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HYDERABAD | FRIDAY | 26 MARCH 2021

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WEATHER

Max: 37.8°C
Min: 22.5°C
RH: 22%
Rainfall: Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy
Sky. Max/Min temp.
37/23°C

ASTROGUIDE

Sarvari; Uttaryana
Tithi: Phalguna Shuddha
Dwadasi till 8.18 am; Phalguna Shuddha Trayodashi till 6.10 am
(Saturday)

Star: Magha till 9.33 am;
4.58 am to 6.27 am (Saturday)
Durmuhurtam: 8.44 am to
9.32 am; 12.46 pm to 1.34 pm
Rahukalam: 10.30 am to 12 noon

HIJRI CALENDAR

Sha'b'an 12, 1442 AH

PRAVERS

Fajar: 5.16 am
Zohar: 12.32 pm
Asar: 4.43 pm
Maghrub: 6.34 pm
Isha: 7.41 pm

SUNSET TODAY 6.28 PM

SUNRISE TOMORROW 6.15 AM

MOONRISE TODAY 4.13 PM

MOONSET TODAY 4.28 AM

INSIDE

CITY... PAGE 2
Higher pollution
recorded in city

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Hi-octane campaign for WB's first phase poll ends

Kolkata, March 25: Curtains came down at 5 pm on Thursday on the high decibel campaign in 30 Assembly seats in West Bengal where polls are scheduled in the first phase on March 27.

The 30 seats are spread across tribal-dominated Purulia, Bankura, Jhargram and Bankura districts promising "ashol poriborto" (actual change) to build "Sonar Bangla" (prosperous Bengal).

The star BJP campaigners for the seats going to poll in the first phase were Prime Minister Narendra Modi and home minister Amit Shah. The other star campaigners of the saffron party were UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, party president Jagat Prakash Nadda, top leader Smriti

Irani who repeatedly harped on the various scams.

On the other hand, West Bengal Chief Minister held poll rallies in each of the 30 constituencies, her injured leg notwithstanding. The TMC supremo in her campaigns described the Modi government as "anti-people" and the Prime Minister a "liar".

The 30 constituencies going to polls on Saturday had overwhelmingly voted for TMC in the last two state elections but BJP had swept them in the 2019 LS elections. —PTI

COVID NEGATIVE REPORT MUST FOR BENGALURU

VINEETA PANDEY | DC
NEW DELHI, MARCH 25

In one of the biggest single-day spikes in five months, India on Thursday recorded 53,476 new cases of Covid-19 in 24 hours along with 251 deaths. Due to the surge, the Kumbh Mela was curtailed to one month and Covid negative report mandatory for pilgrims. Besides, several states started imposing restrictions on movement of people and all passengers to Bengaluru will now need to have a Covid-19 negative report from April 1.

■ Report on Page 7

Pension hike for ex-MLAs, MLCS

₹50,000 minimum pension, Assembly clears Bill

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The Legislative Assembly on Thursday passed the Telangana Payment of Salaries and Pension and Removal of Disqualifications (Amendment) Bill, which enhances pensions of former legislators (MLAs and MLCS).

The minimum pension of former legislators has been increased from ₹30,000 to ₹50,000 per month, with an upper ceiling of ₹75,000.

Finance minister T. Harish Rao introduced the bill in the house, said that several former MLAs and MLCS were "struggling to pay hospital bills", whenever they undergo treatment.

Though there is a provision for sanctioning more funds over the current limit, he said that the "process of approvals has become a major hindrance" for former legislators during emergency conditions. Former legislators, who were elected for over three terms will receive

Retirement age hike Bill passed by House

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

Telangana Public Employment (Regulation of Age of Superannuation) Amendment Bill 2021 to enforce the retirement age hike with immediate effect.

Harish Rao, who introduced the Bill, said some Opposition parties and vested interests were trying to mislead students and job-seekers through a misinformation campaign that the retirement age hike by three years will halt fresh recruitment drives in Telangana for the next three years.

■ Page 2: Promotions led to vacancies: Harish

₹75,000 pension per month, as against ₹50,000 earlier.

■ Page 2: ₹10 lakh aid to treat MLAs, ex-MLCs

SC: Women get raw deal in Army

New Delhi, March 25: The evaluation criteria set by the Army for granting permanent commission (PC) to women SSC officers constituted systemic discrimination which has caused an economic and psychological harm and an affront to their dignity, the Supreme Court said on

Thursday. The apex court said the administrative requirement imposed by the Army authorities while considering the case of women Short Service Commission (SSC) officers for PC, of benchmarking them with the officers lowest in merit in the corresponding male batch, is arbitrary and irrational. A bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and M.R. Shah said this administrative requirement shall not be enforced while implementing the last year's verdict of the top court which had directed that women officers in the Army be granted PC.

A superficial sense of

equality is not in the true spirit of the Constitution and attempts to make equality only symbolic, the bench said in its 137-page verdict which was delivered on a batch of pleas filed by 86 petitioners questioning the manner in which the last year verdict has been implemented. —PTI

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RENTALS

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INDEPENDENT HOUSE

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SHORT TAKES

40-YR-OLD HELD FOR STEALING BANK DETAILS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

A 40-year-old man was arrested by the Rachakonda police on Thursday for stealing bank details of customers and luring them to take loans.

The accused, Kothapally Ashok of LB Nagar, was arrested following a complaint from an HDFC bank in Hyderabad which claimed that said people were receiving calls from bank officials checking for loan requirements.

"However, when the bank officials checked their records they found that no such calls were being made by the bank. The callers were impersonating bank officials and causing inconvenience to the customers," said the police, adding that the callers had secured personal and financial details, including the mobile numbers, of bank customers illegally and they also had acquired sensitive information about the customers.

Ashok had worked as a personal loan executive at the HDFC's Gaddiannaram branch from 2007 to 2018. In 2017, Ashok fraudulently took printouts of HDFC customers without the knowledge of the bank which amounts to stealing valuable data. Again in 2020, Ashok opened an office under the name Taragini Associates at LB Nagar.

"The firm was established to provide assistance in obtaining bank loans and he had hired five telecallers and gave them SIM cards. Their job was to call the customers from the list of phone numbers obtained fraudulently from the bank. They then told the customers they were from the HDFC bank and persuaded them to apply for a loan online. Ashok received a commission for the same and connived with K. Suresh, the direct sales associate of HDFC bank, and made a deal to use his ID and apply for bank approvals," the police explained.

THE ACCUSED was arrested following a complaint from an HDFC bank in Hyderabad which claimed that said people were receiving calls from bank officials checking for loan requirements.



With the state government closing all the educational institutions due to surge in the Covid-19 cases, many students were seen leaving for their hometown from Hyderabad on Thursday.

— P. SURENDRA

Students fume at govt vacate order

Head home with fear of carrying virus

HARLEEN
MINOCHA | DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The shutting down of hostels and resident welfare schools in the state, barely a month after they reopened following the unprecedented gap of 11 months, has left the students stranded again.

The abrupt announcement that came in the wake of the rising Covid-19 cases among students in schools and colleges left the students with barely a day to

vacate the hostels. Most hostels will soon shut down their mess services too. Students in colleges and universities are scared they might take the virus to their native places. They say it is difficult to find safe transport at quick notice. Students across all departments said they will have difficulty accessing online classes and other resources, especially in rural and isolated areas.

"There is hardly any internet connectivity in

rural parts of Mahbubnagar. We have struggled through the past year without any access to books and classes. When I get back home, I will be required to help my parents in the field or at work," said Mary, a student of MSc at OU.

Another student at JNTU-H, Jeevan, said by the closure, students will not now have the access to libraries for books and papers for study and for research purposes.

PSO rams Vani's car into House gate, suspended

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25



The damaged car of MLC Vani Devi after her PSO rammed the vehicle into the gate of the Assembly complex on Thursday in Hyderabad. Vani Devi was not in the car at the time of the accident.

The car of the newly-elected MLC, Vani Devi, was damaged in a mishap after her Personal Security Officer (PSO) rammed the vehicle into the gate of the state Assembly complex on Thursday morning. Following the incident, Hyderabad city police commissioner Anjani Kumar placed the PSO under suspension.

According to the police, the MLC had arrived at the Assembly complex on Thursday morning and got down from the vehicle at the alighting point when the mishap occurred. Along with the driver, the MLC went into the legislative building when her Personal Security Officer, identified as Bhanu Prakash, tried to take the vehicle to the parking lot.

"While doing so, he lost control and crashed the car straight into the gate, damaging the front of the vehicle," police said, adding that nobody was injured in the incident.

Anjani Kumar said, "Bhanu Prakash, who

unauthorisedly drove the protected person's car, had caused a serious accident at the Assembly complex. By law, a PSO is not supposed to drive the vehicle of the protectee," explained the police official.

HC slams Wakf inaction against encroachers

VUJJINI
VAMSHIDHARA | DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The Telangana High Court on Thursday lambasted Wakf Board for its efforts in resuming Wakf properties or lands from illegal encroachers.

The court was embarrassed with the inability of Wakf Board and the state minority department to detail the number of properties or lands that have taken back so far from land grabbers. A division bench, comprising Chief Justice Hima Kohli and Justice B. Vijayreddy was dealing with three PILs complaining about the failure of the Board to take action against illegal encroachments.

Earlier, the Wakf Board assured the court that it would constitute a task force cell to restore properties that were grabbed. However, it had said that shortage of funds was making it difficult.

On Thursday, the bench noticed that no action was taken in the last three months despite assurances given to the court.

COURT DIRECTED both Wakf and the State to come with a new status report.

Wakf Board has not filed the affidavit but the State Minority Welfare department filed a counter that the proposal to constitute the task force cell was still in the discussion stage and submitted that 2,186 eviction orders have been issued to encroachers to dispossess them from the properties of Wakf.

But when Chief Justice Kohli questioned about how many had been executed successfully and how many of them went to appeals before the Tribunal or forums to get stay orders, counsel for the State was unable to give details as he had no information.

Reacting to it, the Bench said "Don't always say that we are working on it. We don't want an action plan but action." It directed both Wakf and the State to come with a new status report furnishing all details of encroached lands and how many have been resumed.

Passersby save man from attack

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The prompt and alert response of two men who stopped for tea at a stall saved a man's life in Rajendranagar on Thursday morning. According to the police, Ramesh Yadav, a herdsman, was attacked with a sickle when the duo, Naresh and Narayan, intervened and saved him.

Yadav took his cattle,

including cows and bulls, to graze in the fields of an Agricultural University's

open land in Rajendranagar on late Wednesday night.

"Meanwhile,

M. Balaiah, aged about 45, complained about him to the university's management, who slapped a fine of ₹3,500 on Ramesh and held onto his cattle until he paid the amount.

On Thursday,

around 12:30 pm, while Ramesh parked his bike and stopped for tea at a stall near NIRD, Balaiah, who was carrying a sickle, taunted him and both picked up an argument,

following which Balaiah started attacking him with the sickle, causing him bleeding injuries on the left shoulder and neck," said the police.

However, who had also stopped for tea at the same stall, intervened and stopped the attack and held the attacker back until cops came to the spot.

The Rajendranagar police team reached the spot and shifted a wounded Ramesh to a nearby hospital for medical attention and detained Balaiah.



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(A/2021/D00040)

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*Offer includes consumer offer, retail support, exchange bonus and corporate/ISL offer (wherever applicable). Above mentioned savings is the value of maximum savings on selected models/variants. *Smart Finance is available in Hyderabad only. **Terms & Conditions apply. The terms and conditions of the offer are subject to change without prior notice. All offers are brought to you by Maruti Suzuki dealers only. Offers shown are valid for limited period & for limited stock only. For more details, please contact your nearest ARENA dealership. Accessories and features shown in the pictures may not be a part of the standard equipment and may vary according to the variant. Colors shown may vary from actual body colors due to printing on paper. Images used are for illustration purposes only. Maruti Suzuki India Limited reserves the right to discontinue offers without notice. This article is published in Business Standard. Above offers are valid till 31st March, 2021.

SHORT TAKES

IIT-H LAUNCHES SEMICONDUCTOR, IP STARTUPS

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The IIT-H has launched a 'Semiconductor Start-up Incubation and Acceleration Programme' on Thursday. This initiative will find, facilitate, and mentor semiconductor and IP design start-ups across India in technological as well as business aspects. This will be part of IIT-H's Fabless Chip Design Incubator (FabCI) along with NXP India, a world leader in secure connectivity solutions for embedded applications, and in collaboration with Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

The new program at IIT-H will incubate up to five promising start-ups for two years in each cohort every year. The participants will include semiconductor chip design, IP design, design services startups with an IP focus and chip design tool related startups. The selected startups for the core programme will get, along with the mentoring experience and exposure, benefits totalling up to ₹1 crore per year.

THE PROGRAMME AT IIT-H will incubate up to five start-ups for two years. The contestants will include semiconductor chip design, IP design, design services startups with an IP focus and chip design

PODU LANDS ISSUE TO BE ADDRESSED BY CHIEF MINISTER

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The issue of podu lands in the state will soon be addressed by Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao, tribal welfare minister Satyavathi Rathod assured the Legislative Assembly on Thursday. She also said that though clear instructions were issued not to trouble tribals practising agriculture in podu lands in forests of Telangana state, some officials were acting with some "over enthusiasm", the minister said.

There were 15,558 claims covering 53,565 acres for rights on forest land by podu cultivators that still need to be addressed, the minister said. She said that since the implementation of the Record of Forest Rights Act, 97,774 tribals were given the rights to cultivate on podu lands covering 3,03,970 acres of forest land in the state.

She also said that the government was considering a liaison officer position to coordinate with the forest department on issues relating to clearances to be obtained from the department by other wings of the government.

On the recent fire in the Amrabad Tiger Reserve in the Nallamalai forests of Nagarkurnool district, the minister said three tribals who suffered burns in the incident, lost their lives and their families have been provided with ₹1 lakh as ex-gratia while those injured in the fire, were given ₹50,000 each.

Form No. URC-2

Advertisement giving notice about registration under Part I of Chapter XXI [Pursuant to section 374(b) of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 4(1) of the companies (Authorized to Register) Rules, 2014]

Notice is hereby given that in pursuance of subsection (2) of section 366 of the Companies Act, 2013, an application is proposed to be made after fifteen days hereof but before the expiry of thirty days hereinafter to the Registrar at Central Registration Centre, Office of Registrar of Companies, Ministry of Corporate Affairs (Office:- Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), Plot No. 6,7,8, Sector-5, IMT Manesar, Gurgaon, Haryana-122050).

1. That R K PRODUCTS CO, a partnership firm may be registered under Part I of Chapter XXI of the Companies Act, 2013, in the name of R K PAN MASALA PRIVATE LIMITED as a company limited by shares.

2. The principal objects of the company are as follows: To carry on the business of manufacture and sale of Pan Masala, Sweet Supari and mouth freshener etc and other allied activities.

3. A copy of the draft memorandum and articles of association of the proposed company may be inspected at the office at Plot No. 79, Survey No.48, Kattedan, R.R.District, Hyderabad (Telangana) 500077.

4. Notice is hereby given that any person objecting to this application may communicate their objection in writing to the Registrar at Central Registration Centre, Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA), Plot No. 6,7,8, Sector-5, IMT Manesar, Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050, within twenty one days from the date of publication of this notice, with a copy to the Firm at its office at:- Plot No. 79, Survey No.48, Kattedan, R.R. District, Hyderabad (Telangana) 500077.

Dated this 26th day of March 2021
Name(s) of Applicant
1. DEEPAK KOTHARI
2. MAHANT LAL YADAV
3. SURYA PRAKASH PANDEY

TRS eyes OBC votes to win N'Sagar bypoll

KCR likely to pick Nomula's son or local BC leader

L. VENKAT RAM REDDY
| DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

Buoyed by a victory in the two graduate MLC polls, the ruling TRS is banking on votes of the Other Backward Castes (OBCs) to achieve its target of winning and retaining the upcoming Nagarjunasagar Assembly bypoll on April 17. Voters from backward classes constitute the majority in this constituency.

TRS party supremo and Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao is likely to announce the party's candidate on Friday, soon after the budget session of the Assembly ends.

Sources said that Mr Chandrashekhar Rao has more or less decided to

field a BC candidate, as was done successfully in the 2018 Assembly polls, to render the contest a fight between BCs and Reddys as a strategy.

The Congress and BJP had fielded candidates from the Reddy community in 2018 while the TRS fielded Nomula Narasimhaiah, a BC from the Yadav community, and went on to win the battle. TRS candidate, known for his leftist politics, trounced Congress heavyweight K. Jana Reddy, who had earlier won the elections from here seven times.

The Congress has already announced Jana Reddy's candidature for the bypoll. Currently, there is no word from the BJP on

its candidate till now. TRS sources further said that Mr Rao's choice has come down to choosing between deceased MLA Nomula Narasimhaiah's son, Nomula Bhagat, and a local BC leader Katteboina Guravaiah Yadav. Mr Yadav is being considered because multiple surveys commissioned by the party on candidate selection suggested that voters were favouring a local BC leader as their MLA but Nomula Bhagat suffers the perception of being a 'non-local', hailing as he does from the Nakrekal mandal.

However, some TRS sources say after stunning victories in the two MLC seats recently, Mr Rao changed his stand

of fielding a local BC candidate for Nagarjunasagar because he is brimming with confidence that TRS would win the bypoll, irrespective of candidate's domicile status and maybe leaning in favour of Bhagat.

But Guravaiah is giving tough competition with both his local and financial status besides his family's deep-rooted political background. Guravaiah is son-in-law of former MLA late Gundeboina Rammurthy Yadav from Chakalurthi constituency between (1994-1999), which was reorganised as Nagarjunasagar constituency later. He is also a relative of TRS Rajya Sabha member Badugula Lingaiah Yadav.

WAKF CANCELS 115 ILLEGAL REGISTRATIONS

ATHER MOIN | DC
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The Telangana Wakf Board has cancelled 115 registrations of deeds relating to the transfer of property by way of sale in respect of immovable Wakf properties.

Chairman of the Board, Mohammed Saleem, addressing the media here on Thursday said that 69 of the registrations pertained to the land attached with Qutub Shahi Masjid and Dargah Hzt. Ibrahim Hussaini at Attapur, Rajendranagar and while 46 were on the land attached to Ashoorkhana, Chilla at Dindigul.

As per Wakf records Acre 7-10 guntas and Acre 1-20 guntas lands, respectively were attached to the said institutions.

He claimed that the Board is identifying other such Wakf properties that were illegally transferred. He appealed to mutawallis and managing committees of graveyards to make arrangements for Shab-e-Barat, which falls on Sunday. Replying to a question, he said that six teams have been constituted to verify reports of the second Survey Commission. On enquiry by this correspondent, it has been revealed that although the teams were constituted six months back, they have not verified even a single report so far.

Quit as MP, turmeric farmers tell Arvind

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Arvind is in a fix over the lack of provision of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for turmeric and the absence of a Turmeric Board, which he had promised in 2019.

On Thursday, protesting turmeric farmers raised slogans against him and demanded his resignation. His troubles grew with BJP's Tamil Nadu unit promising a turmeric development board

and MSP for turmeric. He tried to convince farmers that spices extension centre was a better alternative.

Earlier, replying to a question raised by TRS member, K.R. Suresh Reddy in the Rajya Sabha, Union agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry had already established a regional office-extension centre of Spices Board at Nizamabad for export of spices, including turmeric.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE

"...for He has said, I will never fail you nor abandon you" Hebrews 13:5



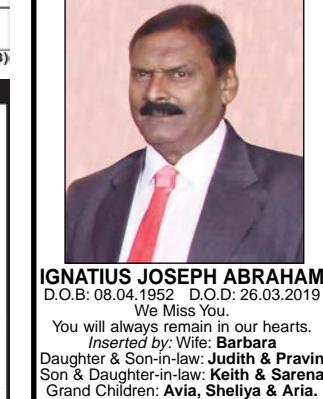
OBITUARY



MAYA RAJAN, 80 Years
W/o Late CDR R V Kanaka Rajan
Passed away at 15:30 hrs on 21.03.2021
She enjoyed a wonderful life over the decades
loved by all
In profound condolence, her children
son Rajendra Rajan and Daughter Anu
Rao announce the obituary for her soul
to rest in peace, along with:
SHALINI RAJAN (W/o Rajendra Rajan)
ARUN RAO (Husband Anu Rao)
(D/o Rajendra Rajan and Shalini Rajan)
ARNAV RAJAN
(S/o Rajendra Rajan and Shalini Rajan)
SIDHARTH RAO
(S/o Arun Rao and Anu Rao)

(CA-3558)

2nd DEATH ANNIVERSARY



IGNATIUS JOSEPH ABRAHAM
D.O.B: 08.04.1952 D.O.D: 26.03.2019
We Miss You.
You will always remain in our hearts.
Inserted by: Wife Barbara
Daughter & Son-in-law: Judith & Pravin
Son & Daughter-in-law: Keeth & Sreena
Grand Children: Avia, Shelly & Aria

(S/2021/D01371)



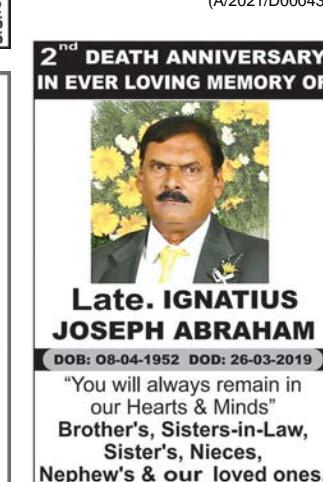
AKKERA SADHANA
DOB: 16.8.1962 D.O.D: 26.3.2016
5 years have gone by but your memories
haven't faded.
Written by: Ashok Kumar Akkeri (Husband)
Suresh & Savani (Children)
Deepika, Sathish and Grand children
Lisha, Kartik, Abhiram, Shourya,
and the entire Akkera Family.

(S/2021/D01372)



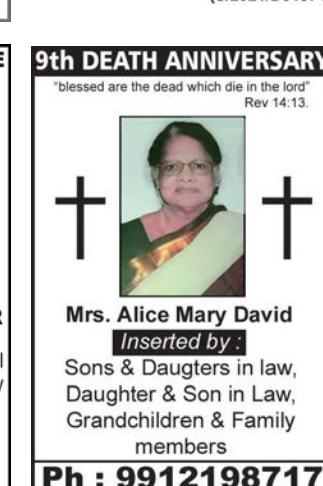
Smt. K. PADMA
D.O.B: 20.08.1951 D.O.D.: 06.03.2012
Inserted by:
Husband: K. Govardhan Krishna
Former Director APTRANSO
& Family Members
Ph: 9866208241

(A/2021/D00043)



Late. IGNATIUS
JOSEPH ABRAHAM
D.O.B: 08.04.1952 D.O.D: 26.03.2019
"You will always remain in
our Hearts & Minds"
Brother's, Sisters-in-Law,
Sister's, Nieces,
Nephew's & our loved ones.

(S/2021/D01374)



Mrs. Alice Mary David
Inserted by:
Sons & Daughters in law,
Daughter & Son in Law,
Grandchildren & Family
members
Ph : 9912198717

Seeking justice



BJP Mahila Morcha members protest in front of the Assembly seeking justice for a minor girl from Bhainsa who was assaulted a week ago. They were later taken into custody.

TS BHIM ARMY CHIEF HURT IN ROAD MISHAP

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

cost. These autos have been distributed in all the 30 circles within GHMC. The vehicles have been designed to also carry hazardous materials.

The minister said "I appeal to the citizens of Hyderabad to join hands in making it a Healthy Hyderabad. Cooperate with the sanitation staff by placing dry and wet garbage in separate bins to improve efficiency in garbage collection and also in achieving a healthy Hyderabad city."

He was speaking after handing over 350 swachh autos with a higher lifting capacity of 1.5 tonnes for collection of garbage here on Thursday.

The event was attended by Mayor Sudheendra Kumar, minister T. Srinivas Yadav and

GHMC Commissioner Lokesh Kumar. These swachh autos were handed over to rag-pickers, under the driver-cum-owner scheme. The beneficiaries contribute 10 per cent and GHMC 90 per cent of the

cost. These autos have been distributed in all the 30 circles within GHMC. The vehicles have been designed to also carry hazardous materials.

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GHMC Commissioner Lokesh Kumar. These swachh autos were handed over to rag-pickers, under the driver-cum-owner scheme. The beneficiaries contribute 10 per cent and GHMC 90 per cent of the

The Telangana Bhim Army chief was injured in an accident after he lost control of his bike at Khairatabad on late Wednesday night.

According to the police, the chief, Sujit Ravana, was riding on his motorcycle alone from Khairatabad towards Raj Bhavan when he lost control over the motorcycle and fell on the road divider. The iron grills on the divider pierced his body resulting in injuries. We received timely information and shifted him to a nearby private hospital for medical attention", the Panjagutta police said.

Denying the rumours on social media platforms about the injuries being a result of an alleged attempt to murder, West Zone DCP AR Srinivas verified the incident. "He had dashed his bike on the divider and fell on the railing. It is a clear accident. It has been verified via CC cameras," said the DCP.

The ACB officials are investigating the source of wealth in the house of Upender. It may be recalled that the farmers burst crackers in front of Vemsoor tahsildar office when the deputy tahsildar was caught while receiving ₹1 lakh from a farmer Thota Sambasiva Rao.

They found ₹37,18,150 cash, 30 tolas of gold jewelry worth ₹10.71 lakh and 637 grams of silver, worth ₹32,500 in his house. Upender was caught while receiving ₹1 lakh from a farmer Thota Sambasiva Rao.

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In a review meeting, the Hyderabad metropolitan water supply and sewerage board decided that 500 teams

linking process in slums has been completed for 1,05,892 connections. This is 50 per cent of the 2,00,785 connections in such areas. In the domestic category, there are a total of 7,64,568 connections. The linking process has been completed for 1,52,588 connections. In the bulk category, 1,594 connections are required and HMWSS is facilitating this with their contractors in different zones.

Those who have not installed new water meters cannot avail of the facility of free drinking water. Hence an awareness drive will be carried out in apartments and gated communities by HMWSS to help them avail of the scheme. Installation of new water meters is required and HMWSS is facilitating this with their contractors in different zones.

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SHORT TAKES

WATER DEPT.
SUBMITS PAPERS
FOR POLAVARAMDC CORRESPONDENT
VIJAYAWADA, MARCH 25

The water resources department has submitted tender documents pertaining to Polavaram irrigation project's additional works costing ₹683 crore to the Judicial Preview Commission for its clearance.

Project superintending engineer C.K. Narasimha Murthy said in a statement here on Thursday that in order to ensure transparency in tendering process, all documents related to the additional works of the project head works were uploaded on the websites '<https://judicialpreview.ap.gov.in>' and 'www.irrigationap.gov.in' on March 22. Suggestions and objections have been sought from the public. Any suggestion and objection on tendering process may be sent to the Commission by 5pm on March 31.

Details of works to be taken up include: diaphragm type end cut off wall at the junction of spill channel and pilot channel; vibro stone columns and deep soil missing in clay portion from Ch 915 to Ch 1425; concrete dam gap-III and ECRF dam gap-I and protection works to cut slopes of left right flanks of spillway and spill channel excluding 902 hill.

₹3.1 CR LOOTED
FROM SBI BANK
IN KARIMNAGARDC CORRESPONDENT
KARIMNAGAR, MARCH 25

In a major filmy style bank robbery thieves broke into the State Bank of India (SBI) branch in Gunjapadugu village of Manthani mandal Wednesday midnight and looted ₹18.46 lakh cash and six kgs of gold worth ₹2.9 crore without leaving any evidence.

On Thursday morning, when the branch manager Prahlad Singh along with his staff entered the premises, they noticed that the bank was robbed by thieves who made a hole through the window at the backside of the bank.

On receiving a complaint, officials from Ramagundam police commissionerate registered the case and started investigation.

Commissioner of Police V. Satyanarayana, officer on special duty, Sharath Pawar, DCP Ravinder and Uday Kumar Reddy, ACPs Umendar and Narendra visited Gunjapadugu village and inspected the premises.

Speaking to press persons, the top cop said that a gang of thieves was involved in the bank robbery, which was a thorough professional job. On entering the premises, the thieves cut the cable wire of the alarm clock before entering into the strong room and removed all batteries besides the cables attached to CCTV cameras. Police recovered hand gloves from the crime spot.

Satyanarayana said eight teams have deployed along with the bank security wing and started a manhunt for the robbers.

It should be noted that Gunjapadugu came to lime-light when the High Court advocate couple Gattu Vaman Rao and P.V. Nagamani, who are the residents of the same village, were brutally murdered last month.

SATYANARAYANA SAID
eight teams have deployed along with the bank security wing and started a manhunt for the robbers.

DEBT | BURDEN

Farmers family had taken ₹10 lakh loan at high interest

DC CORRESPONDENT
MANCHERI, MARCH 25

Four members of a tenant farmer family have committed suicide, pained over mounting debts and inability to repay them. The bodies were found at the house in Malkeppalli village in Kasipet mandal on Thursday morning.

As per the FIR, the parents committed suicide on Wednesday night by hanging from the ceiling after giving poison to their married daughter and young son. The deceased were Janjirala Ramesh, 47, Padma, 39, Soumya, 20, and Akshay 15.

This is the first-of-its-kind suicide due to mounting debts and losses incurred in the cotton crop in the state in the recent past. The family had

Danger zone



Sanitation workers leave manholes uncovered after cleaning them exposing mototristas and pedestrians to danger — P. SURENDRA

Campaigning in full swing in Nizam Club

Race for prez post hots up; many vow new facilities

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

The Nizam Club, the second oldest club in the city, goes to elections on Sunday to elect a new president, joint secretary and three members of its managing committee. With the polling day drawing near, the race for the president's position is heating up with the candidates reaching out to the club members seeking their votes.

At stake is the future of the club, said Zafar Javeed, one of the five candidates in the fray for the president's post. Incidentally, Zafar Javeed's father, the late Amjad Ali Khan, was also a president of the club between 1974 and 1992 and is credited with much of the development of the club.

On what his plans are for the club if elected president, Zafar Javeed said the existing club premises at Lakdiyalpuri, is at its full capacity and if elected president, would work towards

creating a small business centre in the club that would allow families to return to the club and leave business meetings to be held away from areas where club members can relax with their families. He also said that he would work towards establishing an annexe just outside the city with facilities such as a mini golf course and other amenities for the members.

"There is a lot of restoration that needs to be undertaken, right from the guest rooms that were never refurbished in decades to restoring the food quality. There was a time when the food at Nizam Club was famous all over the country. Much needs to be done to bring back families, restore the culture and glory of the club," he said.

The other four candidates in the fray for the club president's position are Manohar Reddy, Rafiq Iqbal, Ramesh Dheer, and Mirza Sajid Baig. According to Manohar

Reddy, a former vice-president of the club, his goal as the club president would be to continue with the development the club has been witnessing over the past few years. "We developed a sports complex, and other amenities. The goal is to improve efficiency and not run the club like a business," he said.

Sajid Baig said that the development — construction of the sports complex and the parking complex — in the club took place when he was the vice-president and his plan is to continue developing amenities at the club. "There are some who claim they will do this and that, but the fact is unless the majority of the managing committee agrees, nothing can be done. One person cannot do anything on his own," he said. The 10-member committee comprises the club president, vice-president, secretary, joint secretary, and managing committee members.

AP TO FACE SEVERE HEAT CONDITIONS

DC CORRESPONDENT
VISHAKHAPATNAM, MARCH 25

on the contentions in the PIL.

Komati Reddy Venkatesh, in his letter to the high court, said the hotel was constructed without seeking permission from the Hyderabad municipal development authority and by flouting municipal laws.

Praveen Kumar, standing counsel for the municipality, informed the bench that the erstwhile gram panchayat at Turkayamal had accorded permission for the construction. As per this, the hotel had permission to construct only the ground and two floors. Instead, the hotel rose to five floors.

At the same time, in 2016, the hotel management applied for regularisation of the illegally constructed additional floors. The request is pending in view of the earlier orders of this high court in various writ petitions filed by the neighbours of the hotel and the hotel itself, the court was told.

"Tuni, Bapatla and parts of Visakhapatnam are facing heat conditions with rise in the temperatures by 2 to 3 degrees Celsius above normal," IMD director S Stella Reddy *Deccan Chronicle*.

She said if the temperature goes up by 4.5 to 6.4 degrees above the normal, it will be declared as heat wave conditions and if it is seven degrees above normal, it will be termed as a severe heat wave condition. In the coastal region, the average maximum temperature is around 37 degrees Celsius and Rayalaseema around 40 degrees.

Tenant farmers neither get Rythu Bandu nor Rythu Bheema nor crop loans from banks and no compensation for the damaged crop but they have to pay the lease amount to the landowner irrespective of gain or loss.

Tenant farmers get all the benefits. The lease amounts for lands also increased in recent years. Thus tenant farmers have to pay huge amounts for taking land on lease for cultivation.

The suicide note said the family would not have ended their lives if they had ₹7.5 lakh to clear the debts. It said, "The middle-class people give more priority to the 'Ijjath' and they

faced in agriculture. "This is the fate of a middle-class family," they noted down.

In the note, the family said they had taken 30 acres of land on lease and cultivated cotton this kharif season but got only 100 quintals of the yield that fetched them ₹3 lakh. They paid that money to one of the moneylenders.

The incident is indicative of the deepening agriculture crisis with the increased investment costs and losses incurred in the cotton crop due to pest attack, lower yields, especially among the tenant farmers.

The suicide note said the family would not have ended their lives if they had ₹7.5 lakh to clear the debts. It said, "The middle-class people give more priority to the 'Ijjath' and they

can't live if once they lost 'Ijjath'."

Tenant farmers engaged in agriculture have no institutional support and governmental backing unlike the farmers who owned land. Some 70 per cent of the farmer suicides are that of tenant farmers.

Tenant farmers neither get Rythu Bandu nor Rythu Bheema nor crop loans from banks and no compensation for the damaged crop but they have to pay the lease amount to the landowner irrespective of gain or loss.

Tenant farmers get all the benefits. The lease amounts for lands also increased in recent years. Thus tenant farmers have to pay huge amounts for taking land on lease for cultivation.

The declaration is made after hearing of objections of persons interested and due enquiry as per rule 15 of the Act, No. 30/2013. The number of families likely to be residing under Sec. 16(1) of the Act., due to Land Acquisition in Nil, No Government Building and other Public Common Amenities are affected in the area under acquisition.

On any working day, the concerned office of the Land Acquisition officer will be inspected in the office of the Land Acquisition officer.

The suicide note said the family would not have ended their lives if they had ₹7.5 lakh to clear the debts. It said, "The middle-class people give more priority to the 'Ijjath' and they

rebelled against the British, the Chief Minister said, "Mahatma Gandhi came only in 1915 and the freedom struggle was largely around the time of Gandhi's entry across the country. But the Kurnool region waged a struggle 100 years before that and Uyyalawada was the name still reverberates in the hearts of the people of the region."

Thanking the electorate for giving a resounding victory to YSRC in the gram panchayat and municipal elections, Mr Jagan Mohan Reddy said his government is dedicated for the welfare of the people. The Chief Minister said Kurnool is connected so far by rail and road ways and with the airport which sixth airport in the state, will transform the region for better.

Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy name for Kurnool Airport: CM

D. SIVA RAMI
REDDY | DC
KURNool MARCH 25

Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy on Thursday said that the Kurnool Airport would be named as Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy Airport. The airport will open for commercial services from March 28 and Indigo Airlines will fly from Kurnool to Vishakapatnam, Bengaluru and Chennai. The CM, while inaugurating airport near Orvakal, said Uyyalawada Narasimha Reddy has fought against the British even before the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857 and had laid down his life for the cause self rule.

Jagan pooh-poohed former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, in a derisive tone, for inaugurating the airport in 2019



just before elections even though it was not ready for operations. "We spent ₹100 crore to make it operational," he said.

Exhorting the spirit of independence of Narasimha Reddy that lead to a

rebellion against the British, the Chief Minister said, "Mahatma Gandhi came only in 1915 and the freedom struggle was largely around the time of Gandhi's entry across the country. But the Kurnool region waged a struggle 100 years before that and Uyyalawada was the name still reverberates in the hearts of the people of the region."

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EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender Notice No. CE/2021/02,
Date: 24.03.2021,
E-Open tender No - 02206462CS to be
opened on 15.04.2021

1. Name of the work with its location:
Manufacture & Supply of Pre-tensioned Mono block Concrete Sleeper (pre-tensioned type) conforming to RDSO's Drg. No. T-2496 and IRS Specification No. T-39 as amended upto date of tender closing duly loaded into wagon/road vehicle. (Qty-35,000 Nos). Location- Office of Principal Chief Engineer, East Central Railway, Hajipur. 02. Approx. cost of the work: Rs. 8,25,16,700.00. 3. Earnest Money to be deposited : Nil. 4. Date & Time for closing of tender and opening of tender : 11:30 hrs. on 15.04.2021, 5. Website particulars, where complete details of tender can be seen or downloaded from website : <http://www.reps.gov.in> Dy. CE/TSP/HJP PR/01672/HQ/T-20/21

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA

I & CAD Department, O/o Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Circle, Gadwal

Tender No.1/202BHK-2020-21 Dt: 24.03.2021

Name of work: 2BHK-construction of (G+2) Double Bed Room Houses (715 Nos.) under Gadwal Municipality, Gadwal Mandi, Gadwal Constituency in Jogulama Gadwal District, value of work: Rs.3789.5 Laks. Availability of tender document : 03.04.2021, 11 AM to 17.04.2021, 3 PM. Tender Acceptance: 03.04.2021, 11:00 AM to 17.04.2021, 5:00 PM. Pre-Bid Bid Opening Date : 19.04.2021, 11:00 AM. Price Bid Closing Date: 22.04.2021 at 11:00 AM. Address of Concerned Superintending Engineer: Superintending Engineer, Irrigation Circle, Gadwal. Further details can be seen at Telangana State e-procurement market place <https://tender.telangana.gov.in>. Sd/-SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, DIPR RO No.1104-DP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2021-21 DIST/CIRCLE NO. GADWAL/2021

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA

ROADS & BUILDINGS DEPARTMENT

e-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

Engineer-In-Chief (R&B) State Roads & CRN: MIT No. 23Non-Plan/DCE/R/EE-R/DEE-1/AE-1/2021, Dt: 23.03.2021, (2) Tender document can be obtained from e-procurement market place i.e., <http://www.e-procurement.telangana.gov.in> from 30.03.2021 at 4:00 PM onwards. The last date of receipt of tenders is on or before 03.04.2021 upto 4:00 PM. Further details can be seen at e-procurement market place <http://www.e-procurement.telangana.gov.in>. Sd/-Engineer-In-Chief (R&B) State Roads & CRN

KONKAN RAILWAY CORPORATION LTD.

(A Government of India Undertaking)

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Chief Engineer, Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., invites Open Tender in Single bid system through E-Tendering on IREPS portal from eligible contractors for the following work. Tender Notice No.: KR-W-01-58-2020-16. Name of Work : Supplying and stacking of ballast at Murudeshwar ballast depot, loading of ballast into KRCL hoppers and Supply of ballast at nominated locations on cess between Shiror-Murudeshwar sections for CTR (P) works under the jurisdiction of Senior Regional Engineer, Karwar region of Konkan Railway. Estimated Cost : ₹ 530.44 Lakhs excluding GST. Completion Period : Nine months including monsoon. Closing Date/Time: 16/04/2021 up to 15:00 hrs. for submission of online Offers/Bids. Manual offers shall not be accepted. Please visit <https://ireps.gov.in> website for details / participation. Corrigendum/addendum will be hosted in this website only.

SAI

Sports Authority of India (Personnel Division)

Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium Complex (East Gate), Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110 003.

In supersession to the notification dated 30.12.2020, Sports Authority of India (SAI), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS) and a Registered Society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860, invites applications from eligible candidates for the appointment to the post of Executive Director (Finance) on deputation basis. The deputation will be initially for a period of 03 years extendable to a maximum of 02 years in the pay matrix 13A as per 7th CPC equivalent to PB 4 with GP Rs. 8900/- for posting at SAI Head Office, Lodhi Road, New Delhi. The applicants who have applied in response to earlier advertisement need not apply again. The details and application form is available on the website of the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports www.yas.nic.in and SAI i.e. www.sportsauthorityofindia.nic.in. The application complete in all aspects should reach to "Director (Personnel), Sports Authority of India, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, (East Gate), 2nd Floor, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003 latest by 15.04.2021."

Deputy Director (Personnel)
Sports Authority of India
--davp-47103/11/0016/2021

Sports Authority of India, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, (East Gate), 2nd Floor, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110 003 latest by 15.04.2021

Deputy Director (Personnel)
Sports Authority of India

"Serving Customers with a Smile."

DECCAN Chronicle

26 MARCH 2021

Calling the cops on Opp.? Bihar ruckus probe must

Legislators are not above the law, but legislatures — the place where laws are made — a House of Parliament or a state Assembly or Legislative Council chamber — are privileged sites, where the law and order machinery of the State, as embodied in the police force, may not intervene — and interfere with proceedings. The legislature, therefore, has marshals who obey the Speaker or Chairman and have been known to deal with unruly situations with firmness.

The logic is if elected representatives of the people were to be interfered with in the performance of their constitutionally mandated duties, then why bother having elections? A despotic executive may then do as it pleases.

In a democracy, these are matters that lie in the realm of first principles. If this were not the case, the majority party which runs the government will be at liberty to send the police in to silence opponents though force, pass unhindered any laws it likes and in the manner it likes, without fear of criticism. Then law-making may be conducted with the peace of the graveyard reigning.

Such a state of affairs will produce order and harmony of a kind that behoves a police state even if it masquerades as a democracy. Such examples are not unknown in the world. In India, however, we have been proud to run a noisy democracy. This has given us prestige even among autocracies which may sometimes denounce us but also envy us.

In light of this, what was witnessed in the Bihar Assembly last Tuesday can only fill every Indian with shame. MLAs of Opposition parties, men and women, were dragged on the ground by the police who had been called in. The scene that was telecast was one of brutality. Legislative decorum was being

given a severe beating.

Chief minister Nitish Kumar appeared later to justify the police action, referring only to the bedlam his party's opponents were creating. Does he remain his own master, or is he dancing to the tune of his alliance partners who now appear to direct his every action and place him in the position of a puppet? On a subsequent day, standing up to speak in the Legislative Council, the CM, according to one report, "quivered" with anger as he continued to denounce the conduct of the Opposition. Not one word about the rights and wrongs of the police entering the legislative chamber.

The Opposition MLAs, led by RJD, had indeed been unruly in mounting their criticism of the Bihar Special Armed Police Bill, 2021, at the introduction stage. This is to be a state paramilitary force apparently on the lines of CISF, with the difference that it will have the power to arrest. In India, only civil police in a state have been given this power. Such a Bill is weighted against citizens. Some reports suggest Opposition parties tried to prevent the Speaker from coming out of his chambers. This is crossing the line. In such situations, marshals are known to be resourceful and vigorous, and are trained to deal with legislators.

If the Speaker called in the police, did he act on his own or did he act on advice? The circumstances are murky, to say the least, and deserve to be enquired into without delay. The CM, for his part, should be contrite, not brazen.

Welcome Justice Ramana

India welcomes the initiation of the process by which Justice N.V. Ramana will be formally declared the next Chief Justice of India, with the current CJI Justice Sharad A. Bobde recommending the name of the senior-most judge after him, to the post. The elevation of Justice Ramana, when he takes office as the 48th CJI, after the incumbent leaves office on April 23, is yet another example of the maturity and independence of the Indian judiciary. After an illustrious career as a judge in more than one high court, and then as a judge of the Supreme Court, Justice Ramana deserves his rise to the highest chair in the Indian judiciary by the dint of his wisdom, brilliance, objectivity and hard work.

In clearing the way for the elevation of Justice Ramana, an in-house procedure of the Supreme Court has also wisely rejected a complaint by chief minister of Andhra Pradesh, Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, against him in a case relating to the Amaravati land scam. It was extremely crucial not to set any precedent, which would have enabled an easy hijack of the chair in future by any self-interested party or group. However, the procedure adopted by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in handling the complaint of chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, was kept "strictly confidential" and declared "not liable, in nature, to be made public".

As several wise judges of the Supreme Court have pronounced, the procedure adopted in arriving at a decision is often of far greater significance to the ethos of instructions than the decisions themselves, and wise right decisions must still stand the test of transparency and fairness test of procedure.

The halo of the Supreme Court could have risen further if the procedure by which the way was paved for the next CJI considered taking into confidence the ordinary citizen crucial enough to be made a yardstick.

The mature decision of naming Justice Ramana as the next CJI, which was so apt, given an unimpeachable candidature as his, should not have taken the risk of leaving room for even an iota of doubt over the procedure adopted in bringing in the only second Telugu speaking CJI into office.

The honourable body would have done greater justice to the Justice if they had considered making the proceeding as transparent as an example the apex court expects from other institutions and lesser mortals.

DECCAN CHRONICLE

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Rajahmundry: Venagiri, Dhawaleswaram Rd, Rajahmundry, Ph: 0883-2417618/2417208; Telefax: 0883-2417208
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Kurnool: Survey No.1341, Vavilalapally Colony, Jagityala Road, Karimnagar - 505 001, Ph: 0878-2228908; Telefax: 0878-2220433
Nellore: Survey No.52/7/2, Burampur Village, Venkatachalam (M), Chennudugunta Panchayat, Nellore, Ph: 0861-2348581/82; Telefax: 0861-2348580
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Mahir Ali

Remembering the bloodbath 50 yrs ago which broke Pakistan into two

It would be tricky to designate the starting point of the sub-continent's second partition. The seeds, it could be argued, were sown during the late 1940s and fertilised through much of the succeeding two decades. There can be little question, though, that the point of no return was reached around midnight on March 25-26 half a century ago.

That was the night the massacres began in what was then East Pakistan and is today Bangladesh. The initial targets stretched from Awami League stalwarts and strongholds to the intelligentsia more generally — among them university students, professors, writers, journalists, doctors and engineers. All too many of an incipient nation's best minds were obliterated before its birth.

That could be described as Pakistan's parting blow in the aftermath of the nation's first properly democratic exercise the preceding December. The elections had been postponed from October after floods wreaked havoc in East Pakistan. They were followed in

November by a cyclone and tidal wave remembered as one of the deadliest natural catastrophes anywhere in the world.

The estimated death toll hovered around a million. Pakistan's military ruler, Gen. Yahya Khan, stopped over in Dhaka on his way home from a state visit to China, witnessed the devastation during a helicopter ride, then promptly resumed his journey home to Islamabad.

He returned in due course, purportedly to oversee the relief effort, but by then the eastern wing was already fluttering in the wind, poised to take solo flight. Much of the assistance in its hour of dire need had come from foreign countries. This inevitably reinforced the impression among the Bengalis that their "brethren" in West Pakistan couldn't care less about their trials and tribulations.

This sense undoubtedly fed into the December elections — the first to be based on universal adult franchise, 23 years after independence. The nationalist Awami League, with its six-point agenda for

provincial autonomy, won 160 of the 162 directly elected seats in East Pakistan — an absolute majority in any putative national

allowed. The "trouble" in the eastern wing, Pakistanis were relentlessly told, was an Indian plot. Sure, there were some "traitors" and a lot more "miscreants", but they were all being adequately dealt with by our fearless "jawans". The implication was that in due course all would be well, the "patriotic" Bengalis were anyhow in a majority, and the necessarily harsh treatment would bring the rest to their senses.

In the 50 years since then, this kind of nonsense has never entirely been superseded by a more objective narrative. The recent cancellation of a seminar on the topic reinforces the impression that the sources of power in what was once deemed the rump state still can't handle the bitter truth.

Perhaps Pakistanis don't wish to be reminded of the fact that for all its foibles, follies and inherited flaws, Bangladesh is doing much better than Pakistan on a number of economic indicators. Or, for that matter, to recognise that the pattern began to be repeated, soon after the bifurcation, in

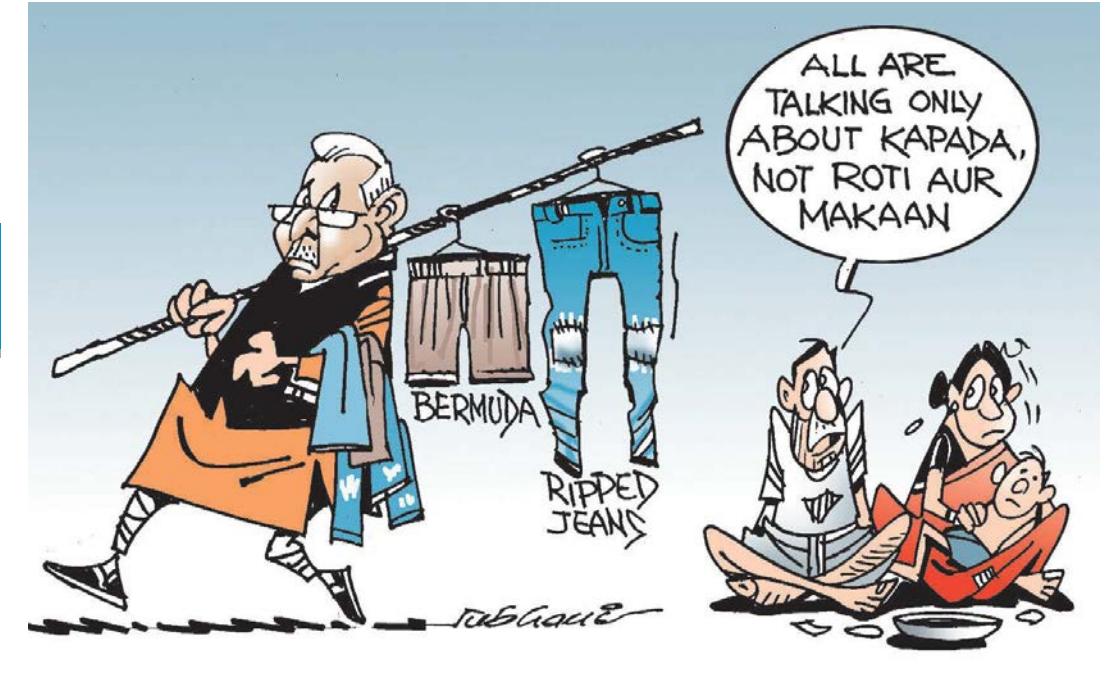
Balochistan.

By then the military chief in Pakistan was Gen. Tikka Khan, a former military governor of East Pakistan. It was under his aegis that the Army had claimed in March 1971 that it could "restore order" within 72 hours or so. That particular delusion came a cropper some nine months later, albeit only after India had openly pitched in.

The lessons of history are difficult, if not impossible, to learn without acknowledging the facts. All too many nations, including Pakistan and India, are often shy of facing up to their past. Not long ago, Poland made it a crime for anyone to suggest that some Poles had collaborated with the Nazis in perpetrating genocide against Jews. And so it goes...

As far as Pakistan is concerned, it may now be too late to atone for what had happened half a century ago, but remembering it accurately might suffice as a warning against repeating the experience.

Subhani



Bengal to trigger domino effect in Indian politics?

Shikha Mukerjee

The 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections is more than just a contest between a regional party, the Trinamul Congress, and the challenger, which is a national party, the BJP. It is a battle that may well trigger a limited, yet crucial, domino effect in Indian politics.

The battle for West Bengal which begins on March 27, the first day of the eight-phase election, will be a test like no other. This contest is not a verdict on the performance of the Trinamul Congress government led by Mamata Banerjee over the past 10 years or the prospects of the state under a new untested regime of the BJP. It is a confrontation between two ideological positions that are fundamental to the future form of India's polity.

If the Trinamul Congress manages to retain power, then the war for federalism, multi-party democracy and secular politics will get a shot in the arm against the BJP's vision of a one-nation, one-identity, one-nation-one-party model on, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi explains it at every one of the many public meetings he has addressed in West Bengal as another unit of the "double engine sarkar" model. The conquest of this border state for the BJP would significantly strengthen its ideological and popular appeal as the defender of the Hindu majority and its legitimacy to discriminate on the basis of religious identity against the Muslim minority through a process that cancels the status of Muslims as citizens by deploying the Citizenship Amendment Act as an instrument of exclusion.

It will be definitive in

another sense; it will give a clue of how the Samyukta Morcha's appeal, especially that of the CPI(M) and the ISF's appeal works. Will the CPI(M) cut into the BJP's vote share by taking back the support it lost in 2019? Will the ISF cut into Trinamul Congress' Muslim vote share? Any reduction in the BJP's vote share will make its position, as the main challenger, precarious.

The options for the voter boils down to this — the Trinamul Congress, which as the party of the incumbent government has a lot to live down, but has a leader who remains the most popular choice as chief minister; the BJP, that does not have a chief ministerial candidate and is banking on the Narendra Modi mystique to hoist it to power and then install a face to lead the government, should it succeed in winning; or, the newly formed Samyukta Morcha, which is in the running as the alternative, if not to the party in power then as the alternative to the party in the Opposition.

This is also a fight between Mamata Banerjee and the rest. Can she be dislodged from her position of dominating the political landscape of West Bengal? Her campaign slogan "Bangla nijer meyeke chait", that is, Bengal its own daughter, underlines the centrality of Mamata Banerjee.

The BJP's campaign has swung between "Ashol Poriborto", or real change, which is a makeover of the Trinamul Congress' 2011 slogan calling for "poriborto", "Sonar Bangla", that is, restoration of Bengal to an

If the Trinamul Congress manages to retain power, then the war for federalism, multi-party democracy and secular politics will get a shot in the arm

NEW DELHI, MARCH 25
With a renewed reign of terror by West Pakistani troops leaving at least 55 dead and more than 200 injured and with Sheikh Mujib Rehman declaring that the killing of unarmed civilians would not go unchallenged, Bangla Desh was at flash-point today despite President Yahya Khan's reported acceptance of all the four demands of the Awami League Chief.

Reacting to the conduct of the troops, which was seen as provocative bid to sabotage a constitutional settlement, Mr. Rehman asked Gen. Yahya Khan to order "an immediate cessation of Military operations."

LETTERS

SCHOOL CLOSURE

The TS government's decision to close all educational institutions was wise (TS shuts all schools, colleges, DC, March 24). It is pertinent to note the increasing cases of Covid with educational institutions becoming a source of spreading the virus. The government must know the gravity of the situation and take steps before the second wave hits.

Uday Kiran Kankipati

Secunderbad

When educational institutes can be closed citing difficulty in keeping social distance, why are theatres being spared? How is social distance being maintained there? The minister must clarify. He pointed out that cinema workers were suffering. Can't he see private school teachers are also suffering from job loss? Will he take responsibility if Covid cases grow because of cinema theatres?

Deshavaina Kishan Prasad

Karimnagar

SSC, INTER EXAMS

It's unfair to cancel SSC and Inter exams this year also as it will derail plans of students to take other competitive exams (SSC, Inter exams unlikely this year, DC, March 25). The state government and the education authorities could have taken strict safety and hygiene measures and let students write their exams to move forward in their academic life.

Ather Roshan Ara

Hyderabad

50 YEARS AGO IN DECCAN Chronicle

Over 50 die in clashes: E. Pak at flash-point

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As far as Pakistan is concerned, it may now be too late to atone for what had happened half a century ago, but remembering it accurately might suffice as a warning against repeating the experience.

By arrangement with Dawn

CRPF officer, jawan killed in sneak militant attack in J&K

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, MARCH 25

An officer and a jawan of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were killed and two others injured in a sneak attack by suspected militants at Lawaypora on the peripheries of Jammu and Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar on Thursday. The assailants were reported to have also decamped with two service rifles of the slain policemen.

The officials said that the jawans were part of a Road

Opening Party (ROP) of the CRPF targeted with automatic weapons by militants. They blamed Lashkar-e-Taiba for the incident and reiterated that the proscribed organisation is now operating in the name of various shadow groups in J&K.

The slain jawans have been identified as Sub-inspector G.D. Manga Ram Dev Barman and Constable-drive Ashok Kumar of the force's 73rd Battalion (E-79 Company) and residents of Tripura and Pinjore in Panchkula district of Haryana, respectively.

O.P.S. Tiwari, a spokesman of the CRPF said that at Kumar died on the spot whereas Barman succumbed to his injuries at a military hospital here later. He said, "Our jawans were discharging ROP duties when they were attacked by some terrorists near a spot between Dilshad Hotel and Noora Hospital area".

Soon, the entire area was cordoned off by reinforcements of the CRPF and J&K police and searches started to look for the assailants.

Therefore, Declaration made for a piece of land admeasuring,

more or less Ac. 3.11 ½ gunta of standard measurement under acquisition for the above said project in the villages: Tellopur to an extent of Ac. 3.01 ½ gts., and the land to an extent of Ac. 0.10 guntas in Kollar village of Ramachandrapuram Mandal, Sangareddy District whose detailed description is as follows:

District: Sangareddy, Mandal: Ramachandrapuram, Village: Tellopur
No. G/1/2697/2015 Dated: 22-03-2021.
FORM - VII
(See Sub-Rule(1) of rule-25 and Section-19(1) of the Act-30/2013)
DECLARATION

Whereas it appears to the Government of Telangana / Collector that a total of about Ac. 3.11 ½ gts land in Tellopur and Kollar villages are required for public purpose, i.e., "Improvement of Radial Road No. 10 from Tellopur Junction to Edulahapulapally from Km 0.0 to KM 6/570 in Hyderabad (Sangareddy District stretch is from Km 0/780 to Km 6/570)"

Therefore, Declaration made for a piece of land admeasuring, more or less Ac. 3.11 ½ gunta of standard measurement under acquisition for the above said project in the villages: Tellopur to an extent of Ac. 3.01 ½ gts., and the land to an extent of Ac. 0.10 guntas in Kollar village of Ramachandrapuram Mandal, Sangareddy District whose detailed description is as follows:

District: Sangareddy, Mandal: Ramachandrapuram, Village: Tellopur
Sl. No. Siy No. Type of Title Area Under Acquisition (Sgt.) Name and person of Address interested Boundaries Remarks

1 1 323/4/2 Gairan Dry ...

2 2 323/3/2 Gairan Dry ...

3 3 323/5/2 Gairan Dry ...

4 4 323/1/2/FU/353/1/ROO Gairan Dry 1.03 ½ ...

5 5 323/1/2/E 323/2/2 Gairan Dry ...

6 6 323/1/2/G 323/1/2/E Gairan Dry 0.09 ½ ...

7 7 323/1/24A Gairan Dry 0.19 ...

8 8 323/1/24B Gairan Dry 0.14 ...

ED questions Mehbooba for over 5 hours

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, MARCH 25

Former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister and president of People's Democratic Party (PDP) Mehbooba Mufti was Thursday questioned for about five hours by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an alleged money laundering case.

On emerging from the ED's regional office in Srinagar, she told reporters, "Whoever speaks up, ED, CBI and NIA are used against him/her. The nation is running not according to the Constitution of India but the agenda of a particular party".

She claimed, "I've nothing to hide and am there with clean hands. This, perhaps, is the reason that it took them two years to find out something and now they question about the land for the graveyard of my father and secret funds meant for widows and who were the beneficiaries."

Late on Thursday evening, Mufti tweeted, "To set the record straight, during the course of my questioning at ED, right from the start I insisted on not signing any statements till I consulted my lawyers. But I was shown rule books & told that not signing would have consequences. Finally, despite my reluctance, I was forced to sign a statement which is evident from the cctv footage of my questioning."

S. Korean min. on 3-day visit to India

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, MARCH 25

In a strategically significant step, South Korea's minister of national defence Suh Wook is on a visit to India from 25 March to 27 March. This comes on heels of US secretary of defence, Lloyd James Austin III visit to India last week.

India and Korea will discuss Indo-Pacific, Quad, and cooperation in defence manufacturing during the visit. Wook will interact with a number of senior Indian dignitaries over the course of his visit and discuss issues of strategic nature, said defence ministry.

Wook will pay his respects at the National War Memorial on Friday, which will be followed by his inauguration of the Indo-Korean Bilateral Friendship Park in Delhi Cantonment. The Park commemorates the contribution of Indian peacekeepers during the Korean War and is a testament to the strong relations between the two countries.

District: Sangareddy, Mandal: Ramachandrapuram, Village: Kollar	
1 116(E)/KOLLUR/Patta	M/s Datta Chandra Hospitals (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
2 116(A)/KOLLUR/Patta	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
3 Sy. No. 21	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
4 Chakali Narasimha S/o Gandalaiah	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
5 Chakali Copal S/o Gandalaiah	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
6 Chakali Sallu S/o Gandalaiah	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
7 Chakali Balraj S/o Gandalaiah	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
8 Manne Mallikeshwar S/o Sathyanayana	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
9 Manne Mallesham S/o Sathyanayana	M/s. Samba Shiva Reddy Sto. Samatha Reddy (Reb'd by G. Ravinder Reddy)
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SHORT TAKES
PARLIAMENT
BUDGET SESSION
ENDS

DC CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 25

The Budget session of Parliament was on Thursday adjourned sine die much ahead of its April 8 scheduled closure owing to the Assembly elections in four states and one Union Territory.

The month-long second part of the Budget session began on March 8 and was scheduled to end on April 8.

Several MPs at the behest of their parties had earlier approached parliamentary affairs minister Prahlad Joshi, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and chairman of Rajya Sabha M Venkaiah Naidu to curtail the session, citing elections as the reason.

Trinamool Congress leaders Sudip Bandopadhyay and Derek O'Brien had written respectively to the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Rajya Sabha chairman, requesting them to adjourn the proceedings.

The first part of the Budget Session commenced with the address of President Ram Nath Kovind on January 29 and concluded on February 29.

Elections are due to be held in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Kerala, Assam and Puducherry from March 27 to April 29. The results will be announced on May 2.

The session witnessed several protests by the Opposition and repeated stalling of proceedings over the three contentious farm laws, rising fuel prices and the passage of the controversial NCT of Delhi Bill which provides greater powers to the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi in matters related to administration of the city.

WILL NO LONGER CALL RSS 'SANGH PARIVAR': RAHUL

New Delhi, March 25: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said it is not right to call the RSS and its associated groups 'Sangh Parivar' as a family has women, respect for elders, compassion and affection, and the organisation has none of these.

Gandhi's remarks come a day after he said the alleged harassment of nuns belonging to a Kerala-based congregation in Uttar Pradesh was a result of the Sangh Parivar's 'vicious propaganda' to pitch one community against another and trample on minorities.

In a tweet in Hindi on Thursday, he said he will no longer refer to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh as 'Sangh Parivar', united family. "I believe it is not right to call the RSS and associated organizations Sangh Parivar - there are women in the family, there is respect for the elderly, a sense of compassion and affection - which is not there in the RSS," he said on Twitter.

"Now I will not call RSS 'Sangh Parivar'!" the Congress leader added.

RAUT BATS FOR PAWAR AS UPA CHIEF

DC CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 25

Shiv Sena MP Mr Sanjay Raut on Thursday said that NCP Chief Mr Sharad Pawar should take over the reigns of the UPA.

Speaking to reporters Mr Raut said, "The UPA is paralysed now. I think NCP chief Sharad Pawar should lead the UPA at the national level. When asked whether other parties support his demand," he said, "I don't think any regional party in the country has objection to Sharad Pawar heading the UPA. All of us are opposing the BJP at the moment."

This statement drew sharp criticism from the Congress with leaders asking Mr Raut to keep his views with himself.

Maharashtra Congress chief Mr. Nana Patole complained about Mr. Raut to the Maharashtra Chief Minister Mr. Uddhav Thackeray.

Mr. Patole said, Raut is a Shiv Sena MP. Shiv Sena is not a part of UPA. We told this to the Chief Minister also. He said that he will take up this issue." Insiders say that since the UPA chairperson is not keeping well there needs to be change in the top leadership of the UPA to fight the BJP effectively. Congress leader Husain Dalwai said, "Senas got more seats (in the last election), hence, it got the Chief Minister's post. But the Sena is still not part of the UPA. There is no need to take Mr. Raut's statement seriously."

I-T raids on DMK candidate cause flutter in Tamil Nadu

Premises raided included college properties of Velu, his offices

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR & D. SEKAR | DC
 CHENNAI, MARCH 25

Income-Tax sleuths stormed into 18 premises of DMK senior leader E.V. Velu, including the guest house of Arunai Engineering College in Thiruvannamalai where party president M.K. Stalin had stayed overnight and left for campaign just then, on Thursday, evoking strong political reactions, suggesting that the fear of loss in the elections has gripped the BJP and AIADMK.

That the I-T officials even searched the room in which Stalin was staying earned the wrath of DMK leaders. General Secretary of the party, Duraimurugan, called the media to say that the raids were politically motivated and the AIADMK was instigating the BJP to unleash I-T officials to intimidate the DMK leaders.

Duraimurugan even said that he suspected the Election Commission of India to have a role in the raids. However, Chief Electoral Officer, Satyabrata Sahoo, when asked about it, told the media that the ECI has nothing to do with it. I-T officials raid premises based only on prior information, he said.

The various premises that were raided included the college properties of Velu, his offices in Chennai and Karur, his home and homes and offices of his friends and relatives. Since Velu, the DMK district secretary of Thiruvannamalai, is also contesting from the same constituency, Stalin was there to campaign for him.

The raids also created a flutter among the local people in Thiruvannamalai, where Velu is a popular politician, having won the constituency in 2011 and 2016 and running the engineering college since 1993.



DMK Youth Wing leader Udhayanidhi Stalin addresses an election campaign in support of DMK candidate Geetha Jeevan, ahead of Tamil Nadu Assembly Polls in Thoothukudi on Thursday. — PTI

Plea to close liquor shops in TN till polls dismissed

Chennai, March 25: The

Madras High Court on Thursday dismissed a plea seeking a direction to the Tamil Nadu government to close all TASMAC liquor shops till April 6, when Assembly elections will be held in the state, to enable voters choose the right candidate without the influence of alcohol.

The petitioner and simi-

lar minded persons can very well abstain themselves from consuming intoxicant materials to take the right decision, the first bench of the court said while dismissing the plea of advocate AP Sooriyaprakasham of Royapettah here.

A blanket direction cannot be issued in this regard, the bench of Chief

Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy said.

Liquor is sold through retail outlets of state-run Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation (TASMAC).

It may be recalled that Single phase polling to 234 Assembly seats in Tamil Nadu is scheduled on April 6. — PTI

Aasu calls people to reject BJP in Assam

MANOJ ANAND | DC
 GUWAHATI, MARCH 25

opment plank.

The implementation of the controversial law, which the BJP says it is committed to, is not part of the 10 promises it gave to the people of Assam in its election manifesto.

If the BJP leaders are confident and claims to have gained the ground that the party had lost during the anti-CAA movement in Upper Assam, going to poll in first phase of polling on March 27, the opposition Congress led grand alliance and two regional outfits are also equally hopeful and leaving no stone unturned to refresh and remind the anger that people had expressed during the anti-CAA movement that started in December 2019 and turned violent in Assam.

Despite the news of the raids spreading, Stalin addressed a meeting describing Velu as a DMK leader who had earned the

praise of the late M. Karunanidhi. However, he did not make any mention of the raids. Velu is facing BJP's S. Thanigaivel in the polls.

Thursday's raids assume significance and they came soon after I-T sleuths searched several premises

that the people of Assam would respond to the injustice and humiliation caused to them. "It's time to make progressive regionalism our guiding spirit to protect Assam and the Assamese," the Aasu, two days before the polling for the first phase, said.

The student activists also staged protest demonstrations at prominent locations of the state, district and sub-divisional headquarters asserting that the CAA would never be accepted by the people of Assam. The Aasu was also instrumental in formation of a new political party — Assam Jatiya Parishad (AJP) contesting the ensuing assembly polls against BJP.

BJP national president J.P. Nadda on Tuesday had declared in Guwahati that the Act would be imple-

mented in letter and spirit. The party which came to power with the promise to protect the 'jati-maatribeti', betrayed the people by paving the way for legalising lakhs of Hindu Bangladeshis," AASU president Dipanka Nath said.

The students' union alleged that despite knowing that the implementation of the CAA would pose grave threat to the existence of the indigenous population, Assam chief minister Sarbananda Sonowal, an ex-Aasu leader, confirmed that the CAA would be implemented in the state.

Meanwhile the stage is set for the first phase of polling in 47 constituencies of Upper and North Assam.

The electioneering for these constituencies came to an end on Thursday.

In Assam, if voted to power:

The voice of the opposition was further boosted as hitting out at the BJP leaders for their statements on the implementation of CAA, the Aasu said

that the Act would be imple-

mented in letter and spirit.

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KERALA | POLLS Former technocrat has vowed to make Palakkad city the best in the country in five years

BJP hopes to chug into Palakkad with 'Metroman'

Palakkad, March 25: In a literal young versus old battle, BJP's 'Metroman' E. Sreedharan will take on sitting Congress MLA Shafi Parambil here for the April 6 Kerala Assembly elections, seeking to convert his technocrat charisma into votes.

A fierce triangular contest is expected this time in Palakkad, held by the United Democratic Front (UDF) since 2011, as the ruling LDF has also fielded a first timer to take on the Congress and the BJP.

The BJP, buoyed by its success in Palakkad in the recent civic polls, has fielded the 88-year-old Sreedharan to fight it out with the 38-year-old Parambil, seeking a berth of terms.

Clad in a pastel colour shirt and traditional dhoti, Sreedharan moves swiftly from one voter to another with folded hands and his trademark gentle smile. At

88, age seems to be no barrier for Sreedharan to fit himself into the garb of a seasoned politician, as stated by his critics.

Talking to people gathered around and reminding them to cast their votes on April 6 Assembly polls, the technocrat-turned-political leader travels from one place to another quickly, mingling with the crowd at ease.

With the unexpected entry of Sreedharan in the poll fray as BJP nominee, Palakkad, the land of palmrya, paddy fields and chariot races in central Kerala, has now captured national attention.

While UDF has once again reposed faith in Parambil, the ruling CPI (M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF), fresh from its good show in the recent civic polls in the state, aims to upset the plans of the two national parties. It has fielded a new face, C.P.

Pramod to take on the other two.

The UDF is banking on the popular image and personal influence of Parambil in the constituency and on various development and welfare initiatives implemented by him. Of the total 1.37 lakh votes polled during 2016 Assembly elections, Shafi had garnered 57,559 votes while his nearest rival Shobha Surendran of BJP got 40,076 votes and CPI(M) candidate N.N. Krishnadas received 38,675 votes.

A constant presence in the constituency, the young Parambil could successfully establish close personal ties with different walks of people including those in various Hindu communities during his 10-year stint.

The Congress Legislator said he was sure the voters in Palakkad were happy with his performance in

Sreedharan seems unfazed by the youngster's popularity and is making all attempts to reach out to maximum number of voters in limited time.

He also seemed to be unperturbed about the controversies and criticisms raised by his political opponents.

The octogenarian recently hit headlines after photos of some voters washing his feet and others prostrating at his feet, went viral. Though his critics alleged that the photos reflected his 'feudal mindset', an unfazed Sreedharan said washing elders' feet reflected Indian culture.

The former technocrat, who has vowed to make Palakkad city the best in the country in five years, talks more development and less politics during the campaign meetings.

"My main focus and priority is development. The

Bengal tops in political ad spend on Facebook

Kolkata, March 25: The four states and one union territory that are going to polls from March 27, West Bengal emerged as the top spender in spending for political advertisements on Facebook this year, according to data available with the social media platform.

level versions such as "Dum-er Garbo Mamata".

The TMC's digital advertisements are handled by the Indian Political Action Committee (I-PAC) which runs other campaigns also for the party on the social media platform.

During the period under review, another Facebook page run by the name of "Khottikarok Modi" (Harmful Modi), has spent ₹33.12 lakh in political ads, according to the data. The state BJP's Facebook ad spend is around ₹25.31 lakh. It is advertising campaigns such as "Amar Paribar BJP Paribar" (My family is BJP family) and "Aar Noi Annay" (No more injustice).

The Facebook page of the TMC has 1.3 million followers while that of the West Bengal BJP has 1.7 million followers. The Trinamool Congress has spent the maximum amount among parties, around ₹1.69 crore, of West Bengal during the period on campaigns such as "Banglar Gorbo Mamata" (Bengal's pride Mamata). It also has constituency

The Trinamul Congress has spent the maximum amount among parties, around ₹1.69 crore, of West Bengal during the period on campaigns such as "Banglar Gorbo Mamata" (Bengal's pride Mamata). According to an analyst, the total spending on digital advertisements of political parties would be more as they do not always pay directly for campaigns. — PTI

Centre to send 50,000 troops to WB for May 2

DC CORRESPONDENT
 NEW DELHI, MARCH 25

March 27 and the last phase of polling will be on April 29. Counting will be held across all five states on May 2.

Electoral Commission has deployed the highest number of central security forces this time with over a lakh para-military personnel to be on election duty this time around in Bengal.

However, both Home Ministry and election Commission admit that not just the elections but even counting in the "extremely sensitive state" was also extremely critical this time. Even elaborate security arrangements are being made for the protection of EVMs that will be kept at different strong rooms across the state.

Securing EVMs is also a challenge for the Election Commission and security forces since the first phase of polling will be held on March 27 while the last and eighth phase of polling will be held almost a month later on April 29.

BJP is fighting the polls on the plank of development," he said.

Meanwhile, LDF nominee Pramod, entrusted with the task of taking on two big players, is making all possible efforts to reach out to maximum number of voters.

During the campaign, he highlights the development programmes implemented by the Pinarayi Vijayan government in various sectors, especially in health, education and infrastructure during the last five years.

His hopes lie on the votes garnered by the Left front in Palakkad Assembly segment during the last Parliamentary elections.

LDF candidate M.B. Rajesh had polled 32.83 per cent votes during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

The Palakkad Assembly constituency has 1,88,534 registered voters including 96,774 women and three transgenders. — PTI

RELEASING TODAY



SHANTI 70MM

11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00pm

SUDARSHAN 35MM

11.00am, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15pm

SVC CINEMAS

MAHALAXMI, 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

EESHWAR, 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SANGEETHA, 11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00

SRI LAXMI, 12.00, 3.00, 7.00, 10.00

MEGHA 70MM

11.15am, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15pm

RAJADHANI DELUXE

11.15am, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15pm

VISWANATH 70MM

11.45am, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45pm

BRAMARAMBA 70MM

11.30am, 2.45, 6.30, 9.45pm

VENKATARAMANA RAMAKRISHNA 35

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.15, 2.30, 6.00, 9.15

SRI RAMULU 70 GOKUL 70MM

11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

TALLURI THEATRE LAXMIKALA

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.00, 2.30, 6.00, 9.30

MANJU 70MM SRI SAI RAM 70

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

RANGA 70MM JYOTHI 70MM Puram

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SRI KRISHNA 70 NARTAKI 70MM

11.00, 2.15, 6.00, 9.15

11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

SENSATION SUNSHINE SREERAMANA

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SAMPOORNA 70 VYJAYANTHI 70

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SAI RANGA 70MM AMBA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.30, 2.30, 6.30, 9.30

ALANKAR 70MM VIJETHA 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

BR HITECH SUPER 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SRI PREMA 70 VIMAL 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.15, 2.15, 6.15, 9.15

SRI SAI POOJA VLS SRIDEVI 70

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15

ASIAN SWAPNA SHIVRANJANI

11.15, 2.15, 6.00, 9.00

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

JYOTHI 70MM IDA Bolaram KRISHNA CINEMA

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

VENKATESHWARA GANESH 70MM

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

11.30, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15

ONE DAY SANDHYA 35

11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00

SHIVAPARVATHY 11.45, 2.45, 6.45, 9.45

PRASAD MULTIPLEX - Khairtabad

8.45, 11.30, 12.00, 2.00, 4.45, 7.15, 10.00, 11.15

AMB CINEMAS - 10.40, 1.30, 4.15, 7.00, 10.00

TIVOLI EXTREME - 10.45, 1.30, 4.20, 7.20, 10.10

PVR

GALLERIA - 11.10, 2.05, 5.00, 6.55, 7.55, 9.45, 10.50

INorbit - 10.05, 11.10, 2.05, 5.00, 7.05, 7.55, 10.50

FORUM - 10.25, 11.20, 1.35, 2.15, 5.10, 7.15, 8.05,

11.00 I RK - 10.20, 1.15, 4.10, 7.05, 11.00 I

MOOSARAMBAGH - 12.25, 2.15, 5.10, 8.05, 11.00 I

IRRUM MANZIL - 12.45, 1.45, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30 I

CENTRAL - 11.20, 2.15, 5.10, 8.05, 11.00

ICON - 1.45, 4.00, 4.40, 7.35, 10.30

PRESTON - 4.10, 5.05, 7.05, 10.00

S2 - Mallapur - 10.20, 1.15, 4.10, 7.05, 10.00

CINEPLANET - 10.30, 1.25, 4.20, 7.15, 10.10 I

CINESQUARE - 10.30, 1.25, 4.20, 7.15, 10.10

RADHIKA - 10.40, 1.20, 4.20, 7.00, 10.00 I

GPR - 10.40, 1.40, 4.30, 7.20, 10.20 I

MJR - 10.30, 1.25, 4.20, 7.15, 10.10 I

M CUBE - 10.30, 1.20, 4.10, 7.00, 9.50 I

SHIVAGANGA - 11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00 I

SHA - 11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.30 I

GVK - 10.00, 1.10, 4.20, 7.30, 8.00, 10.40

MP - 10.00, 11.00, 1.05, 4.10, 7.20, 10.30

GSM - 11.30, 12.40, 1.45, 2.40, 3.50, 5.50

7.00, 9.00, 10.10 I

BALANAGAR - 10.30, 1.30, 4.30, 7.30, 10.30

CHANDANAGAR - 12.30, 3.45, 7.00, 10.15

SHIVANI - 10.30, 1.30, 4.30, 7.30, 10.30

Cinépolis

MANTRA - 10.00, 12.55, 3.50, 5.00, 9.40, 10.40 I

DSL - 12.00, 1.20, 4.30, 7.40, 9.40, 10.40 I

CCPL - 10.00, 11.00, 1.15, 4.50, 7.45, 10.45 I

SUHDHA - 10.30, 1.25, 4.30, 7.20, 7.55, 10.10

BVK - 10.45, 1.45, 4.45, 7.45, 10.45 I

ASIAN CINEMAS
its showtime!
SCHEDULE FOR TODAY
WEAR MASK STAF SAFE

ASIAN RADHIKA-KAPRA
RANGDE(U/A)(TEL)
10.40, 1.20, 4.10, 7.00, 10.00PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)(TEL)1.40, 4.30, 10.15PM
ARANYA(U/A)(TEL)10.30, 1.30, 7.30, 10.30PM
GODZILLA VS CONG(2D)(ENG)
11.00, 4.40, 7.40PM

ASIAN GPR-KUKATPALLY
RANGDE(U/A)(TEL)
10.40, 10.55, 1.35, 4.30, 7.25, 10.20PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)(TEL)1.20, 7.15PM
ARANYA(U/A)(TEL)10.20, 4.10, 7.35, 10.05PM
GODZILLA VS CONG(2D)(ENG)
1.45, 4.40, 10.40PM

ASIAN MCUBE-ATTAPUR(FULLY RENOVATED)
RANGDE(U/A)(TEL)10.30, 10.50, 1.20, 4.20, 7.10, 10.00PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)(TEL)1.30, 7.30, 10.30PM
ARANYA(U/A)(TEL)10.40, 1.40, 4.40, 7.40, 10.40PM
SAINA(U)(HIN)7.50PM | MUMBAI SAGA(A)(HIN)4.30PM
GODZILLA Vs KONG(2D)(ENG)11.00, 1.50, 4.20, 10.20PM

ASIAN SHA COMPLEX-CHINTHAL
RANGDE(U/A)(TEL)11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)(TEL)2.45, 9.45PM
ARANYA(U/A)(TEL)11.15, 6.15, 15.15PM

ASIAN SIVAGANGA-DILSHUKNAGAR
RANGDE(U/A)(TEL)11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM
ARANYA(U/A)(TEL)11.15, 6.15, 9.15PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)(TEL)2.15PM

ASIAN CINESQUARE(FULLY RENOVATED)
RANG DE(U/A)10.30, 10.50, 1.25, 4.25, 7.15, 10.10PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)1.35, 7.30, 10.30PM
ARANYA(U/A)10.40, 1.45, 4.40, 7.40, 10.20PM
GODZILLA Vs KONG(2D)(ENG)
10.50, 1.55, 7.50, 10.40PM
SAINA(U)(HIN)4.30PM

ASIAN LAKSHMIKALA-MOOSAPET
RANG DE(U/A)(TEL)11.00, 2.00, 6.00, 9.00PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)(TEL)11.30, 6.30PM
ARANYA(U/A)(TEL)2.45, 9.45PM
GODZILLA Vs KONG(2D)(TEL)
11.15, 2.30, 6.15, 9.15PM

ASIAN CINEPLANET-KOMPALLY
RANG DE(U/A)
10.30, 10.55, 1.25, 4.20, 7.45, 10.10PM
JATHI RANTALU(U)1.35, 7.30, 10.30PM
ARANYA(U/A)10.40, 1.45, 4.40, 7.40, 10.20PM
GODZILLA Vs KONG(2D)(ENG)
10.50, 1.55, 7.50, 10.40PM
SAINA(U)(HIN)4.30PM

ASIAN MJR SQUARE-NARAPALLY
RANG DE(U/A)(TEL)
10.30, 10.50, 1.25, 4.20, 7.45, 10.10PM
JATHI RANTALU(U

quick BITES

INDICATORS %

Sensex	48,440.12	-1.51
Nifty 50	14,324.90	-1.54
S&P 500*	3,894.83	0.15
Dollar (\$)	72.62	-0.06
Pound Sterling (\$)	99.39	0.24
Euro (\$)	85.74	0.12
Gold (10gm)* (\$)	44,347.44	0.09
Brent crude (\$/bbl)*	62.12	-3.56
IN 10-Yr bond yield	6.131	0.00
US 10-Yr T-bill yield*	1.598	-0.016

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Automakers say production plunged in 2020

Global production of automobiles tumbled by 16% last year to a level last seen in 2010. With less than 78 million units sold, the auto sector faced "its worst crisis ever," said Fu Bengfeng, president, International Organization of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers. A breakdown of the organisation's data showed that in Europe, the drop in output was 21%, while in North America it fell by 20% and in South America by 30%.

67 coal blocks offered in second tranche of auction



The government offered 67 coal mines for sale, launching the second tranche of commercial coal mining auction. The blocks on offer are a mix of mines with small and large reserves, coking and non-coking mines and fully and partially explored blocks spread across six states—Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, MP, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. This is the highest ever number of mines on offer in a tranche.

Khatabook takes over Biz Analyst for \$10 million

Bengaluru-based fintech startup Khatabook acquired Biz Analyst, a SaaS business management application, for \$10 million in a cash-and-equity deal. With this acquisition, Khatabook seeks to enter the next phase of growth and offer its over 10 million active merchants clientele premium value-added services. Biz Analyst provides solutions to SMEs using Tally accounting software to automate operations.

BMW launches motorcycle M1000 RR at ₹42 L

German luxury vehicle maker BMW Group launched its premium performance motorcycle model, BMW M1000 RR, in India with price tag starting at Rs 42 lakh, ex-showroom. Available as completely built-up units, the first 'M model' from BMW Motorrad in India can be booked now. The motorcycle is available in two variants—BMW M 1000 RR priced at Rs 42 lakh and BMW M 1000 RR Competition priced at Rs 45 lakh.

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■ Policy mandatory for top 1,000 firms Dividend policy scope extended

FC BUREAU
MUMBAI, MARCH 25

In a move to further strengthen corporate governance practices and disclosure requirements, markets regulator Sebi on Thursday decided that the top 1,000 listed companies should put in place a dividend distribution policy.

"Requirement for formulation of dividend distribution policy by the existing top 500 listed entities has been extended to the top 1,000 listed entities on the basis of market capitalisation," the Securities and Exchange Board of India said in statement after its board meeting.

In case companies hold their board meetings for more than one day, the financial results should be disclosed by them within 30 minutes of end of the board meeting for the day on which such results are considered, the Sebi said.

Also, the regulator has decided to do away with the requirement to seek stock exchange's approval for change of name of a listed entity.

Further, the requirement to publish newspaper advertisements for the notice for board meetings where financial results are to be discussed and for quarterly statement on deviation or variation in use of funds, has been dispensed with.

The timelines for submission of periodic reports—statement of investor complaints, corporate governance report and shareholding pattern—will be



ANALYST CALL RECORDINGS TO BE MADE PUBLIC IN 24 HOURS

New Delhi, March 25: In

order to address information asymmetry among shareholders, the Sebi on

Thursday decided that listed firms should make available audio and video recordings of analyst and investor meet on their websites as well as stock exchanges within 24 hours or before the next trading day.

It also decided that written transcripts of post-earning conference calls should be made available on websites of listed companies and respective stock exchanges within five working days after such calls. —PTI

harmonised to 21 days from the end of each quarter, Sebi said.

Frequency of submission of compliance certificates relating to share transfer facility and issuance of share certificates within 30 days of lodgement for transfer, sub-division, among others, have been revised from half-year period to one year.

The Sebi board has also cleared amendments to LODR (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations.

"These amendments are

aimed at ensuring gender neutrality and maintaining consistency within the LODR Regulations, harmonising certain provisions of the LODR Regulations with Companies Act, in addition to strengthening the corporate governance practices and disclosure requirements and easing the compliance burden on listed entities," it said.

The provisions of LODR norms, based on the market capitalisation criteria, should continue to apply even if such entities fall below the thresholds.

SOLAR PANELS TO COME UP ALONG NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, MARCH 25

In a move that will support India's electric charging infrastructure, the government has proposed to install solar panels along the national highways.

"The ministry has decided to explore solar energy generation potential on National Highways and it is proposed to install solar panels in available places that are not earmarked to be used for any transport/highway related services/plantation and meets the requirements for installation of solar panels," minister of road transport and highways Nitin Gadkari informed the Lok Sabha.

Further, solar panels have been installed on roof tops of toll plazas in the projects of Pume-Solapur NH, Nagpur bypass, Wainganga Bridge to Chattisgarh Border and Solapur-Yedishi highway.

As per data from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, grid connected rooftop solar PV systems have been installed in 82,487 residential houses totalling 358 MW capacity as on November 18, 2019. An aggregate capacity of 477.2 MW of rooftop solar plants has been installed at 7448 government buildings as on March 15, 2021. With an average generation of 1.5 million units per year per MW, about 715.8 million units per year are being generated from these plants.

Urban women employment remains static in February

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, MARCH 25

Urban female employment rate has remained static at 5.4 per cent last month, the same as in February 2020. Only 7.3 per cent of urban women of 15 years or more were employed in fiscal 2019-20, says a survey.

According to CMIE's Consumer Pyramids Household Survey, urban female employment rate was at 8.4 per cent in 2019-20.

In an earlier report, the Asian Development Bank had found that the pandemic had shrunk the women labour force in India by 10.5 per cent against 2 per cent shrinkage in case of men between October 2019 and October 2020.

Participation of women



"Indian women work a lot. But, their work is predominantly at home... Their participation in the labour markets outside their houses in urban India is very low in spite of their superior education," said Mahesh Vyas, CEO of CMIE.

"There are only three cases under which this can happen. Either Indian women are not willing to go out to work or they are not allowed to go out to work or people are not willing to give them work in spite of their education," he said.

According to a paper presented at the World Economic Forum earlier, increasing participation of women in labour force to the same level as men can boost India's GDP by 27 per cent.

MARKET BLEEDS ON FRESH LOCKDOWN FEARS

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD
MUMBAI, MARCH 25

pressure, as that may drag down global growth.

The Sensex closed 740 points, or 1.51 per cent, down at 48,440 while the Nifty-50 shed 224.50 points, or 1.54 per cent, closing at 14,324.90; both indices are at two-month low levels.

As a government spokesperson talked about the presence of new mutant variants of Covid-19 virus, daily cases in Maharashtra surged to 31,855 while daily cases in other states also were rising, forcing local authorities to announce fresh restrictions.

The broader market took a bigger hit, with the BSE Mid-cap Index down 2.22 per cent and the BSE

Small-cap Index down by 1.85 per cent.

Consumer focused stocks were the worst impacted by the fresh lockdown fears. The top losers among the sectoral indices included BSE Auto (-2.80 per cent), FMCG (-2.37 per cent), Realty (-2.55 per cent), Power (-2.83 per cent) and Consumer Durables (-2.28 per cent).

Investors suffered a notional loss of close to Rs 3 lakh crore as the BSE market capitalisation dropped below the Rs 200-lakh crore mark to Rs 198.57 lakh crore.

FPIs were net sellers to the tune of Rs 3,383.60 crore while DIs were net buyers by Rs 2,267.69 crore.

Inflation goal worked well, says Subbarao



D. Subbarao

inflation at 4 per cent, with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. The monetary policy committee decides on policy rates keeping this target in mind.

The current medium-term inflation target, notified in August 2016, ends on March 31, and the inflation target for the next five years starting April is likely to be notified this month.

Commenting on the government's privatisation and asset monetisation programme, Subbarao said at the time of independence, there was a logic to invest in the public sector units because there was no private capital.

Now, when there is no dearth of private capital, the government should focus its energies on investing in education, health and other people-centric areas. —PTI

India will have a four-tiered banking sector in a decade



Shaktikanta Das

Mumbai, March 25: The Reserve Bank foresees a "competitive, efficient and heterogeneous" banking sector with four distinct sets of banks dominating the landscape over the next decade, its governor Shaktikanta Das said on Thursday.

There will be large banks having presence across the country and the world; mid-size banks present across the economy; small finance banks/regional rural banks/cooperatives to take care of the small borrowers; and digital players, he said.

The comments come days after the RBI appointed a panel headed by former deputy governor Shyamala Gopinath on bank licences to evaluate applications for universal banks and small finance banks.

An internal panel had recently recommended allowing deep-pocketed corporates into the banking fray, something the RBI had been averse to for long. A final view on the controversial proposal is yet to be taken.

"The Reserve Bank is

striving towards a more competitive, efficient and heterogeneous banking structure. The licensing policies for universal banks, small finance

banks (SFBs) and payments banks are a step in this direction," Das said at an event.

He said at present, there are ten small finance banks and six payments banks which are operational.

"I foresee four distinct sets of banking landscapes emerging in the current decade. The first set will be dominated by a few large Indian banks with domestic and international presence," Das said.

The second will be mid-sized banks with economy-wide presence, while the third set would encompass smaller private sector banks, SFBs, regional rural banks and co-operative banks, which may specifically cater to the credit requirements of small borrowers.

The fourth segment would consist of digital players who may act as service providers directly to customers or through banks as their agents or associates, he said, stressing that such players would increasingly emerge as "critical pieces" across all segments. —PTI

E-com firms present divergent views

SANGEETHA G
CHENNAI, MARCH 25

players to file their recommendations within a week for a decision on the issue.

Earlier, minister of commerce and industry Piyush Goyal had informed Parliament that he had received complaints about the operations of some of the e-commerce companies.

The Confederation of All India Traders had complained to the ministry that some of the FDI-funded e-commerce companies have been flouting the FDI norms. It wanted the government to ensure that the current e-commerce norms provide a level-playing field for all stakeholders.

While the FDI-funded e-commerce entities sought policy stability, some of the other players wanted changes and more clarity in the policy.

The ministry had called the meeting with the e-commerce players to understand if there was a need for clarity on the foreign direct investment policy in e-commerce.

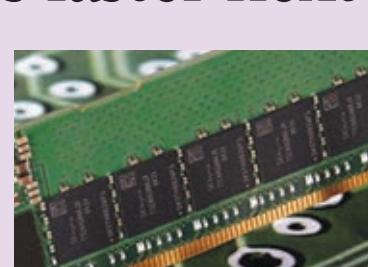
FDI-funded e-commerce companies, including Pepperfry, Swiggy, Amazon, Grofers and Flipkart asserted they did not need further changes in the FDI policy. Instead they needed stability in the policy.

On the other hand, players like Reliance Retail, Jio, Snapdeal, Tata Cliq and Nykaa wanted changes to be made in the policy. They sought clarification on the changes already made in the policy and its implementation.

The ministry asked the

SPEED | JUMP Firm develops 512GB DDR5 memory modules

Samsung eyes faster next-gen memory



SOHEE KIM

MARCH 25

Samsung Electronics Company announced plans for its next-generation memory chips that will double the speed of existing technology and offer the biggest capacity yet, kicking off a transition that will accelerate the growth of data centres and supercomputing.

The world's largest memory chipmaker said it developed 512GB DDR5 (Double Data Rate 5) memory modules based on a High-k Metal Gate (HKMG) fabrication process that's traditionally been used in logic chips. DDR5 memory will be twice as fast as the current DDR4, while reducing leakage and using about 13 per cent less power.

Samsung expects the transition to DDR5 to begin in the second half of this year. The chip industry has

been anticipating the adoption of the new memory standard and support for it will arrive with Intel Corp.'s upcoming Xeon Scalable processors, codenamed Sapphire Rapids.

In addition to partnering with the two major CPU suppliers, Intel and Advanced Micro Devices Inc., Samsung has sent samples of its new memory out to developers

— Bloomberg

Mega infra DFI NaBFID gets House nod

New Delhi, March 25:

Parliament on Thursday passed a bill to set up the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) to fund infrastructure projects in the country, with finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman asserting that its audited accounts will be placed before both the Houses every year and they will have "oversight" of the institution.

The Rajya Sabha passed the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) Bill, 2021 by a voice vote on Thursday. The bill was passed on Tuesday.

Later, financial services secretary Debasish Panda said at an event that the development finance institution (DFI) should be operational in the next four-five months.

Participating in a

SHORT TAKES

India hold Oman 1-1 in a friendly

Dubai: The Indian football team made a fine comeback in the second half to hold fancied Oman 1-1 in its first international match in more than a year though the Gulf side dominated the friendly here on Thursday.

India conceded a goal in the 42nd minute with Chinglensana Singh's clearance crossing the goal-line after hitting goalkeeper Amrinder Singh who started the match instead of Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

Manvir Singh scored the equaliser in the 55th minute to help India pull off a rare draw against Oman in the first international outing after the Covid-19 lockdown.

India head coach Igor Stimac gave debuts to as many 10 players. He had said before the

match that he would give chances to maximum number of players for them to gain the experience of playing in big matches.

The first half was all about Oman attacking in waves with India not getting a single shot on target. India were content defending their citadel with more players in their own half and just one man upfront most of the time. The Indians lost possession too easily on most occasions as Oman did not let them hold on to the ball for long. — PTI

CSK to continue camp in Mumbai

Chennai: Three-time Indian Premier League champions Chennai Super Kings on Thursday travelled to Mumbai and will continue their preparation for the upcoming edition of the tournament in the western metropolis.

The Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led team began training at the MA Chidambaram stadium here on March 8 and practised till Wednesday.

The team will be based in Mumbai for a month, a press release said.

CSK began their pre-season preparatory camp involving the available players at Chepauk, with skipper Dhoni leading the way.

"The players felt the fortnight-long camp was very beneficial. We also had four or five days of open nets," CSK chief executive officer KS Viswanathan said.

"After the previous season, Dhoni told us that he'd reach Chennai in March to prepare for the 2021 edition. True to his word, he was here," the CEO added, hailing the talismanic captain's commitment.

Viswanathan said they were confident that the team would do well in the forthcoming season. — PTI

Lanka set Windies 375-run target

North Sound, Antigua and Barbuda: Pathum Nissanka's hundred on debut and Niroshan Dickwella's pugnacious 96 solidified Sri Lanka's outstanding second innings rearguard with a total of 476 that left the West Indies with the challenging victory target of 375 on the fourth day of the first Test on Wednesday.

Notwithstanding their remarkable successful chase of 395 on the last day of the first Test against Bangladesh in Chattogram six weeks earlier, the hosts face a daunting task at 34 for one overnight heading into Thursday's final day.

West Indies captain Kraigg Brathwaite will resume in partnership with Nkrumah Bonner after Vishwa Fernando prised out John Campbell via a catch to wicketkeeper Dickwella.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka 169 & 476 (Nissanka 103, Dickwella 96) vs West Indies 271 & 34/1.

Brown says Hami to retire after win

Manama: Lewis Hamilton is set to claim an unprecedented eighth drivers' world title — and then leave Mercedes and retire from Formula One, predicted rival team boss Zak Brown of McLaren. Brown, the architect of McLaren's resurgence after a spell in the doldrums, told the Daily Mail he believed Max Verstappen of Red Bull and George Russell of Williams will be recruited by Mercedes in an all-new line-up for 2022. He added that he would not be keen to offer Hamilton a return to McLaren next year because he was building the team for the future with Lando Norris and Daniel Ricciardo.

Speaking ahead of the season-opening Bahrain Grand Prix, Brown explained that it would be "bad timing" if Hamilton wanted to find a seat next year. Hamilton's decision to sign only a one-year contract with Mercedes has made his future the subject of intense speculation. — AFP

TURKISH DELIGHT

Burak hat-trick nails Netherlands in World Cup qualifier

SELECTED RESULTS

Turkey	4	Belgium	3
(Burak Yilmaz 15, 34-pen, 81, Calhanoglu 46)	(De Bruyne 22, T. Hazard 28, Lukaku 73-pen)	Wales	1
Netherlands	2	(Wilson 10)	
(Klaassen 75, L. de Jong 76)			
Portugal	1	Malta	1
(Medvedev 36-og)	(Mbong 56)	Russia	3
Azerbaijan	0	(Dzyuba 23, Fernandes 35, Sobolev 90)	
France	1	Serbia	3
(Griezmann 19)	(Vlahovic 40, Mitrovic 69, 75)	Republic of Ireland	2
Ukraine	1	(Browne 18, Collins 86)	
(Kimpembe 57-og)		Slovenia	1
Gibraltar	0	(Lovric 15)	
Norway	3	Croatia	0
(Sorloth 43, Thorsvedt 45, Svensson 57)			

Paris, March 25: The Netherlands slumped to a dramatic 4-2 defeat by Turkey in their opening 2022 World Cup qualifier on Wednesday, while reigning champions France were held by Ukraine despite a brilliant Antoine Griezmann goal and Belgium came from behind to beat Wales.

European champions Portugal battled to a 1-0 victory over Azerbaijan, but 2018 World Cup runners-up Croatia lost 1-0 in Slovenia as they started their bid to reach the finals in Qatar.

In Istanbul, Turkey led 3-0 shortly after half-time through two Burak Yilmaz goals and a Hakan Calhanoglu strike, but substitutes Davy Klaassen and Luuk de Jong gave Frank de Boer's Dutchmen hope. Yilmaz's wonderful free-

kick sealed him a hat-trick and Turkey a crucial win, though, in a match between the two favourites to qualify from Group G.

"Very disappointing result, and also the way that result came about," De Boer told NOS TV.

The defeat was a dreadful start to the campaign for the Netherlands, who failed to qualify for either Euro 2016 or the 2018 World Cup, but are one of the fancied sides ahead of the delayed Euro 2020 finals this year.

France kicked off their

title defence with a 1-1 draw against Ukraine at the Stade de France.

Griezmann curled a fine finish from outside the box into the top corner in the 19th minute to draw level with David Trezeguet in fourth place on France's all-time

goalscoring list, with 34 against his name.

But Presnel Kimpembe put through his own net before the hour mark to draw Ukraine level in the match.

The Paris Saint-Germain defender had a late chance to make amends, but headed too close to away goalkeeper Georgi Bushchan.

"We need more accuracy and movement against these opponents," France coach Didier Deschamps told TFI.

"Qualifying is a long haul and not a long, quiet river, it never has been."

The other game in Group D saw Finland and Bosnia and Herzegovina draw 2-2, with Teemu Pukki netting twice for the Finns in Helsinki. "It left a bad taste in my mouth," said Pukki.

— AFP



Girls doubles winners (on right) and runners-up (on left) pose with their trophies at the Sania Mirza Tennis Academy in Murtuzaguda, Hyderabad, on Thursday.

Diya-Sremanya are champions

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, MARCH 25

on Thursday, Rithika defeated Apeksha Reddy 6-1, 6-3 while Hansika got the better of Diya Mattipati 6-2, 6-3. In the boys section, Tejas beat Bhavyananda Reddy 1-6, 6-2, 6-2 while Thirumurugan beat Murali Koushal 6-2, 6-2.

THE RESULTS

■ Girls doubles final (number in brackets denotes seed-ing): Diya Mattipati & Sremanya Reddy (1) bt P. Tejaswi & Manvi Mishra (3) 6-3, 6-1.

■ Boys doubles final: Anish Jain & V. Thirumurugan (1) bt Chaitanya Arunami/Tarakanji 6-1, 6-1.

■ Girls singles semifinals:

Rithika Kakarlamudi (1) bt Apeksha Reddy 6-1, 6-3; G. Hansika Reddy bt Diya Mattipati (8) 6-2, 6-3.

■ Boys singles semifinals:

Tejas Singh Bhatia bt Bhavyananda Reddy (5) 1-6, 6-2, 6-2; V. Thirumurugan in the boys title round.

In the semifinals played

— AFP

Ankita to lead Hyd in tennis league

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HYDERABAD, MARCH 25



Leander Paes (from left), actor Sonali Bendre, actor and owner of Hyderabad Strikers team Rakul Preet Singh and producer Divya Khosla during the unveiling of the Tennis Premier League Trophy at the players auction in Mumbai.

Chennai Stallions for ₹3 lakh.

While each team picked two men and one woman player at the auction, another male and women player for each team will emerge from the Talent Days, to be played from June onwards.

Besides the owners of eight teams, co-owners of Leander Paes, Rakul Preet Singh, Sonali Bendre Bell and Divya Khosla Kumar were present to select the players.

India's long-standing

player Leander Paes was delighted. "The Tennis Premier League has seen a tremendous growth since its inception and I'm very excited for its third season now. We have eight strong teams in the league and we have seen encouraging response in the past two years, which only promises that this season will be much larger at scale," he said.

"Sports has always been an integral part of my life and I'm happy to see what Tennis Premier League is

doing for tennis. Tennis deserves a push in our country as we have such talented players. Me and my team are all set for the championship this December," Rakul Preet Singh added.

Founders Kunal Thakkur and Mrunal Jain promise an enthralling championship this year and aim to create an environment which is the perfect amalgamation of sports and entertainment.

"We are excited that this year we will also have

international players playing in the League. We are so happy that the entire tennis fraternity comes forward every year to make this league a success. The intention is to make tennis win," Thakkur said.

"We are thankful to all our owners and sponsors who have shown such faith in our league. All I can say is that this is just the beginning... we intend to make the league one of its kind in India," Jain added.

SNAP SHOTS

SAI teams make it to kabaddi finals

Hyderabad: Sports Authority of India girls and boys teams made it to the finals of the 47th Junior National Kabaddi Championship being played at Suryapet on Wednesday.

In the semifinals played on Thursday, SAI girls beat Maharashtra 38-32 after leading 19-14 at half-time while Haryana humiliated Chandigarh 66-25.

In the boys semifinals, SAI hurtled past Haryana 50-25 after leading 33-10 at half-time while Uttar Pradesh thumped Tamil Nadu 58-33 after a 31-21 lead at the break.

BRIEF SCORES

■ Girls semifinals: Sports Authority of India bt Maharashtra 38-32; Haryana bt Chandigarh 66-25.

■ Boys semifinals: Sports Authority of India bt Haryana 50-25; Uttar Pradesh bt Tamil Nadu 58-33.

Sudeep shines for Sangareddy dist

Hyderabad: D. Sudeep of Sangareddy played a fine knock but was stranded on 96 as his side defeated Jangaon by a massive margin in the Telangana Cricket Association's U-19 Inter Districts West-Central Zone tournament at IOC Grounds in Gajwel. Sudeep took Sangareddy to 252 for 4 in 25 overs and was well-supported by M. Ashok Kumar, who made 87. In reply, Jangaon were bundled out for 89.

BRIEF SCORES

■ Sangareddy 252/4 in 25 overs (D. Sudeep 96 n.o., M. Ashok Kumar 87), bt Jangaon 89 in 20.3 overs (D. Sai Teja 22, Rakesh 2/2, Shiva Reddy 2/12).

■ Gajwel (Siddipet Rural) 224/6 in 25 overs (P. Lohit Reddy 73, Prashant Kumar 54, M. Nazeer 4/35) bt Kamareddy 103 in 21.4 overs (Sohel Chaus 31, Md Rahaman 3/9, Prashanth Kumar 2/12).

Anshul, Krishn, Sainath are best performers

Arfaz, Shashant, Sumeeth, Praveen, Ali, Vamshi, Khalid, Narain, Sunil, Aziz, Kiran and Nimai too do well

DC CORRESPONDENT

HYDERABAD, MARCH 25



101/8 in 23 overs (Mahas Oruganti 3/32).

■ Crown vs Venus Cybertech (Venus Cybertech did not turn up for the match, Crown claimed walkover). Points: Crown 5, Venus Cybertech 0.

■ Shalimar CC vs National (Shalimar CC did not turn up for the match, National claimed walkover). Points: National 5, Shalimar 0.

ONE-DAY LEAGUE

■ Ranga Reddy CC 221 in 49 overs (Nihaal reddy 56, Avaneesh 69, Danush 4/29) bt Saifguda CC 98 in 31.1 overs (Rohan 30, Utaksh 3/18, Natrajeet 5, Mayura 0).

■ Team Kun CC 160 in 34.2 overs (Ishaan manish 50, Raguram 3/24, Siddartha 4/7) lost to AB Colony 164/3 in 19.5 overs (Nithin 39, Hidson 60 n.o.).

■ Shanti XI 246 in 68.1 overs (Mehul Dayani 59, Abdul Khader 56, Radrak Reddy 48, Md Ayub Khan 3/42, V. M. Dhanush 3/36) vs Vijaypuri Willowmen 93/2 in 20 overs.

■ Bharat CC 165 in 55.2 overs (S. Sai Revanth 41, Rahul 45, Vamshi Kumar 30, M. Vasu Deva Raju 3/15) vs Acrylic CC 169/3 in 41.3 overs (Sai Pratheek 68, Chitransh 50 n.o., Jaswanth 32).

■ Universal 140 in 36 overs (Abhishek 34) lost to Reliance CC 141/5 in 30 overs (Harsha Mittal 56).

■ Picket CC 119 in 33 overs (Aman 4/24) lost to Akshit CC 121/3 in 29.2 overs (Vivek 43 n.o.).

■ Gunrock CC 184/7 in 50 overs (Prem 38 n.o., Vamshi Pawar 3/38) lost to Saifguda CC 187/6 in 38.2 overs (J. Aiyush 30, Vineeth Pawar 43 n.o., Ran

