



THE HANS INDIA

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WINDOWS



Arts scholar Kapila Vatsyayan passes away

New Delhi: Renowned scholar Kapila Vatsyayan of Indian classical dance, architecture, history and art died at her home in Delhi on Wednesday. She was 91 years old. Confirming this, India International Center (IIC) secretary Kanwal Ali said Kapila Vatsyayan died at 9 am on Wednesday at her home in Gulmohar Enclave. Kapila Vatsyayan was a lifetime trustee of the India International Center.

Indian origin writer makes cut for 2020 Man Booker Prize

London: Indian origin author Avni Doshi has made the cut for the 2020 Man Booker Prize for Literature with her book "Burnt Sugar" (Hamish Penguin Random House) in the shortlist announced here on Wednesday evening. The five other books in the shortlist are: The New Wilderness by Diane Cook (Oneworld Publications), This Mournable Body by Taitisi Dangaremba (Faber & Faber), The Shadow King by Maaza Mengiste (Canongate Books), Shuggie Bain By Douglas Stuart (Pan Macmillan) and Real Life By Brandon Taylor (Daunt Books Publishing).



SPORTS



First 8 KISCs to get financial aid of over ₹95 cr in 4 years

P8



File Photo

15,000-page charge sheet filed in Delhi riots case

New Delhi: The Delhi police has named 15 individuals as accused in the charge sheet filed over the violence that occurred in nationwide capital in February this year.

The charge sheet filed at Karkardooma courtroom is over 15,000 pages. The 15 individuals have been accused underneath sections of Illegal Actions (Prevention) Act, IPC and Arms Act. The charge sheet filed by the police doesn't identify Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam as accused in the Delhi riots case. Umar and Sharjeel had been arrested

15 PEOPLE NAMED

just a few days ago and their names shall be within the supplementary charge sheet.

In February, Delhi was shaken up with communal riots, worst in at least three decades, with clashes between Hindu and Muslim groups in several parts of the city. Houses were burnt and broken into, while vehicles were set on fire. It all started as clashes between pro- and anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act groups,

further escalated into communal violence with rioters from both communities, taking to streets armed with swords, stones and guns.

"There was an impression that it was an anti-CAA protest but conspirators were being guided through the protest sites," said the police. The charge sheet filed by the police on Wednesday does not name Umar Khalid and Sharjeel Imam as accused in Delhi riots case. Umar and Sharjeel were arrested a few days ago and their names will be in the supplementary charge sheet.

JUDGMENT AFTER 28 YEARS!

Babri verdict on Sept 30; Advani, Joshi asked to be in court

Lucknow: A special CBI court hearing the Babri mosque demolition case will pronounce its judgment on September 30. Judge SK Yadav has directed all the accused to remain present in the court on the day of judgment. Prominent among the 32 accused are former deputy prime minister L K Advani and BJP leaders M M Joshi, Kalyan Singh, Uma Bharti and Vinay Katiyar. CBI counsel Lalit Singh said the arguments of the defence and prosecution concluded on September 1 and thereafter the special judge started writing the judgment. The CBI has produced 351 witnesses and about 600 documentary evidence before the court. The Babri mosque in Ayodhya was demolished by kar sevaks on December 6, 1992.

Dr Reddy's inks deal with Russia to vaccinate India

To distribute 100 million doses of Sputnik vaccine

New Delhi: The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), Russia's sovereign wealth fund, has tied up with the Hyderabad-based pharma firm Dr Reddy's Laboratories Ltd (Dr Reddy's) to supply 100 million doses of Sputnik V — the Covid vaccine developed by Russian researchers — in India once it has received all the necessary regulatory clearances.

Dr Reddy's will perform phase 3 clinical trials — where a vaccine is tested on thousands to establish efficacy and safety — for Sputnik V in India, as required by Indian regulatory norms. "Deliveries could potentially begin in late 2020 subject to completion of successful trials and registration of the vaccine by regulatory authorities in India," the RDIF said in a press statement issued on Wednesday.

"The agreement between RDIF and Dr Reddy's reflects the growing awareness of countries and organizations to have a diversified anti-Covid vaccine portfolio to



protect their populations."

Sputnik V is an adenovirus vector-based vaccine that was registered by the Russian Ministry of Health on August 11. It is the world's first registered Covid-19 vaccine, and results of the phase 1 and 2 clinical trials were published in The Lancet earlier this month.

RDIF CEO Kirill Dmitriev said Sputnik V will "provide a safe and scientifically validated option" to aid the country's battle. "We are very pleased to partner with Dr Reddy's in India. Dr Reddy's has had a very well established and respected presence in Russia for over 25 years and is one of the leading pharmaceutical compa-

nies in India," he said. The RDIF has been in touch with several pharmaceutical companies in India for the manufacture and clinical trials of the vaccine but this is the first formal agreement it has signed.

Co-Chairman & Managing Director of Dr Reddy's Laboratories GV Prasad said "Sputnik V vaccine could provide a credible option in our fight against Covid-19 in India."

"We are pleased to partner with RDIF to bring the vaccine to India. The phase 1 and 2 results have shown promise, and we will be conducting phase III trials in India to meet the requirements of the Indian regulators," he added.

India shreds Pak at UN, calls it epicentre of terrorism

New Delhi: India described Pakistan as an "epicentre of terrorism" and said no one deserves unsolicited lecture on human rights from Islamabad that has consistently persecuted its ethnic and religious minorities including Hindus, Sikhs and Christians. Exercising the Right of Reply to the statements made by Pakistan at the 45th session of Human Rights Council (HRC), the Indian representative said that it has become habitual for Pakistan to malign India with false and fabricated narratives for its self-serving malicious purposes.

"Neither India nor others deserve this unsolicited lecture on human rights from a country that has consistently persecuted its ethnic and religious minorities, is an epicentre of terrorism, has the distinction of providing pensions to individuals on UN Sanctions list and has a Prime Minister who proudly admits training tens of thousands of terrorists to fight in Jammu and Kashmir," Vimarsh Aryan, first secretary, MEA, said. The diplomat said that it was not surprising that other relevant

multilateral institutions have been raising serious concerns on Pakistan's failure to stop terror financing and lack of effective actions against all terror entities in Pakistan. Highlighting the nefarious designs of Pak-



istan in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, the diplomat said, "the mass influx of outsiders has whittled down the number of Kashmiris to an insignificant number in Pakistan occupied parts of Indian Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh."

"In its zeal to reassert its theocratic ideology, it has ensured that ethnic and religious minorities have no future through systematic persecution, blasphemy laws, forced conversions, targeted killings, sectarian violence and faith-based discrimination," the diplomat said. **Continued on P5**

LS takes up Bill to amend Banking Regulation Act

► Aims to bring coop banks under RBI supervision

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha on Wednesday took up for consideration a Bill to address the potential disruptions in the financial system by providing for the Reserve Bank of India to prepare a scheme for reconstruction or amalgamation of the banking company without the necessity of first making an order of moratorium.

Moving the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill 2020 for passage of the House, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the legislation had been brought to protect the interest of depositors.

The Bill will replace an ordinance brought earlier by the government.

"For the last two years, depositors of cooperative banks and small banks are facing problems. We are trying to bring this amendment in order to protect the depositors. Because these banks have fallen into hard days requiring therefore the regulator to bring a moratorium and to solve the problem seems to consume all the time. During the budget session in March, we introduced this bill in order to have the amendments brought in so that depositors' interest will be taken care of. **Continued on Page 5**

Delhi BJP chief Gupta tests corona positive

PURNA SINGH

New Delhi: Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta said he has tested positive for COVID-19. Taking to Twitter on Wednesday, the Delhi BJP chief said he was tested again after he had complained of mild fever and that his report has now come out to be positive.

"Last week, I took a COVID test after having light fever. Its report was negative. I was tested again since I was feeling unwell. The report has now come as positive," he tweeted in Hindi. Gupta said he was already in quar-



antine during the last week and advised those who had come in his contact to get themselves tested.

Meanwhile, 17 people have been found infected in the BJP's Delhi state office. Four days ago, a coronation check was con-

ducted at the state office on Tuesday as a precaution after an office peon was infected.

The media cell head of BJP's Delhi unit said that all those found infected have been sent to various Covid centers. All people exposed to the infected have been advised to remain in isolation.

Cases against lawmakers

Centre favours time-bound trial

New Delhi: The Centre favoured expeditious disposal of pending cases against former and sitting lawmakers on Wednesday before the Supreme Court and said these matters "must reach their logical conclusion" within a time frame.

A bench of Justices N V Ramana, Surya Kanta and Hrishikesh Roy was told by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, that he has no problems with the suggestions made for speedy disposal of case by senior ad-



vocate Vijay Hansaria, appointed as amicus curiae in the matter.

Mehta said that if proceedings of any of these cases against lawmakers are stayed by the high court, then the top court may direct it to decide the matter in a time bound

manner. He told the bench that these cases "must reach their logical conclusion within a time bound manner" and if any central agency (like CBI or ED) is not proceeding with the matter despite there being no stay then he would take up the issue

at another level. "Whatever directions will come from the Supreme Court, the Union of India will welcome them," Mehta said, adding that if there are any lacunae regarding infrastructure of special courts, then the top court may direct the state government concerned to do the needful within a maximum of one month.

At the outset, Hansaria, along with advocate Sneha Kalita, referred to the details of cases against MPs and MLAs from his report. **Continued on Page 5**

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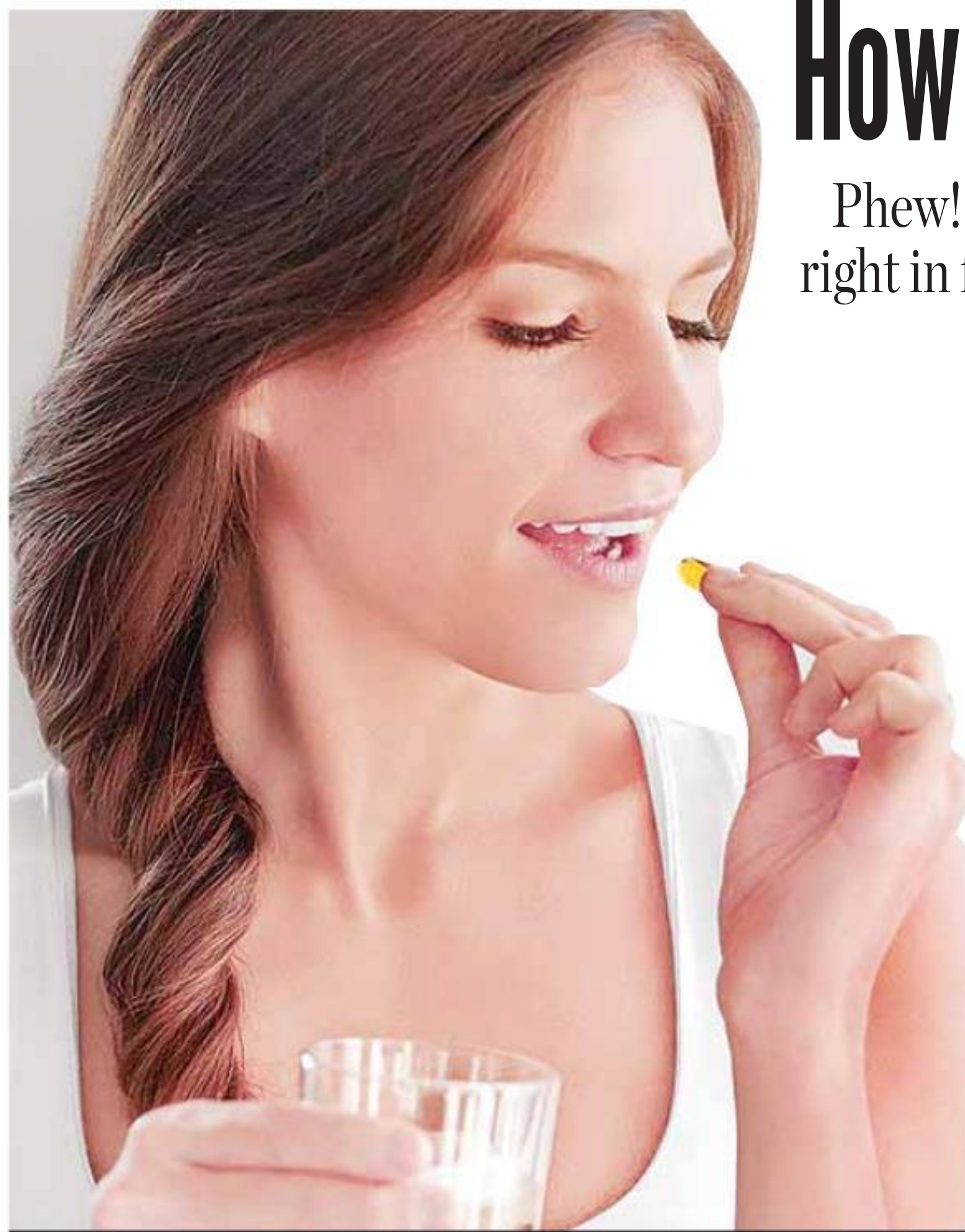
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How antioxidants can help you survive

Phew! Who would have thought the cure to your worries was actually right in front of you. Eating a variety of balanced meals with all these easily sourced ingredients is the secret to a disease free life.

With the ongoing pandemic, work from home and the onslaught of information we are provided with daily has jolted us from our slumber. Everyone is frantically looking up ways to live healthier lives and I couldn't be happier.

Though this renewed belief in the healing and preventive properties of food is a welcome change, I am rather baffled at the need to source exotic ingredients from across the world. I say invest in Antioxidants found in your local Indian produce instead. Antioxidants are compounds that prevent naturally occurring free radical damage in our body. Free radicals are responsible for depleting immunity, cancer risk, worsening diabetes, affecting heart health and a host of other diseases. Make sure to include the following antioxidant foods and safeguard your wellbeing.

Beta- carotene

Vitamin A derivative, beta-carotene ensures a robust



Naini Setalvad

immunity, clear vision and healthy skin. Fresh fruits and vegetables pack a heady punch of beta carotene. Commonly found in India in Pumpkin which is a very high source followed by leafy greens like arbi leaves, spinach, drumstick leaves, dill leaves, curry leaves, carrots, bell peppers, mango, Rajgira, brown rice, barley and sweet potato.

Lycopene

You may have not heard about beta-carotene's chemical cousin which is another powerful antioxidant and is responsible for the bright red colour in tomato, watermelon and grapes. Cooked tomatoes are a richer source of this antioxidant than raw tomatoes.

Vitamin C

During the pandemic this vitamin has taken prominence for its immune boosting properties. The collagen producing, iron absorption facilitator, wound healing vitamin can be found highest in amla, followed by guava, lemon juice, mixed capsicums, wheat grass, drumstick, tomato, potato, sweet potato, orange yam, papayas and green chillies to name a few.

Vitamin E

This nutrient is responsible for fighting infections, cell protection, healthy heart and glowing skin. Vitamin E is found in nuts like almond, pistachio, peanuts, cold

pressed oils, dry coconut and seeds like sunflower, flaxseeds.

Zinc

A key player in the immune system, zinc is required for growth, development and metabolism. Zinc is present in nuts and seeds like cashew, almond, sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds, whole pulses, dals and sprouts.

Selenium

This not so very common mineral does not get its due credit. It plays an active role in the immune system, in maintaining heart health and prevent metal decline. Found in whole grains like wheat, pulses, dals, nuts and seeds.

Home remedies for Pigmentation

Indian skin is prone to hyperpigmentation which causes brown blotchy spots or excess tanning. Skin pigmentation is one of the biggest concerns for people who worry about their complexion. Uneven skin tone, sun spots, acne scars, melasma and dark circles can really affect people emotionally and mentally. Excess melanin production is one of the foremost reasons for cosmetically distressing pigmentation. Hyperpigmentation occurs when the skin produces more melanin leading to spots or patches and makes the skin area darker.

While some types of hyperpigmentation occurring due to sun exposure affects face, arms and legs, others types can occur anywhere in the body. Hormonal changes can also increase the production of melanin in the body.

While there are many medical procedures that are advised for skin pigmentation problems, the aim of the treatment is to reduce the melanin content in the superficial layer of the skin or to create superficial exfoliation. This will help the top layer of the skin, which might have been damaged, to get rejuvenated with a lighter shade. Dr Sravya Chowdary Tipirneni, Consultant Dermatologist & Cosmetologist, Columbia Asia Hospital Whitefield shares some super simple remedies that you can definitely try.

Milk: It contains lactic acid that is used in many face washes and peeling agents. You can apply milk on the dark regions of the body using a cotton pad twice or thrice daily.

Aloe vera gel: Aloin works to lighten spots and tan and this application can be easily left overnight.

Green tea extract: Cooled down tea bags can go directly on the patches and washed off after half an hour. This can be done daily till you see improvement.

Apple cider vinegar (very diluted only!): Apply this only for a few minutes strictly and wash off followed by a licorice extract or kojic acid containing moisturizer. This combination works very well.

Potato juice: A lot of people love this and swear by it. You can apply this juice and leave it for a few hours or overnight either on the patches only or full face and neck.

Tomato juice: The Lycopene in this acts as an effective lightening agent and can show quick results if it is used immediately after you notice the tan.



Don't underestimate the power of accessories

Fashion accessories are pieces that, although they can serve practical functions, are chosen to complement the rest of an outfit, the finishing touches. Accessorising allows you to add new energy to the old standbys in your capsule wardrobe.

Accessorising is all about balance, and the right accessories can make even the most basic outfit look glam. Here are a few tips on how to perfectly match your accessories with your outfit

Choose a signature accessory

If you feel overwhelmed by accessory options, choose just one statement piece that makes you feel great and that you can wear with multiple outfits. When you're ready to add more accessories, create balance by choosing one piece to dominate your look in terms of size or colour, then layer on more subtle accessories.

Think about colours and patterns

Accessories are a great way to add a pop of colour to a simple outfit. Bright colours and animal prints can be difficult to work

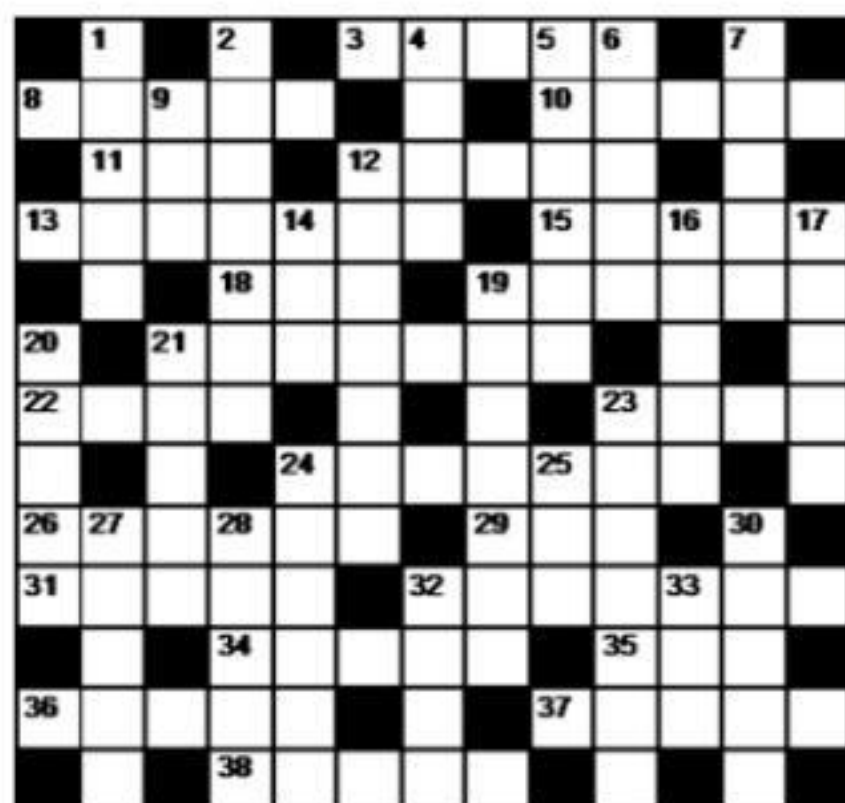
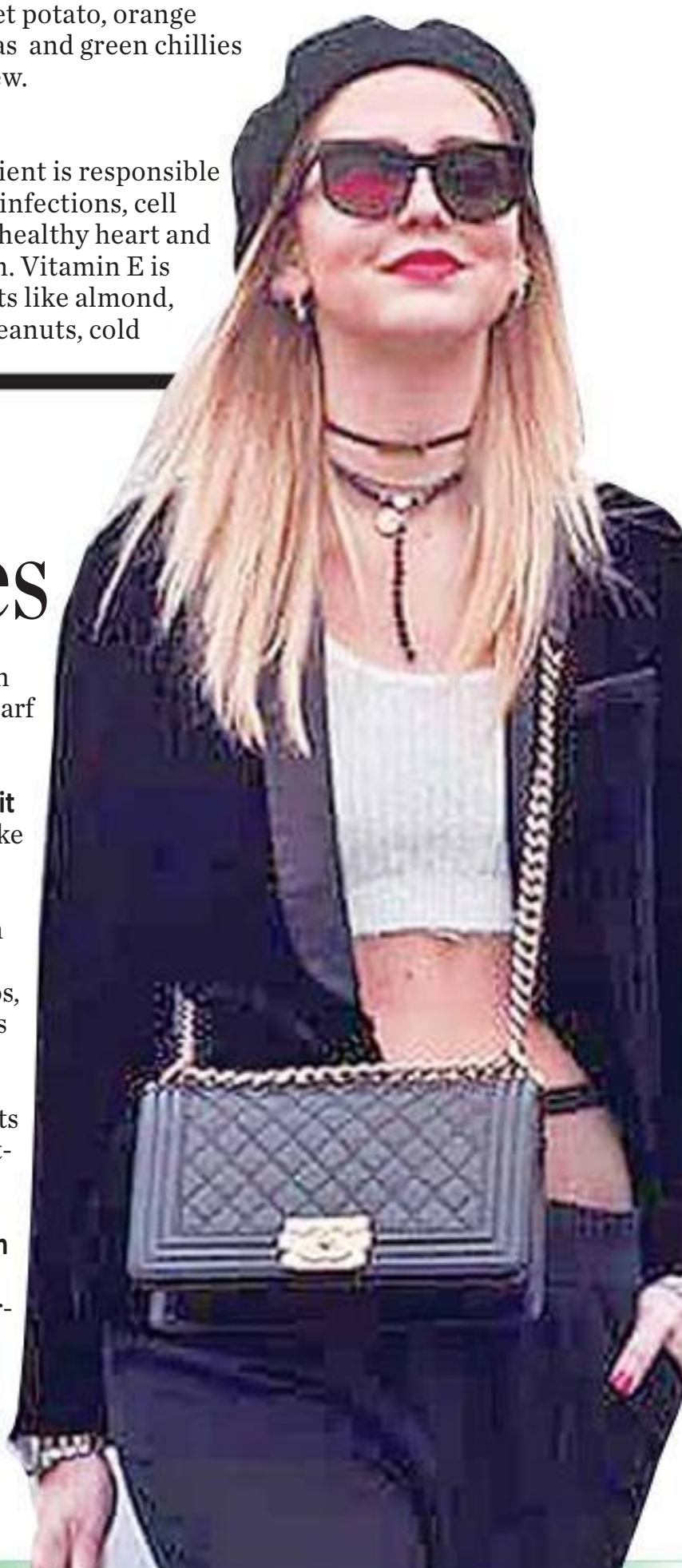
into your wardrobe, but vibrant, fun accessories like shoes, a belt, or a scarf can elevate your look.

Use accessories to transform an outfit

Accessories are an easy way to take an outfit from the office to dinner with friends. A classic little black dress looks work-appropriate when paired with a blazer and flats. Ditch the blazer, swap the flats for stilettos, and add a pair of statement earrings or a cocktail ring, and you're ready for a night out. Have a few go-to accessories in mind for those moments when you're not able to do a full outfit change.

Your accessories don't need to match

Matching accessories can read more conservative than fashion-forward. If you're not sure which colours go together, start by adding one colourful accessory to a base of neutrals. Then, use the colour wheel to get new ideas for bold colour combinations.



SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER 16

CROSSWORD

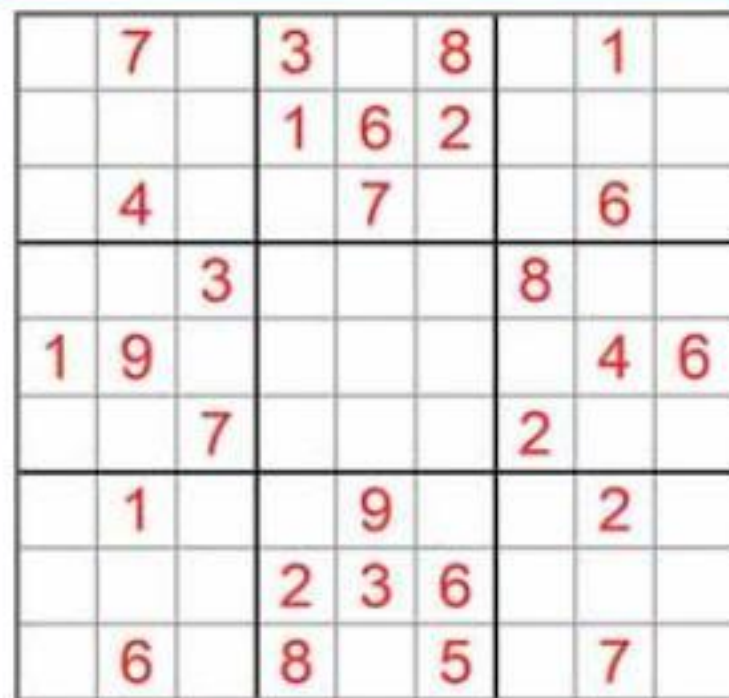
Across

- 3 Climbing evergreen plants (5)
- 8 Gem (5)
- 10 Rogers or Loggins of music (5)
- 11 Dance (3)
- 12 Entertainment unit - the idiot box (2,3)
- 13 Ol' Blue Eyes (7)
- 15 Extravagant, fantastic (5)
- 18 A child's plaything (3)
- 19 Students (6)
- 21 If all else fails (2,5)
- 22 Roman dress (4)
- 23 Hollywood's Heckman (4)
- 24 More motionless (7)
- 26 Fabric folds (6)
- 29 A metal (3)
- 31 Act passively (5)
- 32 Comes back (7)
- 34 Senior (5)
- 35 Latin trio (3)
- 36 Class (5)
- 37 Cause to lose courage (5)
- 38 English county (5)

Down

- 1 Re-arrange (5)
- 2 Boat races (7)
- 4 Long live; an exam (4)
- 5 Obtain with difficulty (3,3)
- 6 Arrangement (3-2)
- 7 Small projecting ridge, etc. (5)
- 9 Be victorious (3)
- 12 Auditions (7)
- 14 Tug (3)
- 16 Roman river (5)
- 17 German industrial city (5)
- 19 Church book (7)
- 20 Stairs (5)
- 21 Lace's end (5)
- 23 Real; authentic (7)
- 24 Fashions (6)
- 25 Illuminated (3)
- 27 Seventh sign of the zodiac (5)
- 28 Domicile (5)
- 30 Eastern Church member (5)
- 32 Nerve network (4)
- 33 Outer edge (3)

SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER 16

NEWS ROUNDUP

Sonakshi Sinha: I'm not worried about when work will start

Actress Sonakshi Sinha says she is not fretting about getting back to work, or how the industry will change in the Covid era. The actress shared that she is loving the lockdown life for now. Sonakshi says, "I am just going to admit that I am loving lockdown life. In the last 10 years, I haven't gotten a break for so long, where I have been able to spend time with myself, understand what I want from life, do the things I like to do and just be one with yourself, sort your head out, contemplate and understand what's important and what's not important in life. I'm really loving it."



"I know it's going to be difficult going back to the set, with 'what you are touching', 'don't touch your face', and with people in PPE kits. I did one photoshoot and it was so strange being around people who are covered up head to toe and you are the only one open. You are like 'keep your hands to yourself and don't touch your face', sanitise every five minutes. It's really weird," she added. The actress is 'keeping that worry aside and doing what makes me happy at the moment'.

NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY AS A 'BACKWARD LOOKING DOCUMENT'

'Education should not be on ancient cultural values'

New Delhi: Terming the new National Education Policy as a "backward looking document", senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge said on Wednesday that education should be based on principles of the Constitution and not be on ancient cultural values. Raising the issue as a Zero Hour mention in Rajya Sabha, Kharge, who was recently elected to the upper house, said the entire NEP is a "backward looking document" that is looking 2000 years back instead of planning and preparing our children for the future.

"Therefore the values of moral education in schools and higher education should be based on the

principles of the Constitution and not on ancient cultural values," he added.

The NEP-2020 is the first education policy of the 21st century, which was announced 34 years after the previous National Policy on Education in 1986. The NEP-2020 is directed towards major reforms at both the school and higher education level, the government has said. Kharge noted that a provision in the Constitution states that in state and state-aided institutions there should be no religious instructions.

According to Article 28 (1), no religious instructions shall be provided in any educational institutions wholly maintained out of the state fund, he said. In cities,

Kharge said, children who have access to quality nursery education learn to read and write by the time they join class 1.

However, he said poor children in towns and villages will be at a disadvantage because there is no proper policy defined for training of Aanganwadi teachers. Poor children will start with a disadvantage of not having learnt for three years before joining class 1.

"Nearly 50 per cent of students drop out after Class 10. There is no plan that has been suggested to reduce this drop outs. It is estimated that 32.4 per cent of these student drop outs are Dalits, 25.7 per cent minorities and 16.4 per cent are tribals," Kharge said.



GEARED UP FOR FULL-FLEDGED WAR ALONG LAC: ARMY

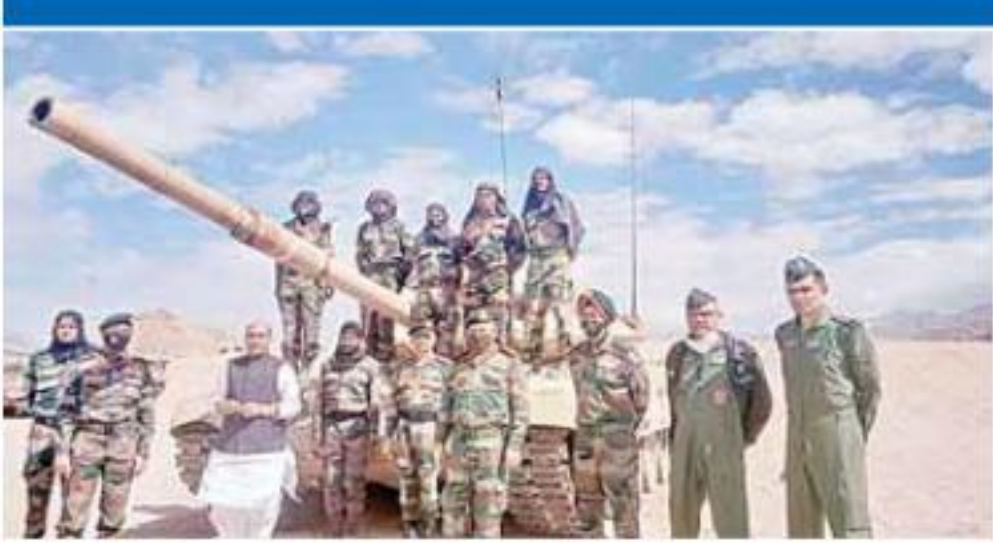
New Delhi: Asserting that it is fully prepared to fight a full-fledged war even in winters in eastern Ladakh, the Indian Army on Wednesday said if China created conditions for war, they will face a better trained, better prepared, fully rested and psychologically hardened Indian troops.

The Indian Army is keeping its formidable Bofors howitzers ready for operations. In a visit to the maintenance facilities for the Bofors guns in Ladakh, ANI could see the effort with which the engineers of the force are servicing and maintaining the 155mm Bofors gun in Ladakh.

In a statement, it said compared to physically and psychologically battle-hardened Indian troops, Chinese troops mostly are from urban areas and not used to hardships or prolonged deployment under field conditions.

The Army Northern Command headquarters made these assertions reacting to China's official media Global Times reports that India's operational logistics is not geared up adequately and it will

Amid China tension, Army readies Bofors guns



not be able to fight through winters effectively.

"This can best be attributed to ignorance. Indian Army is fully prepared and more than capable of fighting a full-fledged war even in winters in eastern Ladakh," a Northern Command spokesperson said.

He said altitudes in Ladakh range from high to super-high altitude and there is a lot of snowfall up to 40 feet after November. Coupled with this, the temperature dipping down to minus 30 to 40

degree Celsius is a usual phenomenon. Wind chill factor makes matters even worse for the troops. The roads also get closed due to the snow. But despite all this, the most encouraging part for India is that the Indian soldiers have a huge experience of winter warfare and are psychologically tuned to operate at short notice, the spokesperson said.

While these facts are known to the world, he said, adding the operational logistics capabilities, however, are hardly known. Logis-

100-200 shots fired before Moscow Pact

Two days before External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi reached an agreement in Moscow, heightened tensions along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh had led Indian and Chinese troops to open fire on the north bank of Pangong Tso. While the Indian troops had moved towards the western side of Finger 3, the Chinese army had moved to occupy the area between Finger 3 and 4. The step by both the countries led to firing of "100 to 200 shots" in the air as the

troops came 300 metre close to each other. A report by Indian Express quoted a top government officer, aware of the details, as saying: "100 to 200 shots were fired in the air by both sides on the ridgeline where Finger 3 and Finger 4 merge before moving north as one ridge." "In the first week of September, there was a lot of movement" on both the north and south banks of Pangong Tso, the officer was quoted as saying, mentioning "multiple" incidents of firing in the region in the first week of September.

tic capability relates to mobility, habitat and billeting, quality services for health, special rations, repair and recovery, heating systems, high-quality weapons, ammunition, quality clothing, and so on.

While much of these capabilities existed earlier and troops could simply plug and play, a lot has also been boosted since May this year when China showed first signs of aggression, he said.

Lightning kills 7 in Madhya Pradesh

Damoh/Bhopal (IANS): Seven persons have died due to lightning at different places in Madhya Pradesh's Damoh district. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and former CM Kamal Nath have expressed grief over the deaths. According to information received from the administration, three members of a family were killed in the last 24 hours due to lightning at Lamti village in Damoh district near Tezgarh police station area.

The three were working at a farm. Two other persons died at Daba village and one each in Sataria and Kunwarpur due to lightning. Expressing grief over the deaths, Chouhan said "Seven people have died due to lightning in Damoh district. I pray to God to give peace to the departed souls and strength to the families to bear the loss." Former Chief Minister Kamal Nath said seven people have been reported to have died due to lightning in a tragic accident in Damoh district. I pray to God to grant peace to the departed souls and also fortitude to their families to bear the loss.



Centre has no data of police harassment

New Delhi: The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday informed Rajya Sabha that since police and public order are State subjects, the Centre has no records of complaints, FIRs, regarding harassment/injury or death of individuals by police measures while enforcing the Covid-19 lockdown in the country, Minister of State (MoS) Home G Kishan Reddy, in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, said "Police and public order are State subjects as per 7th schedule of Constitution of India. Hence, the actions are taken by the respective State government." It also added that the data pertaining to complaints and cases/FIR registered regarding such incidents are "not maintained centrally."

India crosses 50 lakh mark

New Delhi: The total number coronavirus cases in India crossed the 50 lakh mark on Wednesday as the country recorded 90,123 new cases in the past 24 hours.

The country's caseload now stands at 50,20,359. India also recorded single day spike of 1,290 deaths which is the highest recorded deaths in a day since the pandemic began.

In India, over 82,000 people have lost their lives due to coronavirus. According to Union Health Ministry, the caseload includes 9,95,933 active cases and 39,42,360 recovered patients.

Indian expat nurse succumbs in Oman

Muscat(IANS): An India expatriate nurse succumbed to Covid-19 at the Royal hospital here, registering the first coronavirus-related death among MoH health workers in Oman, the Ministry of Health said in a statement on Wednesday.

"With great sadness and sorrow, the Ministry of Health of the Sultanate of Oman mourns the passing away of nurse Blessy Thomas at the Royal Hospital ICU on Monday due to Covid-19. This is the first death among health workers in MoH. The deceased was a true hero and a role model of hard and sincere work. The Minister of Health, as well as the MoH personnel and all health workers in Oman express their heartfelt condolences to the family of the deceased," the statement said.

Blessy is survived by her husband and two young children. There was a previous case of the death of a health worker due to COVID-19 who was working in a private clinic, Gulf News reported.

Many friends and colleagues also expressed shock and dismay at the news.

Buildings with 10+ Covid cases to be sealed: BMC

Mumbai: In a bid to curb the spread of Covid-19 in Mumbai, the city civic body has decided to seal an entire building if 10 or more coronavirus infection cases are found there. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's health department issued the revised protocols on Tuesday after civic chief Iqbal Singh Chahal held a meeting to review the the COVID-19 situation. Earlier, the BMC in July said if there is a COVID-19 case in a society or building, only the particular floor will be sealed and the entire building need not be sealed. According to the revised BMC protocols, the whole building will be sealed if 10 or more cases are reported from two or more floors, and will be sealed partially if one or more cases are found in a single home.

World's longest highway tunnel above 10K feet ready after 10 yrs

Manali: The construction of the Atal Tunnel connecting Manali with Leh, which is the world's longest highway tunnel above 10,000 feet, has been completed in a span of 10 years whereas the original estimated time was less than six years.

"Atal Tunnel, connecting Manali to Leh, is the world's longest highway tunnel above 10,000 feet. The estimated period for completion of this tunnel was less than 6 years but it was completed in 10 years," said KP Purushothaman, Chief Engineer.

"There are CCTV cameras at every 60 metres and emergency exit tunnels at every 500 metres inside the tunnel. The tunnel will reduce the distance between Manali and Leh by 46 kilometres and four hours can be saved," said KP Purushothaman. Fire hydrants have also been installed inside the tunnel in case of any fire incident.

"The induction and de-induction of resources was a difficult task while it was under construction. We did face a lot of challenges but together we were able to complete its construction. The tunnel's width is 10.5 metres, including footpath of 1 metre on both sides," said KP Purushothaman. Speaking to ANI, Colonel Parikshit Mehra, Director, Atal Tunnel project said that many experts working within the team were of the opinion to change the alignment of the tunnel.

"We have had this dream to connect Leh and this was the first step to the connectivity ladder. This tunnel was a challenging project because we were working only from two ends. The other end was in North, across the Rohtang Pass which was accessible only for around five months in a year," he added.



PM CARES fund opportunity in disaster, says Rahul

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday launched a fresh attack on the BJP-led Centre alleging its promises made during the Covid-19 crisis phase had failed.

The Wayanad MP accused the Centre of "building castles in the air regarding defeating Corona in 21 days, Arogya Setu app protecting people, 20 lakh crores package, nobody entered our borders and the situation is under control."

The Congress leader, through his tweet, further alleged that "There was one truth too: 'Aapda Me Aavar' (Opportunity in Disaster) PM CARES."

Rajya Sabha MP Dr Abhishek Singhvi, attacked the Central government and said that the core pillars of the Indian democracy including both institutional and non-institutional are being tampered with, at a webinar



hosted by Congress leader Marri Shashidhar Reddy.

While speaking on the occasion, Singhvi who is also a prominent lawyer, pointed out various institutional and non-institutional pillars of democracy and their prominent role in shaping the country.

"The press has been moving from sense to sensationalism, from news to notice, balance to extremism. Media being the 4th estate has plummeted in the direction," the senior Congress leader said at the webinar that lasted for one hour.

'Namaste Trump', toppling MP Govt delayed lockdown: Oppn

New Delhi (IANS): Participating in the discussion in the Rajya Sabha on the Covid-19 situation, the Opposition alleged that the imposition of the nationwide lockdown was delayed because of the 'Namaste Trump' event and to bring down the elected government in Madhya Pradesh.

DMK MP Tiruchi Siva said during the discussion on Wednesday that "The government deliberately delayed the lockdown and the reason was Donald Trump." Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) MP Manoj Jha said the programme has cost the country dearly, and "later the government thought that the lockdown was the cure". CPI-M MP E. Kareem alleged that the "lockdown was only announced when the government was toppled in MP."

The opposition was of the view that the lockdown was unplanned and the people suffered as a result. JD(U) MP R.C.P. Singh said the 'migrant' word should be scrapped as "how a citizen of the country



can be a migrant in another state".

Earlier on Wednesday, Congress leader Anand Sharma initiated the discussion on the statement of the Union Health Minister made on Tuesday. Sharma targeted the government over the "sudden lockdown". He said the government is claiming it prevented nearly 14 to 29 lakh Covid-19 infections and now the

Centre is saying it does not have the data for migrant labourers.

"Yesterday, the health minister said that this decision (lockdown) could prevent approximately 14 to 29 lakh Covid-19 cases and 37,000-78,000 deaths. This House must be informed what is the scientific basis of this and how we have reached this conclusion," Sharma said. He said

that there was a very wide gap.

Sharma also questioned why the government has no data on the migrant workers. He highlighted that had facilities like quarantine centres been in place in the cities for the migrant workers, their reverse migration could have been restricted and the pandemic could have been contained from spreading to the rural areas.

Soldier succumbs to injuries after Pak ceasefire violation

Srinagar: An Indian Army soldier who was injured in the ceasefire violation in Rajouri area of Jammu succumbed to his injuries, the army said in an official statement today.

"Pakistan Army resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violation along the Line of Control (LoC) in Sunderbani Sector, Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir. Our troops responded strongly to the enemy fire. In the incident, Naik Aneesh Thomas was critically injured and later succumbed to his injuries," Jammu based defence spokesman said this morning.

"Naik Aneesh Thomas was a brave, highly motivated and a sincere soldier. The nation will always remain indebted to him for his supreme sacrifice and devotion to duty," Lt Col Devender Anand said while addressing the media.

Centre should tread cautiously on Power Bill

Eleven States including the two Telugu States and one Union Territory are opposing the Electricity Amendment Bill 2020 saying that it threatens to violate the principles of cooperative federalism. The Telangana Assembly had even passed a resolution to the effect.

The Centre claims that the Electricity (Amendment) Bill would address “critical issues weakening the commercial and investment activities in the electricity sector”. It prescribes multiple policy tools to achieve this objective. If passed, the power sector would be moving from government control to the hands of private sector.

The question now is how will it help the nation? Are the solutions provided in the bill viable and sustain-

able? Can they address the core problems of power sector? There have been several reforms in the past and yes, today the power situation in the country is good. But all the while the control has been with the respective State governments. It now needs to be seen if privatisation could be the solution for further improving the power situation in the country.

Many discoms are facing operational and financial inefficiencies in terms of power generation, transmission and distribution utilities, access and quality of power supply, political interference, lack of private investments, inadequate public infrastructure and lack of consumer participation. Will centralisation of decision making in power sector help in ad-

ressing the present problems is the million dollar question.

The protagonists of the proposed reforms feel that the objective of this bill is to bring uniformity in governance of power sector. This will make it mandatory for States to align themselves with the vision of Centre and the problems like PPA reviews as attempted by Andhra Pradesh which had led to serious problems from private investors from across the globe can be avoided. The bill would expand the scope of privatisation in the power sector.

The Centre appears to be of the opinion that this will help in flow of private investments into distribution business and privatisation of utilities would be in operational efficiency. The bigger aims seem to be de-stressing the discoms. While an in-depth, open minded discussion is needed and the Centre should not rush through passing the Bill and should have a structured roadmap to bridge the gaps. The ex-

isting disconnected dots should be joined. According to the draft, ECEA will have sole authority to adjudicate matters related to specific performance of contracts related to purchase or sale of power. The States fear that it will affect the free power programmes and would work against the interest of farmers and poorer sections of the society. The Centre says that to overcome this problem they had incorporated a provision for direct benefit transfer of subsidy to help the farmers and domestic consumers from weaker sections of society.

The Bill also aims to ensure a mandatory minimum purchase of power from renewable sources of energy and enforce stringent penal measures for non-compliance with the provisions in the act. Since it is going to be a very major reform the Centre has to take all states into confidence and if need be hold meetings like it did in case of GST and then take a final decision.

PART- III

Those little houses of many mirrors

TALKING OF MANY THINGS



Dr Mohan Kanda

I was posted as Collector of Krishna district and, at last, was able to live in a spacious bungalow. The pleasure, however, proved to be short-lived as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh, Sharda Mukherjee, after a visit to Nagarjunasagar (details of which I have explained elsewhere in this column), literally hijacked me to the Raj Bhavan!

The two Governors with whom I had the privilege and honour to work with, Sharda Mukherjee and K C Abraham were extremely considerate and kind. Those two years proved extremely eventful and many significant developments took place which I have mentioned elsewhere in this column. While the posting offered little by way of real work, there was plenty of activity.

On the personal front, one highlight was that the house in which we lived was extremely well appointed and new within the premises. Another was watching TV for the first time. One sat in the Durbar Hall of Raj Bhavan and, together with scores of the staff, watched the India - Pakistan cricket series live on the telly.

Following K C Abraham's decision, to keep his promise to me to send me to the field after a year with him, I was posted to Krishna district as Collector. One was finally promoted into occupying the bungalow which one, as Assistant Collector (under training), had watched wistfully from a distance years ago! And, strangely enough, another house which was allegedly haunted!

Once again the posting failed to run its course. Following a tiff

I had with the then Chief Minister, Channa Reddy, I was shifted to Andhra Pradesh Fisheries Corporation (APFC), with its Head Office at Visakhapatnam – not in the summary and abrupt fashion the Chief Minister was known for, but after a friendly chat during which I was practically persuaded that it was a better place to go to!

It proved to be an exciting assignment with many interesting aspects of which I have described elsewhere in this column. The assignment was professionally satisfying and personally comfortable, except for the fact that one had to go through a lot of hassles to get the children admitted in good schools at Visakhapatnam. I was able to rescue the Corporation from near disaster but, precisely when an exciting scenario was unfolding, was forced to leave, on account of circumstances beyond my control.

I headed to Delhi to take over as the Secretary to the Vice President of India, thanks to a recommendation to Vice President Hidayatullah by my former boss Sharda Mukherjee. The Vice President had just moved from 9, Janpath (Sonia Gandhi was the previous occupant) to 26 Maulana Azad Road, the traditional residence of the Vice President of India.

Not having originally been greatly enthusiastic about the posting (except for the sense of relief of getting away from the state, when the politics was becoming a little suffocating, I must confess to feeling disappointed that, once again, we were destined to live in an outhouse of a bungalow which probably, this time, we would probably never!

The stint in the Upa Rashtrapati Bhavan also proved to be a challenging and event filled period many interesting aspects of which I have described elsewhere in this column.

Following a minor misunderstanding with the Vice President and my desire to return to the state coinciding with an intention from the newly formed TDP government, headed by NTR, to join the Chief Minister's office, I decided to return to Hyderabad.



And, as a specially chosen Joint Secretary in the Chief Minister's office, no less, had to live in the smallest flat we ever lived in, in a nondescript apartment house called Mayuri Apartments!

My tenure in NTR's office was one of the most high profile and productive postings in my service. Many exciting things happened, some of which caused me sadness, and other disappointments, which I have recorded elsewhere in these columns.

That posting was followed by assignments which included the Registrar of Cooperative Societies of the State, the Excise Commissioner, the Civil Supplies Commissioner, the Secretary, (Food and Agriculture), the Secretary to the Chief Minister (when N. Janardhan Reddy was the Chief Minister) and, before I left for Delhi for a stint in the Government of India, a stint as Secretary (Agriculture and Cooperation) of the State. It was during that period that we moved from Mayuri Apartments to a flat in Kranti Sikkhar, we then moved into an independent house in Sanjeev Reddy Nagar Colony and, finally, to Kundan Bagh Colony. It was in Kundan Bagh that I first cultivated the habit of regular physical exercise, using a gym.

I joined as a Joint Secretary in the Department of Agriculture Cooperation (DoAC) of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) of the

government of India in January, 1995. I stayed for a long period in Delhi, a period that had its own interesting and disappointing moments, recorded elsewhere in this column.

I was houseless when I landed in Delhi, and the professional environment was unfriendly and intimidating. After seven long months in the A P Bhavan I was finally rescued by the kindness of my friend Peter Hasan who managed to get me an allotment in Chanakyapuri. A friend had managed what all my contacts including some in the Prime Minister's office could not!

There followed stays in two flats in Chanakyapuri over my stint in the government of India for the next eight years, an eventful period many details of which I have covered elsewhere in this column.

Following a request from the then Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, I returned to the state as the Chief Secretary, and had the pleasure of being the first occupant of a newly remodelled, fully furnished bungalow situated in a large compound, once again in Kundan Bagh.

There are other aspects of life in which blind faith, rather than scientific reasoning, guides the actions of persons. Take, for instance, the case of superstitions about numbers about relying on signs or omens, or to use the In-

dian equivalent of the word 'sakunams' (or as the people in the northern parts of India would call them 'Shaguns').

I, myself, cannot claim to be immune to the weakness. While these signs maybe “shadowy reminiscences of antique credulity” as A.G. Gardiner called them, most of us are influenced by them though we may not admit it. How many of us can resist the temptation of consulting an astrologer, a palmist or a fortune teller about what lies in store for us in the future?

Some of the most educated and successful political leaders senior civil servants and business have all fallen prey to this temptation. History tells us that even Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great when no exceptions. To this day there are many streets in London without a house numbered 13. And, while hotels have no 13th floor in the western world, in China the number 4 is treated with similar fear. It was hoped that, with the advent of modern science superstition would be dis-inherited as the laws of nature had put man in his place. But, well into the 21st century mankind remains as much vulnerable to this phenomenon as it has ever been.

(To be continued)

(The writer is former Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh)

SEPTEMBER 17, 1948

Remembering Hyderabad Liberation Day

DR RAMESH CHENNAMANENI

A most powerful Marxist quote and very relevant for many struggles says “social conditions determine social consciousness”. It tells us that if you put a population under conditions of extreme inequality and injustice for sufficient time, then they will eventually rise up. More recently, social consciousness is linked to the collective self-awareness and experience of collectively shared social identity.

By the experience of collectively shared social identity, individuals may experience social unity. Social consciousness may also stimulate working towards a common goal. We have seen such collective self-awareness in the historical Telangana Rebellion against feudal Nizam of erstwhile Hyderabad State and in the Telangana movement for a separate state in the recent past.

The uniqueness of Hyderabad Liberation Day of September 17 has to be seen in larger context today should we make an attempt to objectively understand the causality effect underlying it. The Telangana Rebellion against Nizam represents the culmination of efforts by communist and socialist parties in the first few decades of the communist movement.

The untiring efforts organising and mobilising the peasantry against grave injustices represented a break away from traditionally more moderate reformist movements within the peasantry in pre independent India. Although the exact significance and value of the Telangana movement is fiercely debated, one cannot deny the role of the movement in bringing the question of the peasantry to the fore of the countries agenda as well as for the communist movement; in actively organising people against caste injustices; and in radically redefining the need for strong organizational structure, which was a key factor in the growth of the movement elsewhere in the country.

Apart from Telangana Rebellion (1946-51), other historic movements were Tebagma movement (1946-1949), Kagodu Satyagraha (1951), Naxalbari Movement (1967) and Lalgarh movement (2009). Andhra Mahasabha: Banner of Telangana Armed Struggle.

Before Indian Independence, Hyderabad state was a princely state within the territory of British India, comprised of three linguistic regions: the Telugu-speaking Telangana area (including the capital city, Hyderabad), the Marathi-speaking Marathwada area, and a small Kannada-speaking area.

Telangana occupied 50 per cent of the state's area. The nature of land ownership in the region was extremely exploitative. Forty per cent of the land was either directly owned by the Nizam or given by the Nizam to elites in the form of jagirs (special tenures). The remaining sixty per cent was under the government's land revenue system, which relied on powerful landlords and gave no legal rights or security from eviction to the people actually cultivating the land. The vetti (forced labour) system consisted of work performed by lower castes at the will of the landlord. Another practice was the prevalence of keeping girls as 'slaves' in landlords' houses, used by landlords as concubines.

Formed in 1928, Andhra Mahasabha was organised under the leadership of Madapati Hanumantha Rao, Suravaram Pratapa Reddy and others. In conferences, it used to pass resolutions demanding certain reforms in the administrative structure, for more schools, for certain concessions for the landed gentry, for certain civil liberties, but did not try to mobilise the people and launch struggles against the oppressors or against the Nizam's government.

But it became in those wretched and tremendously oppressive conditions in Hyderabad state, a forum, a focal point for the rising democratic aspirations of the people. It is this background and the continued resistance of the oppressed which culminated into the historic Telangana armed struggle against the Nizam. It was the Communist Party of India which has organised this peasant led armed rebellion against the cruel rule of Nizam landlords under the banner of Andhra Mahasabha.

Few among the well-known individuals at the forefront of the movement were Ravi Narayana Reddy, Makhdoom Mohiuddin, Hassan Nasir, Bhimreddy Narasimha Reddy, Mallu Venkata Narasimha Reddy, Mallu Swarajyam, Arutla Ramchandra Reddy and his wife Arutla Kamala Devi. As part of this historic rebellion from 1946 to 1951, lakhs of people in Telangana resisted the brutal exploitation of Nizam and his razakars as well as jagirdars, deshmukhs and deshpandays etc.

About 60,000 people left their homes and joined actively as leaders of the movement and took to the arms to wage an armed struggle against Nizam and his Razakars. According to the official records, 35,000 people were arrested in Hyderabad State and put to inhuman torture. About a lakh bogus cases were booked against the participants of the movement. In spite of this upsurge, Nizam continued his brutal oppression and was in no way ready to recognise independence to India in 1947. As part of this historic struggle to liberate the Hyderabad state, 4500 people sacrificed their lives.

‘Police Action’ by the Indian Army

On September 13, 1948, in a ‘police action’ aimed at countering the violence in Hyderabad, the Indian Army marched into the state. Within a week's time, the Nizam, the razakar squads and the police surrendered.

Following the capture of the razakars, a military administration was set up under General J.N. Chaudhuri, and a military offensive was directed at the peasant rebels in the Telangana region. During the next three years, in more than 2,000 villages about 300,000 of people were tortured, about 50,000 were arrested and kept in detention camps for a few days to a few months.

More than 5,000 were imprisoned for years. The Indian Army's presence transformed the struggle, as it was no more a liberation struggle against the Nizam, but rather against the army of the newly-formed Indian Government.

In an effort to co-opt peasant support, the military administration issued the Jagir Abolition Regulation (August 1949) and set up an Agrarian Enquiry Committee to recommend comprehensive land reform legislation. It was clear, though, whose side the state was on; within two weeks the landlords started returning and regaining their lost land.

General J.N. Chaudhuri, the military governor made a statement from Hyderabad, calling all communists to surrender within a week, failing which they would be exterminated.

A debate ensued within the CPI. Certain sections, predominantly led by Ravi Narayana Reddy, felt that giving up arms was essential as India became independent, Nizam's rule came to an end and people have welcomed this change. Other sections were skeptical, as they felt that giving up arms could lead to loss of gains and appear as a betrayal of the people.

However, due to severe military repression leading to a huge loss of life the movement has weakened leading to the CPI formally declaring the struggle as withdrawn on October 21, 1951.

Political legitimacy and self-respect

One of the basic commitments and also political legitimacy reflects in recognition and honouring of September 17, 1948 by the central and the state governments. Celebrating 17th September would therefore honour and respect the sacrifices of the people for the liberation struggle of Hyderabad State and at the same time reaffirm our political commitment to complete the unfinished agenda for political, economic, and cultural emancipation within our own Telangana state.

It would also give a befitting reply to all forces trying to distort the history by zeroing the Hyderabad liberation as a fight between Nizams, Muslims and rest Hindu population. It should be mentioned here that in the first general elections to the Parliament in 1952, the leader of the Telangana armed struggle Ravi Narayana Reddy won his Nalgonda parliamentary seat with highest majority surpassing even Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru.

It is very interesting to note and should be given due importance during discussions on September 17th that the people of Telangana and their movement for a separate state saw many facets of socio-economic, cultural and political emancipation aspirations deriving right from anti-feudal historic Telangana armed struggle in Hyderabad state including equally important other people's movements such as farmers, students, civil liberties, women, Dalit and Adivasis in the past 70 years.

(The author is TRS MLA, Vemulawada, Telangana Assembly)

G KISHAN REDDY

While India's national flag was unfurled across the nation on 15th August 1947, the erstwhile state of Hyderabad had to wait for an agonising 13 months, still languishing under the tyranny of the Nizam of Hyderabad, Mir Osman Ali Khan. It was only after a relentless struggle with Sardar Vallabhai Patel ordering police action under Operation Polo that the entire Hyderabad Deccan was finally liberated on September 17, 1948.

This September 17, Maharashtra will be celebrating the 73rd Marathwada Mukti Sangram Diwas. Maharashtra in general and the Marathwada region in particular recognise the valiant efforts of Swami Ramanand Tirth, Govindbhai Shroff, Vajayantra Kabra, P H Patwardhan, and others to gain independence from the Nizam. These leaders understood the violence unleashed by the private militia of the Nizam, the Razakars, which is well documented in written histories and discussed in the oral lore of the region. Similarly, Karnataka too celebrates Hyderabad-Karnataka Liberation Day to commemorate the liberation of the north eastern districts of Bidar, Kalaburagi and Raichur that were part of the erstwhile Hyderabad state.

Unfortunately, my home state of Telangana does not share the same fortune. In spite of the entire present-day Telangana being part of the erstwhile Hyderabad Deccan state under the Nizam, there is no recognition of the heroes of this region who withstood the atrocities of the Razakars in fighting for the region's liberation. The heroics and sacrifices of the Telangana region leaders Komaram Bheem, P V Narasimha Rao, Marri Chennareddy, Shobullah Khan,

Telangana Liberation Day



Vandemataram Ramachandra Rao, Narayanarao Pawar and Chakali Ailamma are fading from our collective memory as a generation passes on. Their contributions will be forgotten unless immortalised in books, monuments and in our collective memories.

It is ironic that the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, which supported the demand for observing Telangana Liberation Day throughout the course of the Telangana statehood agitation, made a volte-face after coming to power. The reasons were purely political. The state government is protecting its ally, the Majlis Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM), and its inglorious past.

The MIM's leader at the time of India's independence, Qasim Rizvi, believed in establishing Hyderabad Deccan as an independent Islamic nation and supported the Nizam by providing about 150,000 MIM volunteers to augment the Nizam's regular army of 24,000. These became the Razakars that would later unleash carnage in the princely state. The Razakars rampaged villages, molested women, killed men, and de-

stroyed everything in sight. The celebration of Telangana Liberation Day would bring to everybody's notice the ideological roots of the MIM and their ghastly actions. The MIM, in an attempt to hide its own treacherous past, is equating the September 17 celebrations with insulting the Nizam and, by extension, angering the Muslim community.

The appeasement streak in Indian politics is so strong that the state government forgets that it was Muslim journalists, such as Shobullah Khan, who were at the forefront of the agitation and were killed by the Razakars for advocating a merger with India. It forgets that by not celebrating this historic day, it is actually turning a blind eye to the sacrifices made by common Hindus and Muslims of Telangana to integrate their state with the Indian Union.

It was common citizens who were at the receiving end of the Razakar violence. Bhairanpally, a tiny village in Warangal, sacrificed hundreds to the bullets of the Razakars. When the villagers did not allow the Razakars to pass, en-

route to Karimnagar, they indiscriminately pillaged everything, molested women, and lined up able-bodied men and shot them for their amusement; they looted and plundered every village on their journey.

Peasants of Parkal town in Warangal also put up a valiant resistance against the Nizam and his Razakars. When news reached the residents of Parkal and the surrounding villages that India had achieved its independence on August 15, 1947, they decided to hoist the national flag and celebrate the occasion.

However, this patriotic fervour was rewarded with a lathi charge and gun firing by the Razakars. Three people were tied to a tree and shot mercilessly at Rangapuram village. Women of Laxmipuram were raped and their gold and money were looted. India's former Prime Minister, P V Narasimha Rao, had described the events of Rangapuram and Laxmipuram villages as South India's Jallianwala Bagh. The MIM wants to bury this unsavoury past, and the state government seems more than happy to do their bidding.

The histories of our land and the valiant struggles that made India what it is today needs to serve as an inspiration for today's youth and future generations. Burying our history, especially inconvenient truths, is a perverted form of appeasement that will serve no purpose. The least we can do is to observe September 17 as Telangana Liberation Day and setup a memorial honouring the brave who fought for the region's liberation so that present and future generations can learn about the courage of our forefathers.

(The author is the Minister of State for Home Affairs, and a Member of Parliament from the Secunderabad constituency)

VILLAGE, WARD SECRETARIAT EXAMS

Special isolation room for Covid+ve candidates

- Minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy PPE kits and masks will be supplied to all examination centres as per Covid protocol
- Minister says candidates who are not qualified to write he exam can't download the hall tickets
- A total of 10,56,931 candidates applied for the 16,208 vacancies in both village and ward sectts
- Highest number of candidates applied for panchayat secretary posts

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: An isolation room will be arranged at each examination centre for the benefit of the Covid-19 positive candidates for the village and ward secretariat exams, said Peddireddy panchayat raj and rural development minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy.

Addressing a joint press conference with municipal administration and urban development minister Botcha Satyanarayana and other officials at Tadepalli on Wednesday, Ramachandra Reddy said that government was observing all the Covid protocols during he exams.



Ministers Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy and Botcha Satyanarayana addressing the media at YSRCP central office in Tadepalli on Wednesday

The district collectors were asked to arrange exam centres accommodating only 14 to 16 candidates in each room. Temperatures of everyone would be checked and masks made mandatory for all entering the examination centre.

In addition, the government will provide at least 5 Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) kits for each examination centre for seven days. Apart from that, 100 additional masks will be distributed to each examination centre by the government for each exam.

The ministers said a total of 10,56,931 candidates had applied for the 16,208 vacancies in both village and ward secretariats.

Of the total vacancies, 14,062 were at the village secretariats and 2,146 in ward secretariats. Highest number of applications

were received for panchayat secretary posts, for which 4,56,997 candidates applied.

The exams will be conducted from September 20 to September 26. The government is conducting 14 exams for 19 category posts.

The ministers said that already, OMR sheets and question papers were sent to the strong rooms in all the 13 districts.

Ramachandra Reddy said some candidates complaining that they could not download the hall tickets.

He said that whoever did not qualify the minimum educational and other criteria to appear for the exams would not get the hall tickets.

He informed that already, more than 65 per cent candidates had downloaded their hall tickets.

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Terming the gag order on the FIR in the Amaravati land scam as unfortunate, Advisor to Government (Public Affairs) Sajjala Ramkrishna Reddy said that there was no need for the government to be vindictive and even if that was the case it can be challenged after the investigation but stalling it at the this stage is something beyond anyone's comprehension.

Speaking to the media at the party headquarters at Tadepalli here on Wednesday, Ramkrishna Reddy said Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has been raising the Amaravati land scam even while he was in the opposition and the investigation was done by an independent agency on the basis of which the FIR was registered.

No sooner the FIR was registered, the court was moved and the gag order was obtained in quick succession which seems

- Claims TDP leaders have even predicted the court decision before it came
- Suspects the role of 'influential people' behind the HC order in view of the quick succession of events from filing of FIR to issue of gag order
- Terms the order not only a gag on media but also on institutions and system



Sajjala Ramkrishna Reddy addressing the media at YSRCP central office in Tadepalli on Wednesday

that influential people are at work. "While our plea for the CBI probe was rejected the TDP leaders could get a stay on GOs and surprisingly the TDP leaders had even foretold the stay," he said and added that the government would move the apex court on the matter.

A known TDP activist-turned-Advocate General and kin of an influential person must have fig-

ured on merits of the investigation but stalling the probe in the initial stage is unprecedented, he said. "National media has reacted by tweets on the issue. This is not just a gag on media but it is a gag on institutions, and gag on the system," he said.

"We are not vindictive towards opposition party leaders and thus we requested for fair investigation by the CBI, which is a Central

Government institution. The High Court orders were surprising," he said, "The people started to believe that justice differs from a common man to influential persons."

Ramakrishna Reddy said that the stay came on another petition filed by TDP leaders Varla Ramiah and Alapati Raja, on the constitution of SIT on Amaravati lands. In regard to this, he questioned as to how the TDP leaders knew about the judgement yesterday itself.

Speaking on the issue of the missing silver idols at Kanaka Durga Temple, Sajjala Ramkrishna Reddy said that the opposition TDP leaders were conspiring to malign the image of the YSRCP government and were behind a series of incidents taking place across the state. He said that Naidu has been trying to create communal clashes and religious conflicts to divert the public attention from the land scam issue.

Naidu seeks CBI probe into attacks on temples

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Demanding Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy to remove endowments minister Vellampalli Srinivas from the Cabinet, TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu sought a comprehensive inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into all the attacks and property encroachments at all major Hindu temples across the state in the last 15 months of the discriminatory and oppressive regime of YSRCP.

Asks CM to remove Endowments Minister and EO for their lax response to disappearance of silver lions from Kanakadurga temple

In a statement on Wednesday, Naidu demanded Chief Minister to break his silence on the unchecked vandalism and untoward incidents. Had the Chief Minister taken prompt and stringent action when the first attack took place, the ongoing atrocities and attacks would not have taken place, he opined. The TDP chief deplored that over 80 incidents took

place at Hindu temples in the state under the present regime so far. Now, even Kanakadurga temple came under attack where three silver lions from a chariots disappeared overnight. If the Chief Minister dismissed

endowments minister and executive officer, the culprits would have been caught by now. The EO did not lodge a police complaint and took three days to respond to the incident, he said.

India shreds Pak at UN, calls it epicentre of terrorism

Continued from P1

"Thousands of Sikh, Hindus and Christian minority women and girls have been subjected to abductions, forced marriages and conversions in Pakistan." On the plight of people in Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, the Indian diplomat said, "Not a single day has gone by when a family in Balochistan doesn't find its members picked up or kidnapped by the security forces of Pakistan." "Pakistan does well when it comes to intimidation and attacks against journalists, human rights defenders and political dissidents in particular by its state machinery. It is not without a reason that Pakistan has been highlighted by international organizations as a country where journalists are slain and their killers go scot free," the diplomat said.

LS takes up Bill to amend Banking Regulation Act

Continued from P1

But unfortunately, during the budget session, we could not have this bill passed," Sitharaman said.

She said the government had to go for an ordinance because the financial health of many of the cooperative societies, which are also performing as banks, "was becoming very delicate".

"The financial state of affairs of 277 urban cooperative banks is weak and they are reporting loss. 105 cooperative banks are unable to meet the minimum regulatory capital requirement. 47 banks have net worth is negative. 328 urban cooperative banks have more than 15 per cent gross NPA ratio," she said.

The minister said that in March 2020, the stress in cooperative banks increased due to pandemic and gross ratios of urban cooperative banks increased from 7.7 per cent in March 2019 to over 10 per cent in March 2020. "Therefore, it was felt that the ordinance should be brought in the interest of depositors."

She said the bill will not apply to a primary agricultural credit society or a co-operative society whose primary object and principal business is providing of long term finance for agricultural development if such society does not use as part of its name, or in connection with its business, the words "bank", "banker" or "banking" and does not act as drawee of cheques.

The amendments entail making provisions applicable on cooperative banks which apply on commercial banks so that the former is equally subjected to better governance and sound banking regulations through the RBI.

The minister said, "Amendments to section 45 will enable the RBI to make a scheme of reconstruction and amalgamation, for example, the way in which Yes Bank reconstruction happened to protect the interest of depositors".

Participating in the debate, Congress leader Manish Tewari opposed the manner in which the government had brought an ordinance.

Centre favours time-bound trial

Continued from P1

The bench asked Hansaria about the status of the cases being investigated by central agencies like CBI and ED, some of them pending since several years.

Hansaria said that several Prevention of Corruption Act (PCA) cases have been stayed by the high courts like in Karnataka and many cases under the PC Act and the PMLA against elected representatives have been stayed by the Telangana high court. He said in some of these cases trials have not been expedited and many of them are pending at the stage of framing of charges. The bench observed that there may be cases where the central agencies have registered FIRs but nothing much has happened thereafter. To this, Hansaria said there are several cases where even charges have not been framed. The bench observed that there are several issues like non-appointment of public prosecutors, charge sheets not being filed and witnesses not being called.

The apex court observed that if there is only one special court in one state then it may not be possible to conduct all these cases in a time bound manner.

Mehta said that the court may consider having a particular number of cases in one special court. He also referred to the geographical aspect of a particular state and said that the chief justice of the high court of states may decide the number of cases to be dealt with by a special court.

AP reports 8,835 new Covid cases, 64 deaths

The total number of cases in the state now stands at 5,92,760 with a death toll of 5,105

Amaravati: The two Godavari districts, East and West, continued to witness a virulent spread of coronavirus while most other districts in the state seemed to be gradually lowering their numbers as the state reported 8,835 fresh cases on Wednesday.

The latest Covid-19 bulletin said 10,845 patients had fully recovered in 24 hours ending 9 am on Wednesday, while 64 more succumbed.

The state's Covid-19 table now showed a total of 5,92,760 positive cases, 4,97,376 recoveries and 5,105 deaths.

The active cases came down further to 90,279, according to the bulletin. After 48.06 lakh sample tests, the infection positivity rate stood at 12.33 per cent, as against the national average of 8.44 per cent. The tests per million increased to a record 90,016.

East Godavari district, which revealed one of the lowest antibody levels of 14.4 per cent in the Sero prevalence study, continued to add its regulation 1,400 daily cases.

It has now touched a total of 81,064 cases, with 12,036 of them being active.

The neighbouring West Godavari, which too had a lowest Sero prevalence of 12.3 per cent, added 1,051 in the last 24 hours, pushing its overall tally to 53,571.

The district currently has 8,710 active cases.

Chittoor reported nine more Covid-19 deaths in 24 hours, followed by SPS Nellore seven, Guntur and Prakasam six each.

Kadapa, Krishna, Srikakulam and West Godavari saw five new fatalities each, according to the bulletin.

YSRCP sees conspiracy behind temple incidents

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Minister for endowments Vellampalli Srinivas, suspecting TDP conspiracy behind the series of incidents taking place in temples across the state, said that TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu is playing the Hindutva card to divert public attention from Amaravati land scam.

Speaking on the issue of the missing silver lions at Kanakadurga temple, the minister clarified that the chariot was not in use since YSRCP came to power and theft of these lions might have taken place during the rule of previous government.

In the wake of the Antardevi incident, in an inspection drive at Indrakeeladri, it was found the three lion idols were missing from the chariot. In this context, the minister said that a committee has been constituted to investigate the issue and action will be taken against those involved. He stated that all measures are being taken for the protection of chariots in temples.

He lashed out at opposition leader Naidu for politicising the issue and trying to create uncertainty among public.

Recalling the incidents like tantrik ritual, stealing of Goddess Durga saris and jewellery that took place during TDP regime, the minister said that the TDP leaders have exploited



- Endowments Minister alleges that TDP chief Naidu is playing Hindutva card to divert public attention from the ongoing Amaravati land scandal probe
- Says chariot in Kanakadurga temple has not been used since YSRCP came to power

and ruined the sanctity of temples and even went on demolishing temples across the state. He said that the state government is closely monitoring the situation in temples and also taking quick action on the accused.

Further, Srinivas said that TDP leaders are intentionally creating ruckus over the issue to divert public from Amaravati land scam. Chandrababu Naidu is using Hindu religion to bond with the BJP leaders to safeguard from criminal cases. TD does not have any respect towards Hindu religion, where Naidu even performed pujas and rituals wearing shoes on multiple occasions, he said.

State contests NSO literacy survey

- School Education Commissioner seeks details of methodology used by NSO whose survey put AP at the bottom of the list in literacy, behind the states like Bihar, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh
- Govt officials point out that AP's literacy was 67% in 2011 Census, which should at any cost increase not to fall in the 10 years
- They say the NSO rating is based on a sample survey, unlike the census which collects data from every family



Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh commissioner of school education Vadrevu Chinaveerabhadru said the state government does not agree with the worst literacy billing the NSO gave to the state.

"No, we don't agree with that report. We want to know what parameters the NSO has followed," said a source. "The state would like to contest it because (NSO) literacy rating is different from the Census literacy rate also done by the government of India in 2011," said the source. In the 2011 Census, Andhra's literacy rate stood at 67 per cent while the NSO survey claimed the literacy rate was 64 per cent, pointing at a decline.

"Since we are almost 10 years from the last Census, in any way, the literacy rate should only be increasing and not decreasing," the source pointed out.

According to the source, the NSO rating is only based on a sample survey, unlike the census which touches every family in the state.

"This is only a sample study, its main objective is not to find out the literacy rate, but about the consumption patterns. So, the data or observations of the NSO study

waiting to hear from the organisation," he said. According to sources, the state government does not agree with the worst literacy billing the NSO gave to the state.

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Complete projects in time: CM

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy directed the officials to complete the irrigation projects in time and to focus on utilising floodwater being discharged into the sea.

"There should be no delay in the works of Nellore barrage, sangam barrage, Owk tunnel -2, Pula Subbaiah Veligonda-Head Regulator works, Vansadhara-Nagavali Link, BRR Vamsadhara Project Stage-2, Phase II and Polavaram project," he said while addressing a review meeting on progress of works relating to irrigation projects at his camp office on Wednesday.

Gandikota reservoir should be able to store at least 23 tmc ft of water and the R&R works should be completed, along with Chitravati balancing reservoir with 10 tmc ft of water. The compensation to farmers has been increased from Rs 6.5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh he said and instructed officials to create awareness among the farmers and convince them that the completion of projects would benefit them.

The officials said the works of Nellore barrage and Sangam barrage are on fast track mode and the works of Owk tunnel 2 are ongoing and there is delay in the works as soil reached the tunnel due to seepage.

The Chief Minister directed the officials to take the advice of expert committees and complete the project. The works of tunnel 1 of Pula Subbaiah Veligonda-Head Regulator works are completed and Tunnel 2 works will be completed by August 2021 and added that there was delay in the works in this season as water is falling from the mountains of Nallamala forest.

- Tells officials to create awareness among Gandikota reservoir displaced about increased compensation and the benefits of the project
- Officials tell CM 71% works on Polavaram related to head works and canals are over

The work on Vamsadhara Nagavali linking would be completed by December, the officials said. "Only 8.5 km is yet to be completed of the total 33.5 km and the Phase-2 works of BRR Vamsadhara Project Stage-2 would be completed by March 2021," they added.

The Chief Minister said Mahendratana Offshore reservoir in Srikakulam district should be completed on priority as this project would provide water to 24,600 acre benefitting 108 villages.

The Tarakarama Tirthasagar reservoir project would be completed by December 2022, the officials informed the Chief Minister. "Once the distribution works of Sardar Gouthu Latchanna Thotapalli project are completed, water will be provided to 55,000 acre," they said.

The officials also said 71 per cent of the works in Polavaram project related to head works and canals have been completed and the project would be completed by December 2021. The Chief Minister approved the proposal to recruit mechanical and electrical staff required in the department. Minister P Anil Kumar Yadav, special chief secretary Adityanath Das, Engineer-in-Chief C Narayana Reddy and several senior officials of the department attended the meeting.

TODAY'S QUOTE

Honda sees healthy Sept dispatches

“Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India foresees accelerated demand and dispatches for September despite a raging pandemic along with a phase of astrologically inauspicious time period. We are optimistic for September. We have witnessed rising number of enquiries about new products - HMSI Director **Yadvinder Singh Guleria**



INTEREST RATES

No US Fed guidance on rates this week

While US Federal Reserve has adopted a new policy strategy on inflation, the central bank is unlikely to provide new forward guidance on short-term interest rates at its meeting this week, economists said. Fed Chairman Jerome Powell recently announced that US Fed will seek to achieve inflation that averages 2% over time.

FOREX (buy rates in ₹)

US Dollar	77.93	South	
Euro	91.71	African Rand	5.18
UAE Dirham	22.02	Hong Kong Dollar	10.91
Thai Baht	2.72	Japanese Yen	0.8
British Pound	98.87	New Zealand Dollar	52.08
Australian Dollar	56.62	Saudi Riyal	21.56
Canadian Dollar	58.67	Swedish Krona	9.65
Swiss Franc	84.4	Singapore Dollar	56.88

DELHI THURSDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2020

BIZ BRIEFS

Nokia starts C3 sales

Hyderabad: HMD Global announced that sales of Nokia C3 smartphone have started across India. Delivering a large screen, all day battery and a quality camera, the Nokia C3 brings the Android 10 experience, complete with a durable design. Featuring a 5.99-inch screen, the smartphone offers comes with octa-core processor and biometric fingerprint sensor. Additionally, the Nokia C3 comes with a one-year replacement guarantee. Sanmeet Kochhar, Vice President, HMD Global, said: "Our aim is to bring great smartphone experiences to as many fans in India as possible, at a selection of accessible price points. The Nokia C3 will play a key role in helping us achieve this." Over three crore consumers in India are getting ready to upgrade to a smartphone and we believe the Nokia C3 will be a top choice for them, he added.

BoroPlus ropes in Juhi Chawla

Hyderabad: BoroPlus, an anti-septic brand from Emami Ltd, signed up Bollywood actress Juhi Chawla for its newly-launched hygiene range, to spread wider awareness among consumers about the necessity of maintaining personal hygiene especially amidst the present global health crisis of Covid-19. After its entry into the hygiene space with the launch of BoroPlus hand sanitizer in April this year, the brand launched toilet soap bars in June. The range is now set to hit the retail market with hand washes. Priti A Sureka, Director, Emami, said, "For our hygiene range, we are happy to associate with the celebrity presence of Juhi Chawla who enjoys an all-pervasive acceptance all over India across age, gender and geographies. Her warm, charming and friendly personality makes her someone who is relatable to everyone".

Shilpa launches green tea

Hyderabad: Shilpa Medicare Limited, which is into manufacturing of oncology and non-oncology intermediates, APIs and formulations, forayed into green tea segment by launching ready-to-drink green tea films in Hyderabad. The green tea contains natural green tea extracts and boosts 50-60 per cent of EGCG (Epigallocatechin gallate), which contributes to higher antioxidant, immunity booster, weight reduction and anticancer properties, etc. "We are talking about green tea, or more specifically epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), a polyphenol component of green tea that research suggests might be substantially more powerful than HCQ and zinc at protecting against viral infections. Therefore, our Shilpa's Green T films have 60 per cent of EGCG and 98 per cent polyphenol content," said Vishnukant Chaturbhuj Bhutada, MD, Shilpa Medicare.

ICICI HF's new loan

Hyderabad: ICICI Home Finance (ICICI HFC) has launched a new micro home loan 'Apna Ghar Dreamz', for skilled professionals such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians and tailors, etc, as well as small and medium business owners, grocery store owners in the city. The loan amount offered ranges from Rs 2-30 lakh. The home loan is targeted at the informal segment of the population who wish to purchase their own home, but may not have all documents that a formal financial institution would require. Customers seeking to avail of the new home loan need only provide details of their Pan card, Aadhar card, bank statement proof of past six months and a minimum account balance of Rs 1,500 for loan up to 5 lakh and Rs 3,000 for loan above Rs 5 lakh.

RBI sees gradual recovery in GDP

Governor Das says RBI is battle-ready, will do everything to boost growth

New Delhi: RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said economic recovery is still not well entrenched and that the central bank is 'battle ready' to take appropriate measures to support growth. Addressing a virtual conference organised by industry body Ficci, Das said that Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data released by the government was a 'reflection of the ravages of the Covid-19'.

The economy contracted 23.9 per cent during the April-June quarter on account of the strict lockdown imposed by the government towards end of March to check the spread of coronavirus infections.

"Nevertheless, high frequency indicators of agricultural activity, the purchasing managers' index that is PMI for manufacturing and certain private estimates on unemployment point to some stabilisation of economic activity in the second quarter of the current year, while of course contractions in several other sectors are also simultaneously easing," he said. However, Das said that the economic recovery was not yet fully entrenched and also that the recovery is likely to be gradual. "The recovery is, however, not yet fully entrenched and moreover, in some sectors, the uptick, which was noticed in June and July they appear to have levelled off.

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- RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das



By all indications the recovery is likely to be gradual as efforts towards the reopening of the economy are confronted with rising infections," he said.

At the same time, Das assured the industry that the RBI stands "battle ready" and whatever measures are required will be taken to support liquidity, growth and control price rise.

According to him, the immediate policy response to Covid-19 in the country has been to prioritise the stabilisation of the economy and support quick recovery policies for durable and sustainable high growth in the medium term post the coronavirus. The Governor also said financial market conditions in India have eased significantly across segments in response to the front-loaded cuts in the policy repo rate and large system-wide as well as targeted infusion of liquidity by the central bank. Despite substantial

increase in the borrowing programme of the government, Das said that persistently large surplus liquidity conditions have ensured non-disruptive mobilisation of resources at the lowest borrowing costs in a decade.

Noting that fragility of NBFCs is a concern, Das said the RBI is regularly monitoring the health of top 100 NBFCs and it would be the endeavour of the central bank that no large institution should fail. Prior to the IL&FS crisis, Das said there were light touch regulations for the NBFC sector and the RBI is now trying to bring the regulations at par with banks so that there is no repeat of failure.

Regarding loan restructuring scheme, the RBI chief said he would look into the suggestions of the industry.

Interests of depositors and financial stability were kept in mind while framing the loan re-

RBI TAKE

- GDP data reflection of Covid crisis
- Fragility of NBFCs is a concern
- Interests of bank depositors paramount



structuring scheme, he said, adding that it had to be careful and a balanced decision on the part of the RBI. "The primary concern of any banking system should be the protection of the depositors' interests because ultimately it is the depositors' money. The emphasis of resolution plan is to enable companies facing cash problem due to Covid-19 crisis to come back to normalcy and resume their activities, he noted.

"So both the sides had to be matched. In fact, the revival of businesses would also ensure that the NPA levels are kept low and it will also ensure a quicker economic recovery," he said.

Noting that India's participation in Global Value Chains (GVCs) has been lower than many emerging and developing economies, he said there is need to tap this potential segment for bolstering global trade and growth. With strong drug

manufacturing expertise at low cost, India is one of the largest suppliers of generic drugs and vaccines, he said. A sharp policy focus on other GVC intensive "network products", including equipment for IT hardware, electrical appliances, electronics and telecommunications, and automobiles would also provide the cutting edge to India's export strategy with considerable scope for higher value additions, he added.

Terming tourism as an engine of growth, the RBI Governor said although the sector is severely impacted by Covid-19, this is a sector where pent up demand could drive a V shaped recovery when the situation normalises.

He also said Covid-19 has brought the importance of food security and food distribution or supply chain network to the forefront of public policy debate in India.

Pending GST refunds hurting exporters: EEPC

New Delhi: Engineering export body EEPC India on Wednesday said that pending GST refunds along with MEIS dues are hurting exporters.

According to EEPC India, besides fighting a battle for survival in the Covid-19 hit global market, exporters are facing a tedious and tiring process of getting GST refunds and the MEIS entitlements due for the period much before a Rs 2 crore limit was fixed under the government's flagship scheme.

"We are receiving grievances from our members that the shipping bills are not receiving validation in time for processing of GST refunds. The July bills, submitted within due dates have not been validated so far," EEPC India Chairman Mahesh Desai said.



Accordingly, he pointed out that while the government has imposed a Rs 2 crore reward limit per IEC under the Merchandise Exports from India (MEIS) scheme from September 1, 2020, exporters have not received the entitlements even for April-August. "Greater clarity is required and dues as per the old norms should be paid for the period when there was no limit on the rewards," Desai was quoted as saying in a statement.

Capex growth by Centre, States drops to 2% in Q1



New Delhi: Call it the Covid-19 impact or rising bill for maintaining the government, the total capital spending of Centre and 14 Indian states (accounting for 63 per cent of total state budget) has fallen off the cliff in the April-June quarter, and has grown by a mere 2 per cent level over last year.

As per the monthly accounts available for 14 states, while their total spending in Q1 FY21 stood at 18.4 per cent of budget estimate (BE), similar to that in previous years, the spending growth was entirely led by a 9.7 per cent YoY increase in revenue spending.

On the other hand, states' capital spending (including loans and advances) contracted a strong 43.5 per cent YoY last quarter, marking the fourth contraction in the past five quarters.

What this shows is that state governments spent more to maintain its size and clearing debt during pandemic rather than spending on capital activities that prop up economic activities, generates jobs and help propel the growth momentum.

"Somehow states have to get more proactive and focused in relation to their spending. If additional liquidity is available through various schemes being announced by the Centre to kick start economic activities and take the economy back on growth momentum, states need to see it is used more productively," said an analyst tracking the state finances asking not to be named.

Tax collections falls 22% to 2.53 lakh cr



Mumbai: Total tax collection of the Centre, including advance tax collection for the second quarter, fell 22.5 per cent to Rs 2,53,532.3 crore till September 15 of the current fiscal as compared to the year-ago period, according to an income tax department source.

The source shared some details about the provisional data. During the same period ended September 15, 2019, total tax collection stood at Rs 3,27,320.2 crore, the income tax department source from Mumbai zone said over phone on Wednesday. However, the source refused to share the advance tax numbers separately for the current quarter.

Airlines lose 85% revenue, staff count down 7% in Q1

Centre says revenues of airport operators nosedived to Rs 894 cr

New Delhi: The revenue of Indian airlines fell by 85.7 per cent to Rs 3,651 crore during the first quarter of 2020-21 in comparison to the corresponding period a year ago due to Covid-19, said Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday.

Moreover, employee count at the Indian carriers went down from 74,887 on March 31 to 69,589 on July 31, a decrease of 7.07 per cent, Puri stated in a written reply to a question in Rajya Sabha. "The revenue of airport operators has reduced from Rs 5,745 crore during April-June 2019 to Rs 894 crore during April-June 2020," he said.

The Minister said the employee count at airports has reduced from 67,760 on March 31 to 64,514 on July 31. Scheduled



The revenue of Indian carriers has reduced from Rs 25,517 crore during April-June 2019 to Rs 3,651 crore during April-June 2020 - Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri



domestic flight services were suspended in India from March 25 to May 24 due to the coronavirus-triggered lockdown. They were resumed from May 25 but in a curtailed manner. The employee count at ground handling agencies fell by 22.44 per cent to 29,254 in April-July period, Puri said.

In his written reply, Puri was giving information about the "impact of Covid-19 on the civil aviation sector. The revenue of

Indian carriers has reduced from Rs 25,517 crore during April-June 2019 to Rs 3,651 crore during April-June 2020," the Minister said. Air India's total revenue has reduced from Rs 7,066 crore during April-June 2019 to Rs 1,531 crore during the first quarter of 2020-21, Puri stated.

Puri stated the domestic air traffic in the country fell to 1.2 crore during March-July period as compared to 5.85 crore in the year-ago period.

\$50 BN VALUATION

Flipkart eyes overseas listing in 2021

Likely to choose between Singapore, or the US for its IPO listing



Walmart acquired a roughly 77 per cent stake in Flipkart for about \$16 billion back in 2018. If \$50 billion valuation is achieved, that would mean Walmart would have more than doubled its investment

funds," one of the sources said. Flipkart and Walmart did not respond to requests for comment. The sources said the preparations and discussions have been largely internal for now, but the company is preparing to tap external advisers on the process soon. The discussions come as India drafts new regulations that could pave the way for domestic companies to directly list overseas. Two other sources familiar with the plans said that work has begun to ensure compliance, legal and finance functions will meet regulatory

standards ahead of a potential listing. "Right now, the IPO target is more or less considered to be late 2021, or early 2022, but the current crisis has made things a little blurry," said one of these two sources.

The second person added that being 'IPO ready' has become a constant refrain in top level meetings internally.

Bumper valuation

Walmart acquired a roughly 77 per cent stake in Flipkart for about \$16 billion back in 2018. That deal remains the single

largest foreign direct investment in India.

It turned Flipkart's founders Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal into billionaires, and confirmed Flipkart's status as the country's most successful startup at the time. Later that year, Bentonville, Arkansas-headquartered Walmart as a regulatory filing said it could take Flipkart public in four years. In July this year, Flipkart raised \$1.2 billion in fresh funding with Walmart as its lead investor. That round valued Flipkart, which counts China's Tencent, US hedge fund Tiger Global, and Microsoft among its investors, at \$24.9 billion. Flipkart said it would use the funds, to be received in two tranches this fiscal year, to support the development of its e-commerce marketplace as India emerges from the Covid-19 crisis.

Like its rival Amazon, Flipkart began by selling books, but diversified rapidly into selling smartphones, clothing and other items. It now competes with Amazon in most categories.

ETF's AUM grows amid highly volatile trade era

Mumbai: Despite economic contraction along with uncertainty unleashed on account of the pandemic, a silent build up of funds has taken place across the Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) category. In financial parlance, the ETF combines the trading flexibility of a stock with the diversification and low costs of a mutual fund. It gives investors an exposure to a basket of stocks at a fraction of the amount and it is relatively safer to invest.

Accordingly, this segment has received a phenomenal response in the last 5 years, especially in the last six months of high volatility.

At present, the total category assets under management (AUM) grew at an astronomical pace. Recently, released AMFI numbers indicate about 50 per cent growth in the overall ETF category.

In the sub-category, Gold ETFs have seen the highest traction due to the rising price, attractive returns leading to AUM growth of 146 per cent YoY.

In the last five years, the overall category's total AUM (debt and equity) has grown by over 26



In last 5 years, the overall category's total AUM has grown by over 26 times from just ₹7,000 crore to over ₹2 lakh crore

times from just Rs 7,000 crore to over Rs 2 lakh crore.

While initial investment commitment to the ETF category came from EPFO, the launch of CPSE and Bharat 22 ETFs gave a further fillip to the category, said industry insiders.

"The large-cap category ETFs have played an important role in the overall growth of investments. It has had the highest inflow in the segment," Prashant Joshi, Co-founder and Partner at Fintrust Advisors.

MIM seeks ₹10K cr for Old City facelift

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi on Wednesday questioned the government as to when Hyderabad would become Istanbul, as promised by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao.

The MIM leader was speaking during a short discussion on civic works and other infrastructure facilities in GHMC and its surrounding areas and also in other municipalities' in the Assembly on Wednesday. Akbaruddin alleged that every government had a step-motherly attitude towards Old City and added that his party had hopes on the TRS government. He questioned the government when the Old City would become Istanbul as promised by

"When I see the city developing, I feel happy. But I am ashamed when I see the situation in Old City. We feel embarrassed in front of our people," says Akbaruddin Owaisi, MIM leader



the Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. He wanted the government to announce a financial package of Rs 10,000 crore for Old City.

"I have been talking in the House for the last 20 years and still talking the same. When I see the city developing, I feel happy. But I am ashamed when we see the situation in Old City. We feel embarrassed in front of our people," said Akbaruddin

Owaisi.

The MIM leader claimed that he was the one who first demanded metro rail for the city. "I was the one along with Congress member P Janardhan Reddy to demand for metro rail. The Metro has come, but it has not reached Hyderabad. When the metro rail will come to Hyderabad?" asked the MIM leader. He alleged that the Krishna water was meant for peo-

ple of Old City, but it was diverted to other places. The water is supplied every alternate day and in some places, once in five days, he said.

Akbaruddin Owaisi listed out the projects delayed for years in Old City. He said that the road widening was pending for the last 10 years, Charminar Pedestrianisation Project was still pending, sewerage and drains were also pending. The old cities of various cities are jewels and the heritage and architecture should be protected, he said.

Owaisi demanded the government to focus on cleaning Musi River and save Osman-sagar and Himayath Sagar. He wanted the government to provide ration cards to the people in the city.

TESTING TIMES...



A woman and her daughter eagerly waiting for their turn to give swabs through an aperture as a health worker rinses the sample inside at a free Covid-19 testing centre in Urban Primary Health Centre at Garib Nagar in Hyderabad on Wednesday

CRIME NEWS

Cops unravel mystery behind attack on CPI leader's car

It all started with a quarrel between a landlord and his tenant who claims to be the relative of a CPI leader in AP

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The Commissioner's task force on Monday evening detained two persons for throwing stones on the CPI State secretary Chada Venkat Reddy and handed them over to Narayanguda police for further investigation.

After completion of investigation, the Narayanguda police said the accused persons were identified as, Naveen Prasad Shukla (28) and a juvenile aged 16, according to a press release issued here on Wednesday.

According to the Inspector of Narayanguda PS, P Ramesh Kumar, it was noted that the main accused Naveen Prasad is a res-

ident of Kandikalgate in Up-puguda and he rented his house to one Chinna Yadav a few months ago. But, Chinna did not maintain the house in a proper way and was not taking care of the premises. So, the accused informed him to preserve the hygiene of the house or else vacate it. To which the tenant replied that he was a relative of one Harshavardhan, son of AP State secretary of CPI, Rama Krishna and since then the tenant started dominating the accused.

He added, "As the accused was fed up with the antics of Chinna and he decided to take revenge and he planned to break the glasses of any car

parked in Magdum Bhavan as it is the office of CPI. As per his plan, he took the help of a boy from his locality and upon reaching the CPI office they picked up a stick and stones from the street and damaged the windshield of the car belonging to Venkat Reddy, though they did not know to whom the car belonged."

While investigating it was further revealed that the accused was also involved in an excise case earlier and was out on bail. However, he was arrested and produced before the court and the boy juvenile was served a notice and sent along with his parents, stated the officer.

Neredmet corporator arrested for cheating

Hyderabad: The Rachakonda police on Wednesday registered a case against the corporator of Neredmet, K Sreedevi and her husband Hanumanth Rao under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, based on a complaint filed by an advocate Mekala Srinivas who alleged that the corporator and her husband has cheated him and many others by floating a chit fund company.

According to police, they have received a complaint from the advocate who alleged that the couple has cheated people on the pretext of running a chit fund business. The complainant also alleged that the corporator and her husband were running the chit business without any approval from the concerned authorities and they had also invested the money in other businesses.

Based on the complaint filed by the advocate, we have registered a case and the matter is being investigated. Once the investigation is completed, necessary action will be initiated as per to the law, said the police.

Rachakonda police tops in handling of calls

DGP M Mahender Reddy orders for a random survey in the State in regards to the handling of telephone calls by officers and staff at all levels

Hyderabad: Rachakonda police have topped in handling of calls following the standard operating procedure, according to the survey conducted by the Police department. DGP M. Mahender Reddy had ordered for a random survey in the State in regards to the handling of telephone calls by officers and staff at all levels in order to study the standard operating procedure (SOP) of the police officers while handling

the calls. In the survey, it was revealed that Rachakonda police topped the list with 68.57 percentage in following the SOP related to handling of telephone calls.

The survey was done by the officers of the Centre of Excellence of the Police department and the calls were made to the official phone numbers (both landline and mobile) and also to the functional vertical officers from any PS to record their re-

sponses. The identity of the caller was kept secret just to know whether the officers were following the prescribed SOP or not while attending the calls.

Rachakonda Police Commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat said that the department conducted a video conference with all officers of the commissionerate and sensitized them about the SOP and a target was set up to achieve 100 per cent results.

20-year-old gets 2-year RI for stalking minor

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: A local court here in Hyderabad on Wednesday sentenced a 20-year-old man, Madyala Shiva for stalking and harassing a 14-year-old minor girl and instructed him to pay a fine amount of Rs 1,500.

The judge while pronouncing the judgment said that the accused was found guilty under sections 354-D (ii), 506 of IPC and section 11 (IV) of POCSO Act 2012.

Henceforth, the person is convicted to undergo a rigorous imprisonment (RI) for two years along with a fine amount of Rs 1,500.

The Saroornagar police in October 2015 registered a complaint against the accused based on the complaint filed by the victim girl, wherein the girl alleged that she was being harassed by the accused and a boy juvenile for not accepting the proposal of the juvenile. When the girl refused to accept his proposal, the accused dialed her parents and abused them in filthy language along with threatening them with dire consequences.

Later, the accused was arrested and remanded to judicial custody and the boy juvenile was produced before the juvenile board.

New AICC in-charge to rejuvenate TS Cong; holds videoconference

- ▶ Winning Assembly elections in the State should be the sole aim of all Congress leaders and workers as
- ▶ Sonia Gandhi sacrificed another State and a major share of seats in Lok Sabha for Telangana

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The newly appointed AICC in-charge of Telangana, Manickam Tagore who replaced RC Khuntia asked the party leaders to set their target for winning the Assembly elections of 2023.

In his maiden interaction on Wednesday with senior leaders of



Congress party could not win from Telangana, a State for which Congress president Sonia Gandhi sacrificed another State (Andhra Pradesh) and also a major share of seats in Lok Sabha. Therefore, he said that winning the Assembly elections in Telangana should be the sole aim of all Congress leaders and workers. "Our sole aim should be to win Telangana Assembly elections in 2023 and de-

Telangana Congress through Zoom video-conference, Manickam Tagore said that it was unfortunate that the

feat KCR regime," said new AICC in-charge. Earlier, TPCC chief Uttam Kumar Reddy formally welcomed Tagore as the new in-charge and assured full support on behalf of entire TPCC. While briefing him, Uttam informed the State leadership's focus was now on membership drive, Dub-bak by-elections, municipal elections in GHMC, Warangal and Khammam and MLC election from Nalgonda, Warangal and Khammam graduate constituency.

CLP leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, MPs A Revanth Reddy and Komatireddy Venkat Reddy, MLAs Sridhar Babu, Jagga Reddy and Seethakka, MLC T Jeevan Reddy and other leaders also took part in the conference.

The actress allegedly committed suicide by hanging at her residence on September 8. It is alleged that she took the extreme step as she was unable to bear the torture at the hands of the accused persons and also her family members.

Eggs supply to Anganwadi Centres rots; Minister dresses down contractors

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Women and Child Welfare Minister Satyavathi Rathod has warned of strict action against contractors if found to indulge in irregularities in supply of eggs to Anganwadi centres.

The TRS government took several measures including the introduction of a biometric method to ensure transparency in this process, she pointed.

Replying to a query raised by TRS MLAs Padma Devender Reddy, Haripriya Banoth, Gongidi Sunitha, M Sanjay in Assembly, Satyavathi Rathod said that distribution of eggs to Anganwadi centres in all districts from contractors in Hyderabad has been stopped in view of

- ▶ Distribution of eggs to Anganwadi centres in all districts from contractors in Hyderabad has been stopped in view of irregularities
- ▶ A committee under Joint Collector has been formed in all districts to ensure hassle-free distribution of eggs to small kids in Anganwadi centres



shortcomings.

A committee under Joint Collector has been formed in all districts to ensure hassle-free distribution of eggs to small kids in Anganwadi centres, she pointed out. Instructions were given to enter into tie-ups with local poultry farmers to procure fresh eggs directly from them,

the Minister added.

Satyavathi Rathod mentioned that 12,000 Anganwadi centres are running from their own buildings or from government primary schools and plans are afoot to construct more centres in government-owned lands. This programme would be taken up under MGNREGS, which is grant-

ing Rs 5 lakh with Centre Rs 1 lakh and the State to allocate Rs 2 lakh for the construction of buildings in villages.

She explained to the house various initiatives being taken up under Aarogya Lakshmi, the pet scheme of CM K Chandrashekar Rao. Satyavathi Rathod said that the supplementary nutritious food was provided under the scheme to 4.32 lakh pregnant and lactating mothers, 9.42 lakh children under 7 months to 3 years and 5.938 lakh children of 3 to 6 years. The State government is providing additional funds to implement the Aarogya Lakshmi programme in addition to the Government of India funds under the supplementary nutrition programme.

TRS, Cong lock horns over power situation in TS

While Congress leaders claim that the State is now enjoying the power generated due to infrastructure developed by earlier Congress governments, the TRS proscribes opposition claim stating credit for the development in power sector should go to Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: In an attempt to take credit for the existing power situation, the Congress and the Telangana Rashtra Samithi crossed swords during a short discussion in the Council on Wednesday prior to the passage of resolution against Central government's proposed Electricity Amendment Bill, 2020.

Congress MLC T Jeevan Reddy said that the State was now enjoying the power generated due to the infrastructure developed by earlier governments, particularly by the Congress government. He said that former Chief Minister Y Rajasekhara Reddy was the first to sign free power to farmers. To this, the Treasury benches objected and there was an uproar over the issue even as he continued.

Reddy noted that in contrast, the TRS government took some of the impractical decisions like coming up with Yadadri Thermal Power Plant, rather

than developing the Ramagundam which was in subcritical level. "If the government had developed with the available 600 acres of land, it could have reached supercritical level. Despite land availability and proximity to coal mines, the government has decided set up power plant in another location which is distant from mines," he pointed out.

Without clarifying his support to the resolution, the Congress MLC felt that there should have been a detailed discussion as there were some serious issues like interference of Centre in regulatory authority and variation of the provision of generating renewable energy amongst States.

Even as the uproar continued, he lost his cool and blamed the TRS for supporting most of the Bills in Parliament akin to demonetisation that shook the economy. He said that even the Congress was in the forefront of opposing the decision to transfer seven mandals to Andhra Pradesh,

which could have helped TS through Sileru project. He also blamed the government for the death of engineers and other staff in Srisailem power project accident.

During his response, Energy Minister G Jagadish Reddy said that the State was enjoying unhindered power supply only because of the visionary leadership of Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. "If the Congress was behind the success story, why is it that Congress-ruled States in northern India failed to show the same?" he questioned.

The Minister recalled that the earlier State governments, Congress and Telugu Desam, were busy in the blame game as protests over power situation and farmers' suicide was the norm then. "One leader would protest holding a lantern and others would hold dried up corn. "Rajasekhara Reddy only signed but did not provide power. If he had done so, there would not have been so many suicides," he added.

Illegal sand filters demolished

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Amanagalu police and Tahsildar staff demolished illegal sand filters in Gouraram village and at the outskirts of Shettyally village on Wednesday.

On the occasion, Amanagalu police said that strict action will be taken against those who have illegal sand filters, criminal cases will be filed against the wrongdoers, police added.



First 8 KISCEs to get financial aid of over ₹95 cr in 4 years

New Delhi (IANS): The Sports Ministry has announced that sports facilities in eight states will be upgraded to Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) at a cost of Rs 95.19 crore.

In the first leg, the eight states that have been approved for setting up of KISCEs are Odisha, Mizoram, Telangana, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala, according to a SAI release.

The support will be in the form of infrastructure upgradation, setting up of sports science centre and also soft component in the form of quality coaches and sports science human resources, physiotherapists, strength and conditioning expert. High quality equipment will also be provided to the players. The academy will also have a high performance manager to ensure quality sports science input and performance management.

The Sports Ministry is upgrading existing sporting infrastructure in each state and union territory and creating KISCEs with the aim to create a robust sporting ecosystem in the entire country. Each KISCE will be extended sports-specific support in 14



Olympic sports, of which one state or UT will be given support for a maximum of three sports. Speaking about the decision to set up the KISCEs, Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju said, "These Khelo India State Centre of Excellence is yet another step towards building a robust sports ecosystem on one hand and India's pursuit of excellence in Olympics, on the other."

"These state-of-the-art centres will ensure that athletes proficient in a certain sport can be given the highest level of training and these centres become the best facilities in the country to train athletes in the priority

sport for which they have been earmarked. I am confident this step will help to further India's effort of becoming one of the top 10 countries in the Olympics in 2028."

Meanwhile, top sporting facilities have been identified in six more states and union territories -- Assam, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Daman & Diu, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya and Sikkim -- which will be upgraded to KISCE. Currently, the Sports Authority of India is undertaking the "Viability Gap Analysis" to identify areas where upgradation and support is needed in each centre.

IPL 13 Kings XI Punjab eager to see new dawn in KL-Kumble era

Kolkata (IANS): Perennial underachievers Kings XI Punjab will hope the new pair of skipper K.L. Rahul and head coach Anil Kumble can conjure up some magic as they head into the 13th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL), having reached the playoff stages of the cash-rich tournament on just two occasions.

Rahul, who has been in red-hot form for India in white-ball cricket in the recent past, was appointed as skipper ahead of the season with former India captain and legendary off-spinner Kumble pencilled in as head coach.

"I have always enjoyed that leadership role and I have always enjoyed having responsibility on my shoulders. I am going into this (IPL) with an open mind and to learn on the go from each game and each day," Rahul had told IANS in a recent interaction from Dubai.

The camaraderie between Kumble and Rahul, with both coming from Bengaluru, should also help the team.

"Knowing KL and other players from the past obviously helps understand each other really well. I have seen KL from a very young age as a player. This will be his first major (captaincy stint) - he's captained at a junior level, but not in a high profile game. So far he has been brilliant," Kumble had said.

Kings XI look strong on paper this time, but that has always been the case for the side in red who previously too had players like Glenn Maxwell, Chris Gayle and David Miller of more than decent T20 repute.

With Gayle and Maxwell still with them, there should not be a shortage of firepower. Kumble has said he would like the 'Universe Boss' to be more active as part of the leadership group.

At the top of the order, Mayank Agarwal should give the team solidity with the likes of Mandeep Singh and Karun Nair there to back up. Rahul has been in terrific form of late for India and Kings XI will hope he continues in the same vein, with the added motivation of leading the



RR BRING IN BIG FM AS OFFICIAL RADIO PARTNER

New Delhi (IANS): BIG FM, one of the leading radio networks in the country, has become the official radio partner of the Rajasthan Royals ahead of the upcoming edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) starting Saturday in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

As the on-field fervour will be different this season owing to the current scenario amid the Covid-19 pandemic, the radio network has vowed to keep the spirits high by bringing the excitement to the audience's homes with the campaign 'Be Royal With the Royals' for all the die-hard fans of the team and the tournament.

As part of the campaign, the radio station will have a daily feature called 'The Royal Hour' which will see a player from the Rajasthan Royals team or an expert engage in an exclusive interaction with the RJ.

Making the show insightful while keeping the spirit of the game alive, it will also see the guests reminisce their cricket journey along with music dedications from the golden era and candid chats with listeners.

Ensuring fans do not miss any important moment, BIG FM will also bring a brand new show 'A Royal Experience' that will keep them up to date with the latest happenings of the Jaipur-based franchise.

Since BIG FM is known for its storytelling and timeless music, the radio station will present two new features -- 'The Royal Podcast' and 'The Royal Playlist'.

team to a title in the 13th attempt.

In the bowling department, India pacer Mohammed Shami will lead the pace battery with the likes of England seamer Chris Jordan, West Indies' Sheldon Cottrell and New Zealand all-rounder James Neesham for support. The Indian battery of promising Ishan Porel, Darshan Nalkande and Arshdeep Singh

will also lend support.

Afghanistan leg-spinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman will provide top-quality spin option in UAE conditions which could have turn. Kings XI also have Murugan Ashwin, Krishanappa Gowtham and Ravi Bishnoi in the spin department.

The side reached the playoff stages in 2008 and 2014. Kings XI have an enviable record in the



UAE, having not lost a single game out of five matches during the 2014 edition when the first 20 matches of the tournament were staged in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah because of the general elections in India.

Strengths:

The team's fortunes will depend heavily on Rahul and Kumble's partnership and how they lead the team who will always feel the pressure of being one side in the competition with the tag of 'laggards'. Rahul's exceptional form and a cool head should help him as a leader and batsman, and in turn benefit the team.

Weaknesses:

Kings XI have always had a side to win the IPL but never really clicked as a unit. The pressure of having their backs to the wall and having to deliver at any cost might lean a bit too heavily on the players and can play a part in the team's performance.

Squad: KL Rahul (captain and wicketkeeper) Chris Gayle, Mayank Agarwal, Karun Nair, Sarfaraz Khan, Mandeep Singh, Sheldon Cottrell, Ishan Porel, Ravi Bishnoi, Mohammed Shami, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Arshdeep Singh, Hardus Viljoen, M Ashwin, J Suchith, Harpreet Brar, Darshan Nalkande, Glenn Maxwell, James Neesham, Chris Jordan, Krishnappa Gowtham, Deepak Hooda, Tajinder Singh Dhillon, Nicholas Pooran (wicketkeeper), Prabhsimran Singh (wicketkeeper).

Support staff: Anil Kumble (head coach), Andy Flower (assistant coach), Wasim Jaffer (batting coach), Jonty Rhodes (fielding coach), Charl Langeveldt (bowling coach), Andrew Leips (physiotherapist), Adrian Le Roux (strength and conditioning coach).

Bangladesh's Hassan tests corona +ve for 2nd time

Dhaka (IANS): Bangladesh batsman Saif Hassan has tested positive in his second coronavirus test. A Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) source confirmed to ESPNcricinfo that Hassan's second sample was taken exactly seven days after he first tested positive. Hassan's name has not been included in Bangladesh's list of 27 cricketers considered for

the preliminary squad for the Test series in Sri Lanka scheduled to be played in late October. However, the tour is in doubt after the Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) informed BCB last week that the Bangladesh players would need to be in quarantine for one week upon landing in the island, before being able to train.

BCB President Nazmul

Hassan has said that "terms and conditions are nowhere near" that were discussed.

"We cannot play World Test Championships with these terms and conditions. Until their letter yesterday, both boards were having discussions along the lines of a seven-day quarantine," ESPNcricinfo had quoted Nazmul as saying.

East Bengal place bid to participate in ISL 2020-21

New Delhi (IANS): Kolkata football giant East Bengal have submitted the Invitation to Bid (ITD) documents to Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) to participate in the upcoming edition of the Indian Super League (ISL).

East Bengal had recently announced that they had sold a majority stake to city-based Shree Cement Ltd and would appeal to the ISL organisers in a bid to make a dramatic late entry into the country's top-tier club competition.

"We are extremely happy to announce that the consortium of Shree Cement Ltd and East Bengal club have placed the bid to participate in this year's ISL," the club announced on Twitter late on Tuesday. The red-and-gold brigade's new investors were slated to pick up the bid proposal for a spot in the ISL in the name of 'Shree Cement Foundation', a new company it has registered with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

Germany to take on Belgium as FIH Pro League returns after Covid-19 hiatus

Lausanne (IANS): Following a long Covid-19 hiatus, the second season of the FIH Hockey Pro League will return next week in Dusseldorf where Germany will entertain the national women's and men's teams of Belgium on September 22 and 23.

The fixtures -- which take place at Dusseldorfer Hockey Club 1905, located less than 90 kilometres from the Belgian border -- will see the teams face each other twice over the two days.

The International Hockey Federation had in April extended the second season of the Pro League through to June 2021 because of the global health crisis.

Season 2 of the league was initially set to run from January to June 2020. Around one third of the planned matches were completed between January and early March, before the Covid-19 crisis brought the competition to a standstill.

Among the measures being taken to ensure the safety of everyone involved in the Pro League matches, the upcoming games will be played behind closed doors and in adherence to the safety guidelines of the competing governing bodies and local authorities, as per an FIH media release.



There will also be no pre-match handshakes or flagbearers, while athlete and staff testing within the respective 'team bubbles' being an essential element during this time. All participants, including the appointed officials, must have presented a negative coronavirus test within 48 hours of the first match, it added. The Indian men's hockey team's

campaign is scheduled to restart on April 10 and 11, 2021 with a tie against Argentina away from home. India will then play Great Britain away from home on May 8 and 9 before travelling to Spain where they play on May 12 and 13. They then face Germany away on May 18 and 19 and will finally play a home tie on May 29 and 30 against New Zealand.

Wawrinka crashes out of Rome after losing to Italian teenager

Rome (IANS): Three-time Grand Slam champion Stan Wawrinka crashed out of the Italian Open after suffering a shocking first-round defeat to 18-year-old Lorenzo Musetti.

On Tuesday, Musetti earned his first ATP Tour victory defeating Wawrinka 6-0, 7-6(2) in a match that lasted one hour and 24 minutes.

Wawrinka made many unforced errors in the first set which saw him lose it without winning even a single game. However, the Swiss raised his level in the second set to work his way back into the match, overcoming an early break deficit to get back on serve. However, Musetti displayed fearless brand of tennis and controlled points against the 35-year-old, finishing off his victory with a winning cross-court forehand passing shot.

"First set was almost perfect. Second set he tried to play better," the ATP Tour website quoted Musetti as saying. "He was focussed on the



match and he wanted to win the set, but I served really good. I mixed a lot with the wide serve, T and body serve. I think the serve was the key to have the lead of the game."

Musetti, who is the youngest player competing in the Internazionali BNL d'Italia, will now play Japan's Kei Nishikori in the second round. "I have seen him play on television and I know he is a very tough player," Musetti said. "I'm going to enjoy the victory before I start thinking about my match against Nishikori."

Tour de France Germany's Kamna wins Stage 16

Paris (IANS): German youngster Lennard Kamna won the Stage 16 of the Tour de France after attacking over the summit of the penultimate climb to distance fellow escapee Richard Carapaz of Ecuador. Exactly one month after his first pro win on the Criterium du Dauphine, and four days after he narrowly missed out in the Massif Central, Bora-Hansgrohe's Kamna put in an emphatic display of power and fitness in the Vercors Massif to take a maiden Grand Tour stage win from a large group of 23 riders.

Carapaz cut a lonely figure as he crossed the line 1'27" down to take second place for Ineos Grenadiers, who also saw the Russian Pavel Sivakov take fourth

place behind Switzerland's Sebastian Reichenbach (Groupama-FDJ). By placing three riders in the day's break, Ineos Grenadiers displayed aggressive tactics as the British team looked to turn a page following the collapse of defending champion Egan Bernal on the Grand Colombier in Stage 15. For his part, the Colombian definitely checked out of the GC battle by coming home in a gruppetto over 10 minutes behind the yellow jersey group.

Slovenia's Primoz Roglic (Jumbo-Visma) was called on to put out a small fire after compatriot Tadej Pogacar (UAE Team Emirates) lit up the final climb to Villard-de-Lans with an explosive attack.

Badminton should learn from tennis and resume play: Vimal Kumar

New Delhi (IANS): The badminton fraternity should take a leaf out of what other sports like tennis have done to restart competitions -- possibly with lesser prize money and without worrying about TV audience -- amid the COVID-19 pandemic, according to former player-turned-coaches U Vimal Kumar and Arvind Bhat.

A spate of withdrawals by top badminton nations has led to the cancellations of the Thomas Cup and Uber Cup and thus the sport missed out on a chance to restart its calendar that was halted in March. The two competitions were to be played from October 3-11.

Twice national champion Vimal Kumar felt that the financial situation of most badminton players outside of the top bracket is not too different from what is the case in tennis. "Players who are below the top 20 in badminton are strugg-



gling just like the lower ranked players in tennis. But everybody has started playing, including the top players," Vimal told IANS.

Vimal, a former national coach, said the top players in India need to realise that they would have to start competing sooner than later so as to not lose their edge. "Everyone needs to understand at that level is that they needed competition, they would lose their edge. If

the likes of Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu go to compete without any match practice they will not survive. Learn to live with it, this virus is not going away," he warned.

Bhat, too, wanted badminton to take a lesson from tennis. "Tennis has done really well in terms of having done the US Open. So many other sports have been taken care of. They show it

on television and are not too worried about getting a live audience. They do it with lesser prize money or whatever and I think there is a huge push for the Badminton World Federation (BWF) to start holding tournaments instead of cancelling them," Bhat told IANS.

Bhat also said that players need to put their training to use at some point. "Players have been training quite a lot, especially in places where things have opened up, like Bengaluru, they have been training for four months. So, there has to be a tournament for them to test themselves otherwise there is no aim for them to train for. If there are tournaments, then they will know about their weaknesses, they'll win or lose and they can work on all of it," he said.

"Secondly if tournaments are more and more delayed, the prize

money and endorsement money is not coming because they will say it is related to your image and your tournament results. All these people who have contracts, they won't be getting paid because tournaments are not there. Equipment is not being sold and then there will be problems with kits and that leads to financial issues."

Vimal said he is disappointed with the attitude of the dominant badminton nations and top players towards restarting the sport. "This was the best opportunity for badminton to restart," he said. "The community itself let that go, the Asian federations have decided on it. I would blame some of the top players; they also are not looking forward to play. BWF did a good job. A couple of years back, I wasn't happy with the way they handled a lot of things but here I have to say, they have done as much as they can."