold, silver rise marginally

New Delhi: Gold prices rose by Rs 287 to Rs 52,391 per 10 gram in the national capital on Thursday. In the previous trade, the precious metal had closed at Rs 52,104 per 10 gram. Silver prices also gained Rs 875 to Rs 69,950 per kilogram from its previous close of Rs 69,075 per kilogram. In the international market, gold was quoting marginally lower at \$1,944 per ounce, while silver was trading flat at \$26.95 per ounce. Gold prices kept range-bound trading on mixed global cues as market is awaiting comments from ECB over monetary policy.

Amway India eyes 5x growth

New Delhi: Direct selling major Amway India is looking to scale up home delivery orders by five times this year and will invest Rs 30 crore for strengthening its supply chain and automation. Amway India CEO Anshu Budhraj said: "In the last few months, we have witnessed a rapid shift in consumer behaviour, especially in retail, with people increasingly migrating to online platforms for shopping. Amway too has observed a similar trend." The company, which started integrating offline-to-online (O2O) earlier this year, said it has witnessed a significant shift to online sales from 33.6 per cent in February 2020 to over 70 per cent at present, and expects to clock up to 5-6 lakh home delivery orders per month by the end of this year.

Re firms up on oil boost

Mumbai: The rupee on Thursday advanced by nine paise to end at 73.46 to the US dollar as robust foreign fund inflows and easing of crude oil prices lifted forex market sentiment. Starting off the session on a positive note, the domestic currency touched the day's high at 73.16 against the greenback. After paring significant gains, the rupee finally settled at 73.46, up 9 paise. On Wednesday, the rupee had settled at 73.55 against the US dollar. Foreign institutional investors bought equities worth Rs 838.37 crore on a net basis on Thursday, exchange data showed.



India's biggest ever deal on the cards!

New Delhi (PTI): Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) is reported to have offered a 40 per cent stake in its retail arm worth about \$20 billion to Amazon.com, Inc. Bloomberg News citing a source reported that "Amazon has held discussions about investing in the conglomerate's Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd unit and has expressed interest in negotiating a potential transaction." The report went on to say that Reliance was willing to sell as much as a 40 per cent stake in the subsidiary to Amazon and the deal size at \$20 billion would be the biggest ever in India. Both Reliance and Amazon refused to comment on the report.

"In light of a high incidence of speculative media queries and incorrect and ex parte media articles relating to purported capital transactions into Reliance Industries or our group companies, we would like to reiterate that as a policy, we do not comment on media speculation and rumours and we can't confirm or deny any transaction which may or may not be in the works," Reliance said in its revised email response.

Reliance said to offer 40% stake in retail arm to Amazon for \$20 bn; Both cos refuse to comment



liance said in its revised email response.

A similar response was also sent to stock exchanges. The company evaluates various opportunities on an ongoing basis, it said, adding that the company has "made and will continue to make necessary disclosures in compliance" with listing obligations and disclosure requirements. "Vide this communication, we appeal to the media to carefully examine any such speculative information and safeguard themselves and their readers, many of whom are individual retail investors, from publishing/recycling unfounded and/or incorrect news," Reliance said.

Amazon was an investor in Future Group, whose retail business was acquired by Reliance late last month for Rs 24,713 crore. On September 9, RIL announced the divestment of 1.75 per cent stake in the retail arm to private equity firm Silver Lake Partners for Rs 7,500 crore.

More such stake sales are in offing. Bloomberg in the report further stated that Amazon hasn't made any final decision on the size of its potential investment and that talks could still fall apart. Commenting on the issue, Credit Suisse said if the deal fructifies, then this will bring together the largest offline and online retailers in India.

RIL's mcap crosses \$215 bn

New Delhi: Continuing its rally, shares of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) on Thursday closed over seven per cent higher, helping its market valuation cross the \$200 billion mark and become the first domestic firm to achieve the milestone. During the day, it jumped 8.45 per

cent to a record high of Rs 2,343.90. On the NSE, it gained 7.29 per cent to close at Rs 2,319 after hitting a lifetime high of Rs 2,344.95, up 8.49 per cent during the day. In the previous session too, it had closed with nearly three per cent gain. At close of trade on the BSE, RIL's market valuation rose to Rs 14,67,350.26 crore (\$199.74 billion).

ing the day, its market valuation jumped to Rs 15,84,908 crore (\$215.75 billion) on the BSE. The stock of the country's most valuable firm rose by 7.10 per cent to close at Rs 2,314.65 on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 8.45 per

Not all eligible for one-time loan recast



2/3 of Crisil-rated cos & 1-in-3 of B category qualify due to weak debt protection metrics

Mumbai: Domestic rating agency Crisil on Thursday said close to two-thirds of its rated entities would be eligible for one-time loan restructuring based on the proposed norms by KV Kamath Committee. Earlier this week, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) broadly accepted Kamath Committee recommendations. The Panel specified five financial ratios and sector-specific thresholds for resolution of Covid-19-related stressed assets in 26 sectors, including auto components, aviation and tourism. Crisil studied its rated portfolio of more than 8,500 companies after sorting them by rating, sector and moratorium availed. The broad-level assessment is based on financial projections and excludes small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and financial sector companies, the rating agency said in a note.

"Nearly two-thirds of the companies rated by Crisil would be eligible for one-time debt restructuring based on the parameters proposed by the KV Kamath Committee set up by RBI," it said. The rating agency's senior director Subodh Rai said three out of four investment-grade companies (rated Crisil BBB- or higher) and one out of two in the BB rating category qualify for restructuring of loans.

However, in the Crisil B category, only one in three qualify because companies here tend to have relatively weak debt protection metrics. "At an aggregate

Crisil portfolio level, two out of three companies were found eligible for restructuring," Rai said. The committee submitted its recommendations for 26 sectors. For others, it said lenders should make their own internal assessments, but mandated that the current ratio and debt service coverage ratio (DSCR) should be above 1 time and average DSCR above 1.2 times. While this will help identify eligible companies, the decision to restructure will be a function of company performance, the agency said. It said while the parameters support debt restructuring across rating categories, the study indicated that companies in the resilient sectors stand to benefit more. Three out of four rated companies in the resilient sectors such as construction, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, iron and steel manufacturing, corporate retail, and consumer durables/FMCG will qualify for restructuring, the agency said. In the less-resilient sectors such as auto dealerships, gems and jewellery, hotels, restaurants and tourism, power generation, and real estate, opportunities for debt restructuring could be a little lower as they can take longer to recover to pre-pandemic business levels, it noted.

Restructuring will also be available to a large number of companies that opted for the moratorium, it said, adding "every second company in the Crisil-rated portfolio that did so will qualify for restructuring".

Investor wealth rises by ₹2.20 lakh cr

New Delhi: Investor wealth zoomed by Rs 2,20,928.11 crore on Thursday, driven by a rally in the equity market, which bounced back after two days of decline. The 30-share BSE Sensex soared 646.40 points or 1.69 per cent to close at 38,840.32. Following the upbeat sentiment, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies gained Rs 2,20,928.11 crore to Rs 1,55,21,743.23 crore.

"Indian indices again had a strong showing today backed by strong gains in shares of RIL, which alone contributed to more than half of the gains seen on Nifty. Positive global cues also played a part in the positivity seen in the markets," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. On the BSE, 1,789 companies advanced, while 922 declined and 165 remained unchanged.

Market heavyweight Reliance Industries surged to its life-time high during the session amid reports the company has held discussions with Amazon for the retail arm stake sale.

India's fuel demand dips 7.5% in Aug

New Delhi: India's fuel demand in August posted its biggest decline since April as local lockdowns put brakes on economic activity and transportation, official data showed on Thursday. Petroleum product sales fell to 14.39 million tonnes in August, down 7.5 per cent over the previous month and about 16 per cent from a year earlier, data from the oil ministry's Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) showed. The decline in August was the sixth consecutive year-on-year slide. Fuel demand had slumped by a record 48.6 per cent in April to 9.4 million tonnes as the government imposed a nationwide lockdown in an attempt to curb the spread of coronavirus. It recovered in the subsequent two months, but has been falling again since July, on a monthly basis. Sale of diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country, fell 12 per cent to 4.84 million tonnes in August from 5.51 million tonnes in the previous month. On an annual basis, the demand for diesel declined by 20.7 per cent. Petrol sales fell 7.4 per cent year-on-year to 2.38 million tonnes although it rose 5.3 per cent from 2.57 million tonnes in July as commuters preferred driving to using public transportation. LPG sales were down five per cent year-on-year to 2.2 million tonnes, while kerosene demand fell 43 per cent to 1,32,000 tonnes. Month-on-month, the



ous month. On an annual basis, the demand for diesel declined by 20.7 per cent. Petrol sales fell 7.4 per cent year-on-year to 2.38 million tonnes although it rose 5.3 per cent from 2.57 million tonnes in July as commuters preferred driving to using public transportation.

LPG sales were down five per cent year-on-year to 2.2 million tonnes, while kerosene demand fell 43 per cent to 1,32,000 tonnes. Month-on-month, the

sale was almost flat. Industry sources said reaching pre-COVID-19 sales may take at least 3-4 months. There is likely to be a pick-up in demand with the onset of the festive season in October-November but reaching pre-COVID-19 levels would not be before new year, they said. Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had previously stated that sales would return to normal by festival season but the local lockdowns being imposed in several states has prolonged the return to normalcy. Naphtha sales at 1.07 million tonnes was down 16 per cent over July demand.

It was over 24 per cent lower than the consumption of 1.4 million tonnes in August 2019. Sale of bitumen, used for making roads, rose 39.1 per cent to 3,16,000 tonnes on an annual basis but was down about 18 per cent month-on-month.

SIP inflow continues to drop

New Delhi: Investment in mutual funds (MFs) through systematic investment plans (SIPs) dropped for the fifth consecutive month to Rs 7,791 crore in August, amid challenging economic environment due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Besides, equity mutual funds, which mainly depend on SIP for flows, saw a withdrawal of Rs 4,000 crore in August, much higher than Rs 2,480 crore witnessed in the previous month, data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed.

"SIP flows are reducing as well, it is clear that the retail investor is impacted due to the current economic environment brought on by Covid-19," said Jean-Christophe Gougeon, director (investment solutions), Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

G Pradeepkumar, chief executive officer of Union AMC, said that "while the SIP amount has dropped nominally, once again, there is a net addition of about 3.43 lakh SIP folios, which indicate sustained interest of retail



Decline for 5th month in a row to ₹7,791cr on challenging economic environment

investors. Currently, mutual funds have over 3.27 crore SIP accounts through which investors regularly invest in Indian mutual fund schemes. SIP is an investment plan offered by mutual funds, wherein one can invest a fixed amount in a mutual fund scheme periodically at fixed intervals, once a month, instead of making a lump sum investment. It is similar to a recurring deposit where an investor deposits a fixed amount every month." He added that in such a challenging economic environment, retail investors tend to reduce their SIP investments and reduce risk on their portfolios by selling equity mutual funds (MFs). Gougeon,

further, said the long-term opportunity mutual funds through both lump sum and SIP remain promising, the pain in the short term is not likely going to go away soon. As per the data, the industry raised Rs 7,791.6 crore through SIP route last month, lower than Rs 7,831 crore garnered in July. Investment in August hit the lowest level since September 2018, when fund collection through the route stood at Rs 7,727 crore. Further, fund collection through SIP dropped below the Rs 8,000-crore mark in June this year to Rs 7,917 crore. It was at Rs 8,123 crore in May, Rs 8,376 crore in April and Rs 8,641 crore in March.

New disinvestment policy soon

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet may soon take up and approve the new strategic disinvestment policy, which would include the banking and insurance sector, as the Finance Ministry has finalised the Cabinet note on the policy, sources said.

This would be a major move towards privatising more public sector units and meeting the government's disinvestment targets.

The most significant feature of the upcoming policy would be the inclusion of financial sectors under its ambit. The NITI Aayog recently suggested privatisation of three banks - the Punjab & Sind Bank, UCO Bank and the Bank of Maharashtra, according to people in the know.

Among the insurance companies, Life Insurance Corporation of India will not be part of this disinvestment process. There are a total of eight state-run insurers, with the others comprising six general insurance companies and one reinsurance company.

State can tackle Covid-19 better, says Health Minister

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Health Minister Eatala Rajender assured the Council members that Telangana was now better equipped to handle Covid.

Replying to short notice discussion in the State Legislative Council here on Thursday, he shared the concerns of the members who were worried about the growing corona cases in the State.

Explaining at length the measures taken by the State government in containing Covid spread, he reiterated that there was no single way to treat the virus, that still lacks a vaccine. However, the knowledge gained over months in treating the patients has helped the State tackling it better, he said.

Dismissing the criticism against the State government, he said sometimes he was pained by the intemperate comments made by the opposition

► **Alleviates the concerns of Council members with regard to increasing corona cases**

► **Promises to extend incentives to sanitation staff**



members. He recalled how the State had first formulated the idea of containment zone in Karimnagar to contain Covid spread.

Adding that the State had strictly observed the guidelines suggested by the World Health Organisation and the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR), Eatala explained how Gandhi was designated for Covid treatment. Informing that currently there were 121 private centres offering isola-

tion facilities for people lacking space at their homes, the Minister said that the State government was paying Rs 200 per person a day in the rural areas and Rs 270 in the urban areas.

He further assured that more such centres would be permitted keeping in view the constraints being faced by the people to remain in total isolation.

He also assured the members that the government would sympathetically consider an extension of incentives for few

more months to the sanitation workers of urban civic bodies, village panchayats and in GHMC area for their services in containing the virus.

Earlier, participating in the discussion, BJP MLC N Ramchander Rao urged the Minister to immediately take up the appointment of doctors and nurses on permanent basis, besides implementing the Ayushman Bharat and including Covid under Arogyasri scheme.

While Congress MLC T Jeevan Reddy called for extension of incentives to sanitation staff for six more months, AIMIM MLC Amin Ul Hasan Jafri urged the Minister to increase the spending on the health sector.

Council Chairman Gutha Sukender Reddy requested the Minister to establish a toll-free number for people to lodge their complaints with the government proposed task force to oversee the Covid treatment in the private hospitals.

Revanth calls on NGT panel, urges to stall Sectt works

Hyderabad: Pointing out that the State government has started the construction works of new Secretariat building without environmental clearance and in violation of Supreme Court orders, Congress MP A Revanth Reddy met the members of Joint Committee of National Green Tribunal (NGT) on Thursday.

In his representation to the members of the committee, appointed by NGT, at Paryavaran Bhavan in Lakdi-ka-pul, Revanth held that Roads and Buildings department has “blatantly violated” the rule of law and gone ahead with the demolition drive and later construction of new buildings for Secretariat. He pointed out that the project proponent failed to take precautions for controlling air pollution, violated CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board) and Solid Waste Management Rules at the time of demolition. And when the construction activity began, the State government violated the Supreme Court order (2001), which prohibited the permanent construction in the 1 km radius of Hussain Sagar lake. “This is a high-profile case involving senior officials and head of the State government. The impartial inquiry of the CPCB will increase the image in the eyes of the citizens of the country as an independent regulatory authority,” he urged. The MP brought to their notice and presented the details of expert committees, which were on the lines of Supreme Court order. “In violation of order and ignoring the reports from experts, the State government is trying to get permission for construction of new buildings. The concerned departments should cancel permission as the project needs environmental clearance,” he said



Minister for MAUD, K T Rama Rao flagged off nine Force Traveller Ambulances which were given by M/s Realtyshield Service Private Limited in response to KTRs appeal for participation of corporates in fighting Covid-19

Minister highlights agricultural potential of State in Assembly

Says 55 per cent of the country's paddy production is from Telangana as a result of the increase in cultivable land

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Agriculture Minister S Niranjan Reddy on Thursday said 55 per cent of the country's paddy production was from Telangana and this was the result of the increase in cultivable land in the State because of several irrigation projects taken up by the government.

The Minister was replying to a question on whether the government was encouraging palm oil cultivation in the State raised by Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) member B Suman during the Question Hour in the Assembly. The Minister said that during the Rabi season the State produced 55 per cent of the country's paddy production, which showed the increase in the agricultural production in Telangana. However, he said that with increasing production, there was a need for change in the crop-

ping pattern because with same cropping every time, the production level went down and led to insects and other problems.

The Minister said oil seeds production had decreased gradually in the State and the country was depending on imports by spending Rs 79,000 crore every year. For palm oil imports alone, the government was spending Rs 40,000 crore every year. Hence Centre decided to give encouragement for palm oil cultivation and allowed for 18 lakh hectares for the cultivation in the country. The Centre has given a report that 25 districts in Telangana are favourable for palm oil cultivation.

The Minister said the farmers would get palm oil saplings with 95 per cent subsidy and many other subsidies were given to them. Presently, palm oil is purchased for Rs 10,500 per ton. He said that water needed for this crop was less than paddy and more than corn.

Catering business takes nosedive as coronavirus shows no sign of retreat

Situation likely to continue till next summer due to restrictions

MAHESH AVADHUTHA

Hyderabad: The food catering industry, that makes huge bucks in the marriage season, has seen a steep slump this time due to corona pandemic that confined many to homes. Caterers, big or small, registered or non-registered, have been badly affected as there was sharp drop in parties, marriages and other events due to corona.

The catering industry provides employment directly and indirectly to nearly 3 lakh people, including chefs, kitchen helpers, serving staff and petty vendors of ice-cream, chat and others. As a result of corona, many of them have lost their livelihood during the lockdown period.

Further, even after unlocking, family functions restricting the guest number to 50 are being allowed unlike earlier where such parties would be attended by hundreds. Due to lack of work and very few catering orders, several workers from the catering indus-



try returned to their native villages and some even switched jobs to work in the construction sector and other fields.

Vaishnavi Prasad of the noted Vaishnavi Caterers predicted that the slump would continue till next May, which means they would be impacted for nearly 15 months, starting from this March.

“During the season, we take up catering orders for family func-

tions. During off-season, we fulfill catering orders for birthday parties, official or corporate meetings, public gatherings etc. Due to corona, everything has been stalled, except for weddings where guest numbers are restricted to 50. Nearly, 30 full-time staff used to work permanently, and at times, 800 temporary staff used to work on the same day for functions like

engagements, weddings, receptions held same day at different places. Now all these are a thing of the past,” he said.

Members of the Telangana Caterers Association echoed similar sentiments. They said that many caterers were in financial distress and facing troubles in paying the loans. They hoped that tide will turn over soon and situation limps back to normalcy.

Speaker, KTR inspect 2BHKs at Kollur

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Assembly Speaker Pocharam Srinivas Reddy on Thursday said that the double bedroom houses constructed at Kollur would become a role model for the country.

The Speaker along with Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao and Housing Minister Vemula Prashanth Reddy inspected the double bedroom housing project site at Kollur and reviewed amenities available at the high-rise model township. Stating that this was the first time ever any State government had taken up construction of such a major township to provide housing to thousands of poor, Pocharam felt that the housing project would become a role model when talked about housing projects in the country.

KT Rama Rao said that the government was constructing one lakh double bedroom houses and out of which, 85,000 houses would be handed over to beneficiaries in GHMC limits by December end.

Prashanth Reddy expressed satisfaction over the fast progress of construction works and said that complete support would be provided from the Housing department for future assignments.

Man sets self ablaze on busy road; blames govt for lethargy

Receives 40 per cent burns, says though he fought for separate State since childhood, got nothing though Telangana was formed in 1944

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: In a bizarre development, an unemployed man set himself ablaze on the main road in broad daylight under full public glare near the busy Ravindra Bharati junction in Hyderabad on Thursday. As the flames engulfed him, he shouted ‘KCR Sir, Jai Telangana’. However, passersby and the police doused the flame and rushed him to Osmania General Hospital (OGH) for treatment. He received 40 percent burns, according to doctors at OGH.

The man was later identified as a Ramulu from Maisigandi in Kadthal of Rangareddy district.

According to the police, the man arrived at the junction near the Ravindra Bharathi Auditorium, carrying gasoline in a container. And as vehicles advanced, he poured petrol on himself and lit the matchstick.

As the spot was very close to the Telangana State DGP office, security

personnel present there and traffic personnel deployed at the junction and a few passersby rushed to rescue him. Even as they were dousing flames, Ramulu shouted slogans, ‘KCR Sir, Jai Telangana’.

He reportedly told the bystanders that his life had not changed even after a separate State had been created. “Telangana vachina makemi kaledu” (We didn’t get anything even after the new State was formed), he said.

In a video recorded at the hospital, the man said he took part in the struggle for a separate State in 1969, even as a child, and then joined the movement until the State was established in 2014.

According to the police, the preliminary investigations revealed that the person arrived near Ravindra Bharathi with a bottle of petrol and even as vehicles kept on moving on the road, he doused himself. Once he is recovered fully, investigation will continue, according to the police.

TSBIE notifies 182-day academic calendar

- **The academic session commences from September 1 and ends on April 21, 2021**
- **The final Intermediate Public Examinations-2021 will be held from March 24 to April 12**
- **The summer vacation will be from April 17 to May 31**
- **Colleges will reopen after summer vacation for the academic year 2021-22, on June 6, 2021**
- **Dasara and Sankrathi holidays reduced**



HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The Telangana State Board of Intermediate Education (TSBIE) has notified its tentative alternate academic calendar for 2020-21.

A TSBIE statement on Thursday said that the academic year commenced from September 1, 2020, and will end on April 16, 2021. With a total of 182 working days for the academic year, the academic year will have only

three days of Dasara holidays on October 23 to 25. The Sankranti holiday has also been reduced to two days from January 13 and 14, 2021. The pre-final examinations will be held from February 22 to 27, next year.

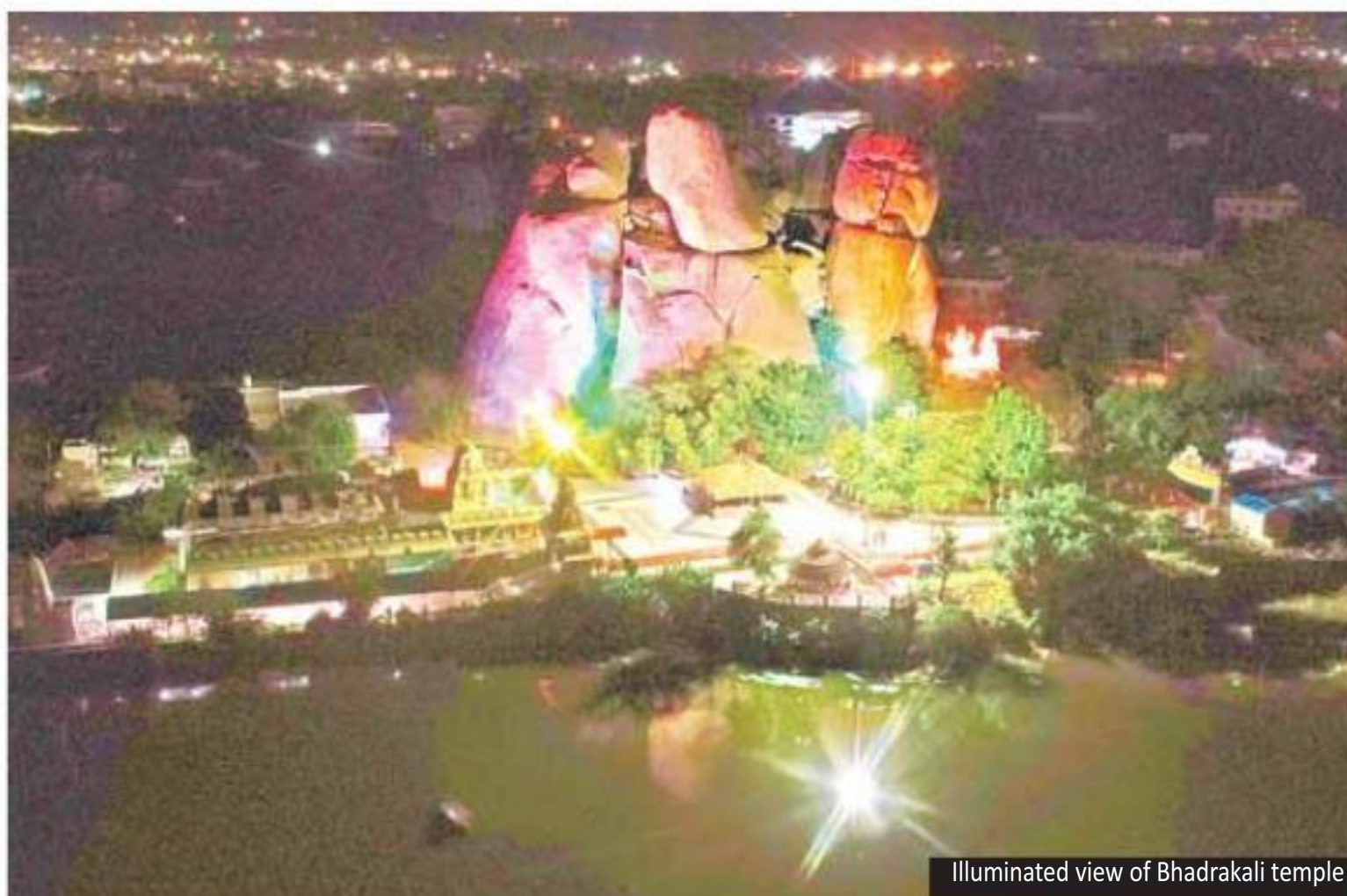
The practical examinations schedule as per the alternate calendar will be held from March 1 to 20. However, the colleges are asked to conduct classes for the students of humanities and first-year interme-

diolate science stream and who have a shortage of attendance during March 2021.

The final Intermediate Public Examinations-2021 will be held from March 24 to April 12. The summer vacation will be from April 17 to May 31 and the Advanced Supplementary Examinations will be held in the last week of May 2021. The colleges will reopen after summer vacation for the academic year 2021-22, on June 6, 2021, it added.

All junior colleges are asked to strictly observe the Sundays and public holidays as per the government orders and conduct admissions process as per the TSBIE schedule.

Besides, it warned not to place any advertisements through hoardings, distributing pamphlets, wall writings and engaging public relations personnel to canvas. Similarly, no advertisements are allowed to be placed through print and electronic media. The colleges are also warned that stringent action would be taken against them if they fail to send qualified lecturers for spot campus valuation.



Illuminated view of Bhadrakali temple

Bhadrakali temple likely to get ISO certification

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Warangal: Famous Bhadrakali temple could well be the second shrine in Telangana to get the certification from the International Standards Organization (ISO). The first to get the certification was the Lord Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple in Yadagirigutta in 2018. It may be mentioned here that the ISO certification is based on a temple's environment, hygiene, security, management and other aspects. The HYM International Certification Private Limited, Hyderabad, team led by its Managing Director Alapati Shivaiah inspected the temple on

Thursday. The HYM International Certifications, accredited by Accredited Services Certifying Bodies (United Kingdom) London, is the partner of the ISO standards.

According to temple sources, the team which thoroughly inspected the temple was satisfied with the amenities and hygienic practices. Further, it's learnt that the team is likely to recommend the certification for the temple. Bhadrakali temple Executive Officer Ramala Sunitha, chief priest Bhadrakali Seshu, Superintendent Adanki Vijay Kumar, Harinath, Shyam Sundar and Nagulu were among others present.

Manohar undid severe damage ICC's 'Big Three' formula inflicted: PCB chief Mani

KAISER MOHAMMAD ALI

New Delhi (IANS): The International Cricket Council's 'Big Three' formula, devised by former BCCI chief N Srinivasan along with England and Australia and by which the three countries were to receive the lion's share of ICC revenues, inflicted 'severe damage to world cricket', Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ehsan Mani has said.

Mani, who was ICC president from 2003-06, felt that the formula was "imposed" on all other ICC members. He alleged that the 'Big Three' countries "threatened" not to play with those who did not agree to the new method of sharing total ICC revenues -- 20.3 per cent for India, 4.4 per cent for England, and 2.7 per cent for Australia -- from 2015-2023.

"Certainly, during my time at the ICC, I was very fortunate that we had a united Board comprising all the mem-

bers. That equation was very badly damaged by the so-called 'Big Three'. India, England and Australia got together and imposed changes on the others that were not in the interest of others, threatening not to play with them unless they agreed (with the changes). Everyone is now scrambling to look after their own interests in an unhealthy environment (at the ICC)," Mani, 75, told IANS in an exclusive interview.

"The 'Big Three' formula was not in the interest of any form of cricket. It has done severe damage to world cricket. They have taken away money from global development fund and ICC associate member countries. The whole thing was very undesirable. All the major ICC events were divided between these three countries - India, Australia and England," thundered Mani.

The 'Big Three' formula was diluted



after India's Shashank Manohar took over from Srinivasan - he was removed by the BCCI as its nominee to the ICC - and became the first independent elected ICC chairman in 2014.

Mani, a former left-arm pacer,

praised Manohar for dismantling the 'Big Three' method to an extent, but said much more work needs to be done to bring financial parity and harmony within the ICC member countries.

"Mr Manohar had to try and undo a lot of the damage. But a lot more has to be done and it can only be done through a proper governance review of the ICC, which will take place, otherwise we will have countries that will go bankrupt," warned the Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants (England & Wales), who has spent a lifetime dealing with financial matters at the highest level.

"I have a lot of respect for Mr-Manohar. I think he was superb; he was very good. He was decisive. What I am saying is that he started something that needed to be built on and taken to the next stage," Mani said.

After Manohar's two-year first term as ICC chairman expired in 2017, he

was given another two-year term. Then, the Nagpur-based senior advocate showed no interest in continuing further.

Mani, however, wanted Manohar to carry on. "It would have been good for cricket if he had continued. But he has his own reasons to not to continue. One has to respect that. He gave the ICC a fair bit and one has to accept that and thank him for that. But then we have to move forward. No institution can be built around one person. I would have liked him to continue," he averred.

In some quarters, Mani's name was also floated as Manohar's successor. "That's true. I am back in cricket (administration) only to help the PCB, and have no other interest," he said.

With Mani ruled out, Colin Graves, who recently demitted office of the England and Wales Cricket Board chairman after five years, and BCCI President Sourav Ganguly, are being

considered as front runners to succeed Manohar. If Ganguly is chosen/elected, he would have to leave the BCCI post. His tenure as BCCI president has already expired and the issue is presently in India's Supreme Court.

Now, the ICC Board is trying to decide a formula through which an independent chairman could be elected or chosen unanimously. Mani refrained from commenting on the issue. "I won't comment on that. That's for the ICC to answer," he said.

Asked specifically about Graves' and Ganguly's names being floated, Mani said: "I am not going to talk about chairmanship at all. It's a matter of the ICC Board and its members to vote and decide."

Mani said he hasn't met Ganguly in person since he took over the BCCI reins in October. Both are of the ICC Board as representatives of their national bodies.

French Open to allow spectators amid Covid-19 pandemic

Paris (IANS): A total of 11,500 spectators per day will be allowed at the upcoming French Open, organisers have announced despite the growing number of coronavirus cases in the country. The French Open, which was originally scheduled to start in May, has been moved back to September 27-October 11 because of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has claimed more than 8 lakh lives across the world so far. Roland Garros will be divided into three zones based on the three main courts, with 5,000 people each for the Philippe Chatrier and Suzanne Lenglen courts. The zone surrounding the third biggest court will host a maximum of 1,500 spectators a day. "Since the international circuit restarted, Roland Garros will be the first tournament with the privilege of hosting an audience," French Tennis Federation president Bernard Giudicelli said.

New York (IANS): Two-time finalist Victoria Azarenka of Belarus stormed into her first Grand Slam semifinal since 2013 after a dominant performance against the No.16 seed Elise Mertens at the ongoing US Open.

On Wednesday night at the Arthur Ashe Stadium, Azarenka looked her vintage best as she defeated Mertens 6-1, 6-0 in an hour and 13 minutes. "I felt today I really executed the game very precisely," Azarenka told press after the match as per the WTA website. "I was moving really well. I saw the ball very long. It was long on my racquet. I saw it where I needed to see it. So I felt I played well."

"I found all the right answers to everything she was trying to make



today and more, so I'm very happy with that today," she added.

She will now face six-time champion Serena Williams who staged a stellar comeback against unranked Tsvetana Pironkova of Bulgaria and registered a 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 victory in her quarter-final match.

The match between Azarenka and Williams will be a repeat of the 2012 and 2013 US Open finals, where the 23-time Grand Slam champion had defeated Azarenka to win back-to-back Grand Slam crowns.

"I love playing against Serena," Azarenka said. "I think we have

one of the best matches - at least that I played in my career - against her. We always played on big stages. It was a lot of big fights. She's one of the players who push

me to the limit, who makes me better." In the other women's singles semi-final, Japan's Naomi Osaka will lock horns with No.28 seed Jennifer Brady.

THIEM GOES PAST DE MINAUR TO ENTER HIS 1ST SEMIFINAL

New York (IANS): Second-seed Dominic Thiem defeated Alex de Minaur in straight sets to reach the semi-finals of the US Open for the first time. In a quarter-final clash that lasted for two-hour and four minutes on Wednesday, Thiem defeated 21st seed de Minaur 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 to become the first Austrian ever to reach the last four at the Flushing Meadows. "I had a great feeling from the first moment on," said Thiem, who will now face 2019 US Open finalist Daniil Medvedev for a place in the summit clash. "There is no Roger, Rafa, Novak, but there is Daniil, Sascha and Pablo now," he said. "There are three other amazing players. Every single one of us deserves this first major title. Everybody will give it all. Once we step on the court, those other three are forgotten anyway," he added.



Tour de France: Caleb Ewan wins Stage 11

Paris (IANS): Caleb Ewan won Stage 11 of the ongoing Tour de France in a photo finish after a feisty bunch sprint in Poitiers saw Peter Sagan relegated after barging Wout van Aert near the barriers.

Boxed out on the slight uphill drag to the line, Australian pocket-rocket Ewan (Lotto Soudal) on Wednesday kept his cool before timing his sprint to perfection to power past Sam Bennett (Deceuninck-QuickStep) in the middle of the road while Sagan and van Aert clashed to his right.



Rijiju sanctions ₹5 lakh for ailing footballer

New Delhi (IANS): The Sports Ministry has come forward to extend financial support to Ramananda Ningthoujam, a young footballer who has represented India at various international tournaments, and is suffering from kidney failure.

The son of a rickshaw-puller, his family does not have the means to provide him necessary treatment. He is presently at Shija Hospital in Manipur and is also suffering from a problem of blurred vision, along with the kidney problem.

Taking cognisance of his serious medical condition and the financial situation of the family, Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju has sanctioned an ex-gratia financial assistance of Rs 5

lakh to the athlete under the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Welfare Fund for sportspersons.

Speaking about the decision, Rijiju said, "The welfare of our athletes is of primary concern for the government. Ramananda has represented the country on various occasions and contributed to Indian sport." "To provide the best facilities, both off and on the field, is important because not only are athletes our national assets, they are also national icons so if we cannot ensure a life of dignity for them, then it would be impossible to motivate sportspersons who give up the best years of their life for sport."

Vettel to join renamed Aston Martin team in 2021

London (IANS): Four-time World Champion Sebastian Vettel will join the renamed Aston Martin team in Formula One next year.

The 33-year-old is moving to the team currently known as Racing Point from Ferrari, who earlier this year decided not to offer the German a new contract.

Aston Martin said signing Vettel was "a clear statement of the team's ambition" to establish themselves at the front. The statement did not give details but said Vettel had signed up "for 2021 and beyond." "I am pleased to finally share this exciting news about my future. I'm extremely proud to say that I will become an Aston Martin driver in 2021," said Vettel who won his titles for Red Bull between 2010 and 13 and multiple Grands Prix victories with Scuderia Ferrari. "It's a new adventure for me with a truly legendary car company. I have been impressed with the results the team has achieved this year and I believe the future looks even brighter."

"The energy and commitment of Lawrence (Stroll) to the sport is inspiring and I believe we can build something very special together."

"I still have so much love for Formula 1 and my only motivation is to race at the front of the grid. To do so with Aston Martin will be a huge privilege," he added.



Every minute felt like an hour during Qatar draw, says Chhetri

Bengaluru (IANS): Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri has said every minute felt like an hour during team's famous 0-0 draw against Asian champions Qatar in a FIFA World Cup 2022 qualifying match last year on this day.

India's record goal-scorer Chhetri was ruled out of the match in Doha due to fever.

"Playing Asian champions Qatar in their own backyard in a World Cup qualifier was one of those dream-like scenarios. I could only watch the match from the four walls of my hotel room, completely glued to the TV and cheering the team on with all my



heart," Chhetri told the aiff.com.

"I was ill. So much so that I couldn't even go to the ground to watch. It was a torture to be left outside. Every minute went by like an hour. But, at the end, we registered

a memorable result and things turned out to be rather 'sweet', in more ways than one," he said.

"Since the draw was made, I was looking forward to the challenge. However, as we left for Doha, something just

felt off inside my body. We reached the hotel, had our lunch and then I found out that I was down with fever.

"There were three days to go for the Qatar game and I tried to do everything I could to fight the flu. The thermometer replaced the ball as my best friend, I was isolated in my room and dal chawal was all my body could digest comfortably. As the rest of the boys began their preparation and training for the crucial match, I was fighting my battle against the mercury -- hoping it would come down in time and allow me to play," the 36-year-old Bengaluru FC striker added.

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Printed and Published by K. Hanumanta Rao, on behalf of Hyderabad Media House Pvt. Limited, Flat.No.609, 6th Floor, Kirti Shikhar Building, Plot.No.11, Dist.Center, Janakpuri, New Delhi- 110058. and Printed at M/s. Marutinandan Printers & Publishers, A-15, Bara Bagh, G.T Karnal Road, Industrial Area, New Delhi - 110033. Editor: V Ramu Sarma. RNI No: DELENG/2017/74095

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