

Spouses of Indian professionals on H1B visas, mostly women, are the biggest beneficiary of the Obama-era rule that gave employment authorisation cards. "We are here to reiterate that this is our home, this is where we have spent the last many years of our lives, raised families and contributed positively to the society and economy as skilled legal immigrants," said Pratima Joglekar, California chapter lead volunteer and organiser of the event.

Womenia

Hyderabadi crowned 'Miss Telangana and Miss India Super Model Best Catwalk'

Shivali Ganda, a 23-year-old born and brought up in the city of pearls wins the title of Miss Telangana and Miss India Super Model Best Catwalk. On the Occasion of Women's Day, Shivali shares how important it is to accept your flaws and never get affected by the trolls

TEJAL SINHA

Unexpected things happen in the most unexpected way'. We all have been hearing this, but when these unexpected things happen in reality, we feel so blessed and overwhelmed. This is what happened when a 23-year-old Shivali who was born and brought up in Hyderabad, won the crown of Miss Telangana and Miss India Super Model Best Catwalk 2021 on 27th February.

She shares, "I never thought of becoming a model or participating in any such pageants. It was all unexpected. Since, I'm a Mass Communication student, I have always been doing these small shoots and had classmates and other friends into fashion photography. They used to call me for shoots and collabs with various brands. I was just a novice model. I just wanted to try this out. My friends made my portfolio and registered me in this pageant which I was unaware of. One day I just got a call from the organisers that tomorrow is the audition. I had no experience for this and my mom suggested me to participate after which I went for the auditions after which I got selected."

Shivali shares that this all was before the lockdown and was supposed to be in 2020 which got postponed. Shivali is a trained classical vocalist, trained in dancing, artist, sculpting and also loves trekking. She has also worked with several NGO's and have actively participated in the adoption of country dogs.

The love for art

Sharing about her love for music and dancing, Shivali shares, "My grandfather and my mom

both of them are into music he plays keyboard and sings too. When I was a kid I use to sing along with my grandfather and mom and as soon as they realised that I can sing they encouraged me to sing. I was doing pretty well in handling both my academics as well as music. In my school time I use to sing and took part in extracurricular activities because I love to sing, dance and paint. When I was in 4th grade I had these two amazing teachers who use to be behind my mom for an year telling her to join me in some music college or something which made my mom convinced for sending me to music school. I have been providing classes for dancing also."

Love the one who needs your love

Shivali has been doing her best to participate in various programs with few NGO's along with her friends. "It was in my 7th grade when we visited to 'The home for mentally challenged' in Ranigunj. That day when I communicated with them, they literally had my heart. After a few days on my birthday, I decided to celebrate my birthday with them. Since then I have always or let's say weekly twice or thrice have been visiting and spending time with them. They have become my family, where I know them and they know me and some people with memory problems there still recognize me I have a very good bond with them. I have to plan a few things for those kids because I have seen they are very talented, they can sing, dance and are good at art. I really want to do something in that aspect where I can train them to become independent."

She is also a part of Monsoon

Raga foundation, founder by her dance sir who has been like a mentor for her since years. Monsoon raga foundation is about uplifting the artform.

Love yourself and accept the flaws

Shivali shares that it is very important for one to accept their flaws. It is definitely good to feel that you can improve yourself. It is good to pamper yourself but definitely not right to pressurize yourself about things that's not in your hand.

She adds, "I have a lot of scars as I am also into dancing and trekking. As a model we need to wear short clothes and I have scars in my thigh itself. Before going also my mom reminded me of having scars in your thighs and also have a silencer mark in your leg. It is too much load to take on your head for every single thing everyone wants to look presentable and there's nothing wrong in it but be yourself. I want to be an example and make people understand how important it is to accept your flaws. For the pageant I wore really short dress and my scar was visible. This was the first time I felt conscious but everyone, my fellow contestants came and appreciated me for how gracefully I carried it."

Trolling-Trolling everywhere Shivali sharing about trolling and negativity on social media that rather than getting angry she feels sad for these people who pull others down for their own fun.

She adds, "I don't understand what people get out of trolling a person, there's a thin between being funny and trolling and it can hit a person mentally very hard. However, do give them a piece of

your mouth if it's becoming too much just stand up for yourself but do not let it pull you down because these are the people who are not in your possession and that's why they are talking about you. They have been investing so much time in bringing someone else down instead of putting that time to improve yourself it's just sad to see. For me they are like my secret well-wishers, I would rather thank these trolls for investing so much time in me and for giving so much importance."



TWEET PATROL



SHILPA SHETTY KUNDRA @THESHILPASHETTY

Whichever style you choose to flaunt... always be original
-Outfit: #KarishmaAshita
Jewellery: #UncutByAditiAmin
Styled by: @SanjanaBatra
Assisted by: #Punya | #DhwanJain
Nails: #TintedTales
Makeup: @ajayshelarmakeu
Hair: @FlorianHurel
Photographer: @tejasnerurkar



NCW Chairperson emphasises on creating digital leadership among women

REKHA SHARMA

As we recognise achievements of women across all spheres, this International Women's Day, there are all the more reasons to celebrate women power. Women across the world have fought a valorous battle against Covid-19 as frontline workers, caregivers and as leaders who dealt with coronavirus better than their male counterparts.

This year's UN Women's International Women's Day theme, 'Women in leadership: Achieving an equal future in a Covid-19 world', particularly resonates with me. It invites us to challenge and raise voices for equality, inspiring us to find ways to bring more women on the internet.

It has taught us the importance of a more gender-equal society where women get their due representation and are part of the decision making process.

Women have come a long way in breaking the existing systemic barriers and societal discrimination. However, besides the inclusive and exceptional leadership of women, this pandemic has also highlighted the underlying inequalities in the society very prominently.

In addition to the unequal brunt of the pandemic, women and girls have also had to face a shadow pandemic of gender-based violence. Women and girls have been subjected to gendered abuse online such as cyber-stalking, online rape threats and cyber bullying which intensified during lockdown. As the internet has become an extremely vital part of everyone's existence and employability, it is being increasingly viewed as a fundamental right and therefore access to safe digital space is crucial for empowerment of women.

Gender-based cyber violence against women indicates the deep rooted inequality in the society and threatens the very participation of women online. The overt pressure of online abuse and

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threats often lead to women self-censoring themselves which is a win for the abusers and affects the cause of gender equality adversely. Online abusers often think cybercrimes will have no consequence, therefore, besides sensitizing people to behave responsibly, encouraging women to report online abuses and to make them aware of the channels of redressal is crucial in ensuring their safety.

There are about 500 million internet users in India, but in urban areas only 40 per cent of women use the internet and in rural areas, it is estimated that there are only 31 per cent of women users. With the increase in internet penetration and usage of technology to access even basic services like education which are needed by all, it has become necessary for the people equipped with the right competencies to enhance digital literacy among the citizens. Digital literacy includes but is not limited to assisting people to use computers. It also focuses on building skills required to get necessary information to find a job, set businesses and join the global community.

The National Commission for Women has been constantly working towards creating digital

leadership among women. However, we do feel that it is not the responsibility of a single entity. It is important for all stakeholders to come together.

For instance we partnered with Facebook on implementing 'We Think Digital', a global literacy programme which aims at creating awareness among women and girls about digital security and imparts them training on keeping themselves safe online. The project, which was launched in 2019 has trained more than 1,60,000 women since 2019.

Online harassment restricts participation of women in the digital space and restricts free participation and sharing of ideas. The National Commission for Women believes women should reclaim their space in every field and their equal representation online is a crucial frontier for strengthening their rights. Since internet accessibility has become a fundamental necessity for employment, decreased participation of women due to online harassment should be seen as cruelty against them. Access to online resources and space is the right of every woman and it is our collective responsibility to make the internet a safe space for women.

Women in STEM to increase to 30% by 2030

Women's Day panel discussion, comprising of industry leaders, innovators and policy makers was organized by FICCI in which the inaugural address was given by Dr Ajay Kumar, Defence Secretary, Government of India, who acknowledged the role of women in the development of the country. Appreciating the diverse roles women have played in the development of the technology sector in India, Dr Ajay Kumar said, "Whether it is in Defence or in IT sector, women's impact has been very significant. I remember the growth of IT in the country. India becoming world's largest IT outsourcing destination would not have been possible without our women. More than one-third of the workforce in IT has been women. Even in Electronic Manufacturing, something in which I have been closely associated with, the role of women has been even more significant".



Risk of heart disease is on rise in women

SIDDHI JAIN

Generally, it is believed that women whose estrogen hormone levels decrease after menopause are at increased risk of coronary heart disease, but due to the changes in lifestyle in recent times, cases of heart disease in women are increasing rapidly, says Dr Ravindra Singh Rao, senior intervention cardiologist and structural heart disease expert, Jaipur.

Now not only after 50, but at the age of 40, women are having heart related problems. In the absence of awareness, they come to the hospital only when the symp-

ptoms are severe, which also affects their treatment, he adds.

The trend is changing now and before menopause, the risk of heart disease in women is similar to men due to diabetes, obesity, stress, and low physical activity. In addition, some diseases such as Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) in women also increase the risk of heart attack, which is not present in men. In such a situation, women need to be more aware of their symptoms, the doctor advises.

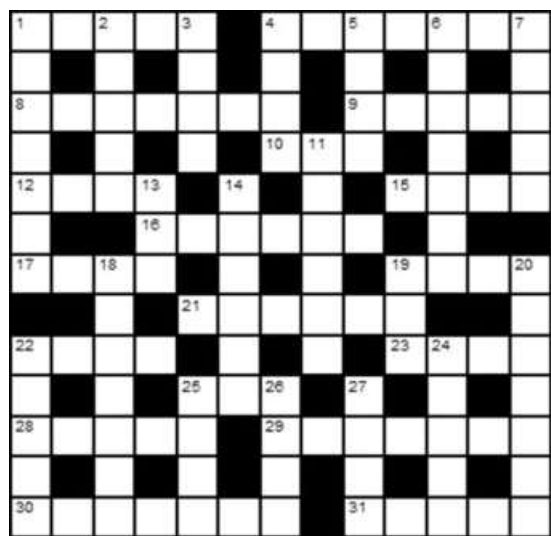
The surgery option in its treatment is a major reason behind ignoring heart problems. In such a situation, catheter-based

treatment therapy is very effective for women. Dr Rao said that due to large incisions in open heart surgery, women also have cosmetic related problems. In the catheter treatment, the heart related problems of women can be corrected easily through the thigh vein. Now many such new technologies have come up, due to which treatment of heart related diseases has become much better in women.

Women suffering from heart failure who have leaking mitral valves in their heart have problems like water filling in the lungs. In such a situation, by applying MitraClip to them, a doctor can fix this prob-



lem. 67 per cent females have calcified blockages in their artery, says Dr Rao. Angioplasty from intravascular lithotripsy is highly effective for women who have calcified blockage in the veins of the heart and are likely to have their stents closed. In this, calcium is broken through a sonographic wave and a stent is inserted. This causes no damage to the artery and also reduces the chances of the stent being closed back.



SOLUTION TO MARCH 9

CROSSWORD

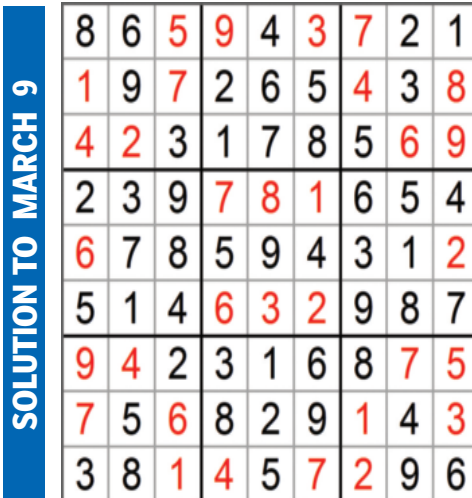
Across

- 1 Small assemblage (5)
- 4 Lattes or cappuccinos (7)
- 8 Ingenuous (7)
- 9 Kick out (5)
- 10 Haul (3)
- 12 Trip to Mecca (4)
- 15 Piece of news (4)
- 16 Prizes (6)
- 17 Large town (4)
- 19 Extras at cricket (4)
- 21 Poisonous effluvia (6)
- 22 Inspires dread (4)
- 23 A part of speech (4)
- 25 Puzzle solver's cry (3)
- 28 Just right (5)
- 29 Hopelessness (7)
- 30 Candid (7)
- 31 Showery (5)

Down

- 1 Vivid (7)
- 2 Chose (5)
- 3 Composition in verse (4)
- 4 Project (4)
- 5 Went by plane (4)
- 6 Fellow-feeling (7)
- 7 New England city famous for its witches (5)
- 11 Of greatest age ? (6)
- 13 A type of bird (3)
- 14 Gaudy (6)
- 18 From that cause or origin (7)
- 19 Prohibit (3)
- 20 Combined action (7)
- 22 French word for 'goodbye' (5)
- 24 Saudi neighbor (5)
- 25 As well as (4)
- 26 Mine passage (4)
- 27 Old Russian ruler (4)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO MARCH 9

NEWS ROUNDUP

FDCI X LAKME FASHION WEEK ANNOUNCES THE WINNER OF THEIR NEW INITIATIVE THIS SEASON

FDCI X Lakmé Fashion Week has announced the winner of 'NEXA presents The Spotlight' – a program that makes its debut this season. Priyanka Ella Lorena Lama of label P.E.L.L.A. emerged as the winner after a highly competitive selection process that required each participating designer to present the collection, idea and concept of their fashion film through a virtual presentation to the jury. The winning designer was awarded with a gratification amount of five lakhs to shoot and create a fashion film which will be showcased at FDCI X Lakmé Fashion Week that takes place from 16-21 March 2021.

The participants were judged by an esteemed panel comprising Rahul Mishra – Fashion Designer; Ashish Shah – Architect & Interior Designer and Priyanka Kapadia – Fashion Director, Vogue India along with Shashank Srivastava – Executive Director, Marketing and Sales Maruti Suzuki India Limited and Jaspreet Chandok – Head, Lifestyle Businesses, RISE Worldwide P.E.L.L.A.'s winning presentation called THE HIVE takes inspiration from the understanding of life in slow motion. This was translated by her during the design process through zero waste pattern making and construction, weaving together indigenous hand-woven textiles from silks to the finest Pashminas and stinging nettle weaves in hues of eggshell, beige and creams. It also incorporates silk painting by hand and thread as it evokes the unpredictable nature of time.



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Local social media apps best bet

THE recent spat between the Indian government and Twitter highlights the rising influence of social media platforms in this globalised world. The power of social media to influence public policy was unthinkable a decade ago. But the world has to live with this new reality now. In business or society at large, any monopolistic dominance is never desirable. Too much power in too few hands is always considered evil. Given the capacity of social media to influence public opinion, it is therefore in the larger public interest to create more options for users. This will create effective check and balance within the ecosystem.

In this perspective, the creation of more India-made apps should be actively encouraged. Owing to the Indo-China border conflict last year, the central government banned around 250 Chinese apps including the Byte-Dance-owned short video sharing app, TikTok, and popular video games app PUBG among others. This acted as an immediate trigger for

the development of local apps in the country. Desi apps such as Chingari, Dubsmash, Roposo, and many more came into the market and have seen encouraging adoption so far. Though these apps are not as popular as TikTok used to be, consumers have more choices now.

Similarly, the country has also witnessed many local alternatives to the US-based social media giants. Twitter's desi alternative 'Koo' has seen wide adoption within a short period of time. Founded in 2020, the app has reached around 5.4 million downloads so far. The centre is also piloting a social messaging app 'Sandes' only for government officials to maintain data privacy. Recent changes in WhatsApp's privacy policy with more integration with Facebook have created a furor globally. Local social messaging app 'Hike' has emerged as an alternative to the US giant.

Moreover, changes in the geospatial regulations announced by the Indian government are also likely

to soon reduce the country's dependency on GoogleMaps. 'MakeMyMap' has tied up with the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to develop geospatial maps that are likely to be widely used by enterprises. This step will make India self-reliant on mapping space.

These local alternatives indicate that the country can develop its own apps for users through its technological prowess. The creation of such apps not only provides more choices to the consumers, but also promotes Indian startups, thus creating wealth and jobs.

Meanwhile, the central government has come up with norms to regulate the functioning of social media apps. The regulations are intended to check the spread of fake news and hate speech among others. While the pros and cons of such regulations are debatable, there is no doubt that more India-made apps will provide more choices to the consumers and reduce the need for regulations. For a democratic country like India, regulations have their own limitations. If the consumers get more choices, it will automatically democratise the social media ecosystem and remove any possible evil influence of any one platform.



Sri Lanka serves kick-in-teeth for Imran

AMJAD AYUB MIRZA

PAKISTAN'S Prime minister Imran Khan's attempt to bluff his way into appealing the Sri Lanka government and her people during his two-day visit on February 23 has back-fired. His attempt to sell himself as an ambassador of Belt and Road Initiative and its secondary project known as CPEC, a crusader of the Muslim ummah so that he could boost his image both at home and to the international money lenders and foreign investors has proven nothing more than a kick-in-the-teeth for Imran Khan.

Not only that he was denied a much publicised opportunity to address the Sri Lankan Parliament, he had to haggle with the Sri Lankan government to be allowed to meet Muslim members of Sri Lankan parliament before a selected few were granted an audience with Imran Khan.

Pakistan is desperate to attract foreign investment into its economy. Yet its foreign direct investment has shrunk by a third and CPEC is going nowhere. The Financial Action Task Force has blatantly refused to take Pakistan out of the Grey list. Pakistan economy is moving in only one direction: downward.

Pakistan's pleas to Sri Lanka to sign a Joint Communique for Maritime Cooperation, commercial activities between Gwadar and Sri Lankan ports and discussions regarding holding the 19th SAARC Summit in Islamabad were all politely turned down by the Sri Lankan government.

Imran Khan's attempts to lure Sri Lanka into investing in the CPEC project led to nowhere. The Sri Lankan did not buy his sales pitch that by joining CPEC Sri Lanka would gain access to the central Asia. Sri Lanka is already part of the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and the experience has not been very promising since Sri Lanka had to lease its port to China for 99 years as a penalty for being unable to pay back Chinese loans.

Imran Khan bid to promote Pakistan as a destination for Buddhist tourism also did not make headway. Pakistan officially never condemned the destruction of Buddha statues in Bamiyan in Afghanistan that were dynamited by the Taliban and many of the archeological relic of Buddha's statue at the Taxila museum have reportedly been stolen.

A depressed Imran Khan could not even muster up enough courage to raise the issue of Covid 19 Muslims that were cremated. His request to address the Sri Lankan Parliament and the Lakshaman Kadirgamar Institute of International Relations and Strategic Studies were courteously dropped by the Sri Lankan government at the last minute due to fear of using the Sri Lankan parliament as a platform for Pakistan's so-called 'Kashmir cause'.

Sri Lanka government was also fearful of an unpredictable Imran Khan that he might just turn around and start to criticise Sri Lanka's Buddhist majority for treating Muslim minority with prejudice. Foreseeing a humiliating trip the Pakistan acting High Commissioner Tanvir Ahmed had very rightly suggested that the Prime minister should cancel his trip.

The terror factor also played its role in the Sri Lankan resolve to downplay Imran Khan's visit to their country. Sri Lankan government was aware of Pakistani diplomat Amir Zubair Siddique's involvement in planning terror attacks on sensitive defence installations in South India and his reported patronage of terrorists in the Easter Sunday killings in 2019. Nine Pakistani nationals were arrested in connection with the bombings which claimed 250 innocent lives.

The drug factor is another possible avenue that Sri Lanka has taken into consideration while accommodating Imran Khan's thrust upon trip. Pakistani drug cartels have been using Sri Lanka as a route to smuggle drugs to Europe through sea-lanes. The money thus earned has been partly used to finance terror activities in Sri Lanka.

The attack on the Sri Lankan cricket team back in 2009 is still fresh in the memory of the Sri Lanka nationalists and general public alike. Sri Lanka cannot afford to have another terror attack causing damage to tourism which is one of Sri Lanka's main source of earning foreign exchange.

In the end for Imran Khan the 'official' trip to Sri Lanka proved to be no more than a short break from the worries of domestic politics where he faces a crushing defeat at the Senate elections and an impending threat of a long march due on March 26 by the Pakistan Democratic Movement. The only publicity Imran Khan could manage was by tweeting about his visit to the Island

domestic politics where he faces a crushing defeat at the Senate elections and an impending threat of a long march due on March 26 by the Pakistan Democratic Movement. The only publicity Imran Khan could manage was by tweeting about his visit to the Island

The fact that none of the controversial issues were even mentioned about in the Pakistani media is a diplomatic triumph for the Sri Lankan government. By not permitting Imran Khan to address her parliament and other institutions of national prestige Sri Lanka has denied Islamabad an opportunity to stir anti-India sentiments in a foreign land and defeated yet another attempt of Pakistani military establishment of rhetorical condemnation of the treatment of Muslims in Sri Lanka while remaining tight lipped about the atrocities that the Uighurs undergo on a daily bases in hundreds of torture and concentration camps dotted across occupied East Turkistan that China calls Xin Jiang.

This is ironical indeed for a nation like Pakistan that prides herself on religion and claims to be the voice of 'oppressed' Muslims the world over.

In the final analysis Imran Khan has failed to present Pakistan as a friendly and secure investment destination for the Sri Lankan people and has returned back to Islamabad after receiving a Kick-in-the-teeth of its national pride.

(Amjad Ayub Mirza is an author and a human rights activist from Mirpur in Pakistan occupied J&K. The views expressed are personal.)

JASMINE, SHRIYA BAJAJ,
RAHUL KUMAR JHA

TODAY India is at a crossroads where it has to carefully balance the trade-off between economic development and the environmental health of its citizens. That is difficult for any developing country to choose.

Without economic development, the environmental health of a country cannot be improved. This process is very systematic and time-consuming, as it takes years to make investments in environmental-friendly technologies.

This phenomenal change takes place when a particular country reaches the final stage of its development curve. That is when a one unit increase in the gross domestic product (GDP) leads to a per unit reduction in carbon emissions.

This is because the growth in the capital-output of the country generates a per capita increase in the overall national income that leads to greater investments in green technology. This plays a potential role in achieving the targeted framework of environmental sustainability.

An increase in the investments in green technology helps in the achievement of the United Nations-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). India has announced its intention to achieve all the SDGs by 2030.

However, the question remains: How it will accomplish the target and by using what mechanism? The Kuznet's hypothesis has proved to be the most efficient method for achieving environmental sustainability and SDG goals in the case of developed countries, that have already reached the maximum point of their development curve.

The developed countries have reached such a position because they can spend their precious revenues on investment in green technology.

But the environment is not improving. In fact, by using this methodology, the developed countries are walking on the path of worsening the environment further. This is because carbon

emissions are increasing rather than decreasing.

If developing countries like India start to follow in the footsteps of developed countries, the world will reach its end. Both sides indulge in blame games when it comes to improving the global environment during summits and imbibing conventions.

India failed to reduce its carbon emissions per tonne even when its per capita GDP over the years was increasing (at a rate of 7-8 per cent per year). The rates of emissions are increasing rapidly if we see the data of fossil carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions of India.

The alternative to the Kuznets hypothesis was the evolution of green finance that came into being when the first green bond was issued in 2015.

A green bond is a fixed-income instrument designed specifically to support specific climate-related or environmental projects. It encourages sustainability and more specifically, green bonds finance projects aimed at energy efficiency, pollution prevention, sustainable agriculture, fishery and forestry, the protection of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, clean transportation, clean water and sustainable water management. Such bonds also finance the cultivation of environmentally friendly technologies and the mitigation of climate change.

This is a very efficient way chosen by developed and developing countries to achieve environmental sustainability in a cost-effective manner. Since 2015, the Indian green bond market has been growing. Green bonds are currently valued at ~\$3.2 billion.

The key features involving the green bond market in India include:

- The market commenced with banks issuing green bonds. The share of corporates is now increasing, similar to the situation abroad
- The use of green label and certification is increasing, with many issuers opting for post-issuance certification
- Corporates issue green bonds



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for a period of 3-5 years. Banks opt for a longer tenure, ie, 5-10 years

- The US dollar and Indian Rupee are two preferred currencies. The National Thermal Power Corporation and the International Finance Corporation started the overseas 'Masala Bond' market. The growth of Masala Bonds will help issuers avoid the risk of currency exchange and will likely be a preferred mode, as international investors get comfortable with the country risk, sector risk and credit risk of Indian issuers.

Green bonds have developed a large base in the following years and are highly preferred by investors and the issuing authorities as:

- Green credentials result in access to a larger investor pool, as global investors increasingly invest in green activities. The demand for 'green' paper is higher and opportunities to invest are lagging
- Larger investor interest translates to faster access to debt, improved yield. Many issuers feel that green bonds has resulted in improved yields -15-20 basis points (bps).
- As investors get comfortable with an issuer, the country and the segment, subsequent issuances can secure improvements in yield, time to access

and tenures.

India today ranks eighth in terms of the issuance of green bonds. It seeks to develop its green technology and related projects on a large scale to meet the goal of a clean and greener country till 2030 as announced by the prime minister in the budget of 2018.

Today, India has become the second-largest market globally for green bonds, with \$10.3 billion worth of transactions in the first half of 2019, as issuers and investors continued to adopt policies and strategies linked to sustainable development goals, according to the Economic Survey 2019-20. India now has the second-largest emerging green bond market after China.

Several government agencies have contributed to this issuance including Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency and Indian Railway Finance Corporation. In 2018, the State Bank of India entered the green market with a \$650 million certified climate bond.

To scale up the environmentally sustainable investments, India joined the International Platform on Sustainable Finance (IPSF) in October 2019. IPSF acknowledges the global nature of financial markets that can help finance the transition to a green, low carbon and climate-resilient economy by linking financing needs to the global sources of

chilling effect on persons who dare to question policies of the government and populist leaders.
K R Srinivasan, Secunderabad

Use technology for public benefit

IT is really delightful to know that in the rural areas of Wisconsin school district in the US where internet accessibility is poor the authorities concerned have come out with a project with the help of startups to connect users, especially school children - using drones as a way to access flawless internet connectivity. The drones will be equipped with cell phone devices that can let students and others to go online. The Wisconsin district is one such where issues regarding internet access is very poor. The drone will work on latest technology and will be able to remain aloft for weeks.

The same technology if it is implemented in our own country it would benefit thousands of students and citizens residing in remote areas and localities where net connection is very low. During the lock down months when online studies were fully relied upon there were heavy complaints regarding the poor internet connectivity in many parts of India. Using such novel technology can definitely benefit people. Our internet providers with the help of startups can come out with such projects.

M Pradyu, Kannur

Implement reservation for women in legislatures

FORMALITY of celebrating International Women Day is fulfilled every year on March 8 but without any attitude-change towards women which though being 50-per cent of population, get only a minute representation in law-making system. Many political par-

ties cry for reservation on man-made aspects like religion and caste evidently for vote-bank politics, but oppose reservation to women which still remain dominated section of society created by nature in our male-dominated political system. Even Islamic world including Pakistan and many other democratic countries have adopted reservation for women in legislature.

Election Commission formula to make it compulsory for every political party to give at least 33 per cent party tickets to women may be immediately enforced as an interim measure, till Indian women get their legitimate right for 33 per cent state-wise reservation in legislature. Moreover to prevent wives or other relations being misused as proxy of male politicians, there should be a system whereby name or photo of husband or any other relation may not be permitted in election-campaigns of women candidates. At a time when women-quota in panchayats and local bodies is being increased to 50-per cent from earlier 33-per cent, it is meaningless to resist 33-per cent reservation to women in legislature. Rather there should be uniform 33-per cent reservation for women at all stages from civic bodies to Parliament.

Madhu Agrawal, Delhi

Sasikala's smart move

EATING a humble pie, Sasikala declaring her disinterest to be active in politics for upcoming assembly elections of Tamil Nadu is tactically a good move for AIADMK party. Her active involvement would have led a disintegration of supporting base, further weakening the ruling party's stake at hustings. Then it would have helped rival DMK party to sail through. Now the opposing camps are looking equal forces, with a slight tilt of winning probability towards DMK camp.

Dr D V G Sankararao, Nellimarla

LETTERS

Dissent cannot be stifled

THE editorial page piece by Madhubhushi Sidhar Acharyulu has correctly highlighted that sedition law is more often misused by the powers that be to settle political scores despite the conviction rate is negligible so far since independence. The quote from Rig Veda is appropriate inasmuch that the arrest of poet Varavara Rao and climate activist Disha Ravi invoking draconian sedition law by police was prima facie partisan with an intention to make political bosses trigger-happy.

As it is seen, recent trend shows that more often the party in power have been invoking sedition law extensively to criminalise dissent against particular person/persons only with an intent to get him/her arrested by hook or crook even when the whole matter is not seditious at all. In short, the law literally becoming a tool in the hands of government who often try to misuse to quieten disquiet a person who vary with the government's style of functioning or policies or make statements is a clear pointer and a sign of erosion of democracy.

Overall, as there is no evidence to connect the toolkit or violence on Republic Day with IPJ spells danger to the nation or to the government is only a figment of imagination. It is an accepted fact that maintaining order in society always is a necessity and paramount but not at the cost of stifling dissent which is part of democratic process in any civilised nation. Time has come to take a critical view of the sedition law because sedition cases rarely leading to conviction has only a

thehansreader@gmail.com

NO TAKERS FOR ₹10 COINS

Legal tender
faces rejection

MEGHNA NATH
HYDERABAD

SOCIAL activists took to twitter and also tried to approach the concerned officials regarding Rs 10 coins that are being rejected by business establishments, small traders and even public transport services. Nevertheless, there is no written document of Rs 10 coin being banned by Reserve Bank of India (RBI), a few people are under apprehension that they may end up accepting fake coins while others feel that the Rs 10 coin is banned.

R Ravi, a small trader, Secunderabad said “we are not accepting the coins as we have received many fake ones.”

“We got information from our union leader not to accept the Rs 10 coin,” said Ramesh Rao, an auto driver.

Social activists say it's high time to control the menace and dispel the myths. All the business establishments and transport services should display a notice board that Rs 10 coins are legal tender money accepted by them. Failure to comply with the same, annual trade licenses should not be renewed.

B V Seshagiri, social activist said, “Recently I have visited a supermarket at Alwal and when I was about to pay cash at the bill counter, the billing clerk refused to accept Rs 10 coins. Later, I approached the store manager who too expressed his inability to accept the coins stating that Cash Management Services’ (CMS) refuses to accept Rs 10 Coins to be deposited in Banks. I also tried to reach out to CMS manager, but my efforts went vein.”

HISTORIC EDUCATION POLICY

‘India will be Vishwa Guru once again, thanks to NEP’

It will make India grow in knowledge, research, science and technology and all spheres

- Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal says the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) will transform India
- It is both national and international, inclusive and innovative, and built on cornerstone of equity, quality and access
- Thrust on primary education in mother tongue. It will impart vocational education from sixth standard along with subjects like AI

HYDERABAD

UNION Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal ‘Nishank’ said here on Tuesday the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP) will transform India and once again make the country a ‘Vishwa Guru’ (global teacher). This new policy is both national and international, inclusive and innovative, impactful and interactive and built on the cornerstone of “equity, quality and access,” he said, addressing the Association of Professional College Managements meet here.

Pokhriyal said the NEP saw elaborate deliberations and direct consultations with 33 crore



Union Minister of Education Dr Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank releases a book of N Ramachandra Rao, the BJP MLC candidate, during a talk on ‘Fast-tracking Change Towards Building a Resurgent India: Role of Intellectuals’ at a meeting of Association of Professional College Managements in the Hyderabad on Tuesday

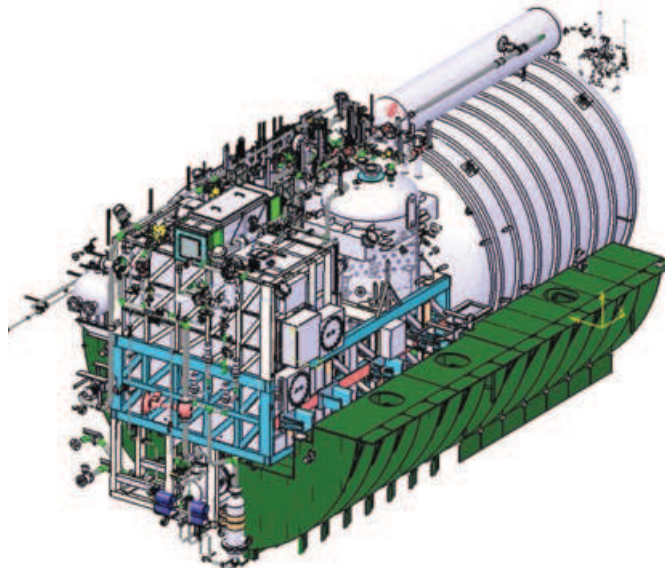
students and their parents, 1.1 crore teachers and professors, 1,000 vice-chancellors, principals of 50,000 degree colleges, from Gram Pradhan to Prime Minister, from village to Parliament. Over 2.5 lakh suggestions were received on this policy. “Did you see any opposition against NEP in the country. If anyone wants to oppose (then) come before me. I am ready to explain but nobody

is coming forward. Those who oppose just for the sake of opposing also did not muster courage. What will they oppose for? This new policy is for nation-building...It is aimed at transforming India and enabling the country regain its position as Vishwa Guru and we will grow in knowledge, research, science and technology and all spheres,” Pokhriyal said.

The NEP, approved by the Union Cabinet, replaces the 34-year-old National Policy on Education framed in 1986. It is aimed at paving the way for transformational reforms in school and higher education systems to make India a global knowledge superpower. The NEP is coming up with a lot of reforms, and will pave the way for holistic and multidisciplinary education, he said adding there is a lot of enthusiasm and exuberance on this new policy in Telangana and the entire country.

“The policy by providing primary education in mother tongue, will impart vocational education from sixth standard along with subjects like Artificial Intelligence (AI) in school education and hence it is a unique and historic education policy in the world. We will also move ahead in research and development,” the Union Minister said. The state governments have constituted a Task Force (for NEP implementation) and guidelines have been issued to some states also, he said.

Pokhriyal further said that for the National Research Foundation, around Rs 50,000 crore has been allocated towards patent, research and development over the next five years and added it (proposal over its creation) will come up before the Union Cabinet soon.



Fuel cell-based AIP system crosses new milestone of user specific tests

HANS NEWS SERVICE
HYDERABAD

DEFENCE Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has achieved an important milestone in the development of Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) System by proving the land-based prototype on March 8. The plant was operated in endurance mode and max power mode as per the user requirements. The system is being developed by Naval Materials Research Laboratory (NMRL) of DRDO.

AIP has a force multiplier effect on lethality of a diesel electric submarine as it enhances the submerged endurance of the boat, several folds. Fuel cell-based AIP has merits in performance compared to other technologies.

While there are different

types of AIP systems being pursued internationally, fuel cell based AIP of NMRL is unique as the hydrogen is generated on-board.

The technology has been successfully developed with the support of industry partners L&T and Thermax. It has now reached the stage of maturity for fitment into target vessels.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO, Indian Navy and Industry for the achievement.

Secretary DDR&D and Chairman DRDO, G Satheesh Reddy appreciated the efforts of DRDO, Indian Navy and Industry teams involved in the successful development.

He called upon DRDO fraternity to come up with more such advanced technological achievements by putting extraordinary efforts.

CM LETTER ON VSP

It's a mere drama, says Oppn

- APCC chief Sailajanath describes the gesture ‘a drama’ to win civic body polls
- CPI warns CM will pay a heavy price if he allows the steel plant privatised
- CPM welcomes CM letter, suggests that YSRCP bring on board all other parties for a united fight



Sake Sailajanath



P Madhu



K Ramakrishna

HANS NEWS SERVICE
VIJAYAWADA

CONGRESS and Left parties dismissed the letter written by Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy to Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking an early appointment for discussing Visakha steel plant privatisation as an ‘eye wash’ and said he will have to pay a heavy price for allowing the sale of the plant which is fruit of years of struggles and sacrifices by the people of Andhra Pradesh.

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Sake Sailajanath said the letter written by the Chief Minister opposing the privatisation of steel plant is another drama enacted by him to pacify the people. He said if the Chief Minister was really serious about saving VSP from disinvestment, he should put pressure on the Prime Minister and give warning that the state government would stop supplying water and power if the plant is privatised.

He said the Congress had asked the Chief Minister for the all party meeting on the issue but he turned down the appeal.

The APCC chief said the state government was not taking initiative to protect the plant and would keep on giving statements till the completion of local body elections and leave the plant to the Central government after the elections are over.

CPI state secretary K Ramakrishna said Jagan Mohan Reddy should

continue the fight and must convene an all-party meeting to formulate an action plan to protect the plant. He warned that the Chief Minister will have to pay a heavy price if the VSP is privatised. He said all MPs from Andhra Pradesh must stand united in the fight to save the steel plant. “VSP is not just a steel plant but is associated with the sentiments of Telugu people over four decades. The state will suffer a huge loss if the VSP is sold and workers will suffer a lot,” he said.

The CPI leader suggested the Chief Minister should get appointment of Modi and lead a delegation from the state for the talks in New Delhi.

He said the MPs from the CPI from other states were ready to stand by the people of Andhra Pradesh in this fight and join the delegation from Andhra Pradesh.

Meanwhile, CPM state secretary P Madhu welcomed the writing of a letter by Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said YSRCP should join hands with other political parties in the struggle for the protection of steel plant. He felt that all political parties in the Parliament and outside should unite in the fight.

The CPM leader said the Chief Minister has made a good proposal to take all party delegation to meet the Prime Minister to express the views of the people of Andhra Pradesh on the disinvestment of VSP. He said Jagan should also suggest alternative options for the revival of the VSP.

Jagan wants to buy steel plant like scrap, alleges Lokesh

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

TDP national general secretary and MLC Nara Lokesh on Tuesday expressed concern that the Central government was going ahead with its plans to sell away the Visakha Steel Plant in the absence of any resistance from the ruling YSRCP ministers, MLAs and MPs in Andhra Pradesh.

Lokesh accused Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy of planning to buy the prime property of the steel plant at very low scrap values.

All the 28 YSRCP MPs were doing nothing to save the VSP and were just nodding their heads like puppets while the Chief Minister was doing gross injustice to the Andhra people.

In a statement here, Lokesh

asserted that their party would not let go of this issue just like that and they would go to any lengths in order to foil the devious plans of the Chief Minister to destroy the steel plant. The Centre has already clarified that there was prior approval of Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy for the privatisation of the VSP. The whole process to privatise the steel plant was being informed to the state government at all stages, he said.

The TDP leader advised Jagan to stop his drama since the people would not believe in his letter written to the Prime Minister expressing his fake opposition to sale of steel plant. Nobody would believe in the fake statements of the YSRCP ministers and leaders any more on the issue of the VSP. All sections were determined to continue and intensify their agitation till the privatisation plan was withdrawn, he said.



HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy directed the officials to prepare an action plan to ensure that adequate funds are released on time for supplying free electricity to farmers, subsidy power to aqua farmers and free electricity up to 200 units for SC/ST families.

During a review on power situation at his camp office on Tuesday, the Chief

Minister instructed them to complete the construction of thermal units in Krishnapatnam and Vijayawada. He said these units would be a burden if their construction is not completed at the earliest and added that it would be beneficial if they are completed soon.

The Chief Minister directed the officials to ensure that there would be no power shortage in coming three-four months and asked them to make prepa-

rations for generation of power to meet requirements. He directed them to ensure that three would be disruption in generation of power in 15 thermal units running under APGENCO. He told the officials to conduct reviews on coal supply and ensure to meet the requirements.

Chief secretary Aditya Nath Das, energy ex-officio principal secretary G Sai Prasad, energy secretary N Srikanth and other officials were present.

All govt hospitals to administer Covid vax

AMARAVATI

STARTING Tuesday, all government hospitals and those private hospitals linked to the Aarogya network are offering coronavirus vaccination in the state. “Even without registering online, one can go to the vaccination centre personally to get vaccinated,” said an official.

People over 60 have been advised to carry an Aadhar card or any other identity cards to get inoculated while those between 45 to 59 years with comorbidities should produce a doctor's endorsement. People without any identity cards can produce blood test reports, doctor's prescription or any other supporting document.

On Monday, Andhra Pradesh High Court Chief Justice Arup Kumar Goswami and his wife Nilakshi Goswami got vaccinated at the

Without any online registration, those above 60 years of age can walk in to any vaccination centre to get the jab

Mangalagiri All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). On Monday, as many as 30,373 first doses of the vaccine were administered across the 13 districts of the state and 11,773 second doses were also inoculated.

Meanwhile, the upward spiral of coronavirus cases continued as the state added 118 anew in 24 hours ending 9 am on Tuesday, pushing the gross up to 8.90 lakh.

The latest bulletin said 89 patients had recovered from the infection while none died in the state in a day. The active cases went up to 1,038 after 8,82,670 total recoveries and 7,176 deaths so far.

Swamy to visit Tirupati today

HANS NEWS SERVICE
TIRUPATI

THE TTD which is harried by a series of adverse reports in the media and also in social media has got support from an unexpected quarter. BJP MP Dr Subramanian Swamy said that a defamation case will be filed against ‘a print media’ which has been slandering TTD, in the Tirupati city Court on Wednesday.

In a tweet on Tuesday, Dr Swamy said that he is arriving in Tirupati on Wednesday to supervise the filing of case.

Swamy's tweet says, “I am in Tirupati tomorrow to supervise the filing of a defamation case as a Balaji Bhakt, against a print media which has been slandering TTD in whose Trust Board, BJP MP Rakesh Sinha and VHP office-bearer Govind Hari are members.”

Dixon to provide jobs to 3k in Kopparthi unit

AMARAVATI

A delegation of Dixon Technologies (India) Ltd called on Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy at the camp office here on Tuesday.

During the interaction, the Chief Minister said it is a good development that Dixon Technologies has come forward to invest in Kopparthi electronic manufacturing cluster and as-

sured that the government would extend its complete support to the companies ready to invest in Andhra Pradesh.

The chairman and CEO of the company informed the Chief Minister that they would provide employment to nearly 2,000-3,000 people. They said they would manufacture mobiles, variables, laptops, tablets, security equipment and cameras in the Kopparthi unit in Kadapa

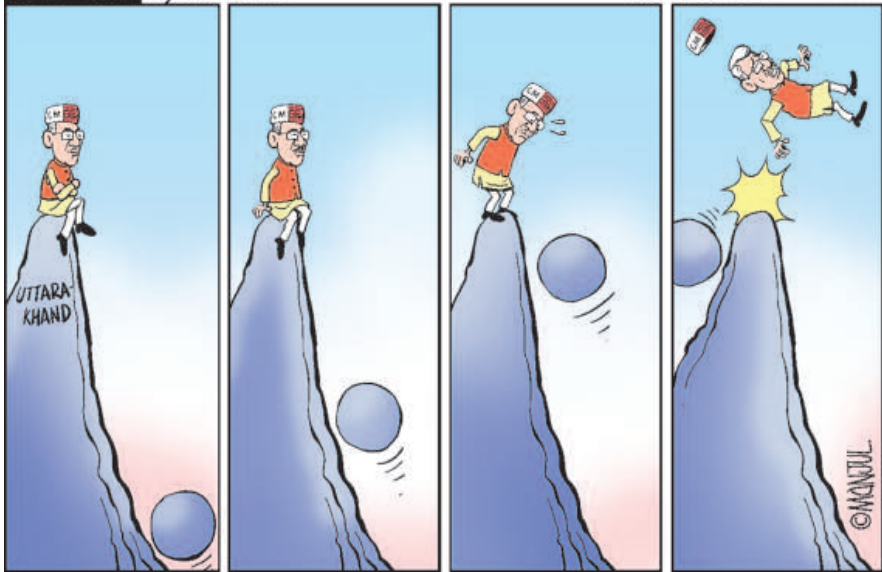
district. They said plans are ready to expand their unit in Tirupati and create another 1,000 jobs. They said they will partner with Bosch company to set up washing machine manufacturing unit in Home Appliances division. Dixon Technologies India Ltd chairman Sunil Vachani, CEO Pankaj Sharma and industries minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy are among who met the Chief Minister.



Dixon Technologies India Ltd chairman Sunil Vachani, CEO Pankaj Sharma and Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy with Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy at his camp office in Tadepalli on Tuesday

POLITICKLE by MANJUL

f t i n @MANJULtoons



Rawat resigns as U'khand CM

DEHRADUN

TRIVENDRA Singh Rawat on Tuesday resigned as the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, ending days of speculations about a leadership change in the BJP-ruled hill state amid reports of discontent against him. Rawat submitted his resignation to Governor Baby Rani Maurya at the Raj Bhawan here upon his arrival from Delhi where he met the central BJP leadership. After submitting his resignation, Rawat said the Uttarakhand BJP Legislature Party will meet at the state party headquarters here at 10 am Wednesday to choose his successor. Earlier before proceeding to the Raj Bhawan, Rawat was closeted with his associates at the chief

minister's residence including Cabinet minister Madan Kaushik and state minister Dhan Singh Rawat, who has emerged as the frontrunner to succeed him. Rawat was going to complete four years in office on March 17.

The Congress said the resignation of Rawat was an eyewash to hide the government's "failures", and urged the President to dismiss the BJP dispensation in the state.

Soon after submitting his resignation, Rawat addressed a press conference at his official residence, telling the media that the party has "collectively decided"



that someone else should lead the State now. He said he comes from a humble family background and had never even imagined his party will give him the honour of serving Uttarakhand for nearly four years as a chief minister.

"Now the party has collectively decided that I should give this opportunity to someone else. So I have submitted my resignation to the Governor. I wish all the best to whoever

takes over from me," he said.

He said that during his tenure several steps were taken for the empowerment of women including a recent ordinance giving the ownership rights to women in the ancestral property of their husbands. Asked what had been the reason behind his replacement, Rawat did not divulge much. "I told you it was a collective decision of the party." On being queried further, Rawat quipped, "You will have to go to Delhi to find that out."

The central BJP leadership had recently sent two observers Raman Singh and Dushyant Kumar Gautam to the state to get feedback from the party's core group amid reports of discontent against the chief minister.

Mukesh Ambani bomb scare, Hiren's death ARREST ENCOUNTER SPECIALIST SACHIN VAZE, SAYS FADNAVIS

Car was in the possession of Vaze for four months

MUMBAI

FORMER Maharashtra CM and BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis has demanded the arrest of Mumbai Police 'encounter specialist' Sachin Vaze in the Mukesh Ambani bomb threat case, reports India Today.

In his address to the State Assembly, Fadnavis claimed that the car laden with explosives found near Ambani residence was in the possession of Vaze for four months prior to the incident.

The car's legal owner Mansukh Hiren was found dead on 5 March after being "missing" for five hours. The police said that it looked like he committed suicide by jumping into Kalwa creek.

Before his death, Hiren, in his statement to the Mumbai police stated that his car had not been in use for over a year, and that he recently drove the car because he wanted to sell it. According to him, the car broke down after he parked it at the Mulund-Airoli Link Road,



From left: Mansukh Hiren, Sachin Vaze and Mansukh's wife

but when he returned to the spot the next day, the car was not there.

The police had said the vehicle was stolen from Airoli-Mulund Bridge on 18 February.

Fadnavis said that Hiren's wife has alleged that Sachin Vaze killed her husband. Reading a statement from her, he said that Vaze had advised Hiren to get himself arrested

and that he would get him out on bail safely. However, his wife advised him against it and Hiren sought legal help for anticipatory bail. Fadnavis further said that the last known location of Mansukh Hiren's phone was near Shiv Sena leader Dhananjay Gawde's office. Both Gawde and Vaze are purportedly close as both were named in an extortion case in 2017. "Why he is not being arrested under Section 201 of IPC (destroying evidence)? Who is defending him?", he asked in the assembly.

Vaze's has long been a notorious name. He was forced to quit the force in 2007 after being suspended along with 14 other policemen over the custodial death of Khwaja Yunus, a suspect in the 2002 Ghatkopar bomb blast case.

The Congress questioned how the Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnavis obtained Call Detail Records (CDR) in the case. MLA and state Congress chief Nana Patole sought a probe into how the BJP leader accessed CDR.



BJP MP Jyotiraditya Scindia at Parliament, during the ongoing Budget Session on Tuesday

Jyotiraditya Scindia hits back at Rahul Gandhi's 'backbencher' dig

NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's comment that Jyotiraditya Scindia had become a "backbencher" in the BJP and would have to return to the Congress to ever be chief minister has drawn a swift and sharp response from the Rajya Sabha member who made the big switch last year.

"It would have been a different situation had Rahul Gandhi been concerned the same way as he is now, when I was in the Congress," Jyotiraditya Scindia was quoted by news agency ANI as saying.

Mr Scindia left the Congress, his party of 19 years, in March last year, starting an exodus that led to the

collapse of the party's Kamal Nath government and the return of the BJP in Madhya Pradesh.

On Monday, Rahul Gandhi apparently spoke about his one-time close aide while making a point of the importance of the party at a meeting of the Youth Wing of the Congress.

"Scindia had the option to strengthen the organisation by working with Congress workers. I told him - One day you will become the Chief Minister. But he chose another route," Rahul Gandhi reportedly said.

The Congress MP, according to sources quoted by ANI, also said, "Write it down, he will never become Chief Minister there. He will have to come back here for that."

DGCA: Pilots, crew won't fly for 48 hours after getting vaccine

NEW DELHI

AVIATION regulator DGCA said on Tuesday pilots and cabin crew members will not fly in an aircraft for 48 hours after being vaccinated against coronavirus. "If there are no symptoms after 48 hours, the air crew (which includes pilots and cabin crew) is fit to resume 'unrestricted' flying duties," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said in a circular. Air crew will be monitored for 30 minutes after taking the shot at the COVID-19 vaccination centre itself for any anaphylactic and idiosyncratic reaction, it said. "Air crew will be 'medically unfit for flying' for 48 hours after vaccination," the DGCA said. If, after 48 hours, the pilot experiences any symptoms, he or she will be reviewed by treating physician or his or her authorised medical attendant, it said.

RLY ELECTRIFICATION BETWEEN HUBBALLI AND ALNAWAR



Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) AK Rai, inspected electrification of 65 Route km (RKM) between Hubballi and Alnawar on Monday. He inspected Traction Substation (TSS) at Hubballi, Sub sectioning and Paralleling Post (SSP) at Dharwad, Kambarganvi, Kashanatti and Sectioning & Paralleling Post (SP) at Kyarkop, inspected Overhead Equipment, Level Crossing Gates, Foot Over Bridges in the section. He also conducted Speed trial with AC Loco from Alnawar to Hubballi.

DMDK quits AIADMK-BJP alliance in TN

CHENNAI

ACTOR-TURNED-POLITICIAN Vijayakanth-led Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK) on Tuesday quit the AIADMK-BJP alliance after differences over allocation of seats ahead of the Tamil Nadu assembly polls.

The DMDK released a statement announcing that the party is leaving the AIADMK-BJP alliance over the inconclusive seat-sharing discussion even after three rounds of negotiations.

In the past few weeks, the party had been hinting that they are willing to fight the assembly elections on all 234 seats alone if their demands aren't met.

With the DMDK pulling out of the AIADMK led front in Tamil Nadu, the BJP plans to seek eight more seats from the ruling party in the state.

With the seat sharing among the Makkal Needhi Maiam (MNM) led by actor turned politician Kamal Haasan, Indhiya Jananayaga Katchi (IJK) and All India Samathuva Makkal Katchi (AISMK) having been successfully finalised, the front will now be actively commencing campaigning in the Tamil Nadu Assembly elections on April 6.

The All India NR Congress (AINR Congress) headed by former Puducherry Chief Minister N. Rangaswamy has entered into a seat-sharing agreement with the BJP and the AIADMK combine for the April 6 Assembly elections in the Union Territory.

As per the agreement, AINR Congress will contest 16 seats while the BJP-AIADMK combine will contest 14 seats in the 30-member Assembly. Rangaswamy will be the Chief Minister if the combine is voted to power.



Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal with BJP supporters as he arrives to file his nomination for the upcoming State Assembly polls, in Majuli on Tuesday

SC upholds EC decision on 8-phase poll in WB

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a plea challenging the Election Commission's (EC) decision to conduct the West Bengal Assembly polls over eight phases. A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde rejected the plea, which had also sought to bar the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its leaders from using the "Jai Shri Ram" slogan during the poll campaign in the state. The bench initially told advocate M L Sharma, the petitioner, to approach the Calcutta High Court. "I rely upon a judgment. This is not a matter of an election petition. One party is using a religious slogan. Why should I go to the high court," Sharma told the bench, which also comprised justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian.

SC stays arrest warrant of BJP leader Bharati

The Supreme Court directed that the non-bailable arrest warrant against BJP candidate and former IPS officer Bharati Ghosh in connection with the 2019 Lok Sabha polls violence case be kept in abeyance till the conclusion of the assembly polls in West Bengal. Ghosh is contesting from Derba constituency against Trinamool Congress candidate Humayun Kabir, also a former IPS officer. A bench said no further coercive action should be taken against Ghosh in the case. The top court listed the matter for further hearing on May 10. The top court noted that this Court had already granted interim protection to the petitioner in the writ petition with regard to FIRs which have been filed against her.

EC orders removal of West Bengal DGP Virendra

KOLKATA

THE Election Commission on Tuesday ordered removal of Virendra as the Director General of Police of poll-bound West Bengal with immediate effect, and appointed P Nirajnan in his place.

In a directive to the state chief secretary, the EC said Virendra "should not be given any post which directly or indirectly relates to conduct of election."

The decision was taken after reviewing the poll preparedness in the state.

It said a compliance of the commission's order may be done immediately.

"Kindly inform the commission about the compliance latest by 10.00 am tomorrow (Wednesday)," the letter said.

Meanwhile, Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday held her first mega rally in East Midnapore's Nandigram where the feisty West Bengal chief minister brought alive old memories of the Nandigram anti-land acquisition protests. "Bhulte Pari Sobar Naam, Bhulbo Nako Nandigram (I can forget everyone's name but I will never forget Nandigram)...When I had first visited Nandigram, there was no MLA. I looked at these faces and decided to contest from here. I had my home constituency and it was Bhawanipore. There was no problem and the effort would have been less for me. But still I chose Nandigram as I could see your love and enthusiasm," Banerjee said. Earlier, Banerjee had dubbed Nandigram as "lucky" for her. "I will contest from Nandigram."

'Cow slaughter bad, but stray cattle menace bigger problem'

Animals damaging crops on rise in the sugarcane-yielding district of Meerut in western Uttar Pradesh

MEERUT

On a sunny afternoon in Western Uttar Pradesh, a common sight at barren lands alongside highways is quintals of sugarcane loaded on tractor-trolleys and some old men keeping guard there to keep the crop safe from stray animals always on the prowl to pull away their share. Jumma, 72, is one of those old men sitting near a quaint weighing scale along the Ganga canal in Meerut district, constantly keeping a watch on the sugarcane load he has been protecting from stray cattle waiting to be weighed before being sent off to a mill. And the stray cattle population is an

ever-increasing one, which many locals across religious lines blame on a ban on their slaughter in the state.

The septuagenarian is aware that a farmers' movement has been underway on borders of Delhi, less than 100 kms away, for more than 100 days over three contentious central laws.

He is also concerned that there is no law to guarantee the minimum support price (MSP) for crops, another key issue before protesting farmers, in case some big corporate buyers of agri-produce decide to monopolise the market and decide to throw peanuts before farmers to gobble their crops. The landless farm worker easily gets involved in discussions over the agitation --




which has had ripples in the region that is known for sugarcane -- but is not much amused. His concerns, like that of Akbar Ali, who also has been hired to guard crops against stray animals, go beyond the issues being highlighted in the ongoing stir and the job at his hand gets the maximum priority.

The problem of stray animals damaging crops looms large in the sugarcane-yielding district of Meerut in western Uttar Pradesh where men hired to guard the fields are hoping for better aid for their community from the government. Jumma said he worked for a central government warehousing corporation where his job largely kept him away from home and around a decade

ago he returned to Meerut upon realising that he no longer had the capacity to perform the duty his previous job required him to do.

"Here at my village, I got hired by Nanglamlal sugar mill along with some other locals to guard farms and farm produce from stray animals. Initially, it seemed like a fine work that kept me engaged and provided some money too," he told PTI.

"As far as Hinduism is considered, I am against slaughtering cattle but if you look at the condition of farmers, they cannot even afford fodder for productive animals, so how will they keep the non-productive ones," said another farmer.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)				
US Dollar	77.33	South		
Euro	91.2	African Rand		5.46
UAE Dirham	21.85	Hong Kong Dollar		10.81
Thai Baht	2.72	Japanese Yen		0.77
British Pound	105.42	New Zealand Dollar		54.9
Australian Dollar	59.01	Saudi Riyal		21.38
Canadian Dollar	60.76	Swedish Krona		9.84
Swiss Franc	81.32	Singapore Dollar		56.94

DELHI | WEDNESDAY 10 MARCH 2021

BIZ BRIEFS

WayCool signs MoU with NDRF

WayCool Foods has signed a three-year umbrella MoU with National Design and Research Forum (NDRF). The collaboration will help the company in its pursuit to re-imagine the agri-supply chain with the introduction of solutions aimed at constantly enhancing efficiency and reducing food wastage. For NDRF, WayCool's farmer connect and distribution excellence will help expedite field trials of its unique, sustainable agricultural products such as naturally developed bio-fertilizers. The MoU has been signed and exchanged between Karthik Jayaraman, CEO, WayCool Foods and Dr Myslswamy Annadurai, Chairman, NDRF. Senthil Kumar, Head, Farmer Engagement, said: "We are proud to collaborate with NDRF. Through this partnership, we will facilitate field trials and distribution of natural bio-fertilizers developed by NDRF, and its partners."

Itel launches new offers

Itel has announced its partnership with Bajaj Finserv to facilitate best available affordability options on its smartphones. The scheme will offer its flagship smartphones A48, A25 Pro, Vision 1 (3GB), and Vision 1 PRO that comes equipped with 4G LTE, on no-cost EMI and zero down payment. All these smartphones can be purchased at Rs 299 followed by four easy EMIs. The scheme is live across more than 1,200 cities in 26 States. Existing customers of the Bajaj Finserv EMI Network Card are also eligible. Arijeeet Talapatra, CEO, Transion India, said: "This partnership will help our aspirational consumers in smaller towns to get accessibility to our flagship smartphones through Bajaj's and itel's robust distribution presence. With this scheme, itel becomes the first brand to roll out this unique offer in the sub 7K segment."

Motorola unveils smartphones

Motorola has launched g series portfolio with two new smartphones - moto g10 power and moto g30. Two smartphones come with a near-Stock Android 11 OS and Motorola's ThinkShield for mobile. moto g10 Power has features like 6000mAh battery, 48MP Quad Camera, 4GB RAM, 64GB storage. The 6.5 max vision HD+ display gives consumers maximum viewing to a 20:9 aspect ratio. With a bigger screen to body proportion and with more active area from edge to edge, phone responds instantly anywhere when one touches, taps, or swipes. The product is priced at Rs 9,999. Moto g30 comes with a 64 MP Quad camera system, 90Hz 6.5 display, and is powered by Snapdragon 662 with 4B RAM + 64GB Storage, an IP52 water-repellent design which keeps the phone protected inside and out.

Asus expands laptop series

Asus India has announced the expansion of its TUF laptop portfolio in India with the launch of new TUF Dash F15 a slim 15-inch device that represents portability, thin & light design and also comes with the latest 11th Gen Intel Core, i7-11370H processor and GeForce RTX 3070/ 3060 GPU. The laptop was unveiled globally during a virtual conference at CES 2021. Arnold Su, Business Head, Consumer and Gaming PC, System Business Group, Asus India, said: "We aim at empowering our consumers with products that boost their productivity while uplifting their performance with industry-leading technologies. Our TUF Gaming series resonates this synergy and is designed to augment the gaming experience by making it accessible to all."

INFRASTRUCTURE

CPSE assets sale a game changer: FM

Says States' support essential to develop infrastructure

NEW DELHI

FINANCE Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday said monetisation of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE) assets is based on the principle of value creation for the government and investors and would bring about a paradigm shift in infrastructure augmentation and maintenance.

Chairing the national workshop with the states/UTs on Asset Monetisation organised by Niti Aayog, the Minister sought the collaboration of States for the holistic development of infrastructure. She said India can become a \$5 trillion crore economy, while striking the right balance between fiscal imperatives and socio-economic welfare, through active collaboration between the public and private sector.

"Asset monetisation needs to be viewed not just as a funding mechanism, but as an overall strategy for bringing about a paradigm shift in infrastructure augmentation and maintenance," she added.

Sitharaman also underlined the government's resolve for value creation and improvement in the productivity of brownfield infrastructure assets via innovative instruments. Observing that asset monetisation is based on the principle of value creation for government and investors, she said, "Our vision for Infrastructure is ultimately of, for and by our States. Without whose collaboration, holistic development of infrastructure is neither feasible nor impactful."

Asset monetisation needs to be viewed not just as a funding mechanism, but as an overall strategy for bringing about a paradigm shift in infrastructure augmentation and maintenance

— Nirmala Sitharaman, Finance Minister



Prime Minister Narendra Modi had last month said that 100 under-utilised or unutilised assets with public sector units (PSUs), such as those in the oil and gas and power sectors, will be monetised, creating Rs 2.5 lakh crore of investment opportunities.

Sitharaman in her 2021-22 Budget speech had said monetising operating public infrastructure assets is a very important financing option for new infrastructure construction.

"A national monetisation pipeline of potential brownfield infrastructure assets will be launched. An asset monetisation dashboard will also be created for tracking the progress and to provide visibility to investors," she had said.

Reliance Jio to digitally transform 50mn MSMEs

HYDERABAD

JIOBUSINESS has introduced an integrated offering for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). This is based on the three key pillars of Enterprise-Grade Fiber Connectivity that offers voice and data services, digital solutions that help enterprises manage and grow their business and devices that enable leading digital solutions for MSMEs.

Speaking at this announcement, Akash Ambani, Director, Jio commented, "Micro, small and medium enterprises are the bedrock of Indian economy. Currently, in the absence of an integrated digital services offering and the knowhow to adopt advanced enterprise offerings, they are unable to leverage the power of digital technologies to run their businesses efficiently.

Now, JioBusiness will bridge this gap by providing integrated Enterprise-grade voice and data services, digital solutions and devices, to small businesses. These easy-to-use solutions will help them run their business efficiently and compete with larger enterprises. Currently, a micro and small business spends between Rs



15,000 to Rs 20,000 per month towards connectivity, productivity and automation tools. Today, we are taking the first step towards empowering small businesses by giving these solutions, along with our connectivity, for less than 1/10th the cost, starting below one thousand rupees per month.

With this step, I am certain that millions of micro, small and medium enterprises will propel towards prosperity and march towards creating a new Aatmanirbhar digital India."

The key elements of Jio business value proposition will be to enhance customer experience: Better engagement across customer lifecycle, take business online and increase revenue: Make the business discoverable online, run operations 24/7 to manage employees, customer and business anytime, anywhere.

Sensex surges 584 points to close above 51k mark

MUMBAI

BENCHMARK BSE Sensex rallied 584 points to close above the 51,000-level in a volatile session on Tuesday as private banks, IT and consumer goods stocks advanced amid positive global cues. The 30-share BSE barometer ended 584.1 points or 1.16 per cent higher at 51,025.48 with 19 of its constituents ending in the green.

The index had opened higher at 50,714.16 but pared gains to hit an intra-day low of 50,396.10 in mid-session due to profit booking in energy and infra stocks. However, positive global cues, a fall in US bond yields and gains in US Futures helped the index rebound and close above the 51,000 level.

The broader NSE Nifty surged by 142.20 points or 0.95 per cent to close at 15,098.40 with 24 of its stocks advancing. The 50-issue index touched a high of 15,126.85 and a low of 14,925.45 in the day trade.

"In a volatile day, the Indian market ended with minor positivity amid mixed global cues. Barring private banks, IT and consumer stocks, all other sectors

Nifty gains 142 points to settle at 15,098.40; Pvt banks, IT shares shine amid positive global cues

were most impacted. Fall in US bond yields and stronger US equity futures aided Asian markets to recover from earlier losses." Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said. Binod Modi, Head - Strategy at Reliance Securities commented: "Domestic equities extended gains for the second consecutive day mainly aided by favourable cues from Asian markets. However, it is financials (ex-PSU banks), which majorly supported the market's rally today. Barring financials and IT, most of the key sectoral indices traded lower." Among Sensex stocks, Kotak Bank rose the most by 3.35 per cent. HDFC Bank spurted by 2.85 per cent while mortgage



major HDFC advanced 2.68 per cent. ICICI Bank rose by 2.8 per cent. Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Asian Paints, Infosys, HUL and TCS also gained. On the other hand, PowerGrid, ONGC, NTPC and Dr Reddy's were among the laggards. In the broader market, midcap and smallcap indices declined by 0.66 per cent and 0.41 per cent as investors opted to book profit after the recent run-up in these stocks.

Among sectoral indices, BSE bankex, finance, IT, tech, consumer durables and FMCG indices ended with gains, while metal, oil and gas, utilities, realty and power were in the red. Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking said, "Markets traded volatile and managed to settle with decent gains in continuation to the prevailing consolidation phase. We expect the prevailing consolidation phase to end soon however a lot depends on the performance of the global markets."

Will seize Indian assets if not paid: Cairn

NEW DELHI

BRITISH oil firm Cairn Energy Plc on Tuesday said it has identified Indian sovereign assets overseas, which it can seize in the event of New Delhi failing to return over \$ 1.7 billion that an international arbitration tribunal has ordered after rescinding a retrospective tax demand.

"Cairn is extremely confident that satisfaction of the award will be achieved either by negotiated settlement or by enforcement against Indian assets," the firm said in its 2020 annual earnings statement. The firm has moved courts in nine countries to get the arbitral award registered and recognised. "The tribunal ruled unanimously that India had breached its obligations to Cairn under the UK-India Bilateral Investment Treaty and awarded to Cairn damages of \$ 1.2 billion-plus interest and costs, which immediately became payable. The total due at the year-end was \$ 1.7 billion," it said. The firm said it has engaged directly with the government of India regarding satisfaction of the award, which is also enforceable against Indian-owned assets in more than 160 countries that have signed and ratified the 1958 New York Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards.

"Cairn has already taken steps to have the Award recognised in certain major jurisdictions in which Indian sovereign assets have been identified," the statement said.

Apple to make iPhone 12 in India

The device received stupendous response in the country

NEW DELHI

IN yet another fillip to the 'Make in India' and domestic manufacturing dream of the Indian government, Apple said on Tuesday that its flagship and environment-friendly iPhone 12 smartphone will soon be produced in India for the local customers.

The news comes at a time when the iPhone 12 series has received stupendous response in the country. "We are proud to be starting production of iPhone 12 in India for our local customers," Apple said in a statement.

"Apple is dedicated to making the best products and services in the world to delight our customers," the company added. Despite arriving in October, the iPhone 12 contributed significantly towards the rise of Apple in the festive quarter (October-December period) in the country, according to market intelligence firm CyberMedia Research (CMR). Apple registered over 60 per cent growth (on-year) in its India business in the full year 2020 while for the festive quarter, the growth was an impressive 100 per cent (YoY) and iPhone 12 contributed significantly towards it. "With its recent market gains in India, Apple is positioned for aggressive growth in the upcoming quarters. The local assembly of iPhone 12 in India will give a further fillip to its Apple's



prospects," said Prabhu Ram, Head-Industry Intelligence Group (IIG), CMR.

Riding on the stellar performance of iPhone 11, XR and then iPhone 12, Apple for the first time doubled its smartphone market share in India to nearly 4 per cent in the festive quarter of 2020.

Apple started manufacturing iPhones in India in 2017 with iPhone SE. Today, Apple manufactures some of its most advanced iPhones in India including XR, iPhone 11, and now iPhone 12. According to Navkendar Singh, Research Director, client devices & IPDS, IDC India, Apple had a very good 2020 for iPhone shipments, having almost doubled it over 2019. "Now with plans to manufacture iPhone 12 in India, this will certainly help Apple in continuing last year's momentum in 2021 as well," Singh told.

For the first time, iPhone 12 models utilise 100 per cent recycled rare earth elements in all magnets, including the new camera, Taptic Engine, and MagSafe, as well as Apple's MagSafe accessories. Apple's suppliers in India are now utilising solar and wind energy for their needs. iPhone 12 comes with 5G technology, features the fastest A14 Bionic chip, edge-to-edge Super Retina XDR displays, advanced computational photography and a sophisticated flat-edge design with Ceramic Shield front cover, offering four times better drop performance.

Swaraj looks to expand its presence in TS, AP

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

MAHINDRA's Swaraj division, a tractor maker, on Tuesday announced plans to expand its presence in the Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. The company started new campaign 'Josh Ka Raaz Mera Swaraj' for the customers.

The two States are progressive in agricultural production in the country and account for a major part of paddy production in the country. The agriculture policies by both the State governments are encouraging the farmers to do agriculture. "Presently the company have 10 per cent of sales from the Telugu States and will increase its share further. There is robust increase in tractor sales after the lockdown and first segment to start operations in the country post the lockdown," Harish Chavan, Chief Executive Office, Swaraj Division, told the media on Tuesday.

The good monsoons and increase in water level despite Covid has good demand for tractor sales in the country. The tractor sales will reach 8 lakh units in FY21 and growth rate of industry will be 20 per cent in the country, he added.

TRAI suspends biz text messages norms for 1 week

NEW DELHI

TELECOM regulator TRAI on Tuesday suspended the newly implemented norms for commercial text messages for one week, following major disruptions in SMS and OTP deliveries for banking, payment, and other transactions. The norms that pertain to content template checks and balances for text messages came into effect on Monday. Its temporary suspension now would give commercial entities, sending out messages and OTPs to customers, a reprieve and more time to comply with the stipulated requirements.

The move to suspend the norms would enable the 'principal entities' to register the template of SMS so that no inconvenience is faced by the customers, Telecom

Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) said in a statement. "In order to protect the interest of consumers, it has been decided that scrubbing of SMS by telecom service providers shall be suspended temporarily for seven days..." it said. According to the regulator, telecom operators are being asked to inform their 'principal entities' to take immediate necessary action in this regard and facilitate their registration, including SMS template, in a time-bound manner. The temporary suspension comes after transactions, including banking, credit card payment and certain other services that involve SMSs and OTP generation, faced a major outage on Monday, and some estimates pegged the delivery failure and delays of such SMSes at 40 per cent.

WTT STAR CONTENDER



Kamal downs world No. 16, enters last 16

DOHA

INDIAN paddler Achanta Sharath Kamal produced a stunning performance to make his way into the last 16 stage with a thrilling 12-10, 3-11, 11-7, 7-11, 11-9 win over world No. 16 Patrick Franziska in the men's singles second round match at the WTT Star Contender in Doha on Tuesday.

In a hard-fought five-setter, the seasoned campaigner and world No. 32 Kamal began the battle with a 1-0 lead before the German Franziska made a comeback to level the scores. The third and fourth games also saw equal domination from both players as they took the match into the fifth set.

However, the nine-time senior national champion kept his calm in the crucial decider and got the better of Franziska to wrap up the match in his favour.

Sharath will now face the winner of the match between Egypt's Ahmed Saleh and German Dimitrij Ovtcharov in the pre-quarterfinals on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, other Indians Sathiyam Gnanasekaran and Manika Batra couldn't manage to progress further after suffering defeats in their respective singles second round matches.

While world No. 63 Batra fell short 7-11, 6-11, 7-11 against Japan's Mima Ito, who is ranked third in the world, Sathiyam couldn't manage to succeed against Japanese sensation and world No. 5 Tomokazu Harimoto and suffered a 4-11, 5-11, 8-11 loss.

Window to qualify for Olympics closing fast on Saina, Srikanth

NEW DELHI

FOR PLAYERS like Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth, the opportunities for qualifying for this year's Olympic Games are fast shrinking as they have about five tournaments to book their tickets for Tokyo.

The recently-concluded Swiss Open was the first tournament of the year to be part of the Olympic qualification cycle and reigning badminton world champion P.V. Sindhu was the only Indian who managed to reach the final.

London 2012 Olympics bronze medallist Saina Nehwal was knocked out in the very first round of the Swiss Open. A nation can enter a maximum of two players for each event in singles if they are ranked in the top 16 of the 'Race to Tokyo' rankings and Sindhu is already seventh, while Saina is currently 19th. She may be able to rise three spots to 16th and thus stand a chance at qualifying but then she also has to maintain that position.

Former men's singles world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth seems to have left behind his wretched run of form that held him back for much of the last two years. Srikanth reached the semi-finals of the Swiss Open before losing to world No. 1 and eventual champion Viktor Axelsen.

Srikanth is currently 13th on the world rankings while Sai Praneeth, who won bronze at the 2019 World Championships, re-entered the top 16 after his quarter-final finish in Basel.

In men's doubles, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty are sitting comfortably in 10th spot. They are expected to be the only automatic qualifiers in the segment from India as the next



highest pair from the country, Manu Attri and Sumeth Reddy, are languishing in 35th place.

"I feel Srikanth, Sindhu, Chirag and Satwik will qualify. Srikanth and Sindhu's rankings will improve because of their performances in Swiss Open. From my point of view those that do well in tournaments so close to qualification will benefit hugely," said four-time national men's doubles champion Uday Pawar.

The Badminton World Federation (BWF) and its member associations are scrambling to hold tournaments with the plethora of complications created by quarantine periods and standard operating procedures amid the Covid-19 pandemic. It means that while for all means and purposes the Olympic qualification calendar has restarted, there is little to no certainty on whether tournaments will be held as per schedule or not. A case in point being the German Open Super 300 tournament, which was part of the qualification calendar, but was cancelled just under a month before it was scheduled to be held.

The qualification calendar itself was extended from April 25 to June 15. All this, accompanied by potential clashes in dates and the uncertainty around the Asian Championships with about five tournaments left to play in the qualification calendar.

While Pawar feels that Shetty and Rankireddy should try and maintain themselves within the top 8 so they get a relatively easy draw at the Olympics, it is not yet a lost cause for Saina.

"It won't be possible for Saina to come into the top 10 but she can still break into the top 10," said Pawar.

India thrash SA by 9 wkts, level 5-match series at 1-1

Jhulan scalps 4 before Mandhana's unbeaten 80 seals win

LUCKNOW

VETERAN Jhulan Goswami's four-wicket haul was beautifully complemented by Smriti Mandhana's sparkling 80 not out as Indian women outplayed South Africa by nine wickets in the second ODI to level the five-match series 1-1 here on Tuesday.

The 38-year-old Goswami returned with figures of 10-0-42-4 and she was ably supported by fellow seamer Mansi Joshi (2/23) and left-arm spinner Rajeshwari Gayakwad (3/37) as India dismissed South Africa for a paltry 157 after opting to field.

Opener Mandhana (80 not out off 64 balls) and Raut (62 not out, 89 balls) then shared an unbeaten 138-run partnership for the second wicket with India overhauling the target in only 28.4 overs to bounce back from their



two fours off Nonkululeko Mlaba. In the 20th over, Mandhana picked up successive fours to get to her fifty in style, while Raut crossed the 50-mark with an innovative short behind the keeper.

Mandhana eventually scored the winning runs with successive fours in the 29th over. Earlier, Lara Goodall was the most successful batswoman for South Africa as she scored a 77-ball 49, while skipper Sune Luus chipped in with a 57-ball 36.

Electing to field, the Indian pacers were rewarded for bowling a probing line as Goswami and Joshi made early breakthroughs, dismissing openers Lizelle Lee (4) and Laura Wolvaardt (9) cheaply. Luus and Goodall then added 60 runs but Joshi returned to dismiss the South Africa skipper in the 21st over.

The spinners then took control of the proceedings as Deepti Sharma and Gayakwad bowled in tandem. In the 26th over, Mignon du Preez (11) was caught by Deepti at cover after she was deceived by Gayakwad in flight.

SCOREBOARD

South Africa women	
Lizelle Lee lbw b Goswami	4
Laura Wolvaardt c Verma b Joshi	9
Sune Luus c Verma b Joshi	36
Lara Goodall b Kaur	49
Mignon du Preez c Sharma b Gayakwad	11
Marizanne Kapp c Sharma b Goswami	10
Trisha Chetty c Kaur b Gayakwad	12
Nadine de Klerk b Goswami	8
Shabnim Ismail b Goswami	0
Ayabonga Khaka not out	5
Nonkululeko Mlaba c Raj b Gayakwad	0
Extras: (B-4, LB-1, NB-2, W-6)	13
Total: (All out in 41 overs)	157
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-20, 3-80, 4-99, 5-113, 6-130, 7-144, 8-144, 9-156, 10-157	
Bowling: Jhulan Goswami 10-0-42-4, Mansi Joshi 7-1-23-2, Deepti Sharma 6-0-20-0, Rajeshwari Gayakwad 9-0-37-3, Poonam Yadav 8-0-30-0, Harmanpreet Kaur 1-1-0-1.	
India Women Innings	
Jemimah Rodrigues b Ismail	9
Smriti Mandhana not out	80
Deepti Sharma not out	62
Extras: (NB-1, W-9)	9
Total: (For 1 wkt in 28.4 overs)	160
Fall of wickets: 1-22	
Bowling: Shabnim Ismail 6-0-46-1, Marizanne Kapp 6-1-0-0, Ayabonga Khaka 7-1-23-0, Nonkululeko Mlaba 3-0-29-0, Sune Luus 4-0-28-0, Nadine de Klerk 2-4-0-26-0.	

India skipper Mithali Raj made some excellent bowling changes as Goswami



Representing India is the biggest motivation for me. I don't think you have to look elsewhere for motivation. You cannot belong to the team if you don't perform your best everyday. It's important for us to maintain our fitness and come out strong on the field. It's not going to be easy."

—Jhulan Goswami

Slow over rate at MCG vs India cost us WTC final: Langer

SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA head coach Justin Langer said he was disappointed that the four points docked from them during the second Test of their series against India turned out to be crucial in Australia missing out on a place in the World Test Championship (WTC) final.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) had fined Australia 40 per cent of their match fee and docked four WTC points due to their slow over rate on the third day of the Boxing Day Test which they lost to India by eight wickets in December. They went on to lose the series 2-1.



"We've played some great cricket. Losing to India at home that was really disappointing, but we got docked two points for a slow over rate, and that cost us," Langer told SEN Radio.

"That's how close it was and how often do you get docked points in Test cricket these days? Rarely. We have that in our control, that's an attitudinal thing, at the time we probably thought 'oh it's not that big a deal', but that cost us the WTC after what had been two really good years when we were ranked No. 1 again. The things we can control we have to control, and we can't for a second relax in Test cricket," he further said.

Australia trail New Zealand

by just two percentage points in the WTC table and would have still remained in contention despite the defeat to India had it not been for the four points that were docked. Langer said that it was "real slack" on the team's behalf.

"Our manager Gavin Dovey had gone home ... for Christmas with his family in England, and it wasn't until after the game that we realised our over rate was down. That's really slack on our behalf, but I remember we were in the team room afterwards and I spoke to Painey and Dene Hills, our analyst, about it. I was a bit grumpy about it and I thought 'imagine if this cost us the World Test Championship'," said Langer.

"And I mentioned it to the players afterwards that two overs down could cost us the World Test Championship. And so, we have to get bet-

ter at that and make sure it doesn't happen in Sydney and Brisbane. It didn't, but we also couldn't bowl out India twice and we didn't make enough runs. It was relevant at the time, and it certainly became incredibly significant over the weekend," he said.

Australia would have still had another shot at making the cut in the two away series against Bangladesh and South Africa. However, the two series never got underway because of complications related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"It's disappointing for a couple of reasons - one we didn't get to play in South Africa to have another crack at it after the India series and it's disappointing for me because this Test Championship goes over a couple of years, we were in the box seat for a lot of it," Langer said. (IANS)

JR BOYS, SR WOMEN'S MAKE HYD PROUD



Hyderabad emerge champions by defeating Warangal in the 43rd Telangana Junior Boys Inter District Handball Championship held at Warangal from March 6 to 8, while the Senior Women's Handball Team secures 22-21 in the 49th Senior Women's Inter District Handball Championship. Hyderabad junior boys side defeated Warangal 22-21 and the senior women's side lost to Warangal 18-14. The players celebrated their wins with Hyderabad District Handball Association general secretary S.R.Sanjeev Kumar and other Officials.

Shaw storm puts Mumbai into Hazare semis; beat Saurashtra by 9 wickets

NEW DELHI

SKIPPER Prithvi Shaw blazed his way to an unbeaten 185 off just 123 balls as Mumbai stormed into the semi-finals of the Vijay Hazare Trophy with a crushing nine-wicket win over Saurashtra in the fourth quarter-final here on Tuesday. Uttar Pradesh comfortably beat Delhi by 46 runs to reach Hazare semi-final. Opting to bat, Saurashtra rode on Samarth Vyas' unbeaten 90 to post 284 for 5, but it was overshadowed by Shaw's blitzkrieg, as Mumbai chased the target in just 41.5 overs. Shaw

smashed his third hundred in the tournament after slamming 105 not out against Delhi and 227 not out against Puducherry in the league stage. Chasing 285, Shaw went on the offensive from the word go as Mumbai scored 67 for no loss after nine overs.

A disciplined Uttar Pradesh put up a thoroughly professional performance to outwit Delhi by 46 runs in the quarterfinals.



UP will now meet Gujarat in the first semi-final while heavyweights Mumbai will be pitted against Karnataka in the other last four clash.

Uttar Pradesh rode on keeper-batsman Upendra Yadav's stroke-filled 112 off 101 balls and skipper Karan Sharma's 83 off 100 deliveries to post a competitive 280/7. The UP bowlers then did well enough to restrict Delhi to 234 in 48.1 overs with none of the middle-order batsmen getting a

move on after a top-order collapse, having lost half of the side within 20 overs.

BRIEF SCORES: Saurashtra 284/5 (Samarth Vyas 90 not out, Chirag Jani 53 not out; Shams Mulani 2/51; Tanush Kotian 1/30) lost to Mumbai 285/1 (Prithvi Shaw 185 not out, Yashasvi Jaiswal 75; Jaydev Unadkat 1/52) by 9 wickets. PTI

Uttar Pradesh 280/7 (Upendra Yadav 112, Karan Sharma 83; Pradeep Sangwan 2/49, Simarjeet Singh 2/51) beat Delhi 234 in 48.1 overs (Lalit Yadav 61, Anuj Rawat 47, Akshdeep Nath 2/29, Shivam Mavi 1/32).

NEW NCA: 40 PITCHES, 16,000 sq ft GYM ETC

The National Cricket Academy (NCA) was established in 2000 at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium premises in Bengaluru. The Karnataka State Cricket Association provided the space to the BCCI on lease-rent. The BCCI wanted to build its own modern NCA, but the project was mired in controversy. Finally, on March 7, the BCCI invited bids for the turnkey design build construction services for its ambitious NCA project.

LAND: The Karnataka State Cricket Association has leased the land to the BCCI for 99 years.

REGISTRATION: The land was registered in the name of the BCCI in 2017.

CONSTRUCTION: New NCA to be built in two phases.

EST. COST: ₹150 crore

DESIGN: 16 cranes will be used in the first phase.

WHERE: DEVANAHALLI TALUK, NEAR BENGALURU AIRPORT

SALIENT FEATURES OF NEW NCA:

- 16,000 square feet gym
- 40 practice pitches, including 20 batting practice pitches
- 243 rooms with varying capacities including single, double, triple, quad, etc.
- Indoor training facility including table tennis, badminton, basketball, tennis, cycling track
- Temperature-controlled pool
- Lockers
- Open air theatre
- Centre for research & development
- Club
- Shower
- First aid
- First floor

Ambitious NCA to come up in Bengaluru

KAISER MOHAMMAD ALI
NEW DELHI

A creche -- apparently for cricketers' children -- a 16,000 square feet gymnasium, besides a whopping 40 practice pitches, including 20 having floodlight facility, 243 rooms of varying shapes and sizes, and an open air theatre -- will be part of the new and ambitious National Cricket Academy (NCA) coming up in Bengaluru.

According to the NCA blueprint, accessed by IANS, these and many other world class facilities -- like indoor training facility comprising futsal, squash, badminton, basketball, tennis, cycling track, temperature-controlled pool -- and ancillary provisions such as pharmacy, courier dispatch facility, bank, ATM, salon, tuck shops will come up on a 40 acre land in Devanahalli Taluk, near the Bengaluru international airport.

The BCCI is keen to pursue a holistic approach for developing cricketers at the new NCA campus.

"The BCCI is desirous of setting up a new campus for the NCA to train current and future cricketers in all aspects of the game to enhance their mental and physical development in order to ensure their holistic development as sportspersons. The proposed academy would be constructed over a land of 40 acres leased to the BCCI by the KIADB (Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board). The entire NCA would come up in two phases, namely Phase-I & Phase-II," says the BCCI in a document detailing the plan, accessed by IANS.

The BCCI has secured the land on a 99-year lease from the KIADB for around Rs 50 crore, after a number of twists and turns - and bad blood - in getting hold of the land. The land issue couldn't be resolved through

successive Karnataka state governments, and was finally registered in the name of the BCCI in 2017.

Since the NCA's establishment in 2000, it has been running from the premises of the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in the heart of Bengaluru. The Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA), which owns the stadium, has rented out to the BCCI its Ground B for outdoor practice, besides an indoor practice facility, and separate space for a modern gymnasium.

Niranjan Shah, former NCA chairman and BCCI secretary, is happy that finally the work is about to start on the project. "The BCCI deserves to have a world-class NCA. When I was chairman, we gave a proposal for building the new NCA campus to fulfil some formalities, but this project is different and bigger," Shah told IANS.

On Sunday, the BCCI said it is inviting bids for the turnkey design build construction services for the new NCA campus through a tender process. In the first phase of construction, divided into five zones and the "common facilities" that spill into the second phase, one main ground, including ancillary facilities, administrative and pavilion block, and two practice grounds will be part of Zone-I.

In Zone-II, outdoor training facility, including 40 practice pitches, multipurpose fielding area, swimming pool, and meeting rooms etc. will come up. A 16,000 square feet gymnasium, one acre outdoor facility, and all-weather indoor pitches will be the highlights of Zone-III.

As part of Zone-IV, a residential block comprising 10 double occupancy rooms, 10 quad sharing dormitories, eight rooms for guests, central kitchen, and banquet facility will be built. (IANS)