



THE HANS INDIA

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WINDOWS

Piyush gets additional charge of Food Ministry

New Delhi: A day after the demise of Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, President Ram Nath Kovind has given the additional charge of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution to Railway Minister Piyush Goyal. Earlier, the Union Cabinet met and condoned the demise of Paswan, and also observed silence for two minutes in memory of the late leader.

NATION

Dhoni's daughter gets rape threats



New Delhi: Social media has turned out to be a mediator for the celebrities and the cricketers to connect with their fans and vice-versa. But a coin always has two sides. Social media also brings some disadvantages with it and it is the amount of hate people spread. The comments section of the celebrities and cricketers is sometimes filled with a lot of abuse. Most of the time, the so-called fans also drag their families into it. This time around the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) skipper MS Dhoni isn't spared either. **Report: P3**

BUSINESS

RBI goes for liquidity boost

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to rationalise the risk weights of new individual home loans sanctioned up to March 31, 2022. Under the extant regulations, differential risk weights are applicable to individual housing loans, based on the size of the loan as well as the loan-to-value ratio (LTV). Addressing the media after the Monetary Policy Committee's bi-monthly meeting, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said: "In recognition of the role of the real estate sector in generating employment and economic activity, it has been decided to rationalise the risk weights and link them to LTV ratios only for all new housing loans sanctioned up to March 31, 2022." He noted that the move is expected to give a fillip to the real estate sector. Realty players have hailed the decision which would boost liquidity for the prospective home buyers. "The linking of risk weight of home loans to LTV for all new housing loans is a step in the right direction, this will benefit the real estate sector," Krish Raveshia, CEO, Azlo Realty said.



Report: P6



AAP MLA Somnath Bharti with 80-year-old Kanta Prasad poses for photographs during the former's visit to 'Baba Ka Dhaba', at Malviya Nagar in New Delhi on Friday

WINTER WARNING!

Delhi likely to witness 15,000 Covid cases daily

New Delhi: National capital Delhi is likely to report around 15,000 Covid-19 cases daily in winter because of the prevalence of respiratory illnesses during this season that worsen symptoms of the disease, the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) has warned. More patients with severe symptoms from other states are also expected to come to the national capital for treatment during this period, it has said. At its peak, the seven-day Covid-19 case average was 4119, on September 19. "Winter months that make respiratory illnesses severer... Patients may come from outside Delhi in large numbers... Patients coming from distant areas are likely to be more serious. In addition, with festival-related gatherings, there could be a sudden rise in cases. **Continued on Page 5**

DELHI POLLUTION

Kejri gov't okays compulsory tree transplantation

PURNA SINGH

New Delhi: In a bid to curb the rising pollution levels in the national capital, the Kejriwal Cabinet took two major decisions on Friday to protect the environment and trees. The Cabinet approved the tree plantation policy and the installation of smog towers.

The tree transplantation policy for development or construction projects will be in addition to the compulsory plantation of trees policy which is already in place.

"Delhi government has passed a tree transplantation policy, under which 80% of trees uprooted for any construction or development project, must be transplanted elsewhere. Payment will be made to the transplantation agency only if 80% of transplanted trees survive for a year. The government is working on a panel of authorised agency to conduct these transplantations," Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, adding that, a dedicated tree transplantation cell will be formed and local committees will be involved to monitor transplanted trees.

"Delhi government has also approved to set-up a 20 crore smog tower in Connaught Place. This is in addition to the Central government's smog tower which is coming up in Anand Vihar. This tower will suck the air from the top & release filtered air near the ground," he said. This will be the second smog tower in the world. The first smog tower is in China. He said the tower will be ready within 10 months. Rs 19 crore has been approved for this.

The announcements come just ahead of the winter season, when Delhi sees a spike in the levels of air



pollution due to subtle burning in the neighbouring states. Earlier this week, Kejriwal announced setting up of 'war room' to monitor efforts to contain pollution, fumes and dust levels in hotspots.

Amidst the covid-19 outbreak the need to control air pollution has become more crucial as both can damage lungs, Kejriwal had said.

According to the government, there are 13 points where pollution levels are high. The chief minister said that a detailed plan has been made for each of those hotspots which will be implemented there. Smog tower will be installed in Delhi

pollution due to subtle burning in the neighbouring states. Earlier this week, Kejriwal announced setting up of 'war room' to monitor efforts to contain pollution, fumes and dust levels in hotspots.

RUDRAM 1 SUCCESSFULLY TEST-FIRED

New Delhi: India on Friday successfully test-fired Rudram 1, the tactical anti-radiation missile that the Indian Air Force can launch from its Sukhoi-30MKI fighter jets to take down enemy radars and surveillance systems. The missile has a launch speed of up to 2 Mach, twice the speed of sound, people familiar with the matter said.

The Defence Research and Development Organisation developed the new generation weapon. It was tested at the interim test range Balasore, off the coast of Odisha in the Bay of Bengal, at about 10.30 am.

Continued on Page 5

India gets 2nd tranche of Swiss bank a/c details

Sizeable number of Indians among 3 million accounts

New Delhi: India has got the second set of Swiss bank account details of its nationals and entities under the automatic exchange of information pact with Switzerland, marking a key milestone in the government's fight against black money allegedly stashed abroad.

India is among the 86 countries with which Switzerland's Federal Tax Administration (FTA) has exchanged information on financial accounts within the framework of global standards on AEOI this year. India had received the first set of details from Switzerland in September 2019 under AEOI (Automatic Exchange of Information), when it involved 75 countries. The information exchange this year involved nearly 3.1 million (31 lakh) financial accounts, FTA said in a statement on Friday. The number of such accounts was similar in 2019. While the statement did not explicitly name India among the 86 countries, officials said that India is among the prominent countries with which Switzerland has shared details about financial accounts of clients of Swiss banks and various other financial institutions.



The officials further said a "sizeable number" relates to Indian citizens and entities in the overall exchange of information about over three million financial accounts by Switzerland this year with 86 countries. **Continued on Page 5**

Changes in H1B will attract best minds: US

Washington: The changes to the US H1B foreign workers visa will help attract the best and the brightest minds from across the world, a top US official said on Thursday.

The new interim final rules published on Thursday by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Labour (DL) narrows down the definition of "specialty occupation". It requires companies to make "real" offers to "real employees" by plugging loopholes and preventing the "displacement" of the

American workers. The H1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise.

"I just reject their premise that this will somehow get in the way of bringing the best and the brightest," Acting Homeland Security Deputy Ken Cuccinelli told Fox Business in an interview on Thursday.

The Department of Labour regulation will raise those wage requirements for these high-tech workers



and will make Americans more competitive. He said low-paid foreign workers who undercut Americans and depress wages would be screened.

The regulations by the DHS will stop third-party companies from subcontracting out H-1B employees. "This is where you hear the horror stories of

Disney and AT&T and the TVA where Americans have to train their foreign replacements. Well, that is coming to an end under President Donald Trump

with this set of regulations," Cuccinelli said. Representing top technology companies from the Silicon Valley, the FWD.US, a pro-immigration lobby group, alleged the new rules will be implemented without consideration of American people's comment.

"The Trump Administration continues to do everything it can to make it harder for immigrants to contribute to their families, communities, and economy. These policies are yet another roadblock for US businesses to hire critically

needed workers with specialised skills," said Todd Schulte. "Because these rules impose obligations completely disconnected from real world labour markets, many immigrants who have lived in the country for years may now be unable to extend their status here, while international graduates of US colleges and universities will be unable to change status here to work and will thus have no choice but to leave the country, taking their US education and training with them," he said.

Womenia

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Ayurvedic personal care for clean beauty

Having grown up with deep rooted values embedded in Ayurveda, Vedika took her family knowledge and created a phenomenal independent brand

TEJAL SINHA

As the 4th generation of the Baidyanath Group, one of the most trusted names in Ayurveda for India since 1917, Vedika Sharma embodies the same zeal to bring quality Ayurveda solutions to everyone. Adding a new age intelligence to a group executing ancient traditions, her presence forms the perfect blend of expertise for the brand Mantra Herbals.

Combining the ancient wisdom of Ayurveda with pioneering manufacturing techniques perfected over a century, Mantra Herbals is an initiative of the Baidyanath Research Foundation that brings hair, skin care and spa products created by combining the best natural practices with modern technology and Baidyanath's 100 year legacy.

A true millennial, she has several interests besides her professional goals. A self-confessed globetrotter who has travelled the world, she is also a PADI certified scuba diver and a trained Kathak dancer. A thorough art enthusiast, she brings a creative and adventurous mindset to the table along with valuable know-how in marketing to the modern consumer.



Vedika Sharma

Vedika shares, "I Come from a marketing background. I was always interested in Ayurveda and wanted to bring alive the concept of clean beauty to the Indian markets. We are an ayurvedic brand born with the idea of clean beauty focused on bringing a perfect blend of time-tested solutions of ayurveda along with technology. Our products are an answer to everyday personal care needs related to Skin, Body, Hair, Overall Wellness and Spa. While studying abroad I realised that my friends here know more about Ayurveda than my friends back home in India. Also I was always inclined towards Ayurveda and wanted to spread it



in personal care space. I realised a void in the market for clean ayurvedic beauty products and that led to the birth of Mantra Herbal."

They provide a 100 per cent vegetarian brand promoting clean beauty and don't use harmful chemicals with eco-friendly packaging. "One of the greatest unique features of the brand is the use of 100 per cent natural ingredients and propagating sustainability. Our research and development is done by the Baidyanath Research Foundation. In Ayurveda, our body primarily has 5 elements and based on this we have three doshas - Vata, Pitta and Kapha. Where Vata embodies air energy, Pitta embodies fire energy and Kapha embodies water energy and our products are

designed in order to balance those doshas and give an effective long term result."

Like every other organisation, they were also impacted by the pandemic and started focussing on online solutions. Taking this as an opportunity, they launched products like hand wash, sanitizer and an immunity kit which are necessities in these COVID-19 times.

After finishing her education, she chose to garner industry experience in the field of marketing at Time Group, Coca Cola and Big FM in India before joining the family business. With high set goals to expand the business, her grit and determination set the brand soaring to great heights.

Responsibility towards society

With a heart of gold, Vedika's empathetic and charitable demeanor leads her to carry forth various philanthropic endeavours. Having been associated with Habitat for Humanity and CRY foundation, she has been a part of Jagran workshops in New Delhi as well as the Balwadi programme where she taught students. Currently running PT Vishwanath Sharma Charitable trust in UP, Vedika wholeheartedly works towards women's skill development- holding classes for embroidery, needling and vermicomposting. In the future, she seeks to open a charitable trust for the girl child, partnering with her mother.

Styling your kanaftan dresses

A kaftan or caftan is a variant of the robe or tunic, and has been worn in a number of cultures around the world for thousands of years and is of Asiatic origin. A very stylish piece of dress to be adorned on a regular day or on an occasion, kaftan adds a classy touch to your look. Today, rather than going for the traditional embroidered salwar suits, women opt for style statement dresses, be it Indian or western. Here are a few ways to style your kaftans

Kaftan with palazzos

A classic Indian style of wearing a kaftan is with a pair of palazzos. The loose and comfortable kaftan when worn with palazzos looks beautiful and adds to the elegance of your attire. If you opt for solid colors or lacey designs keep the jewellery low. You can wear a nice necklace and ear studs to look classy. Or else, if you have a pair of printed kaftan and palazzos, go for just simple earrings and a clutch.

Kaftan with shorts

To create a modern and sophisticated look, team a kaftan with your favourite denim shorts and look fabulous. Ripped shorts also look great with a paisley print kaftan and some boho-chic accessories, like a bracelet and earrings.

Kaftan jacket

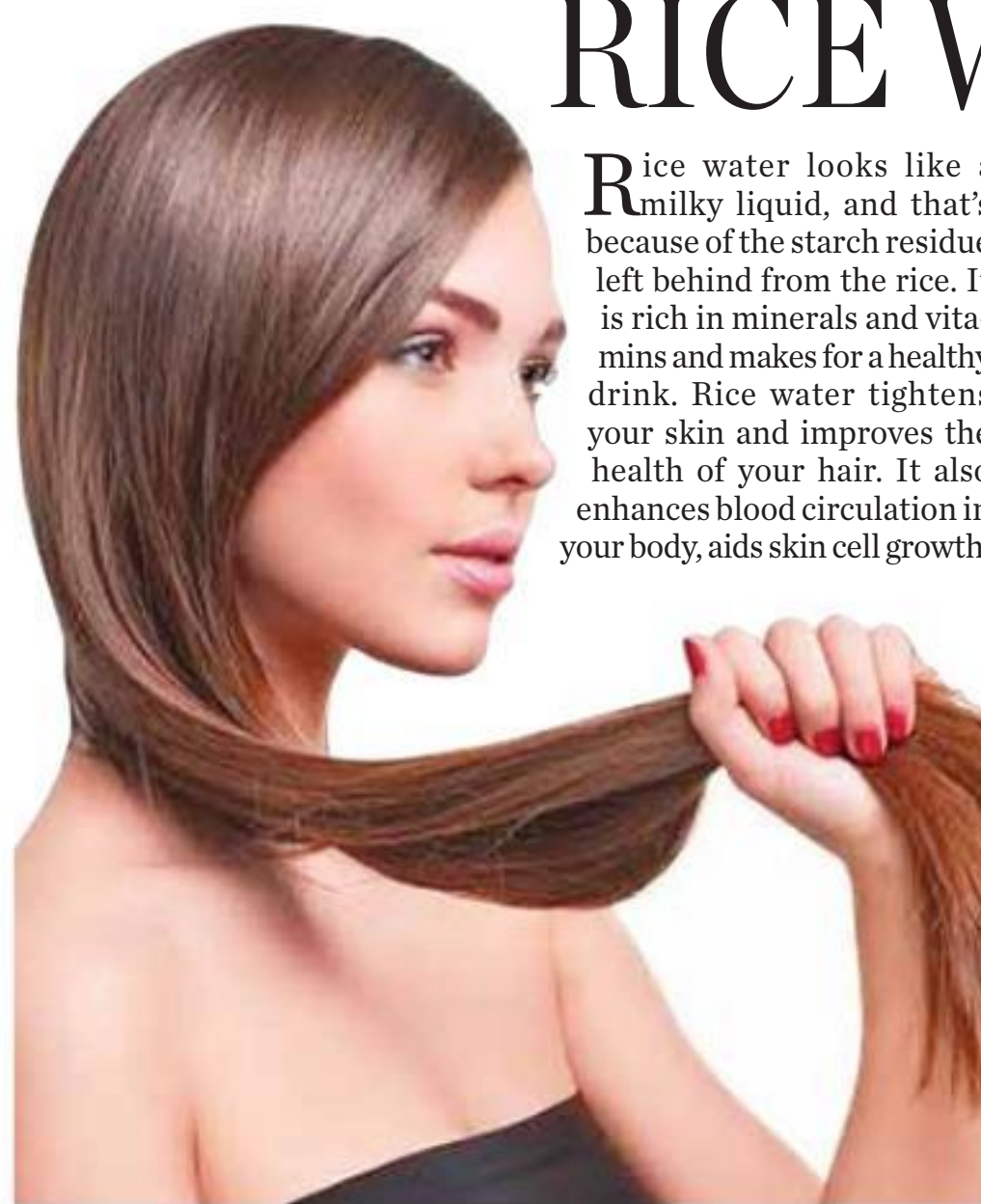
Pick your favourite tank, jeans and a kaftan jacket for an evening party to become a fashionista. These jackets are available in various lengths so you can choose the one that fits perfectly for the event. And if you want to keep one for regular wear, choose a waist length kaftan jacket.

Kaftan with leggings

The best way to dress stylishly for office is to pair kaftan with leggings. A classic way of styling kaftan is with leggings. You can pair kaftan of various styles and lengths with a pair of leggings to look gorgeous and chic.

Kaftan with skirt

Teaming up a tight fitted pencil skirt with a kaftan is a great idea if you want to be the style diva for any event. A long chain necklace and bracelets look fabulous with a Kaftan and skirt.



RICE WATER FOR HAIR CARE

Rice water looks like a milky liquid, and that's because of the starch residue left behind from the rice. It is rich in minerals and vitamins and makes for a healthy drink. Rice water tightens your skin and improves the health of your hair. It also enhances blood circulation in your body, aids skin cell growth,

and keeps your skin looking young and rejuvenated.

Improves hair growth

Nothing better than rice water to decrease hair fall and aid hair growth. The amino acids present in rice water, in particular, help in the regeneration of hair and aid faster growth of your hair. Rice water contains vitamins B, C, and E, which further help in hair growth. The best way to use rice water to grow hair is to rinse your hair with it after a wash. Follow the process at least twice a week, and you will surely see the results.

Reduces split ends

Split ends make you look like a mess, don't they? Your hair needs protein to avoid split ends, and rice water has plenty of it. The primary causes of split ends are inadequate maintenance and pollution, which lead to an overall degeneration in the health of your

hair. The amino acids present in rice water come to your rescue and repair the damage. Soak your split ends in rice water for 15 to 20 minutes and then wash your hair. You will gradually see improvement in the condition of your hair.

Hair rinse

Rinsing your hair with rice water after shampooing instead of using a conditioner is the best thing you can do. It improves your hair texture and increases volume. It also tames and smoothes your hair. And, above all, it keeps your hair strong and healthy.

Protects hair from damage

Rice water decreases surface friction and improves hair elasticity. It contains a carbohydrate called inositol that repairs damaged hair and protects hair in general.

What makes rice water stand apart from other ingredients is

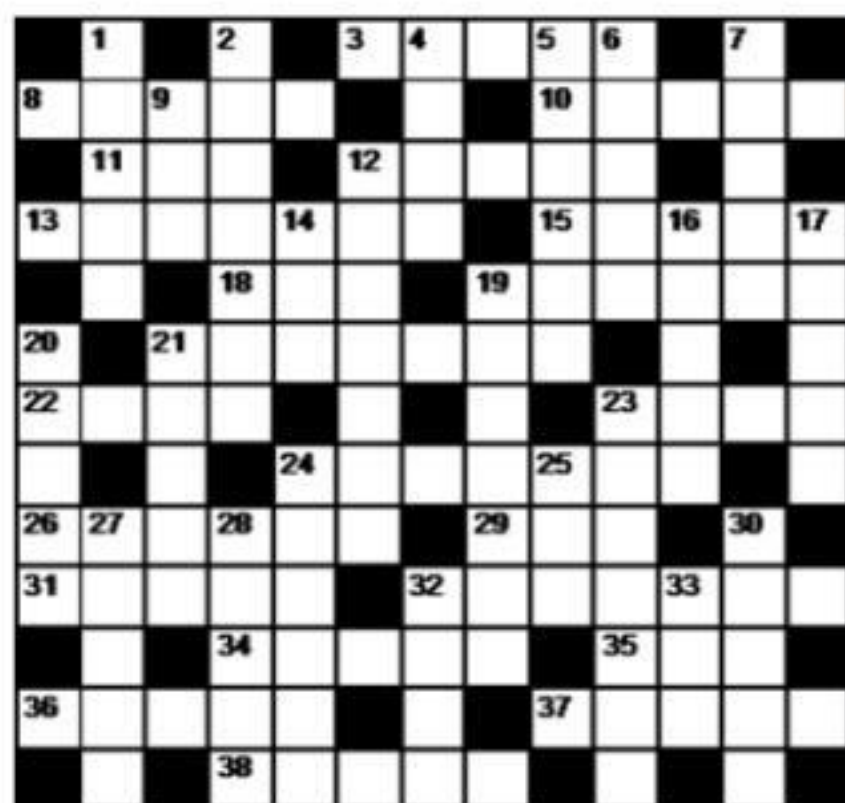
the fact that the inositol remains in your hair even after rinsing off the rice water and shields your hair from further damage.

Strengthens the hair roots and smoothes hair

Rice water is rich in amino acids - this is something you already know. You'd be amazed to know that apart from the many benefits that they impart to your hair, they also strengthen your hair roots, add shine to hair, and make it smooth and silky.

Cures dandruff

Dandruff is a menace. It is like a plague attacking your head, leaving a shower of white mist on your clothing. It is utterly embarrassing and a cause of itching and irritation. Rice water gives you respite from dandruff and, with regular use, helps you combat the problem altogether. For that to happen, you must rinse your hair with rice water regularly.



SOLUTION TO OCTOBER 9

CROSSWORD

Across

- 3 Vast chasm (5)
- 8 Strength (5)
- 10 Felt sore (5)
- 11 A head covering (3)
- 12 Distinctive smell (5)
- 13 Crafty (7)
- 15 Lowest deck (5)
- 18 Joule fraction (3)
- 19 Be ambitious (6)
- 21 Old time queen of Russia (7)
- 22 Regrets (4)
- 23 Achilles' weak spot (4)
- 24 Recommended (7)
- 26 Football for the Americans (6)
- 29 Bond creator Fleming (3)
- 31 Bobbin (5)
- 32 Lines of equal pressure (7)
- 34 Sweet cicely (5)
- 35 Bristle on barley (3)
- 36 First (5)
- 37 Dark, not lighted (5)
- 38 Worry (5)

Down

- 1 Dull (2-3)
- 2 Moisture (7)
- 4 A large mass of ice (4)
- 5 Indian snack (6)
- 6 Steep slope (5)
- 7 Furnishings (5)
- 9 Pallid (3)
- 12 More irate (7)
- 14 Lyricist Gershwin (3)
- 16 Enjoyed (5)
- 17 Rings out (5)
- 19 Acute suffering (7)
- 20 Hybrid (5)
- 21 Tata Motors formerly (5)
- 23 Poisonous plant with unpleasant smell (7)
- 24 Depend upon (4,2)
- 25 China's Great Helmsman (3)
- 27 Musical drama (5)
- 28 Cause for pause (5)
- 30 Bert's "Sesame Street" buddy (5)
- 32 Causes irritation (4)
- 33 Piercing tool (3)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO OCTOBER 9

NEWS ROUNDUP

Malayalam star Kani Kusruti: Actors should be given equal opportunities

Malayalam actress Kani Kusruti wants a system in place that lets artistes get equal opportunities, irrespective of caste, class or skin colour.

Kani was recently awarded Best Actress in the BRICS competition category at the 42nd Moscow Film Festival, and she dedicated her win to Malayalam cinema's first ever heroine, PK Rosy.

Kani shares, "I dedicate this award to PK Rosy, the first heroine of Malayalam cinema and also the first Dalit actress in Indian cinema. Her house was burnt down for her crime of playing the part of an upper caste person and she was forced to flee for her life. I see a lot of amazing actors not being offered characters they could have been amazing at, just because of gaps in the current talent-representation infrastructure. I share this award with all of them and hope that together, we will soon create a new culture of motion picture excellence that will provide equal opportunities to all actors, irrespective of their caste, class or skin colour."

The young artiste was awarded for her role in 'Biriyaani'. "I play a character called Khadeeja. She has been deprived of agency all her life, her social context has offered her very little freedom in matters of family, sex or religion. A set of tumultuous circumstances force her to take a journey of transformation in exile, where she invents her own rules of morality, avenging her suffering in a way as grotesque as the prejudice and hatred that caused it," Kani added.



Dhoni's daughter gets rape threats after CSK skipper's poor show

New Delhi: Social media has turned out to be a mediator for the celebrities and the cricketers to connect with their fans and vice-versa. But a coin always has two sides. Social media also brings some disadvantages with it and it is the amount of hate people spread. The comments section of the celebrities and cricketers is sometimes filled with a lot of abuse. Most of the time, the so-called fans also drag their families into it.

This time around the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) skipper MS Dhoni isn't spared either. CSK is going through a tough phase at the moment in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) season with not much working for them. The team has won only two matches out of six they've played and moreover, Dhoni is yet to light up the tournament with his batting and the fans aren't happy it seems.

MS Dhoni is at the receiving

end of a lot of hate comments on social media, especially Instagram, at the moment. Rather some of the users also gave rape threats to his five-year-old daughter as well which has left many in shock now. The screenshots of the comment have gone viral on Twitter with many lashing out at a section of fans for dragging the family of a big personality every now and then without any reason.

The comments are flooding on MS Dhoni's retirement an-

nouncement post on Instagram. The legendary player called it a day from international cricket on August 15 this year and all this criticism and especially, the rape threats to his daughter is absolutely uncalled for.

MS Dhoni hasn't had a great time in the ongoing IPL so far with the bat. His batting number was the talking point earlier. But even after walking out to bat at four against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), the CSK skipper

couldn't do much getting out on 11 off 12 deliveries. He has so far scored only 102 runs in five innings with the best score of 47*.

All the hate comments for the cricketer and his family started coming in after CSK's lost to KKR a couple of days ago. While MS Dhoni has just learned to ignore all such things over the years, the fans should refrain from abusing and giving rape threats to cricketers' and celebrities families.



HAL staffer held for giving fighter jet details to ISI

Nashik/Mumbai (IANS): In a major swoop, the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (Nashik unit) has arrested an employee of the high-security Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) on alleged charges of spying for a foreign agency, top officials said here on Friday.

The HAL staffer -- whose identity has not been revealed -- has been accused of supplying confidential and sensitive information about Indian fighter aircraft and the manufacturing facilities in Nashik, said Additional DGP (ATS), Deven Bharti.

Following a tip-off on his suspicious activities, the employee -- working with HAL's critical aircraft manufacturing division in Nashik -- was under the radar of multiple agencies, including the Nashik Police, ATS and Military Intelligence for the past several days, and was finally nabbed around three days ago, said officials.

Sustained interrogation of the accused revealed that he was in



regular contact with some members of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and was passing on secret and sensitive details and information about the HAL manufacturing unit at Ozar, the Indian Air Force airbase in Nashik, and the prohibited areas within the unit.

Among other things, the sleuths learnt that he was allegedly passing on documents, photographs, maps with longitude-latitude markings of de-

fence-related facilities in Nashik, via WhatsApp and other modes of communication.

"An offence under Sections 3, 4 and 5 of the Official Secrets Act, 1923 has been registered against the accused. We have seized three mobile handsets with five SIM cards and two memory cards, which have been sent for forensic examination," Bharti said.

The accused was produced before a special ATS court in Nashik, which remanded him to

Pakistan bans Chinese-owned app TikTok

Lahore: Pakistan has blocked the Chinese-owned TikTok app after receiving complaints against "immoral and indecent" content on the video-sharing application.

Pakistan Telecommunication Authority said TikTok failed to fully comply with the instructions for "development of an effective mechanism for proactive moderation of unlawful online content".

PTA added that the step was taken after the authority received a number of complaints from different segments of the society against immoral and indecent content on the video-sharing application.

10 days' police custody, said ATS DIG Jayant Naiknavre.



70,496 Covid cases in 24 hours

New Delhi: With a spike of 70,496 new cases and 964 deaths in the last 24 hours, India's COVID-19 tally crossed the 69-lakh mark on Friday.

As per the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), the number of people who have recuperated surged to 59,06,070. The national recovery stands at 85.25 per cent. The total coronavirus cases mounted to 69,06,152, while the death toll climbed to 1,06,490, the data updated at 8 am showed. There are 8,93,592 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 13.20 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate due to the coronavirus infection has dropped to 1.54 per cent. India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, and 40 lakh on September 5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16 and crossed 60 lakh on September 28.

Indo-Israel Covid test shows results in seconds

New Delhi: A game-changer rapid Covid-19 testing technology being jointly developed by India and Israel should be ready for rollout in "a matter of days" and it will be able to give test results in less than a minute by simply requiring an individual to blow into a tube, the Israeli envoy to India has said.

Ambassador Ron Malka also said Israel would want India to become the manufacturing hub for this rapid testing kit and the two countries will also collaborate on vaccine development for this dreaded disease with India taking a key role in production given its "very strong relative advantage in manufacturing". He said the work on the rapid Covid-19 testing project is in a very advanced stage. "I think it is a matter of days. What I hear from those involved in the process, it should not take more than 2-3 weeks to finalise that one reliable and accurate technology or a combination of more than one from amongst the four different technologies being analysed," Malka told PTI in an interview.



Sanitise! Covid virus survives on skin for 9 hrs

Tokyo: The SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes Covid-19, may linger on human skin for nine hours, much longer than the flu viruses can, according to a study. The influenza A virus (IAV), in contrast, remained viable on human skin for nearly two hours, said the researchers including those from Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine in Japan. The study, published in the journal Clinical Infectious Diseases, found that both the viruses were rapidly inactivated on skin with a hand sanitiser. The finding underscores the importance of hand washing or using a sanitiser to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The researchers noted that the stability of SARS-CoV-2 on human skin remains unknown, considering the hazards of viral exposure to humans. "We generated a model that allows the safe reproduction of clinical studies on the application of pathogens to human skin and elucidated the stability of SARS-CoV-2 on the human skin," the researchers wrote in the journal.

Major sent to Army custody in dowry case

Bhubaneswar: A local court in Bhubaneswar held a midnight hearing on Thursday and decided to send an army Major, arrested in a dowry torture case, to army custody instead of jail.

The judge of sub-divisional judicial magistrate's (SDJM) court SK Mishra visited the court at 10 pm after attempts to hold the hearing through video conferencing failed. The hearing continued past 1:30 am.

After the hearing, the judge ordered that the Major arrested be sent to army custody instead of jail.

Earlier, the Mahila Police Station had arrested the Major on the basis of his wife's allegation of physical and mental torture for dowry and attempt to murder. The army officer was staying in Nayapalli area in Bhubaneswar.

A case has been registered



against the army officer at the police station under various sections of the Indian Penal Code and Dowry Prohibition Act.

The officer had allegedly threatened his wife to shoot her to death if she doesn't bring money from her parents.

The wife in her complaint said that though the matter was settled mutually earlier, her husband continued the torture. Though police served a notice to the Major, he did not respond. On Thursday, he was arrested by the police.

Bhima Koregaon case: NIA files charge-sheet against 8

Pune: The NIA on Friday filed a charge-sheet against eight people, including social activist Gautam Navlakha, Delhi University associate professor Hany Babu and tribal leader Father Stan Swamy, for their alleged involvement in inciting a mob to violence in Bhima Koregaon on January 1, 2018, officials said.

NIA spokesperson and Deputy Inspector General of Police in the agency Sonia Narang said the charge-sheet was submitted before a designated court here. The eight people were arrested during the course of the investigation.

The NIA had arrested Father Stan Swamy, an activist who works with tribals. He was picked up from his home in Jharkhand earlier in the morning of October 9.

The case relates to the violence on January 1, 2018, in



which one person was killed and several injured after clashes at the 200th-anniversary celebrations of the Battle of Koregaon near Pune.

The others named in the charge-sheet are Goa Institute of Management professor Anand Teltumbde, and Jyoti Jagtap,

Sagar Gorkhe and Ramesh Gai-chor, activists of the Bhima Koregaon Shaurya Din Prerna Abhiyaan group.

The NIA has also named Milind Teltumbde as accused. He is absconding.

NIA took over the case on January 24 this year.

Piyush Goyal new Consumer Affairs Minister

New Delhi: Railways Minister Piyush Goyal has been given additional charge of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution after the death of Ram Vilas Paswan on Thursday, the Rashtrapati Bhavan said.

Goyal is also the Minister of Commerce and Industry in the Narendra Modi government.

PM Modi and a number of leaders paid tributes to the Lok Janashakti Party (LJP) leader at his Delhi home. PM Modi was accompanied by senior BJP leaders including BJP chief JP Nadda. "I have lost a friend, valued colleague and someone who was ex-

remely passionate to ensure every poor person leads a life of dignity," the Prime Minister had tweeted on Thursday.

Piyush Goyal too was among those who paid their last respects to Mr Paswan at the latter's home.

Paswan, who is from Bihar, will be cremated in state capital Patna tomorrow. Law and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad will represent the central government and the union council of ministers at the funeral.

He died just days before a Bihar assembly election that holds high stakes for his son Chirag Paswan.

Rahul Gandhi taunts PM over wind turbine ideas

New Delhi: Two Union Ministers hit back at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his sarcastic tweet about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's views on wind turbines expressed a few days ago during an interaction with Henrik Andersen, head of Danish wind turbine-maker Vestas.

Rahul Gandhi had shared a video of the October 6 interaction with the Vestas President and CEO, and said, "The real danger to India isn't that our PM doesn't understand. It's the fact that nobody around him has the guts to tell him." In the video, the Prime Minister is heard saying that if wind turbines could collect moisture from air, besides producing power, it could help tackle drinking water shortage. "The other suggestion I have is that we can separate oxygen from the air using this same turbine... If this can be done, one wind turbine can then provide



drinking water, oxygen, and energy... Can your scientists do something to innovate in that direction?" PM Modi said.

Mr Andersen, in response, invited him to Denmark where "you could be the idea developer for our research and development."

Textile minister Smriti Irani and Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal took on Mr Gandhi on Twitter today, referring to him as

"Yuvraj," and saying that he was "ignorant" and "doesn't understand".

"They say ignorance is bliss, but rarely in Indian politics has an individual made a conscious effort to sustain his ignorance. It seems the real danger to the Congress flourishes unabashedly and no one seems to have the guts to tell the Yuvraj otherwise," Ms Irani said, reacting to Mr Gandhi's tweet. In his tweet, Minister Piyush Goyal said the Prime Minister's ideas were endorsed by the world's leading company, which the Congress leader "doesn't understand".

"Nobody around Rahul Gandhi has the guts to tell him that he doesn't understand. He mocks PM @NarendraModi's ideas when CEO of the world's leading company endorses them," the minister said, citing an April 2012 CNN news report as proof.

8 CCTV cameras, 60 cops to protect Hathras victim's family

Lucknow: Sixty security personnel have been deployed and eight closed circuit television cameras installed at the house of a Dalit woman, who was allegedly gang-raped and killed, in her village in Bulgarhi area here to ensure the safety of her family members, police said on Friday. DIG Shalabh Mathur, who has been sent to Hathras from Lucknow as a nodal officer, told PTI that if needed a control room will also be established there. "Sixty personnel, including women, have been deployed on 12 hours shifts for the security of the victim's family.

Yale University sued for considering race during admissions process

Washington (IANS): The US Justice Department has filed a lawsuit against the prestigious Yale University, accusing it of violating federal civil rights laws for "at least 50 years" by making admission decisions based on a candidate's race, it was reported.

The Department filed the lawsuit "on the grounds of race and national origin" on Thursday in the US District Court for the District of Connecticut.

In a press release, it said the University "imposes undue and unlawful penalties on racially-



disfavoured applicants, including in particular most Asian and White applicants".

The University "injures applicants and students because Yale's

race discrimination relies upon and reinforces damaging race-based stereotypes, including in particular such stereotypes against racially-favoured appli-

cants".

The lawsuit has also alleges that th University also engages in "racial balancing by, among other things, keeping the annual percentage of African-American admitted applicants to within one percentage point of the previous year's admitted class as reflected in US Department of Education data".

Similar racial balancing was also meted against Asian-American applicants, it added.

"Illegal race discrimination by colleges and universities must

end," the press release quoted Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreihand for the Civil Rights Division, as saying.

"This nation's highest ideals include the notion that we are all equal under the law. For centuries, people from all over the world have learned of this ideal, left their ancestral homes, and come to the US... All persons who apply for admission to colleges and universities should expect and know that they will be judged by their character, talents, and achievements and not the

colour of their skin. "To do otherwise is to permit our institutions to foster stereotypes, bitterness, and division," he added. According to a statement obtained by The Hill news website, Yale University President Peter Salovey defended the college, saying the use of race is "one element in a multi-stage examination" of an applicant in an effort to diversify the student body. "Yale does not discriminate against applicants of any race or ethnicity. Our admissions practices are completely fair and lawful.

"Yale's admissions policies will not change as a result of the filing of this baseless lawsuit. We look forward to defending these policies in court," Salovey was quoted as saying in the statement.

CHANGE OF NAME
I Seema w/o Abdul Akhri R/o E-247, shakur pur JJ colony, Saraswati Vihar Delhi-34, my correct and actual name is Seema. So should be known as Seema for all future purposes.

China's follies make it unpopular around world

A common observation of any foreigner who visits China is this: Any good travel guide will state that China is a land of contrasts. The travel guides, if trite, are correct. China is a single nation and a multinational collection of individual nations. It is the oldest civilization on Earth and yet considered a developing nation. It is the second largest economy in the world, with less than 10 percent of its people living below the poverty line (less than \$1 per day), but that 10 percent equals 133,861,297 people – more than the population of Japan. The People's Republic of China is officially a Communist State but has a free market economy that contributed to a gross domestic product of \$9.7 trillion in 2010, according to the International Monetary Fund. This confuses many of the China observers. But the dichotomy is not confined to just these aspects. There is a huge gap between its words and deeds. For example, it

talks of friendship, but keeps backstabbing people even in trade and commerce. There are dozens of countries which have lost their land to China in recent times – also in the past – that would vouch for it. It is some kind of a lesson that China teaches its friends for having reposed their trust in it. In addition, it lies. There is no bigger a nation in the modern world which thrives on falsehood. Yet another aspect that is not just irritating but despicable, is its sermonising habit. It is difficult to comprehend what gives the country a right to criticise others for no reason at all. Coupled with these follies, Chinese actions in and around the country, project it in poor light. This is the reason that unfavourable views of China have soared to historic highs in many countries in a new global poll by Pew Research Centre, with the highest in Australia. Pew has recorded that a majority of those polled in each of the 14 advanced

economies had negative views of China. But in nine of them, China's unpopularity was at the highest since it started tracking this subject more than a decade ago – in Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, the Netherlands, Canada, Spain, Sweden and South Korea. Even in Pakistan discontent against the Chinese is simmering despite the protective net thrown around it by its rulers and its Army. It is not a surprise that a median of 73% of those polled in 14 countries (Belgium, Japan, Italy, Denmark and France in addition to the nine named above) had unfavourable views of China. Australians had soured the most, with 81%, going up by 24 points over 2019; the last year has seen a sharp deterioration in ties between the two countries. Negative views of China went up by double digits in the last one year in the UK, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, the US, South Korea and Spain. China may deny it, but the world believes in the claim that coronavirus has been deliberately mishandled by China. Global Times keeps preaching the world the “dos and donts”. It is time China started reading the world.

People pin hopes on benign budget



IN MY OPINION

V RAMU SARMA

The outbreak of corona pandemic has brought in many changes in the lifestyle of the common man. It has adversely affected the economy across the globe and has also affected individual economy. Though the world is slowly opening, the fact is with a vaccine still a distant dream, one has to live with the threat of corona. The question is; will the governments think on taking proactive measures to see that the spending capacity of the individuals increases or not?

Every government, be it the Centre or the State, claims to be for the people, of the people and by the people. But that slogan ends once the elections are over. No government wants to lose even a rupee in the form of taxes but wants the common man to agree for reduction in wages. It also does not think of giving any kind of relief on interest on bank loans. On the other hand, it would love to reduce the interest on savings. Interest on credit card EMIs is about 21%. Interest on personal loans is 18% but when it comes to FDs, they give only 6.5% and one percent more in case of senior citizens.

It's time the Centre and States take stern steps to see that the consumption of goods goes up in the days to come. The markets need to be revived and for that measures to give back more money to the common man's wallet is must. With reduced salaries and mounting loan burden on the common man, the growth in consumption would continue to be sluggish. Even trade bodies are of the opinion that if more money is added to the pockets of the common man, the economy could witness more consumption and liquidity, and this would lead to positive growth which in turn would infuse new life to the shattered economy.

The Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das had stated that the repo rate and reverse repo rate will remain unchanged and the country's real GDP in 2021 is likely to decline by 9.5 percent. The real GDP growth in 2020-21 is expected to be negative at (-) 9.5 percent, with risks tilted to the downside

(-) 9.8 per cent in the second quarter of 2020-21; (-) 5.6 per cent in the third quarter; and 0.5 per cent in the fourth quarter. Real GDP growth for the first quarter of 2021-22 is placed at 20.6 per cent.

Pricing power of firms remains weak in the face of subdued demand. Covid-19-related supply disruptions, including labour shortages and high transportation costs, could continue to impose cost-push pressures, but these risks are getting mitigated by progressive easing of lockdowns and removal of restrictions on inter-state movements.

Now that it is time for the Centre and States to start working on Budget proposals, they should give a serious thought to take some revolutionary and progressive measures like agreeing for bringing petrol and diesel under Goods and Service Tax (GST). Yes, this would result in fall in revenue in terms of the high taxes which the states are now levying on these products but this would help in increasing availability of cash with the common man which he will be spending on other goods and the loss suffered here can be made up to great extent. States may argue that if the common spends on buying other goods, the States will get only the GST compensation from the Centre.

The officials should place themselves in the position of affected common man (they are no way affected as they continue to get full salaries and are enjoying all perks as usual) and view economics from the angle of strengthening the common man so that the economy can revive at a faster rate. They should forget the concept of increasing taxes on various goods and services.

They also need to stop thinking and calculating figures based on what the situation was before the pandemic. For example, bars are biggest source of revenue earners. The States as part of unlock 5.0 have permitted opening of bars and restaurants. Has the footfall come to normal level? Bars are still witnessing empty tables. Majority of the tippers are preferring to buy liquor of their choice and consume at home instead of taking the risk of going to bars for two reasons – fear of contracting corona and non-availability of money.

If petrol and diesel are brought under GST, the Centre may have to forego about over Rs 20,000 crore or so which it now gets in the form of tax credit. States, on the other hand,



The officials should place themselves in the position of affected common man (they are no way affected as they continue to get full salaries and are enjoying all perks as usual) and view economics from the angle of strengthening the common man so that the economy can revive at a faster rate. They should forget the concept of increasing taxes on various goods and services. They also need to stop thinking and calculating figures based on what the situation was before the pandemic. For example, bars are biggest source of revenue earners. The States as part of unlock 5.0 have permitted opening of bars and restaurants. Has the footfall come to normal level? Bars are still witnessing empty tables. Majority of the tippers are preferring to buy liquor of their choices and consume at homes instead of taking the risk of going to bars for two reasons – fear of contracting corona and non-availability of money

want to keep a revenue tool in their hand. The Centre currently levies a total of Rs 19.48 per litre of excise duty on petrol and Rs 15.33 per litre on diesel. On top of this, States levy value added tax (VAT). The lowest being in Andaman and Nicobar Islands where a 6% sales tax is charged on both the fuel. Mumbai has a VAT of 39.12% on petrol, while Telangana levies VAT of 26% on diesel.

Increasing the taxes on fuel results in cascading effect on the prices of various goods in the

market and ultimately it is the common man who is suffering the most. For example, Andhra Pradesh government has hiked the rates of petrol and diesel and the cost of fuel here is highest compared to other states. The local people of course have no choice but to buy petrol at the high rates but if you look at the issue from larger perspective, the transporters who consume diesel in bulk are finding ways to save some money though they do not pass on that benefit to the customer.

If a heavy truck has to carry goods from Tamil Nadu to Telangana, they buy about 400 litres of diesel in that State as the price is less by about Rs 3 per litre. With the tank full of fuel, they can easily cross the borders of Andhra Pradesh. They again get their vehicles re-fuelled in Kodad or Khammam where the fuel rate is less by Rs 3 per litre. Trucks going from Telangana side to Odisha buy fuel here and get refuelling done in Odisha. Officials claim that they knew of all such tricks and still according to their calculations, the State still earns more in form of taxes. But it is also a fact that they are losing heavily on account of fall in bulk consumption by the transporters. Hence a fresh look at all these aspects is must. The States should understand that still there are many sectors which are yet to open and even if opened, there is no guarantee that they will start generating revenue immediately. Take for example the Tourism sector. The industry continues to be under lockdown. This has affected the tour operators, the hotel industry and the transport industry. The Centre has so far not given any thought of reviving this sector and it also does not appear to be thinking of giving any exemptions to this sector.

Against the backdrop of this situation, it is time the Centre and States come with a budget that would be people-friendly and more practical than theoretical in approach. The Prime Minister too needs to pitch and see that the next budget would help the common man and the genuine taxpayers. Similarly, the Chief Ministers too need to make some exercise based on ground situation. Can this be expected from the political executive? Will empathy prevail over politics?



Why opposition to farm Bills?

GIDUGU RUDRA RAJU

Farmers agitations are showing no signs of abating. Farmers have hit the streets, in the nooks and corners of the country over the three controversial farm Bills that were pushed through in rather unflattering circumstances in the just-concluded Monsoon Session of Parliament.

The Modi government had promulgated 11 Ordinances, since the Budget Session of Parliament was abruptly adjourned sine die, following the clamping of lockdown in March 2020. Three of these 11 relate to the farmers. In the Monsoon Session, these Ordinances were replaced by Bills, which were hurriedly passed, with President Ram Nath Kovind immediately thereafter according the Presidential assent. These were Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020; Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020; and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020.

These three legislations have the potential to deal a body blow to the farmers. When farmers realised that these Bills would directly hit their livelihoods, there was no other alternative for them, but to come out on to the streets. It is a sad reality of our times that the Anna-Daata, who feeds the country, is forced on to the roads. What are the basic issues at stake? Why are farmers refusing to heed to the appeals of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the entire Union Cabinet?

First, these laws assume that farmer and private purchaser have equal bargaining power. No. They do not.

The small farmer will be at the mercy of the private purchaser. In case of dispute, the machinery proposed under the law is so bureaucratic that it will ruin the farmers. So, at no stage is there any relief for the farmers proposed under these anti-farmer laws. Besides, with corporates entering the farmers market, they are likely to procure the farmers' produce dead cheap. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) buffer stocks of food grains will be seriously jeopardized, threatening the national food security.

Secondly, these new laws undermine Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) Mandis, the only regulated markets available to the farmers to sell their produce, without creating markets in large villages and small towns that will be accessible to the farmers.

Thirdly, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime will be eliminated progressively. The public procurement system will also be done away with, eventually. The three anti-farmer Bills will give full freedom to corporates to brutally exploit farmers and take away protection that the Minimum Support Price (MSP) mechanism provides them.

Now, the net outcome is surrender to corporates and traders. Private purchasers outside the APMC areas will not even pay the farmer amounts at par with the Minimum Support Price (MSP). This means fall in the agricultural incomes of the farmers. This was the same Prime Minister Modi, who promised to double farmer incomes by 2022, now ending up on a note of anti-climax, by halving their incomes.

After the issue of doing away with MSP was effectively raised by Opposition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was forced to respond, by claiming that MSP will continue. This is far too late and an inadequate assurance for the farmers.

If indeed it is so, the Bills could have included a simple clause that the price that the farmer will get from the private purchaser shall not be less than the Minimum Support Price (MSP). This was not done. Why is such a clause absent in the Bills? The Modi government has no answer.

Farmers fear that they will no longer get paid MSP, while commission agents fear they will lose their commission. According to a Punjab Agricultural University study, there are over 12 lakh farming families in Punjab and 28,000 registered commission agents. You can imagine what will be the figures in other States, as India is essentially an agricultural society. These Bills can seriously affect a large section of our society, who are still farmers.

The Modi government claims everything is hunky-dory about the farmers Bills and that the Congress was misleading the farmers. If that were true, why did the oldest ally of the BJP, the Akali Dal, withdraw its only Union Minister in the Modi government Harsimrat Kaur Badal and pull out from the ruling NDA?

To justify its own indefensible Ordinances/Bills, the BJP and the Modi government selectively quoted from the Congress election manifesto. What is the Congress' stand on the Farmers Issue? In the Congress election manifesto in 2019, the party promised to promote farmers producer companies / organisations to enable farmers to access inputs, technology and markets; besides to establish farmers markets with adequate infrastructure and support in large villages and small towns, to enable the farmer to bring his/her produce and freely market the same.

Farmers need multiple and easily accessible markets and choices. The Congress election manifesto for 2019 promised to enable farmers companies / organisations to access technology and also set up adequate infrastructure in large villages and small towns to help the farmers to trade freely. Once that is accomplished, the Congress election manifesto promised to repeal the Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) Act, thus making trade in agricultural produce free would have been a natural sequel. What the Modi government did was to jump the gun and hurriedly wind up the APMC Mandis, without creating the necessary markets with adequate infrastructure in large villages and small towns for the farmers to access.

The three pillars of the food security architecture are MSP, Public Procurement and Public Distribution System (PDS). As the pillars start crumbling, food security will take a serious beating. The food security system, which culminated in the National Food Security Act, 2013 stands threatened to be destroyed in the wake of the new legislations of the Modi government. Considering the serious implications of these anti-farmer Bills of the Modi government, Congress president Sonia Gandhi has issued a directive to the Congress-ruled State Chief Ministers. Sonia Gandhi has asked the Congress Chief Ministers to invoke Article 254 (2) of the Constitution. It is a rarely used Article, which allows State Legislature to pass a law to negate the anti-agricultural Central laws encroaching upon jurisdiction of States under the Constitution.

(The author is AICC Secretary and former MLC. Views expressed are personal)

LETTERS

Restoration of statehood to J&K a distant dream

While there is little possibility of the Centre changing its mind, the nature of the post-Article 370 dispensation in Kashmir region has made it impossible for political opposition to the August 5 intervention to have a decisive impact, let alone succeed. The only way mainstream parties could have undone some of the administrative and legislative changes over the last year would be for these parties to form a majority government if J&K were a State. But in a Union territory, even if they were to secure a landslide majority in a future election, the parties will remain subservient to the Lieutenant-Governor. Making things further difficult for them, the Centre in a new order has put even the police and the IPS beyond the remit of a future Chief Minister. Moreover, the Centre, as looks likely, may prolong this state of affairs by indefinitely delaying the restoration of statehood. The restoration may not take

place before there is certainty that Kashmir's political parties are not in a position to undo any law or order passed during lieutenant-governors' rule.

Rajmohan Ch, Guntur, AP

Radical groups dangerous to democracy

This is with reference to the report 'NIA arrests two for ISIS links' (THI, Oct 09). National Investigation Agency (NIA) which arrested two persons from Bangalore and Ramanathapuram, having active links with the Bangalore-based ISIS module case is serious cause of concern and proliferation of anti-India sentiments and activities that is prevailing among some sections of Muslim community in the country. The radical Islam that is being portrayed as a blind way to achieve ends, to make the world a Caliphate, is as dangerous and akin to individuals under the influence of drugs and narcotic substances being in a secular and democratic country like India; having all kind unfettered freedom of expression for all in the country. The case was registered suo moto by the NIA in the wake of

arrests of others having links with the Bangalore-based organisation. The arrested were supposedly members of Hizb-ut-Tehrir (HuT) formed under a group called 'Quran Circle' to recruit gullible Muslim youth in Bangalore to facilitate their travel to conflict zones in Syria to assist in the jihad that is undertaken by the ISIS.

K R Parvathy, Mysuru



Hathras victim deserves justice, not slander

Amid murky politics over the Hathras incident, Ranjeet Bahadur Srivastava, a BJP leader from Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki claimed that the 19-year-old woman was having an affair with the accused and called him to the millet field

where she was found on September 14. However, this is not the first time the ruling party has tried to malign the victim's character. One BJP leader held a rally in support of the accused, and another said rapes will stop if parents teach their daughters "proper values." The manner in which crimes against women, specially Dalit woman, is being approached and dealt with by those in power, is outrageous. Such comments from political leaders are not only inappropriate but also set a dangerous precedent that a certain section of the society is above the law. These actions, though not at all a surprise, should not be ignored. While certain political leaders are busy assassinating the victim's character, the Uttar Pradesh government is trying to justify its act of cremating the victim's body without her family's consent and the imposition of Section 144, which was used to alienate the family. In the affidavit submitted to the SC, the State government claimed that the above steps were necessary for maintaining law and order.

M N Musaeed, Mumbai

thehansreader@gmail.com

TDP demands scholarships for poor students

- MLC Chengal Rayudu calls for open debate on Jagananna Vidya Kanuka which he describes as nothing but pruned version of TDP's scheme
- Says the YSRCP govt has deprived poor students of scholarships and assistance for foreign study and ignored midday meal scheme

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Calling for an open debate on Jagananna Vidya Kanuka scheme, TDP described it nothing but repackaging of the previous government's welfare schemes. Party MLC B Chengal Rayudu at a press conference here on Friday accused the YSRCP government of denying long standing benefits like scholarships to the students of weaker sections adding that poor students were hit hard by this.

Chengal Rayudu challenged the YSRCP leaders for an open debate on 'Vidya Kanuka' which was nothing but another diversionary tactic by Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy Reddy. The previous TDP government gave four pairs of stitched clothes to the residential students but now this benefit was removed.

The TDP leader said the Jagan government has completely ignored the midday meal scheme thus depriving nutritious food to lakhs of students.

Chengal Rayudu said that the government was reducing budget allocations for the education sector since it came to power. The government has defaulted on payments to the suppliers of clothes last year.

Also, only 30 per cent payments were made to the suppliers of essential commodities and those who constructed toilets and compound walls for schools, he added.

The MLC strongly objected to discontinuing the foreign education scheme for the students of weaker sections. In the past, Rs 10 lakh to Rs. 20 lakh were given as financial assistance for foreign study aspirants among the poor students. But, the Jagan government cancelled it altogether, he said.

COVID REVIEW

Focus on Aarogyasri hospitals: CM



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy reviewing the steps to tackle Covid-19 at his camp office in Tadepalli on Friday

- Asks officials to give grading to networks hospitals in 15 days
- Every hospital should set up Arogya Mitra helpdesk to guide Aarogyasri patients
- Reiterates that all empanelled hospitals including designated Covid hospitals must follow six steps including sanitised atmosphere, nutritious food, Aarogy Mitra helpdesks

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed the health department officials to lay special focus on Aarogyasri network hospitals and give them grading to ensure proper health services are provided. He also said CC cameras should be installed in all hospitals.

During a review meeting here on Friday on the prevailing Covid-19 situation, the Chief Minister reiterated the six mandatory steps to be followed by all hospitals; medical facilities, availability of doctors and medicines, providing nutritious diet, sanitised atmosphere, and Aarogy Mitra helpdesk in all empanelled hospitals, including the Covid hospitals. He told the officials to take stern action against those hospitals which fail to follow the stipulated guidelines.

The Chief Minister told the officials to set up a helpdesk (Arogya Mitra) in all network hospitals and monitor their services on a regular basis. Arogya

Mitras should receive the patient and guide them to the doctor based on their ailments. In case, the hospital doesn't offer any treatment, Aarogy Mitras should send the patient to the nearest hospital.

The Chief Minister directed the authorities to grade the Aarogyasri network hospitals in the next 15 days based on their standards and services, including the helpdesks. He also instructed the officials to take follow up actions based on the IVRS feedback taken from the patients regarding the quality of medical services and sanitation in hospitals.

He instructed authorities to be vigilant and to make best use of 104 call centres in creating awareness among the public and to also provide information on the testing facilities, availability of beds, test results, and COVID hospitals.

The officials informed that Covid-19 infection was on a declining trend, where the positivity rate, number of cases, and the deaths have been reduced to a great extent. The testing capacity in the state has been increased significantly. As many as 35,680 RT PCR tests and 8,890 TrueNat tests are being conducted on a daily basis,

State logs 5,145 new Covid cases

Amaravati: Over 13,850 out of every 10 lakh people in the state have contracted the coronavirus disease so far, the state government said on Friday even as the total number of cases rose to 7,44,864 with the addition of 5,145 fresh infections. However, independent data put the confirmed cases per million at 14,165. The state so far tested 64,20,474 samples that turned out a positivity rate of 11.60 per cent, as per the latest government bulletin. While 6,91,040 infected people had so far recovered, including 6,110 in the 24 hours ending

9 am on Friday, as many as 6,159 have succumbed as the state saw 31 more Covid-19 fatalities. The active cases in the state dropped to 47,665, with the recovery rate touching 92.77 per cent. West Godavari district reported 862 new cases, followed by Chittoor (757) and East Godavari (738) while Srikakulam had the lowest additions in 24 hours at 139. Prakasam district reported five fresh fatalities and Chittoor and Visakhapatnam four each. Anantapur, Krishna, East Godavari and Nellore added three more deaths each to their tally.

which is the highest in the country. RTPCR testing centres are being set up in private medical colleges, and the test results are being given within 24 hours. So far 63,49,953 tests were conducted in the state. The recovery rate is 92.59 percent and the mortality rate is 0.83 percent.

The authorities said that a total of 38,042 beds were made available in 252 hospitals across the state and nearly 5,000 ventilators are in place. Earlier, only 3,636 oxygen beds were available but now almost 28,790 oxygen beds were set up in all hospitals in the state. Besides, even plasma therapy for Covid is also

taking place where Rs 5,000 is being given for the plasma donors.

The officials said 13,488 beds are being used of the 35,210 total available beds and 13,488 patients are being treated in Covid hospitals, whereas 8,576 people are in Covid care centres and 26,597 people in home isolation.

Health minister Alla Krishna Srinivas (Nani), chief secretary Nilam Sawhney, DGP D Gautam Sawang, special chief secretary Dr K S Jawahar Reddy, principal secretary of health Anil Kumar Singhal, health commissioner Katamaneni Bhaskar, and other officials attended the meeting.

84% students qualify in Polycet exam

Amaravati: At least 84 per cent students have qualified in the Andhra Pradesh Polycet examination.

Technical education commissioner M M Naik and senior official Anantha Ramu released the results on Friday. Of the 88,372 applicants, 71,631 have appeared for the exam.

Of 50,706 boys who appeared, 42,313 qualified for the exam while 18,467 girl students from 20,925 applicants have also achieved the same.

Matta Durga Saikeerthi Teja from West Godavari district has ranked first in the state with 120



Technical Education Commissioner MM Naik and State Skill Development and Training department Special Chief Secretary G Anantha Ramu releasing Polycet results in Vijayawada on Friday

marks while Sri Datta Syamsundar from East Godavari came second with 118 marks. Ramu

said the students are eligible for admissions in 271 colleges where 66,742 seats are up for grabs.

SHILPA SUICIDE CASE

JUDAS oppose reinstatement of accused docs, threaten agitation

SFI, AIDWA CRY FOUL

Write a letter to principal secretary, medical and health, warning that if the decision to reinstate the two doctors without the court clearing them, the association will chalk out an action plan for statewide stir

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Tirupati: The state government's decision to reinstate the two doctors who are accused in the suicide of PG student B Shilpa in 2018 kicked up a controversy with Ruia Hospital junior doctors raising objections over the doctors resuming their duties.

"As we all know, Dr Shilpa, a PG resident of Paediatrics department committed suicide on June 8, 2018 due to the harassment in the department and later on CID stated that three doctors were involved in the case, charge-sheet was also filed against them. High Power Committee headed by then DME Dr Babji also confirmed that the allegations made by Dr Shilpa found to be true and initiated departmental action against the accused by suspension and transfer. And DME also promised to the association that the three accused will not be allowed to work in SVRRGGH for a minimum of five years from now," said junior doctors in the letter addressed to the medical and health principal secretary.

They said that it was shocking and demoralising to hear about the posting of two of the accused doctors into the Paediatrics department of SVRRGGH on October 8. They demanded that the accused doctors should not be posted here until the verdict of court is pronounced in order to prevent further issues of same kind. They warned the government If it doesn't take suitable action in the regard, they have to chalk out a plan of action on the statewide agitation over the issue.

- Dr Shipla, a PG student, committed suicide in 2018 unable to bear with the sexual harassment by some professors

- Two professors have been suspended and charge sheet filed against them in court

- But the YSRCP govt reinstates them even as the case is pending

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Tirupati: Student Federation of India (SFI) and All India Democratic Women Association (Aidwa) jointly staged a dharna in front of SV Medical College main entrance on Friday against the college authorities' decision to reinstate the accused in Dr Shilpa suicide case.

Dr B Shilpa, who was doing PG in paediatrics, had committed suicide in 2018 after being allegedly sexually harassed and humiliated by some doctors. In the case, Prof Dr Kiriti and Dr Sasikumar were arrested by police. Now the SV Medical College



SFI and AIDWA activists staging a dharna against reinstatement of accused in Dr Shilpa suicide case at SV Medical College in Tirupati on Friday

authorities have allowed them to rejoin in duties at Ruia Children's Hospital. CBCID filed a chargesheet against them in the court and the case is pending in the court.

People's organisations have expressed their ire at reinstatement of the two accused without court clearing their names in the case. Addressing the protesters, DYFI district secretary S Jayachandra recalled that officials had given assurance that the accused doctors would be suspended for five years, but they were being reinstated by the YSRCP government after two years. Aidwa district sec-

retary Sai Lakshmi criticised the inefficiency of the officials in taking departmental action against them.

SFI district secretary N Madhav Krishna warned the officials if they allowed the accused to join the duties the joint action committee of various mass organisations would continue the agitations till the issue is solved. Later, they submitted a memorandum to SV Medical College Vice-Principal over the issue.

In the protest SFI leaders Ravi, Prasanna, Abuddul, Kilash Varma, Aidwa leaders Jayanthi, Sudjathamma were present.

Delhi likely to witness 15,000 Covid cases daily

Continued from P1

Therefore, it is recommended that Delhi should prepare for a daily surge of approximately 15,000 positive cases and make arrangements for inpatient admissions of patients with moderate and severe disease roughly amounting to 20% of this surge," the NCDC said in a document related to the revised Covid-19 strategy for Delhi.

The document has been drafted on the basis of the recommendations of an expert group led by Dr V K Paul of Niti Aayog to help formulate a revised strategy for Covid-19 management in Delhi.

It has recommended that the

Delhi government should engage with community leaders, organisers, etc, to ensure festivals like Durga Puja, Dasara and Chhath are low key with little or no gathering.

The document said containment zones should be limited to places such as resettlement colonies and slums, and contact-tracing activities have to be rationalised and districts should follow leads provided by their own surveillance instead of just chasing targets when it comes to testing.

The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) is relying on these recommendations for fresh Covid-19 management strategy for the Capital.

Jockey Group drops Anantapur venture

- APIIC confirms that the group has approached the govt seeking annulment of MoU it had signed during the TDP govt
- Then govt allotted 60 acre land in Raptadu constituency
- Apprehending political pressures, demands for underhand payments, new law that mandates 75% jobs to locals are said to have spooked the group

RAVI P BENJAMIN

Anantapur: Jockey Industrial group which was supposed to open its shop in the district, has backed off despite signing an agreement with the government during the TDP rule. This was confirmed by APIIC (AP Industrial Infrastructure Corporation) zonal manager Padmavathi.

Taking to 'The Hans India' on Friday, Padmavathi revealed that the Jockey International group had approached the government seeking cancellation of the MoU it had signed with the APIIC.

Already, 60 acre land was allotted to the apparel group. It was supposed to set up the shop way back in 2019 itself. It decided to abandon its project reportedly due to disillusionment caused by the demands and pressures for underhand payments by political leaders.

The innerwear garments factory was supposed to provide jobs to 6,000 rural youth and womenfolk. Raptadu constituency was selected for the setting up of the factory.

The change in the govern-

ment reportedly led to the international group to drop its project in the district fearing political pressures from the ruling dispensation.

According to APIIC sources, the government is yet to take a decision on the issue. It remains to be seen whether the government will persuade the group to stay or allow it to leave the district.

Industries minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy is yet to take a call on the matter.

Local people are urging the government to persuade the group to remain in the district and execute the project in the larger interest of industrialisation of the region.

Observers in the industry feel that the recent legislation making it mandatory for new industries to earmark 75 per cent of jobs to locals is also becoming a hurdle for the new industries to come and open shops here.

When the district will be divided into two next year, Anantapur will get a raw deal as the region will be devoid of industrial presence worth mentioning.

UN food agency WFP wins Nobel Peace Prize

Continued from P1

WFP Executive Director David Beasley, travelling in Niger, posted a video statement on social media. "It's because of the WFP family," he said. "They are out there in the most difficult, complex places in the world, where there's war, conflict, climate extremes – it doesn't matter. They are out there, and they deserve this award ... "This is the first time I've been speechless ... This is unbelievable," he said. "And wow! Wow! Wow! Wow!"

In a written statement, he added: "Today is a reminder that food security, peace and stability go together. Without peace, we cannot achieve our global goal of zero hunger; and while there is hunger, we will never have a peaceful world."

Rudram 1 successfully test-fired

Continued from P1

"This is a huge step forward," a senior government official said about the DRDO's successful test firing. "The IAF will now have the capability to perform SEAD (Suppression of Enemy Air Defence) operations deep into enemy territory to destroy enemy air defence setup," the official said.

This would allow the IAF's strike aircraft to carry out their mission unhindered effectively. "This test demonstrates the capability of an Anti-Radiation Missile with large stand-off

ranges," a second official said. The New Generation Anti-Radiation Missile, or NGARM, is integrated on Su-30MKI fighter aircraft. Its range depends on the height at which the fighter jet is flying. It can be launched from a height ranging from 500 metres to 15 km and can hit radiation emitting targets within a range of 250 km.

The tactical, air-to-surface anti-radiation missile is equipped with a passive homing head that tracks sources of radiation of a wide range of frequen-

cies. It can lock into a target not only before launch but also after it has been launched.

The missile is comparable to the tactical air-to-surface missile AGM-88E Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile that was inducted by the US Navy only in 2017 and can engage relocatable Integrated Air Defence targets and other targets equipped with shutdown capability. This means that if the enemy shuts down the radar after the missile is launched, it will still hit the target.

India gets 2nd tranche of Swiss bank a/c details

Continued from P1

Besides, Swiss authorities have already shared information about more than 100 Indian citizens and entities in the past one year on receipt of requests for administrative assistance in cases involving probes into financial wrongdoings including tax evasion, the officials added.

These cases mostly relate to older accounts that might have been closed before 2018, for which Switzerland has shared details with India under an earlier framework of mutual administrative assistance as Indian authorities had provided prima facie evidence of tax-related wrongdoing by those account holders.

AEIOI is applicable only to accounts that are active or were closed during 2018. Some of these cases relate to entities set up by Indians in various overseas jurisdictions like Panama, British Virgin Islands and Cayman Islands, while the individuals include mostly businessmen and a few politicians and erstwhile royals as well as their family members.

The officials, however, refused to share details about the exact number of accounts or the quantum of assets held in the accounts held by Indians, for which the information has been shared with India, citing strict confidentiality clauses governing the exchange framework.

TODAY'S QUOTE

RBI steps will improve fund flows

“ While the policy repo rate was not cut by RBI, several other measures were announced that should help bring down interest rates in the market. The steps by RBI will also help improve the flow of funds in the system – FICCI president Sangita Reddy



FARMER FRIENDLY

Onion exports allowed in limited way

Centre decided to give partial relief to onion exporters by easing restrictions on certain varieties of the staple for foreign shipments. In a tweet, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said: "To empower farmers and increase their income, the government permits export of Bangalore Rose and Krishnapuram onions of up to 10,000 MT each."

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	77.52	South	
Euro	90.64	African Rand	5.11
UAE Dirham	21.9	Hong Kong Dollar	10.85
Thai Baht	2.71	Japanese Yen	0.79
British Pound	98.49	New Zealand Dollar	50.83
Australian Dollar	55.23	Saudi Riyal	21.43
Canadian Dollar	58.31	Swedish Krona	9.52
Swiss Franc	83.34	Singapore Dollar	56.66

DELHI SATURDAY 10 OCTOBER 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

Ficci, SLG meet on healthcare

Hyderabad: SLG Hospitals in collaboration with FICCI, Hyderabad Chapter, organised a webinar titled: 'Mind v/s Machine: AI in healthcare – increasing use of technology in medicine - boon or bane?' The panel comprised of senior doctors and senior level managers representing healthcare equipment and technology companies. It included DVS Somaraju, Executive Director, SLG Hospitals, Dr V Jagan Mohan Reddy, orthopaedic surgeon, Dr Pradeep Panigrahi, GI and laparoscopic surgeon and Medical Director at SLG Hospitals and others. Speaking on the occasion, Somaraju underlined the importance of investing in advanced robotic equipment and the overall impact on cost to the patient. He also threw light on the ongoing training for doctors to invest them with the capability to handle high precision robotic equipment. "With better monitoring and diagnostic capabilities, artificial intelligence can dramatically influence healthcare," the organisers said.

Zoom unveils prices in rupees

Hyderabad: Zoom Video Communications, Inc, a US based video-first unified communications platform, announced localised pricing in rupees for the Indian market. In a move to expand its footprint and reach a bigger audience, this enhancement will allow users in India to buy their preferred plans and add-ons available on purchase flow. Users will be required to choose India as the billing and 'sold to country' and can pay using the credit card option for purchase in rupees. For the initial phase, the users will be limited from seeing or buying Zoom Phone SKU in the purchase flow made via web browsers. The announcement represents Zoom's growing strategic investment and plans to grow in the country, where the company already has one office in Mumbai, two data centres in Mumbai and Hyderabad and an upcoming technology centre in Bengaluru.

RBI GOES FOR LIQUIDITY BOOST

Keeps rates unchanged, retains accommodative stance, gives optimistic outlook

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank on Friday made an expected move by retaining key lending rates, but cheered investors and home buyers by giving a liquidity boost and an optimistic outlook.

The central bank's Monetary Policy Committee, in its penultimate meet for 2020, decided to maintain the repo - or short-term lending - rate for commercial banks, at 4 per cent on the back of persistently high inflation, fanned in part due to supply side disruptions along with seasonal factors.

The reverse repo rate was also left unchanged at 3.35 per cent, and the marginal standing facility (MSF) rate and the 'Bank Rate' at 4.2 per cent. Nevertheless, the MPC, with three new members, voted to maintain an accommodative stance, thus opening up possibilities for more future rate cuts.

It was broadly expected that the RBI's MPC might hold rates as recent data showed that retail inflation has been at an elevated level during June till August.

"The MPC evaluated domestic and global macroeconomic and financial conditions and voted unanimously to leave the policy repo rate unchanged at 4 per cent," RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said on Friday. It also decided to continue with the accommodative stance of monetary policy as long as necessary - at least during the current financial year and into the next year - to revive growth on a durable basis and mitigate the impact of Covid-19, while ensuring that inflation remains within the target going forward, he added.

Das said that India's economy is entering into a decisive phase in the fight against the pandemic, citing that relative to pre-Covid levels, several high frequency indicators are pointing to the easing of contractions in various sectors of the economy and the emergence of impulses of growth.

"By all indications, the deep contractions of Q1:2020-21 are behind us; silver linings are visible in the flattening of the active caseload curve across the country," he said.



The MPC evaluated domestic and global macroeconomic and financial conditions and voted unanimously to leave the policy repo rate unchanged at 4 per cent – RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das

Barring the incidence of a second wave, India stands poised to shrug off the deadly grip of the virus and renew its tryst with its pre-Covid growth trajectory.

The Governor pointed out that some of "this optimism is being reflected in people's expectations".

In the September 2020 round of the RBI's survey, households expect inflation to decline modestly over the next three months, indicative of hope that supply chains are mending.

Significantly, the inflation expectations denote the likely timing of the next rate cut as monetary policy is in essence a tool to contain rising prices. Lately, retail inflation has been at an elevated level during July-August. The retail or consumer price index stood at 6.69 per cent in August. It had risen to 6.73 per cent in July. As per the data, retail inflation level has reached the upper limit of the medium-term CPI inflation target of four per cent. The target is set within a band of plus/minus two per cent.

Nonetheless, the RBI said that it will resort to on-tap long-term repo operations and open market bond purchases to ensure liquidity in the banking system. It has also eased capital requirements on home loans to spur lending to the real estate sector.

Sees 9.5% GDP contraction in FY21

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank expects the GDP to contract by 9.5 per cent in the current financial year due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on domestic as well as global economies.

Unveiling the bi-monthly monetary policy statement, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that GDP was likely to turn positive at 0.5 per cent in the January-March quarter of the current financial year. "Taking into consideration (various factors) and the uncertain Covid-19 trajectory, real GDP growth in 2020-21 is expected to be negative at (-)9.5 per cent, with risks tilted to the downside: (-)9.8 per cent in Q2:2020-21; (-)5.6 per cent in Q3; and 0.5 per cent in Q4. Real GDP growth for Q1:2021-22 is placed at 20.6 per cent," he said.

The economy contracted 23.9 per cent in the April-June quarter of the current fiscal, mainly on account of the disruption in normal business activities following the lockdown to check spread of the coronavirus. Das said that while the recovery in the rural economy is expected to strengthen further, the turnaround in urban demand is likely to be lagged in view of

While the recovery in the rural economy is expected to strengthen further, the turnaround in urban demand is likely to be lagged in view of social distancing norms



social distancing norms and the elevated number of Covid-19 infections.

"While the contact-intensive services sector will take time to regain pre-Covid levels, manufacturing firms expect capacity utilisation to recover in Q3:2020-21 and activity to gain some traction from Q4 onwards. Both private investment and exports are likely to be subdued, especially as external demand is still anaemic," he noted. Further, the Governor said that by all indications, the deep contractions of April-June quarter are "behind us" and "silver linings are visible in the flattening of the active caseload

curve across the country".

Barring the incidence of a second wave, India stands poised to shrug off the deadly grip of the virus and renew its tryst with its pre-Covid growth trajectory, he added. Referring to the current debate about the shape of the recovery - whether it is V, U, L, W of K - Das said that it was likely to predominantly be a three-speed recovery, with individual sectors showing varying paces, depending on sector-specific realities.

Sectors that would open their accounts the earliest are expected to be those that have shown resilience in the face of the pandemic and are also labour-intensive. These include agriculture and allied activities; fast moving consumer goods; two-wheelers, passenger vehicles and tractors; drugs and pharmaceuticals; and electricity generation, especially renewables.

Stock markets remain upbeat

Mumbai: Buoyed by the Reserve Bank's liquidity boosting measures, the Indian benchmark indices rose for the seventh consecutive session on Friday, making it the best winning streak in almost a year.

The markets' upswing was maintained despite a status quo in key lending rates announced by the RBI. However, analysts noted that gains came on the back of the Reserve Bank's positive outlook along with its decision to maintain the accommodative stance and measures for a liquidity boost. On the global front, positive cues as renewed hopes for fresh US stimulus kept investors' sentiments high.

The S&P BSE Banking index closed at 40,509.49, higher by 326.82 points, or 0.81 per cent, from its previous close. The Nifty50, on the National Stock Exchange, ended the day's trade at 11,914.20, higher by 79.60 points, or 0.67 per cent, from its previous close.

"Banks and Housing finance stocks rose post the RBI MPC meet outcome even as the rates have been kept unchanged and stance remains accommodative," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research at HDFC Securities.

Markets have become overbought after relentless rise over the past 2 weeks. Over the next 1-2 days we expect even the Nifty to come under some pressure as largecaps also need to consolidate or correct after such a rise, he added. According to Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services: "Indian indices took a leap today following the positive announcements of TLTRO and OMO, which will help in maintaining a good level of funds available at cheap rates from RBI to the industry."



REAL CORNER

Housing sales gain traction

The Indian real estate sector seems to be recovering from a slump in demand during the nationwide lockdown as sales during the July-September quarter jumped over 100 per cent on a quarter-on-quarter basis across seven major cities, according to a report by PropEquity.

Housing sales across these seven cities during the third quarter of 2020 stood at 50,983 units, compared with 24,936 units in the previous quarter. NCR-Delhi witnessed 295



per cent home sales growth during the three months, while other cities like Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai Metropolitan Region, and Pune clocked 86, 131, 159, 89, 70, and 72 per cent respectively. However, on a year-on-year

basis, sales fell by 35 per cent and new launches were down by 30 per cent.

"The Indian real estate sector is showing some recovery as many projects were launched in the last quarter. With various schemes and offers, developers were able to clear significant inventory. As we move into the festive season, we forecast this recovery to continue with more offers, discounts, and attractive payment schemes to attract more customers," Samir Jasuja, Founder and Managing Director at PropEquity, said.

Chennai, B'luru, Hyd lead realty project completion

At a time when stalled projects and construction delays mar the Indian real estate scenario, Chennai leads the race among the major markets in terms of completed housing projects, showed a report by Anarock Property Consultants.

Chennai saw new launches of over 1.32 lakh units between 2013 and Q3 2020, out of which 61 per cent is already completed. In stark contrast, the National Capital Region (NCR) saw over 5.54 lakh units of new supply launched in this period, of which just 26 per cent units are completed, it said. The southern markets seem to be better placed regarding completion of projects as Bengaluru and Hyderabad follow Chennai in the list.

"Out of the total new housing unit launches in each top city between 2013 till Q3 2020, Chennai has the highest share of ready/completed homes at 61 per cent of its total inventory, followed by Bengaluru with 48 per cent and Hyderabad at 44 per cent," the report said. Altogether over 23 lakh

units were launched between 2013 and Q3 2020 across the top 7 cities, of which 34 per cent (around 7.92 lakh units) is completed. Another 19 per cent is scheduled to complete within the next 12 months, and another 19 per cent between one to two years. Anuj Puri, Chairman, Anarock Property Consultants says: "Predominantly driven by end-users from the IT/ITES sector, the conservative housing markets of the southern cities also benefit from the proactive project completion focus of developers active there."

Out of all the projects launched and completed between 2013-to the date, the average time to complete projects in Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad is between 4.1 - 4.3 years for smaller projects (with 100-500 units each) and between 5.5 - 5.9 years for large projects (over 500 units each). This is significantly less than the average completion time in NCR, where it is 6 years and 7.2 years, respectively, showed the report.

Real estate gets 'lower risk weightage' boost

But developers seek more steps to revive the ailing sector

Real estate developers on Friday welcomed the RBI's decision to lower risk weightage on housing loans, saying it would boost credit flow to the sector, but demanded that more steps should be taken to revive the industry.

The RBI decided to rationalise the risk weights by linking them only with LTV (loan to value) ratios for all new housing loans sanctioned up to March 31, 2022. With lowering of risk weightage, the requirement of capital provision for banks will come down. Commenting on the monetary policy, Credai national president Satish Magar said linking of housing loans to LTV would boost housing demand.

The move to extend co-lending scheme to non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs) may infuse additional liquidity, he said, but added that realty sector might not get benefit due to strict due diligence norms and eligibility criteria.

"Now that RBI has recognized realty sector as the largest employer, it should also announce steps that are imperative and crucial for the sector's survival and then introduce measures that will aid the sector's revival," Magar said. He sought that all loan accounts that were SMA 1 & SMA 2 as on March 1, 2020 should be made eligible for restructuring.

Naredco President Niranjan Hirani said the RBI's decision to



On Friday, RBI announced its decision to rationalise the risk weights by linking them only with LTV (loan to value) ratios for all new housing loans sanctioned up to March 31, 2022. With lowering of risk weightage, the requirement of capital provision for banks will come down, resulting in more credit flow to the sector

rationalise the risk weights on home loans and link them to LTV ratios will give a boost to the sector. "Particularly, this step would benefit borrowers of higher value loans. It would ensure that more credit is available to borrowers. This move is a much appreciated step recognising the role of the real estate sector in generating employment and economic activity," he added.

Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO - CBRE India, said, "RBI's decisions to relax LTV guidelines and rationalize risk weights for home loans will further encourage home buyers." Anarock Chairman Anuj Puri said the announcement will definitely encourage banks to lend more to individual homebuyers without feeling the stress on their balance sheets. PropTiger and Housing.com CEO Dhruv Agarwala said it will effectively

result in higher credit flow to the real estate sector.

Square Yards CEO Tanuj Shori said, "The linking of risk weightage only to LTV ratio vis-a-vis the earlier practice of risk weightage with both pricing and LTV augurs well for the sector, particularly for high end properties which have been facing severe downward demand pressures." Welcoming the move, Hardayal Prasad, MD & CEO, PNB Housing Finance said rationalising the risk weights for all new housing loans until March 31, 2022 and the relaxation extended for LTV, shall give the much needed impetus to the housing sector.

"At the same time, home loans will become accessible and competitive for the customers. This move by the central bank addresses the urgency required to boost the real estate sector

in the country. This will also lead to the desired recovery of the construction sector which has a very important role to play in creating employment and growth," Prasad said. JLL India CEO and Country Head Ramesh Nair termed the move as timely and a step in the right direction and said this would provide a fillip to housing loans and have a positive impact on the residential sector. Knight Frank India CMD Shishir Bajjal said the measures like rationalisation of risk weights to all new housing loans until March 2022 would give a fillip to housing loan growth.

The RBI has extended the scheme for co-lending to all NBFCs and HFCs which will ease credit availability for the real estate sector, he added.

Meanwhile, Siddhartha Mohanty, MD & CEO of LIC HFL said that in recognition of the role of the real estate sector in generating employment and economic activity, it has been rightly decided to rationalise the risk weights and link them to LTV ratios for all new housing loans sanctioned up to March 31, 2022. Savills India CEO Anurag Mathur said the rationalisation of risk weight of housing loans is a welcome step by the RBI that could potentially boost housing demand.

"With this move, housing loans would eventually get more affordable, thereby benefiting the homebuyers in this sluggish market," he added.

Over ₹2,155 cr released for Palle Pragathi since April

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The State government has credited an amount of Rs 308 crore under Palle Pragathi programme directly into the accounts of gram panchayats, Mandal Praja Parishads & Zilla Praja Parishads.

According to officials, with this release, the total amount released since September 2019 is Rs 4,528.5 crore and Rs 2,155.5 crore since April 2020 (from the new financial year) under this scheme. From Rs 308 crore, gram panchayats received Rs 277.22 crore, Mandal Praja Parishads Rs 20.52 crore and Zilla Praja Parishads Rs 10.26 crore.

Minister for Panchayat Raj Errabelli Dayakar Rao recently said that the Palle Pragathi programme was a boon for taking up different development activities in villages. The programme enabled the administration to complete various pending works in gram panchayats, including dumping yards, crematoriums, laying of CC roads, increasing green cover and development of parks. Under this scheme, Rs 5 lakh funds were sanctioned to gram panchayats.

Ats having a population of over 100 people and with 30 houses towards strengthening the villages.

Cong leaders granted bail

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Nampally court on Friday granted bail to 68 Congress leaders and activists who had laid siege to Home Minister's camp office in Ministers Quarters on Thursday. Former MLA and AICC secretary, SA Sampath Kumar, TPCC Minorities department chairman Shaik Abdullah Sohail, youth Congress State president, Anil Kumar Yadav and NSUI State president, B Venkat, TPCC SC cell chairman Preetham Nagarigari and others were released during the early hours this morning. The 68 leaders and activists who took part in the demonstration were booked under sections 147, 152, 332, 353, 506, 504, 341, R/w 149 of IPC.

NIMS MHM course application date extended to Oct 20

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The last date for applying for Masters in Hospital Management programme at NIMS has been extended. According to Dr Martha Ramesh, Academic Incharge, graduates (medical or non-medical background) can apply until October 20. The last date to apply online and through submission of hard copies is October 20. The age limit for the two and half-years course is 20 to 30 years of age while for SC/STs it is relaxed till 33 years. More details can be accessed at their website or by calling on 8555839760, 7794043987, 9046484856, 9059544844 or 9160793142.

Subhash Reddy is Hyd-RR-Mbnr Grads constituency in-charge

Hyderabad: Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao on Friday appointed his political secretary and MLC Sheri Subhash Reddy as the in-charge for Hyderabad-Rangareddy-Mahabubnagar Graduates constituency. In a statement issued here, Subhash Reddy said

COVID FEAR STILL RULES HIGH Medical staff dread going back to work in private hospitals

The staff who showed reluctance to work in private hospitals are now resuming their work

MAHESH AVADHUTHA

Hyderabad: Private hospitals had a tough time to function as usual for nearly four months after lockdown restrictions were eased from June onwards. Medical staff working in various departments were reluctant to come and work in a hospital atmosphere fearing risk to lives from coronavirus.

Medical staff from nursing, technical, front-desk and reception, housekeeping, and sanitation as well as other support staff had shied away from duties. As such private hospitals in districts as well as in the State capital functioned with reduced manpower, at times 50 per cent of their usual strength from pre-Covid times.

To motivate the medical staff to attend duties regularly, the hospital managements had to adopt different tactics like increased pay (50 to 100 per cent), alternate day duties and giving salaries on the 30th or 31st of every month moving away from the customary practice of giving salaries after first of every month. The fear of working in Covid wards amidst virus-infected patients made the staff to show reluctance towards duties. Some of the house cleaning staff also shied away because they were not ready to clean floors, rooms and restrooms.

Hospital administrations were helpless as the medical staff were concerned about the safety and well-being of their family members and hence did not act tough, especially with their senior staff members associated for a long



period. According to V Rakesh, president of Telangana Network Hospitals Association, private hospitals in the district faced problems during corona pandemic. If the shortage of staff was a big challenge, hospitals had to do with reduced occupancy of hospital beds, increased black marketing of essential items like oxygen cylinders, PPE kits, essential drugs for some time, pending dues from various health

insurance schemes. Meanwhile, Dr Bhaskar Rao from Telangana Super-Specialty Hospitals Association and MD, KIMS hospitals stated that the situation had drastically improved in September. The fear of working in hospitals was evident during three-four months from June and medical staff shied away. Off late, the situation had changed and staff has started reported back to duties slowly, he added.

MOINABAD RAPE & MURDER

Shabbir Ali extends financial aid to victim's kin

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Congress leader and former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir on Friday gave financial assistance of Rs 50,000 to the family members of victim of Moinabad rape and murder case. Victim's sister Afreen Begum, brother Salman and other relatives met the Congress leader at his residence in Jubilee Hills on Friday. Shabbir Ali, along with Hyderabad Congress Committee Minorities Department Chairman Sameer Waliullah and other Congress leaders, held a detailed discussion with the family members on the status of

case and also their economic condition. Shabbir Ali also spoke to the Investigation Officer, ACP Ashok Chakravarthy, over phone and enquired about the status of investigation.

The ACP told Shabbir Ali that the investigation was going on and the forensic report was expected in the next two to three days. He said that the accused, Madhu Yadav, was already lodged in prison and it would be difficult for him to come out on bail as he has been arrested under PD Act. He assured Shabbir Ali that the police would complete the investigation in a fair manner without any delay.

NEP will make India global hub of quality education: Governor

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: National Education Policy (NEP)-2020 will transform the Indian education system and make it the global hub of quality education, said Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan. She said that the NEP-2020 is going to mould the students as job-creators and not as the job-seekers. Governor addressed the webinar on NEP-2020 organised by the Centre for South Indian Studies (CSIS) from the Raj Bhavan here on Friday. She stated that NEP-2020 was aimed at creating global citizens with strong Indian roots and added that if implemented in true spirit by all the stakeholders, the NEP-2020 will regain India's position as the Vishwa Guru. Governor called for the participation of different sections of the people in implementation of NEP-2020 so as to make



India as the global knowledge superpower.

Soundararajan further stated that it was important to ensure that we offer world-class education in Indian educational institutions. She exhorted the people to understand NEP-2020 in its holistic perspective and realise its potential to transform Indian education system as the international

KTR using Pragathi Bhavan for party activities, alleges Congress

Objects to Minister conducting party meeting at the official residence of Chief Minister



HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: A day after Minister KT Rama Rao held a review meeting for the upcoming GHMC elections, the Congress party wrote to State Election Commissioner alleging misuse of Pragathi Bhavan, official residence of Chief Minister, for the party activities.

TPCC Election Commission Coordination Committee Convenor G Niranjan requested the Election Commissioner C Parthasarathi to initiate action against the Minister and instruct officials to take serious note of irregularities committed by the ruling party. "The review meet-

ing to find out party position in 150 divisions of GHMC was convened at Pragathi Bhavan. KT Rama Rao shared the information received from ground-level and appealed to partymen to suggest ways through which the party could improve its majority. Similar meeting is likely to be held after a fortnight. The official residence of CM is meant for administrative purposes and meeting with officials, but not for party purposes. We request your good-self to take a serious note of this irregularity and misuse of official residence of the CM for party purposes in view of the ensuing elections to the GHMC," the Congress leader stated.

Dubbaka by-poll notification issued

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Notification for Dubbaka by-poll was issued by ECI on Friday (October 9). The election is scheduled for November 3, while counting of votes will be done on November 10. The last date for filing of nominations is fixed as October 16. The last date for scrutiny of nominations is October 17 while withdrawal shall be allowed until October 19. The electoral rolls with October 1 as the qualifying date was published by ECI.

VOTERS ENROLMENT FOR COUNCIL POLLS

Grads irked by mandatory attestation by gazetted official

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Even as political parties are encouraging eligible graduates to enroll their names in the voters list, they are finding it difficult to get attestation from a gazetted officer, which is mandatory to apply for enrolment.

As per the rule, the graduates who are eligible for voting in the Council elections should get their certificates attested by a gazetted officer and then should apply through Form 18. However, most of them are not keen on approaching the gazetted officer for the signature. There are no issues for people in urban areas,

but in rural areas, the graduates are not getting the signatures easily.

The political parties, particularly the ruling TRS, has been encouraging the graduates to enroll their names in the list by taking up special campaigns. The local leaders are asking graduates to enroll their names in the list, but they are puzzled when the graduates are asking them to arrange the signature of the gazetted officer for attestation of their certificates. At some places, the party workers are asking the graduates to give a copy of their certificate so that they can get them attested from a gazetted official. However, the graduates are not

ready to give their certificate as they are afraid of misuse. K Santosh Kumar, a graduate said, "Why should we give our certificate to them? If we get a signature from a gazetted officer, we will enroll otherwise, we will not."

The graduates want the authorities to remove the attestation by the official. "At a time when self-attestation is sought in many programmes, why should there be an attestation by a gazetted officer. I am a graduate and I certify myself that I am an eligible voter," said an advocate K Siddharth. He said that the Election Commission should do away with the old rules.

Dubbaka bypolls: Cong candidate to file paper on Oct 15

Hyderabad: TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy on Friday said that the party candidate from Dubbaka, Cheruku Srinivas Reddy, would file his nomination papers on October 15. He said that the party State In-charge Manickam Tagore would hold the meeting on the issue of elections with the party leaders on October 12. He said that they would implement the LRS free of cost after coming to power and urged the people of the State to oppose the inhuman attitude of the TRS-led State government. He made these remarks during a zoom app video conference with the party leaders MLC T Jeevan Reddy, former PCC president Ponnala Laxmaiah and others. MLC Jeevan Reddy alleged that the State government had come up with the LRS to fill its coffers. Commenting on the ongoing revenue survey, he wondered as to why the survey was being held when the details of the properties were present in gram panchayat records. He alleged that the survey was being conducted only to burden the people of the State. He made it clear that the State government would face a blow in the State High Court.

Dharani sparking fears, charges Cong

Hyderabad: The Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee Treasurer, Guduru Narayana Reddy, on Friday criticised that the State government has been creating apprehensions among people by taking up registration of non-agricultural assets on Dharani portal. In a media statement, Reddy said that the government has announced the programme without stating its objectives and added that he was unable to understand what would be the use of passbooks to be issued through Dharani.

Adding that municipal and panchayat raj staff has been visiting the residences of people and asking several details, he said that while the government stated that

TPCC Treasurer Guduru Narayana Reddy likens the revenue exercise to the Household survey conducted five years ago

it wanted to register only the non-agricultural assets, several other details were also being sought. He said as far as his knowledge goes, registering the asset details on Dharani portal would not help people in any manner.

Likening the entire exercise to another Household Survey taken up five years ago, he alleged the data of which was never made public and was used by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao for political and electoral purposes.

HC advocate is Toopran Municipality legal advisor

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Municipal Chairman Bondi Ravinder Goud, Vice-Chairman Nandyala Srinivas and councillors unanimously elected High Court advocate Dr Anarelli Venkata Swamy as Toopran Municipal Standing Committee legal advisor, at a meeting held here. Municipal Commissioner Khaja Moinuddin handed over the certificate of appointment to Dr A. Venkata Swamy.



Hyderabad: Two men have died and six members have been severely injured as an allegedly drunk driver rammed his car into another car on Friday at the outskirts of Narsingi Outer Ring Road. The accident led to a huge traffic congestion at the ORR. The ORR Traffic police reached the spot and the injured were shifted to a private hospital in Gachibowli. The Narsingi police suspected them to be heavily drunk. The victims were identified as the residents of Suryapet.

KL holds onto Orange Cap, Purple stays with Rabada

Dubai (IANS): Kings XI Punjab captain KL Rahul continues to hold onto the Orange Cap while the Purple Cap is lying with Delhi Capitals fast bowler Kagiso Rabada in the ongoing Indian Premier League season following the conclusion of the 22th IPL 2020 match.

On Thursday evening, SunRisers Hyderabad defeated Kings XI Punjab by 69 runs at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

Rahul managed to score 11 runs against the David Warner-led side and in the process took his tournament tally to 313 in six games. He

is followed by Chennai Super Kings' Faf du Plessis who has 299 runs to his name from six games. Kings XI opener Mayank Agarwal is third on the list with 281 runs.

Meanwhile, Rabada continues to lead the bowling chart with 12 wickets from five games. He is followed by Mumbai Indians' Jasprit Bumrah, who has 11 wickets in six games. Bumrah's teammate Trent Boult is third

on the list with 10 wickets from six matches.

These running caps are presented to the leading run scorer and wicket-taker and keep changing hands throughout the duration of the tournament.

In the points table, Mumbai Indians currently occupy the number one spot with eight points from six games. They are followed by Delhi Capitals who also have eight points from five games but a lower net run-rate compared to the defending champions. SunRisers Hyder-

a b a d c o m - p l e t e t h e p o d i u m w i t h s i x p o i n t s f r o m s i x g a m e s .

TODAY'S MATCH
Kings XI Punjab vs Kolkata Knight Riders at 3.30pm
Chennai Super Kings vs Royal Challengers Bangalore at 7.30pm

Some batsmen think of CSK as govt job: Sehwal

Dubai (IANS): Former India opener VirenderSehwal has lashed out at the Chennai Super Kings batsmen, saying some of them think of the franchise as a "government job".

The MS Dhoni-led side suffered their fourth defeat of the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) season on Wednesday. Chasing 168 against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), CSK were, at one stage, in a comfortable position as they needed 79 runs from the last 10 overs. However, they failed to accelerate with both Shane Watson and Ambati Rayudu failing to up the ante.

At the end, Ravindra Jadeja and KedarJadhav remained not out at 21 (8 balls) and 7 (12 balls) as KKR won the match by 10 runs.

"It should have been chased down. But the dot balls played by

KedarJadhav and RavindraJadeja didn't help," Sehwal told Cricbuzz.

"And, in my view, some of the Chennai Super Kings batsmen think of CSK as a government job, whether you perform or not, they know they'll

get their salary anyway," he added. With just four points from six games, CSK are currently lying at the sixth spot in the points table. They will next take on Royal Challengers Bangalore in Dubai on Saturday.

Yumnam 1st Indian to appear in The Guardian's Next Generation list

New Delhi (IANS): Defender BikashYumnam has become the first and only Indian player to get featured in The Guardian's Next Generation 2020: 60 of the best young talents in world football.

"Composed on the ball, a great reader of the game, and capable of excellent, fast, long throw-ins, the teenager has already been earmarked for a quick progression to the full international side," reads his profile on The Guardian website.

The profile mentions his performance in the 2018 Asian under-16 championship where India made the quarter-finals, losing 0-1 to South Korea. It was the only goal India conceded in the competition following 0-0 draws against Iran and Indonesia.

The 17-year-old Manipurborn defender was loaned to Indian Arrows, the All India Football Federation's development side, for the 2019-20 I-League. After 16 games, the Indians-only Arrows who are protected from relegation were at the bottom of the 11-team standings. He has played nine games in the I-League top tier before it was halted because of Covid-19 pandemic.

"He impressed again on loan

at developmental club Indian Arrows before returning to Punjab, turning down offers from bigger Indian clubs, in May," the profile reads.

"It's a great news and brings me immense joy and pride that my boy Bikash got featured in such a prestigious list. He has huge potential, everyone here appreciates him, he has the attributes to become a great player," Ranjit Bajaj, owner of



Minerva Academy FC, stated.

"He is a young player who of course will have to be protected, but at the same time should be given space to grow and reach his potential. He is a serious kid, always on time for training, and has certain modesty but on the pitch, he leads the team and always wants to win as a team. He is an example for many in the academy and I hope we can produce such talents in years to come," he added.

The Guardian has been releasing the list of next generation player every year since 2014.

FRENCH OPEN FINAL Sofia vows to give her best, Iga unperturbed

Paris (IANS): America's Sofia Kenin, in her second Grand Slam final of this year, is preparing to bring out her best when she takes on 19-year-old rookie IgaSwiatek in the summit clash of the French Open to be played on Saturday.

Kenin went through with a 6-4, 7-5 win over two-time Grand Slam champion Petra Kvitova while Swiatek brought a halt to Argentine qualifier Nadia Podoroska's magical run with a 6-2, 6-1 win on Thursday.

"I've already done it in Australia," WTA website quoted Kenin as saying after her semifinal win against Petra Kvitova. "I've had tough matches these past two weeks and I'm so excited to be in the final. It's incredible. I'm going to enjoy this moment today and get ready for the final tomorrow."

The fourth-seeded player boasts a 16-1 winning record in majors in 2020, having started the year with a title win at the Australian Open after defeating GarbineMuguruza in the final.

"We played in juniors in the French Open. It was a close one. I'm going to prepare for the final and I'm going to do my best," said the 21-year-old

about her title clash against Swiatek.



Meanwhile, giant-killer Swiatek, who is the first Polish woman to play in the final of Roland Garros during the Open Era and the first at any major since AgnieszkaRadwanska at Wimbledon 2012, is not worried about the result of the final and is just focussed on playing her "best" tennis. On her way to the finals, she caused what was probably the biggest upset of the tournament defeating top seed SimonaHalep and has grown into confidence with each passing match since then.

"Sofia, she's on fire this year," she said after her win against Argentine qualifier Nadia Podoroska in the semis. "Usually I'm that kind of player who is playing better under pressure. If I'm not going to choke up, I think everything will be fine."



Shuttler Ajay Jayaram 'not allowed to board' flight to Denmark

New Delhi (IANS): Shuttler Ajay Jayaram has said he was not allowed to board a flight on Friday morning from Bengaluru to Denmark, where he is scheduled to play in the Denmark Open Super Series. The rest of the Indian squad, including LakshyaSen, KidambiSrikanth and ShubhankarDey, flew with Air France from Delhi the previous night, while Jayaram was flying with the British Airways on Friday morning.

In a series of tweets, the 33-year old said he was not allowed to board the flight, despite carrying the same Type C Schengen Visa, as well as Covid-19 negative certificate like the rest of the players.

"I need to travel from Bangalore to Denmark tonight for the Denmark Open. I have a valid type C visa with Covid negative certificate and invitation letter from organisers stating my cause is worthy. I want to know if I can travel by Air France. Please let me know," he tweeted while appealing to Air France to let him fly with them while tagging the airline along with BWF and BAI.

"I wasn't allowed to board British Airways flight this morning. The rest of the Indian team has flown out with Air France last night from Delhi having the same type C schengen Visa as me. Kindly help," he wrote in another tweet, tagging Sports Minister KirenRijiju and the Prime Minister's Office Twitter handle.

Test series against India will be compelling: CA interim CEO

Sydney (IANS): Cricket Australia interim CEO Nick Hockley is looking forward to hearing how SEN experts would cover a "compelling" Test series against India scheduled to be played in the month of December and January.

Australia will host India this summer for four Tests, three ODIs and three T20Is from November to January.

"We're proud to deepen our partnership with Sports Entertainment Network (SEN), in what's already shaping up as a massive summer of cricket," said Hockley as per a Cricket Australia media release. "SEN is increasingly becoming a go to destination for sports radio across the country, and we're looking forward to hearing their experts cover what is going to be a compelling Test series against India," he added.

SEN's chief sports caller Gerard Wateley will head a stellar commentary team for the series which will be announced in due course of time.



Following increase of water levels in the Hussain Sagar post-monsoon, sports enthusiasts shake off their rust by performing rowing regattas amid pandemic. Photo: Adulakrishna

LaLiga Club series launched for young aspirants in India

Mumbai (IANS): LaLiga on Friday announced the launch of the LaLiga Club series program to their football school curriculum in India in association with India On Track (IOT). Students of LaLiga Football Schools will get an opportunity to understand the technical and institutional session with experts from LaLiga clubs such as Real Betis, Sevilla FC, and Celta de Vigo over a span of six weeks. These virtual sessions will feature informational topics like the history of the club, legacy, club rivalries, along with focusing on develop-

mental aspects such as the youth academy system, scouting processes, player evaluation and much more. Additionally, students will also get an opportunity to participate in technical topics such as match analysis, strength and conditioning sessions, and master-classes with the academy coaches. LaLiga Club series will be available for all the LaLiga Football Schools students in the country across the age group of 5 to 18 years. Real Betis will host the first session on October 9, followed by Celta de Vigo on October 16 and Sevilla FC on October 23.

'Govt committed to create world-class sports ecosystem for athletes'

New Delhi (IANS): Union Sports Minister KirenRijiju has stated that the government is committed to provide a sports ecosystem of global standards for athletes.

Rijiju made these comments during the 53rd Governing Body Meeting of the Sports Authority of India (SAI) held on Thursday. A number of key decisions were taken by the committee.

It was decided by the committee that to provide additional impetus to the preparation of Olympics 2024 and 2028, some of the country's best training centres will be notified as Target Olympic





Podium Scheme National Centre of Excellence (TOPS NCOE).


The centers will be operated in collaboration with national sporting federations. Both SAI and non-SAI sporting facilities across the country will be earmarked as TOPS NCOEs, depending

on the existing facilities and performance of athletes at those centers.

Speaking about this, the Sports Minister said the TOPS NCOEs will have state-of-art infrastructure, best-in-class coaches and support staff as well as modern sports science support.

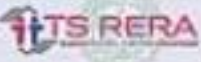
Rijiju also announced that talent scouting committees, consisting of top ex-athletes, coaches and experts are being formed and will begin the task of identifying sporting talent in various disciplines from across the country within the next four-five months, once the Covid-19 situation improves.





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