



Officials present a mask to a vegetable vendor during 'Mask Enforcement Day' as part of an initiative by the State Government to curb COVID-19 spread, in Agartala on Saturday

BARC scientist goes missing from Mysuru

Mysuru: A 24-year-old scientist working in the Rare Materials Project at the Bhabha Atomic Research Institute near Mysuru has gone missing for the last four days, the police said. Assistant Scientific Officer Gulla Abhisheka Reddy, 24, was a resident of Cauvery Layout (New Janata Colony) at Yelawala in Mysuru. Reddy had moved to Mysuru from Chitturu district in Andhra Pradesh a year ago after he secured a job at BARC, 15 km from Mysuru. The police suspect that since he was allegedly suffering from depression and migraine, he left without informing anyone.

BUSINESS

Agra tourism in dire need of help as Covid takes toll

The bustling Fatehabad road and Taj ganj area that was till February wearing festive colours and reverberating with sounds of tourists flocking to the 17th century Mughal mausoleum, now looks like a ghost city. ► **Details: P7**

Trust, Reliability & Service
Synonymous with **Kapil Chits**

KAPIL GROUP **40**
Years of Service

Visit Us: www.kapilchits.com

KAPIL CHITS
SMALL SAVINGS GROW BIG WITH KAPIL

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

I watch this channel because I love its financial coverage...
Rs 400 per month

HATHRAS ALERT

Centre draws new roadmap to boost women's safety

Zero FIR, dying declaration, probe in 2 months a must

New Delhi: Amid rising cases of crimes against women in the country and the uproar over the Hathras gangrape and murder, the Centre has issued a fresh advisory to states and UTs reiterating existing guidelines on women's safety.

In the advisory, the Ministry of Home Affairs said action must be taken by the police in cases of crimes against women, adding probe into rape cases must be completed within two months as per law and that dying declaration of a victim can't be discarded merely



because it has not been recorded by a magistrate. The detailed three-page advisory came days after the gangrape and murder of a 20-year-old Dalit woman at Hathras in Uttar Pradesh, which sparked nationwide outrage. The MHA said there should be compulsory

registration of an FIR in case of a cognisable offence under the CrPC, and any failure of the police to adhere to laid-down rules does not augur well for the delivery of justice. The law also enables the police to register an FIR or a "Zero FIR", in case the crime is committed outside the jurisdiction of the police station, in the event of receipt of the information on the commission of a cognisable offence, which includes cases of sexual assault on women, the ministry said.

Continued on Page 4

India warns against Pak attempts to disrupt NAM

United Nations: Calling out Pakistan's attempts to disrupt the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), India has warned that it will slide to irrelevance and be shut out of global decision-making if attempts were made to divide it by venting bilateral grievances. **Continued on P4**

‘Talks with China won't help’

US NSA advises India on Ladakh standoff

Washington: China has 'attempted to seize' control of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India 'by force' as part of its territorial aggression, US' National Security Adviser has said, underlining that time has come to accept that dialogue and agreements will not persuade Beijing to change.

India and China are locked in a five-month-long tense standoff in eastern



Ladakh that has significantly strained relations between New Delhi and Beijing. Both sides have held a series of high-level diplomatic and military talks to resolve the border row.

Continued on Page 4

DRAGON DEPLOYED 60K SOLDIERS AT LAC: POMPEO

New Delhi: China has deployed tens of thousands of soldiers on India's northern border, US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo said, in further signs that a deadly military standoff between the world's two most populous countries is far from cooling down. **Cont'd on P4**

TRUMP BACKS OUT

2nd US Presidential debate cancelled



Washington: The planned October 15 debate between US President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden was officially cancelled on Friday a day after Trump rejected a decision by the nonpartisan commission organizing it to change its format to a virtual event to guard against the spread of Covid-19.

The debate, originally scheduled as a town hall-style encounter in Miami, was intended to be the second of three presidential debates. The final one is planned for October 22 in Nashville, Tennessee. After Trump refused to take part in the October 15 debate, Biden scheduled a televised town hall-style event for himself that evening. The Commission

on Presidential Debates (CPD) said in an emailed statement: "It is now apparent there will be no debate on October 15, and the CPD will turn its attention to preparations for the final presidential debate scheduled for October 22."

Trump announced on Friday that he had tested positive for the novel coronavirus and spent three days hospitalized receiving treatment before being released on Monday. The Republican president, seeking reelection on November 3, on Thursday called the format change in which he and Biden were to participate from remote locations "ridiculous" and said it would be a waste of his time to take part.



Major change in AP CMO?

HANS NEW SERVICE

Amaravati: Is there going to be a major change in the CMO? Speculations are rife that the 1994 batch IAS officer Pravin Prakash, Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister in CMO, is likely to go to Central services.

Though there has been no official confirmation, grapevine says that he had opted to go Delhi as his wife is an IPS officer and is posted in New Delhi. It may be recalled that Pravin Prakash is the most important officer in CMO.

So far the CMO sources had only said that a minor administrative reshuffle appears to be on cards which includes shifting of three IAS officers who so far never got a chance to work as Collectors in districts and shuffling of secretaries of various departments.

DU student beaten to death over love affair

New Delhi: A Delhi University (DU) student was beaten to death allegedly over an affair with a girl belonging to a different religion in Adarsh Nagar. He was a BA second year student, who also used to give English tuition to students. According to the victim's family, the 18-year-old had received a call regarding tuition, and he was asked to meet someone at a narrow lane near his house. He was later beaten by the girl's brother along with 7-8 boys. Rajput was immediately rushed to the BJRM Hospital in an unconscious condition. However, the boy succumbed to his injuries during treatment. No visible injury was seen on the deceased's body.

The incident happened on October 7. "Both (girl and boy) used to study together and were spotted by the girl's brother somewhere outside. In rage, he along with other boys beat up my son. We don't want anything but justice," Rajput's father said. "When I reached the spot, I saw his clothes were torn. His face had turned red, eyes and lips all swollen," Rahul's cousin said. Meanwhile, five accused have been arrested and a case registered. They have been identified as Manwar Hussain, Mohammad Afroz and Sarfaraz.

₹150 (3PCS PACK)

RAMRAJ

face mask

WASHABLE & REUSABLE
KNITTED FABRIC

For Corporate Orders Concession Available
Contact : 73730 45147

Available @ Company Showrooms & All Leading Textile Shops

HRH Covid patients to be shifted to govt hosps

PURNA SINGH

New Delhi: Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain held a press conference on Saturday about the problems of health and hospitals in the state. On the issue of protests over the salaries of doctors for several days, he said there is an appeal to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to release salaries of doctors and health workers of Kasturba Gandhi and Hindu Rao Hospital.

If the MCD is unable to run the hospitals, then hand them over to the Delhi government. He said that corona patients admitted to Hindu Rao Hospital would soon be shifted to Delhi government hospitals.

He said due to the doctors' strike, the Delhi government has instructed the transfer of all corona patients from Hindu Rao Hospital. It may be mentioned here that the health workers gave a 48-hour ultimatum to the administration on Friday after an ongoing demonstration demanding salaries for the past several days at the Hindu Rao



Protesting doctors and nursing staff of Hindu Rao Hospital

Hospital in North Delhi Municipal Corporation. The doctors told the medical superintendent of the hospital that if salaries were not released within the next 48 hours, they would withdraw services also from the Covid ward. The health workers of the Hindu Rao Hospital have not been paid salaries for the last four months. Health workers have been demonstrating for salaries for the past several days. On Wednesday, doctors also announced a symbolic indefinite strike.

DRDO's Rustom-2 drone takes off

New Delhi: Overcoming the initial programme setbacks, the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) has flight tested the Rustom-2 medium altitude long endurance indigenous prototype drone and achieved eight hours of flying at an altitude of 16000 feet at Chitradurga, Karnataka. The prototype is expected to achieve a height of 26000 feet and endurance of 18 hours by 2020 end.

Rustom-2 is capable of carrying different combinations of payloads depending on the mission objectives including synthetic

INDIA GOES FOR ARMED HERON



Rustom-2. The medium altitude long endurance indigenous prototype drone

aperture radar, electronic intelligence systems and situational awareness systems. It has a satellite communication link to relay situation in the battle theatre

on real time basis. "The Rustom-2 had one hour of fuel left after eight hours of test flying at Challakere aeronautical test range in Chitradurga district of

Karnataka and had achieved the test flight ceiling," said a senior official.

While the DRDO expects Rustom-2 surveillance drone to match the specifications of the Israeli Heron unmanned aerial vehicle used by the Indian Air Force and Navy, it has revitalized its drone program with a new mission head and objectives. The push to Rustom-2 program was given after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) tried to occupy Indian territory in Ladakh on the basis of a 1959 cartographical claim on the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Continued on Page 4

DRIVE INDUSTRY WITH A B.TECH DRIVE IMPACT WITH GITAM

Engineering
Management
Health Sciences
Sciences
Pharmacy
Architecture
Law
Humanities
Medical Sciences
Nursing

Every engineering course teaches you to apply the latest tools and technology to develop solutions. Here's a curriculum that strengthens your values and empowers you to make a real impact through them.

APPLY FOR GAT NOW!

8880884000
www.gitam.edu

#1 CATEGORY DRUGS MANUFACTURING BY IIT
NAAC A* Grade

VISAKHAPATNAM HYDERABAD BENGALURU

GITAM
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

AEROSPACE | BIO-TECHNOLOGY AI & Machine Learning | CIVIL AI & Machine Learning | CSE AI & Machine Learning, Cyber Security, Data Sciences, IoT | COMPUTER SCIENCE & BUSINESS SYSTEMS ECE AI & Machine Learning, IoT, Medical Electronics, VLSI Design | EEE Robotics & Automation MECHANICAL AI & Machine Learning, Electric & Hybrid Vehicles, Smart Manufacturing

Govt mapping voters through Dharani survey before GHMC polls, says Cong

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The Congress on Saturday alleged that the TRS government is conducting Dharani survey to 'map the voters' similar to Samagra Kutumba Survey (Comprehensive Household Survey) in 2014 prior to GHMC elections.

Speaking to media persons at Gandhi Bhavan, TPCC election commission coordination committee chairman Marri Shashidhar Reddy and convenor G Niranjan recalled that following bifurcation of the State, elections to GHMC were due in November 2014. In August 2014 the State government carried out the Samagra Kutumba Survey all over the State. Even though the data of the survey was never made public, this was utilised to map the voters, especially in the GHMC area where

● **Similar Samagra Kutumba Survey (Comprehensive Household Survey) was done in 2014 prior to the GHMC elections, says senior leader Marri Shashidhar Reddy**
● **Even though the data of the survey was never made public, this was utilised to map the voters in the GHMC polls**

TRS fared very badly winning only 3 out of 24 seats during Assembly elections.

"We don't think that the present Dharani survey being carried out just before the GHMC elections is a coincidence. What normally could take about a year is being condensed into a short time. It seems to have a hidden agenda to map the voters once again."

"Apart from many empty prom-



ises, TRS seems to be deeply concerned about the anti-incumbency factor this time at the ward level due to neglect of public issues and indulgence in corruption by the corporators and MLAs, and all

these attempts are aimed for damage control," said Shashidhar Reddy.

Niranjan alleged that the reservation of wards carried out last time in 2015 was fixed to suit the

ruling TRS party. SC and ST and women reservations, which had to be done on the basis of the 2011 census, were faulty and done arbitrarily. "Ward-wise BC enumeration was tailored to suit the interest of the ruling party and hence the reservations done on its basis was also wrong. We had demanded that this time we will follow up on the process of reservations meticulously based on the experience last time. We asked for information about the enumeration block-wise details of the wards delimited last time but the GHMC did not share this information. Now either by an amendment or a new act, they appear to be keen to continue the same reservations, which were wrong, in the first place. We condemn this and demand that reservations be done in a fair manner," he added.

NMDC supports world's largest cancer awareness programme

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: NMDC, the country's largest Iron ore producing Navratna mining company, partnered with Grace Cancer Foundation, a reputed NGO engaged in creating cancer awareness and conducting screening camps by providing a Mobile Cancer Screening Bus fitted with Mammography Machine, X-Ray Machines, Computed Radiography Imaging system, Digital Printing and other cutting-edge features.

State Health Minister Eatala Rajender flagged off the NMDC Mobile Cancer Detecting Van on Saturday, in the presence of Sumit Deb, CMD, NMDC; D Rajeshwar Rao, MLC; VC Sajjanar, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad.

To create awareness about cancer, a marathon was organized by GCF that was attended

by about 50 participants maintaining the current guidelines of Social Distancing. The marathon was also attended by participants virtually not only from India but also from more than 110 countries from different parts of the world.

The NMDC Mobile Cancer Screening Bus provided to Grace Cancer Foundation will be operated by the Foundation in Telangana State and also at NMDC Project Areas to conduct Cancer Detection & Awareness Campaigns to educate people about prevention and early detection of cancer. The bus will be operated at remote areas for the under privileged as a free of cost facility.

Speaking on the occasion, Sumit Deb, CMD, NMDC, said "NMDC as a responsible corporate citizen has always taken proactive and responsive steps to help the communities.



Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao submitting details of his property to officials in Erravalli on Saturday

CM gets his property details uploaded online

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: The property enlisting process has picked up pace across Telangana as Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao registered his assets on Saturday.

CM himself revealed details of the assets including house and non-agricultural properties to Erravalli village secretary Siddeshwar and later got it registered on the website. KCR who was in house in Erravalli

CM himself revealed details of the assets including house and non-agricultural properties to Erravalli village secretary Siddeshwar and later got it registered on the website

village, Markuk mandal of Sidipet district, enrolled his details like a common man. KCR called upon people of the State to enlist their properties in

gram panchayats, municipalities, and municipal corporations, including GHMC limits to update details on Dharani portal by October 15.

Clash over sarees distribution

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Ranga Reddy: A clash broke out among villagers of Dacharam in Vikarabad mandal on Saturday during the distribution of Bathukamma sarees. Vikarabad MLA Methuku Anand attended the programme as the chief guest to distribute the sarees. On this occasion, the villagers alleged that Dacharam village Sarpanch Anjappa was distributing sarees only to the women of his followers' families. Vikarabad MLA tried to quell the clash but, villagers threw footwear on each other.

Villagers also said that only 20 sarees were brought to 327 women in the village.

IHRA mourns Paswan's death

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: International Human Rights Association (IHRA) Southern region director and prominent Dalit leader, Dr A V Swamy mourned untimely death of Union Minister and icon of Dalits, Ram Vilas Paswan. Swamy described death of Paswan is a great loss to the Dalits and other weaker sections. He said Paswan who was a towering personality among the current crop of politicians, relentlessly championed the cause of Dalits. He conveyed his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.



TRS president Gellu Srinivas Yadav and others addressing press conference in Hyderabad on Saturday

TRS fires failure salvo at BJP

Says that BJP leaders have no right to demand implementation of EBC reservations in the State

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Telangana Rashtra Samithi Vidyarthi, the student wing of TRS on Saturday said that BJP leaders lacked commitment on the implementation of The Economic Weaker Section (EBC) Reservations.

Addressing a press conference here at Telangana Bhavan TRSV president Gellu Srinivas Yadav said that have no right to demand implementation of EBC

reservations. He said that the EBC reservations were not implemented even in BJP ruled States. The BJP leaders have no commitments towards the OBCs, alleged Srinivas Yadav. There is not even one professor from the OBC in the Benarus Hindu University, which is in the Constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. There are 40 Central universities in the country but there are only nine professors belonging to OBC community, said Yadav.

The TRS leader said that because of non-implementation of 27 per cent OBC reservations in NEET 11,027 students could not get seat. The Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, along with BC organisations had demanded separate ministry for BCs on several occasions so that countrywide BCs would get justice, recalled Yadav.

Yadav alleged that the BJP and ABVP leaders had given a call to lay seige Ministers' quarters to hide their failures.

Patients suffer as rainwater floods OGH new block

MD NIZAMUDDIN

Hyderabad: Despite cloud burst and inundation across the city, the Osmania General Hospital's now shut heritage block remained dry and without flooding. In contrast, the new Quli Qutb Shah block which now houses the patients witnessed flooding, causing inconvenience and damaging equipment.

The comparative videos went viral amongst the medical circles following an intensive spell of rain that lashed the city submerged most of the buildings. This once again sparked demand for reopening and continuation of services at the heritage block. Senior doctors and alumnus of the Osmania echoed the sentiment, as nothing like the July 16 incident has happened ever since.

"The drainage incident remained an isolated one, which was overcome. The block needs only minor repair works like restoring the damaged ceiling. Historically the block remained crucial for functioning of the hospital. Sealing of it has not only impacted poor patients but also practicing doctors. The government must rethink of opening of the heritage block for the great good of people," said founder president of Telangana Indian Medical Association (IMA) and Osmania alumni, Dr K Shyamsunder.

It has been almost 4 months ever since the Heritage block was sealed by the administration citing flooding. But the doctors argue that the recent rainfall during the entire monsoon proves this argument wrong, as no flooding was witnessed.



Heritage block

In contrast, the general ward of patients which were shifted to the Quli Qutb Shah block constructed some three decades back was inundated on Friday evening and also caused damage to important equipment. "You can watch the visuals of flooding, which caused huge inconvenience to patients. The block was never built for accommodating patients and was used for conducting tests of patients.

The entire waiting hall has been converted into a general ward. With no proper facilities available for the patients coming not only from Telangana, but from neighbouring States are returning without proper treatment," said Osmania Alumni Member and senior doctor, Dr Iqbal Javed.

With outpatients of 1 lakh per month, the State-owned the hospital which was the pride of the State, if restored to past glory would be better off when compared to multi-specialty hospitals in and around Hy-



Quli Qutb Shah block

derabad. "Almost every other doctor's guru is here. The young doctors learn here the practical knowledge, where other Corporate hospitals fail to provide," he added.

Postal dept pays tributes to its corona warriors

FOUR POSTMEN HAD DIED DUE TO COVID-19

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad: Chief Post Master General, Telanagana Circle, S Rajendra Kumar paid homage to four postal warriors who died on duty to become Corona Martyrs with rich floral tributes.

Taking part in the Saving Banks Day event held at Hyderabad Jubilee Head Post office under Hyderabad South East Division, Chief Post Master General also released posters in Urdu for reaching out to all customers.

The National Postal Week is being celebrated from October 9 to 15. A number of activities will be conducted in Hyder-

abad South East Division on occasion of National Postal Week. Rajendra Kumar informed that wide campaign regarding awareness of various schemes will be done on providing digital mode of financial transactions like internet banking, mobile banking, debit card operations.

First of its kind online Postal Life Insurance mela session will be conducted for tech savvy professionals on the eve of Postal Life Insurance Day on October 12 providing insurance coverage to professionals and protection of lives. Philately Day, Business Development Day and Mail Day, will be celebrated on October 13, 14 and 15 respectively.

Throughout the period of National Postal Week the various activities as well as importance of the department in providing financial, insurance, mail and a number of various services is being highlighted. Besides other activities Urdu Posters were released on Sukanya Samruddhi yojana Scheme and other Postal Savings Savings Schemes. The oldest Post Box holding customer and the oldest Savings Bank customer were felicitated on this occasion. K Vishnu Jyothi, Assistant Superintendent of Post Offices, Maulana Sayeed Quadri and Jaffer Hussain Editor Sada-e-Hussaini were also present.



ISRO's human space flight rocket to have multiple backups for crucial systems

VENKATACHARI JAGANNATHAN

Chennai (IANS): India's human space flight rocket will have multiple redundancies/backup systems as a matter of safety and the necessary hardware for building the rocket are coming in, said a senior official.

"The GSLV (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle) that will be used for the Gaganyaan or the human space flight mission will be built with four redundancies (backup systems) for critical functions as a safety measure," S. Somanath, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) told

IANS. The VSSC is part of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and based in Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala.

For instance, there will be multiple sensors for a particular function so that if one fails the other will be functional, a former ISRO official told IANS. The Indian space agency has said the parachute systems are configured with redundancy. The avionics for Crew Escape System are configured as an independent system including instrumentation system and sequencing system, ISRO said.

According to Somanath, no major design changes were made to



the GSLV Mk-III rocket that will carry three Indian astronauts to space. "We have just modified the design slightly as per the need," Somanath said.

The electronics will be the major cost component in the rocket. India plans to send three astronauts to space to be in orbit for about a week.

The first unmanned test flight of GSLV, as part of the country's human space mission Gaganyaan, is expected to happen in 2021.

Two unmanned GSLV rockets will be tested before the actual human flight can happen.

ISRO Chairman K. Sivan had

earlier said that the "design and engineering of the launch vehicle and orbital module system for India's human space flight has been completed. A series of tests have to be competed to validate the design and engineering of the systems in 2020".

According to ISRO, the facilities required for carrying out the preparation and check-out of orbital module have been identified and actions taken for the realisation of various systems and equipment. A full scale integration mock-up of crew module has been realised through industry for integration trials of subsystems.



Dalit woman panchayat leader made to sit on floor for meeting

Chennai: A photograph showing an elected woman panchayat leader sitting on the floor during a meeting she ought to preside over - while others sit on chairs - has sparked outrage in Tamil Nadu and exposed the deeply entrenched discriminative practices.

The District Collector in Tamil Nadu's Cuddalore, where the incident took place, has suspended the panchayat's secretary and ordered a probe after the photograph emerged on social media, according to NDTV report.

The woman seen in the photograph of the President of the Therku Thittai village panchayat and belongs to the Adi Dravida community, a Scheduled Caste. She was elected to her post - a reserved seat - last year.

"Because of my caste the Vice President does not let me preside over meeting. He did not even let me hoist the flag. He made his father do it. Although I was cooperating with the upper castes all these months, it is going overboard now," she said.

Chandra Sekhar Sakhamuri, the District Collector, said: "We are investigating the case and will have clarity in a few hours. The secretary was suspended because she failed to inform authorities about this alleged discrimination."

India's Covid tally nears 70L

New Delhi (IANS): India recorded a spike of 73,272 Covid-19 cases and 926 deaths in 24 hours taking the tally to 69,79,423 cases, the data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said on Saturday. Out of the total, 8,83,185 cases are currently active, 59,88,822 have been cured, while 1,07,416 lost the battle against the viral disease. While the recovery rate is at 85.52 per cent, the fatality rate is 1.54 per cent, the Health Ministry data said. The total percentage of active cases is now at 12.94 per cent. Maharashtra continues to be the worst-hit with a total of 15,06,018 cases, including 39,732 deaths; followed by Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. According to the data from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), India conducted 11,64,018 sample tests in a single day on Friday.

New Delhi (IANS): Republic TV's CFO Shiva Sundaram has moved the Supreme Court against the summons issued by Mumbai Police to the news channel in connection with the alleged Television Rating Point (TRP) scam.

The plea in the apex court has challenged the October 9 summons, issued to the CFO of Republic Media Network, in connection with the investigation in an FIR. The CFO citing the plea in the top court has urged the Mumbai Police to pause its probe in the role of the network and its employees, as a request

TELEVISION RATING POINTS SCAM

REPUBLIC TV CFO MOVES SC, SKIPS MUMBAI POLICE PROBE



has been made before the court for an early hearing in the matter. Sundaram and the heads of

two prominent advertising agencies had been asked to report at the Crime Branch office

at 11 a.m. on Saturday to record their statements.

The development came a day after the Mumbai Police sent the country's television industry into a tizzy by unearthing a suspected mega scam of fraudulent TRP estimated to be worth over Rs 30,000 crore.

The police have named Republic TV, Fakt Marathi and Box Cinema among the accused after an investigation conducted in the past few days.

Hitting out at the police probe, Republic TV Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami has denied all the allegations, claiming

a witch-hunt against his channel for questioning the police and the Maharashtra government. He also threatened to file a criminal defamation case against Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh.

While at least two persons have been arrested in connection with the case so far, the police teams are probing the involvement of more people connected to the TV industry and the ad world who are suspected to be involved in the TRP fraud with an eye on a bigger piece of the advertising revenue cake.

Hathras victim's family to appear in High Court



Lucknow (PTI): Family members of a 19-year-old Dalit woman who died after allegedly being raped by four men in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras district will appear before the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court amid tight security on Monday.

A division bench of Justice Rajan Roy and Justice Jaspreet Singh had ordered the Uttar Pradesh additional chief secretary, state police chief and an additional director general of police to appear before it on October 12 to explain the incident.

Taking suo motu cognisance of the case, which has triggered widespread outrage, the bench also ordered Hathras district

magistrate and superintendent of police to appear with to apprise the court of various aspects of the case, including the ongoing probe into it. "The incidents which took place after the death of the victim on September 29, 2020 leading up to her cremation, as alleged, have shocked our conscience. Therefore, we are taking suo moto cognisance of the same," the bench had said in its order.

The bench had also asked the late woman's parents to come to the court to apprise it of their versions of the incident and ordered the Hathras district administration to arrange for their travel to the court and facilitate their appearance before it.



Army sees suspicious movement across LoC

Captures AK-74s, 240 rounds of ammo

Srinagar: The Army has foiled an attempt to push in arms and ammunition by Pakistan from across the Line of Control (LoC) in Keran sector of Jammu and Kashmir and recovered a cache, including four AK-74 rifles, officials said.

Alert troops foiled Pakistan's attempt to push in arms across the LoC in Keran Sector of north Kashmir's Kupwara district, an Army official said. He said the Army noticed two-three men transporting some items in a tube tied to a rope across the Kishenganga river.

The troops immediately reached the location and recovered four AK-74 rifles, eight magazines and 240 rounds concealed in two bags. The area has been cordoned off and a search is under progress, the official said.

He said it was another attempt by terrorists from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) to smuggle war-like stores, but it was successfully foiled by the quick action of alert troops.

Corps Commander of the Srinagar-based Chinara Corps Lt Gen BS Raju said "There has been no change in Pakistan's intentions."

Athawale only NDA ally left in Modi Govt

New Delhi: Ramdas Athawale of the Republican Party of India (RPI) is the only member among BJP's allies in the NDA government at the Centre.

Following the death of Lok Janshakti Party leader and Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, there is no representation from BJP allies in the Union Cabinet.

Arvind Sawant of the Shiv Sena, Harimrat Kaur Badal of the Shiromani Akali Dal, and Ram Vilas Paswan of the Lok Janshakti Party were from the BJP-led NDA alliance in the Union Cabinet when the Modi 2.0 government returned to power in 2019 following Lok Sabha elections.



While the Shiv Sena quit the NDA in late 2019, Shiromani Akali Dal left the alliance recently over the new farm legislations. Another key NDA ally, the JD(U) had kept itself out of the government.

Besides Prime Minister Modi, a total of 57 ministers - 24 Cabinet Ministers, nine Ministers of State (with Independ-

ent charge) and 24 Ministers of State - had taken oath as members of the Union Council of Ministers on May 30, 2019.

Following the resignations of Arvind Sawant and Harimrat Kaur Badal, and the death of Ram Vilas Paswan, there are 21 Cabinet Ministers.

With the recent death of Minister of State for Railways Suresh Angadi, the number of ministers of state has also come down to 23.

As per the Constitution, the total number of Union Ministers, including the Prime Minister, shall not exceed 15 per cent of the total number of members in the Lok Sabha.

Bhima Koregaon: 'Activist Navlakha met ISI agents through common friend in US'

ANAND SINGH

New Delh (IANS): Activist Gautam Navlakha, arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in connection with the Bhima Koregaon Elgar Parishad case, had met Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agents through a common friend in the United States.

The NIA has filed its first chargesheet in the special NIA court in Mumbai on Friday against eight people. Besides Navlakha, NIA named Hany Babu, Stan Swamy, Anand Teltumbde, Sagar Gorkhe, Ramesh Gaichor, Jyoti Jagtap and Milind Teltumbde under several sections of the Indian Penal Code and Unlawful Prevention Activities Act.

The 10,000-page chargesheet has details of each of the accused on how they planned violence on the basis of caste. An NIA source in Delhi related to the probe told IANS, "Navlakha during one of his visits to the United States met the ISI agents through a common friend." The source said that he was approached by the ISI agents in US seeking help from Navlakha to find them suitable spies in India. The source, however, did not reveal any further details when enquired about the year in which he travelled to the US and for how many times he communi-



cated with the ISI agents.

The NIA source also remained tightlipped on whether Navlakha met ISI agents later.

The NIA in its chargesheet has claimed that Navlakha was in touch with the ISI and was assigned the task to unite intellectuals against the government.

The NIA chargesheet also claimed that during probe Navlakha's name also came up in the secret communications with CPI (Maoist) cadres. "Navlakha was assigned the task to unite intellectuals against the government. He was part of some fact-finding committees and was assigned the task to recruit cadres for guerrilla activities of CPI (Maoist)," the NIA claimed in its chargesheet.

Besides Navlakha, the NIA claimed that Teltumbde, who normally resides in Goa, was one of the conveners of 'Bhima Koregaon Shaurya Din Prerna Abhiyan' and was present at Shaniwar Wada, Pune on December 31, 2017

where Elgar Parishad Programme was organised.

"Teltumbde played an active role with other Maoist cadres and received funds from them for carrying out the activities. Incriminating documents revealing his deep involvement with CPI (Maoist) activities also came to the fore," the agency said in its chargesheet. The NIA registered a case on January 24 this year and arrested Navlakha in April this year. The case pertains to inciting people and giving provocative speeches during the Elgar Parishad organised by the activists of Kabir Kala Manch at Shaniwarwada in Maharashtra's Pune on December 31, 2017, which promoted enmity between various caste groups and led to violence resulting in loss of life and property and state-wide agitation in Maharashtra.

During investigation, it was revealed that senior leaders of CPI (Maoist), an organisation banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, were in contact with the organisers of Elgar Parishad as well as the accused arrested in the case to spread the ideology of Maoism and encourage unlawful activities. The Pune Police had filed a chargesheet and a supplementary chargesheet in this case on November 15, 2018 and February 21, 2019, respectively.

KAPIL KAVURI HUB

KAPIL PROPERTIES

EARN EXTRA SFT*

LIFE LONG RETURNS

SAFE

AFFORDABLE

NO MAINTENANCE

upto

9% +

returns

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY MULTIPLIER

WITHOUT ADDITIONAL INVESTMENT

High yield monthly income + Long term wealth asset

The legendary opportunity is here

Limited units left, grab the advantage today

+91 95337 76694

www.kapilkavurihub.com

sales@kapilproperties.com

State to invite tenders for 4 fishing harbours

Amaravati: Aiming to propel Andhra Pradesh as a major destination for trade through the seas, the state's department of ports is planning to invite tenders for four fishing harbours in a fortnight.

"We are taking up tendering for four fishing harbours in the next week," Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board (APMB) chief executive N P Ramakrishna Reddy said.

The four fishing harbours are planned at Nizampatnam, Machilipatnam, Uppada and Juvvaladinne.

Similarly, tenders are also expected for two ports, Ramayapatnam and Bhavanampadu, while two more green-field ports are also being planned at Kakinada SEZ and Machilipatnam.

The state government aims to increase the capacity of ports and to 400 million tonne by 2024.

According to Reddy, the current capacity of the state's ports stands at 100 million tonne. Following the tendering process for the four fishing harbours in the first phase, the government aims to make them available in two years' time.

The government has already



The govt is going to build fishing harbours in Nisampatnam, Machilipatnam, Uppada and Juvvaladinne

approved the detailed projects reports of Ramayaptnam and Bhavanampadu ports.

It has also appointed consultants for these projects.

Mekapati Goutham Reddy, Minister of Industries and Commerce said there is huge scope to increase trade for Andhra Pradesh through the ports.

Labs mint money as patients run for CT scan as Covid test

V PRADEEP KUMAR

Tirupati: Covid-19 pandemic has become a blessing in disguise for some private labs and private hospitals. Cashing in on the anguish and fears of people about the suspected infection of the deadly virus, the labs have started fleecing them in the name of CT (computerised tomography) scans. Ignoring the government guidelines, some private hospitals to refer patients for CT scans joining hand with lab managements.

Also, several patients are going directly to diagnostic centres asking for a CT scan to know the Covid result instantly. While the result through RT-PCR test is taking more than 24 hours to come out, CT-scan result can be known within one hour. In view of this, to get rid of their anxiety people are not hesitating to undergo CT scan and rushing towards scan centres.

This has become a boon for these centres which started collecting huge charges ranging between Rs 3,500 to 6,000.

The government has prescribed CT-scan fee for Covid

■ Experts say the CT scan is not at all a standard test for infection

■ But people anxious over infection are rushing to labs on their own for some sort of comfort

■ Diagnostic centres are charging exorbitant prices, defying government guidelines

test as Rs 2,500 which most of the diagnostic centres were not following.

While several doctors are suggesting that it is not correct to go directly for CT scan to determine Covid unless a designated qualified doctor prescribes it, some private hospitals were convincing patients that by undergoing CT scan, correct treatment can be given.

Private hospitals are also insisting that patients undergo CT scan and come with Covid test report for consultation.

This has become a huge burden for the people, particularly for the middle and lower classes.



The Covid-19 nodal officer at Ruia hospital Dr S Subba Rao makes it clear that C scan is not a primary screening test for coronavirus.

Speaking to *The Hans India*, he said that one has to undergo RT-PCR test to determine Covid.

In case of urgency, rapid antigen tests and TrueNat tests are there.

If a patient gets negative in these tests and still has symptoms then a CT scan may give some indications to the presence of virus in lungs.

Also, aged people having no symptoms and their close contacts of those tested positive can

also undergo CT scan. Even all such people do not require it. It is important to go for a CT on the advice of a qualified doctor who will take into consideration all the aspects before recommending it.

In view of the widespread allegations on the diagnostic centres, vigilance and enforcement officials have raided several laboratories in Tirupati recently where it was proved that they are charging exorbitantly.

The district medical and health officials are also saying that they will act tough on those labs who defy government guidelines.

State witnesses 5,653 fresh Covid infections

Amaravati: Confirmed cases of coronavirus crossed the 7.50 lakh mark in Andhra Pradesh as 5,653 infections were added afresh on Saturday.

The latest bulletin said 6,659 patients got cured in 24 hours ending 9 am on Saturday and another 35 succumbed.

State's Covid-19 table now showed 7,50,517 total positives, 6,97,699 recoveries and 6,194 deaths so far.

The number of active cases stood at 46,624, according to the latest government bulletin said.

In 24 hours, West Godavari district added the highest number of 823 new Covid-19 cases in the state, while East Godavari and Chittoor reported 706 each.

Kurnool district continued to report the lowest number of 119 new cases.

Prakasam district saw six fresh fatalities and Chittoor, five.

East Godavari and Krishna reported four more Covid-19 deaths each.

After 64.94 lakh sample tests, at the rate of 1,21,612 per million population, the overall infection positivity rate in the state stood at 11.56 per cent.

Private schools seek govt assistance

WISHLIST

- Extension of Vidya Kanuka to poor students of private schools
- Classification of schools and assistance to budget and semi-budget schools
- Govt help to teacher who are not paid salaries
- Waiver of taxes, power charges
- Extension of recognition for one more year

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Vijayawada: The joint action committee of the managements of the Andhra Pradesh Private Unaided Schools Managements Association (APPUSMA) appealed to the state government to help them to restart their educational institution.

Addressing the media here on Saturday, general secretary of APPUSMA K Tulasi Vishnu Prasad requested the state government to announce an academic calendar with the syllabus and working days for schools also as it did with the Intermediate course. "There should be a clear-cut policy to organise online classes," he said.

Once the government announces the reduced syllabus, the teachers and the parents would have an idea and the children would be sent to schools,



Members of Andhra Pradesh Private Unaided School Managements Association addressing the media in Vijayawada on Saturday

he pointed out. The general secretary said that the government should provide loans through commercial banks to the schools depending upon their size to help the managements tide over the financial problems caused by Covid-19 pandemic.

The teachers of the unaided schools should also be helped like the other classes of people who were helped by the government, he said.

"The children of white ration cardholders studying in private schools should also be extended Vidya Kanuka," he suggested.

Vishnu Prasad appealed to the government to postpone the renewal of schools for one year in view of the present situation. Honorary president of the

Andhra Pradesh Private Schools Association V Sundar Rao suggested classification of schools into three categories — corporate, budget and semi-budget — and the budget and semi-budget schools should be helped to overcome the crisis.

The budget schools should be exempted from the supervision of the Fee Regulation Monitoring Committee, he said.

Gajuwaka Independent Private Schools Association leader P Bhaskara Rao deplored that the teachers did not receive salaries during the lockdown period since the schools were closed.

The member schools are burdened with various types of taxes, and are unable to repay

the loans to the banks, he pointed out.

The power tariff should be changed from category two, he appealed to the government.

Vijayawada Children's Schools and Tutorials Association leader M Srinivasa Rao appealed to the government to exempt the school buses from road tax and insurance considering it as a stoppage period.

The finance companies were bringing pressure to pay the EMIs, he said and appealed to the government to give instructions to them.

L Jogi Rami Reddy, K Srikanth, M Appaji, M Vijay Kumar, Anil Kumar, Mohan Rao and others were present.



RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat showing Raktha Seva app brochure at RSS Andhra region meeting at Nutakki in Guntur district on Saturday

Mohan Bhagwat unveils app for blood donations

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Guntur: RSS Sarsanghchalak Mohan Bhagwat launched Raktha Seva app, at RSS Andhra region meeting held at Nutakki in the district on Saturday.

Seva Bharati, an NGO, developed the app. Bhagwat is here to attend the two-day RSS conclave. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the app would connect blood donor, receiver and useful to those in need blood donation..

Seva Bharati State Sanghatan secretary Kakani Prudhvi Raj said that the people may download the app from Google playstore and register their name. Those who register their names in the app may send request for blood, platelets and plasma. If they do not get any response from donors, they may contact 040-4821-4920.

RSS Kshetra Sanchalak K Naga Raju, regional sanchalak Bhupatiraju Srinivasa Raju and others took part in the meeting.

Covid, flood exposed govt's inefficiency: TDP

HANS NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati: TDP national president and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday expressed concern that the troubles of the common people in the state were multiplying day by day under the inefficient rule of the YSRCP government.

Naidu said that the government's failures and wrongdoings were exposed during the coronavirus relief measures and also floods. No relief was provided to the victims. The ruling party was not doing what it was promising to the people right from the day one it came to power, he said.

Addressing people's representatives and mandal in-charges in Vizianagaram Lok Sabha con-

stituency, the TDP chief slammed the government for rendering over one lakh construction workers jobless in the first year of its rule itself. Now, in the past six months of Covid-effect, these workers were thrown on to the streets with no livelihood and no help from the government.

Even the Covid-affected families were being exploited and squeezed of their money. Naidu deplored that bribes were being collected even for performing the last rites to the virus victims.

He said the YSRCP leaders were resorting to corruption in everything and they have made the lives of the general public miserable.

'Talks with China won't help'

Continuation from p1

However, no breakthrough has been achieved to end the standoff.

"Chinese Communist Party's territorial aggression is also apparent on its Indian border where China has attempted to seize control of the Line of Actual Control by force," US National Security Adviser Robert O'Brien said in a remark on China early this week in Utah. China's territorial aggression is also true in the Taiwan Strait where the PLA (People's Liberation Army) Navy and Air Force continue to conduct threatening military drills, O'Brien said.

"Beijing's signature international development programme, One Belt One Road (OBOR), involves impoverished companies taking on opaque and unsustainable Chinese loans to pay Chinese firms employing Chinese labourers to build their infrastructure," he said. Many of these projects are un-

necessary, shoddily built and are "white elephants", the US National Security Adviser said.

"And now these countries' dependence on the Chinese debt leaves their sovereignty eroded and with no choice but to hue to the party's line on UN votes or any other issue that the Chinese Communist Party considers a red line," he said.

O'Brien also noted that China's other international aid efforts include selling surveillance systems and similar tools of repression to "pariah regimes" around the world, including Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro. "The time has come to accept that dialogue and agreements will not persuade or compel the People's Republic of China to change. There's nothing to be gained from looking the other way or turning the other cheek. We've been doing that for far too

long," he said.

O'Brien said the US must stand up to the Chinese and protect the American people. "We must promote American prosperity, practice peace through strength and advance American influence in the world," he said, adding that under President Donald Trump's leadership that is exactly what the US has done.

O'Brien said the Trump administration has adopted a competitive approach to China. That approach, he said, has two primary objectives. First, improve the resiliency of US institutions, alliances and partnerships to prevail against the challenges that China presents; and the second is to impose tangible cost in order to compel Beijing to cease or reduce actions harmful to America's vital national interest and those of its allied and partner nations.

Heron drone but also arm them with air to surface missile and laser guided bombs.

According to South Block officials, the technical upgradation and arming of Heron drone is at contract negotiating committee level after being cleared by the Defence Acquisition Committee (DAC). The project will be cleared at the level of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS).

Continuation from p1

The PLA has Wing Loong II armed drones in its arsenal and has even given four of them to Pakistan to protect the CPEC corridor and Gwadar port.

Although the Rustom-2 will have to undergo test and user trials before inducted in the Indian military, the Ministry of Defence is currently negotiating with Israeli Aerospace Industry (IAI) to not only upgrade the existing fleet of

India warns against Pak attempts to disrupt NAM

Continuation from p1

"If we take up issues that divide rather than unite us, reducing our movement to a platform for venting bilateral grievances or for embarrassing fellow Members, we will soon become

a weak and irrelevant entity, with no say at all in global decision making," India's Minister of State for External Affairs V. Muraleedharan told the virtual Ministerial Meeting of the NAM on Friday.

DRDO's Rustom-2 drone takes-off

Centre draws new roadmap to boost women's safety

Continuation from p1

"However, even with stringent provisions in law and several capacity-building measures undertaken, any failure of police to adhere to these mandatory requirements may not augur well for the delivery of criminal justice in the country, especially in the context of women safety," it said. "Such lapses, if noticed, need to be investigated into and stringent action taken immediately against the concerned officers responsible for the same," the advisory to states and Union Territory administrations said. States and Union Territories have also been requested to monitor cases on Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offenses (ITSSO) to ensure that appropriate action is taken on the charge sheet in a time bound manner as required by law.

China deployed 60K soldiers at LAC: Pompeo

Continuation from p1

"The Indians are seeing 60,000 Chinese soldiers on their northern border," Pompeo said on Fox News late Friday. Each of the three major Indo-Pacific democracies -- India, Australia and Japan -- which form the so-called Quad along with the US, is under threat from the Chinese Communist Party, Pompeo said. Pompeo also criticized China's response to the coronavirus pandemic and its telecommunication infrastructure, and said the country steals intellectual property. President Donald Trump has vowed "to take seriously the threat from General Secretary Xi Jinping and the Chinese Communist Party, and we're no longer going to allow them to run around cost-free and impose their vision for the future upon the West," Pompeo said. The comment came after a second ministerial-level meeting of the Quad in Tokyo last week, in which Pompeo called on the other participants to band together against coercion from China. The Trump Administration has been critical of Beijing on many topics from trade policy to the coronavirus, while India is growing increasingly wary of Chinese economic and military influence in South Asia.



Education minister Audimulapu Suresh addressing media at the media point in R&B office in Vijayawada on Saturday

Social system: It's time for alternative theories

With regards to the article 'Rapes show double struggle of low-caste women in India' (Oct 9), rape is indeed the worst possible crime deserving the highest form of punishment as human exploitation based on social hierarchies. However, in India, a huge distortive discourse by the social sciences and humanities over decades dominated by a single ideology has caused huge damage at a national and international level. We failed to develop alternative theories on our social systems. 'Colonial consciousness', a continuing intellectual violence by the colonised minds in a different period, refuses to remove the western lenses to understand ourselves. The dated narratives try to fit every social problem into the Marxist paradigm of the exploiter and the exploited.

Rape is a neither a generalised phenomenon nor India the rape capital of the world. Assuming a uniform meaning to the word despite varying definitions, in fact, rapes in India is much lower as compared to other countries. The incidence of rape

in India in 2010 stood at 1.8 per 100,000. The comparative figures were 27.3 for USA, 28.8 for UK, 65.3 for Sweden, and an overwhelming 120 per 100,000 for South Africa. Regarding the oft-repeated 'underreporting' criticism, even if we assume ten times under-reporting in India and absolutely no underreporting in the Western countries, we still have a hard time catching up. The under-reporting must be thirty-six times before it reaches levels in Sweden. Rape is a distinct phenomenon with biological roots. Attaching it to traditions, religions, cultures, or even education, it is a classical bad statistical practice of conflating causation to correlation. Sweden has one of the highest number of atheists and the highest literacy rates in the world. Would that be an argument to show that either a lack of belief in god and/or good education is responsible for high rapes?

The so-called caste-system, the biggest punching bag for intellectuals, remains a continuing and colossal semantic trap for the whole country. No equivalent to the word 'caste' exists in



any of our scriptures. A Portuguese word 'casta' applied to groups of people (New Christians and the Old Christians) in the Iberian Peninsula when the Portuguese landed on the shores of Goa became an internal story of India amazingly. If horror stories of 'caste discrimination'; the social humiliation of groups, poverty, and so on are evidences of the existence of 'the caste system', then the latter is present everywhere in the world. Discrimination, poverty, and social

humiliation of groups are in slavery, in the feudal societies of Europe, in the capitalist societies of today, and so on. These are compatible with multiple social structures.

Our lived reality is the four varnas and the thousands of jatis. The varnas are normative, categorical classification to which attached a hierarchical ordering by the colonials by a very selective reading of our scriptures. Jatis evolving and dissolving, going up and down

the social-political-economic scale with their own rules of marriage, food and customs have been the only social reality. One of the most impossible and futile exercises in social theorising has been to correlate the varnas to the jatis. Force-fitting continues to persist despite problems.

Amazingly, by constant decrees, legislation, and politics, a diverse population, numbering 64.5 million at the last census, born into one thousand two

hundred communities, each with its own identity has become a single category of 'scheduled castes'. The single criteria for this grouping, a political and legal creation rather than a social reality, is 'untouchability' - an extremely tenuous idea. Importantly, the data for caste atrocities simply does not exist. The definitions have been narrow; discriminations studied only in isolated groups; and the whole narrative of 'caste discrimination' finally is a case of data manipulation, statistical cherry-picking, and making macro claims based on micro evidence.

The same hard data from the National Crime Records Bureau which helps in giving us a terrible international reputation shows, for example, on an average, every percentage of the non-SC population faces roughly 1.19% of the incidences of crime, while every percentage of the SC population faces about 0.04% (30 times less) of the crime. The ambit of soft data remains wide with ad hoc explanations and even more manipulations.

Successive governments, by

creating categories like forward caste, backward caste (with further sub-categories like A, B, C, D), and scheduled castes, have happily promoted the racial categories we detest so much and instilling false notions of superiority, inferiority, guilt, anger, and shame in various proportions in society while wanting ironically to create an equal society.

The colonials had a purpose to break our society, but why did our own politicians and intellectuals fail us after independence? Our natural sciences declare boldly that all humans share 99.99% of genes; any slightest notion of race or inherent superiority or inferiority of a group of people is wrong. Yet, our intellectuals keep hitting at India to be the worst place in the world for a woman or a Dalit. We absorbed and assimilated every culture from across the world for thousands of years, and yet we are in the dock for the 'ugly caste-system', 'patriarchy', a rape culture'. It is time for us to dissipate unfortunate angers and start fresher narratives.

-Dr Pingali Gopal, Warangal

Misdemeanour of a 'holier-than-thou' TV honcho



Normally TV anchors don't make news. But Republic TV's Arnab Goswami is one of a kind; he represents post-truth journalism in its most decadent form; he has made news for the wrong reason; he has allegedly manipulated TRP ratings. The otherwise sanctimonious anchor has certainly come under a cloud in the wake of Mumbai police's explosive revelations. Now that the allegation that he rigged TRP ratings in the dog-eat-dog TV news industry has been

made, he has the burden of proof put on him to save himself from being perceived as a fraudster and a profiteer.

It is alleged that the Republic TV channel, driven by the lure of filthy lucre, paid peanuts for the households to inflate TRP ratings and received humongous proceeds. Bribing households to swell viewership and amass illegal advertisement revenues involves breach of trust and cheating and constitutes a punishable economic offence; it cannot go

in the name of media freedom. There is nothing immoral about wanting to earn more money, but illegal earnings are a different matter.

The Mumbai police must be commended for busting the TRP manipulation racket; it cannot be faulted for doing its job just because of the spurious claim of the channel in question that it is 'nationalistic'. The question is not what stand the news channel took on Shaheen Bagh protests, the Palghar

killings, Sushant Singh death case, the Hathras atrocity or any other matter or what it rammed down the viewers' throat, but whether it rigged the TRP ratings or not. There is no way the Republic channel can claim immunity from prosecution if it is really involved in the 'false TRP' racket.

In this context, Arnab Goswami's evocation of his adherence to Sanatan Dharam in a vain bid to defend his integrity is irrelevant to the issue at hand and makes no sense. True, it is no laughing matter; still India's self-styled number one channel in terms of viewership has given those with a sense of humour a reason to laugh - the Republic channel that made it big allegedly by unethical means would be switched on and kept on running unwatched by a single soul! Meanwhile, the political forces that have benefitted from the TV anchor's brand of virulent journalism should admit to the element of taint in the gain accrued from it.

- G David Milton, Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

Senseless civic staff throw Covid norms to wind

Concerning Non-Agriculture Properties Updation of Records which is underway in Telangana, the municipal officials have already started visiting the individual houses of residents to collect the data related to non-agricultural property for the stated reason, among others, that after this updating process, mutation of names of owners in various departments concerned is going to be easier post transfer of properties at the execution of the registration itself. However praiseworthy might be the government's objectives, not to speak of distracters' allegation about secrecy issues, it is highly questionable and objectionable for the municipal officials to enter the houses and interview the occupants on the private premise albeit in the line of duty especially in times of coronavirus at its peak stage of spreading infection. Many residents who are the owners or tenants are in their advanced age with comorbidities confined to home in isolation. Their own children are keeping themselves away lest they contact the virus to their elders. Now in the wake of the extant project on these premises, the elders and chil-



dren will be sitting ducks in their own homes which is otherwise septic or isolated now being thrown open for contamination thanks to the visits of the municipal officials. Both sides are susceptible to get contacted with the deadly virus. The staff could be carriers of the virus as unwitting pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic positive patients more so by their contacting with scores of such residents already in the course of duty and thus become potential super spreaders. Why this public unhygienic campaign escaped the attention

of the powers that be including the judiciary who could have taken notice of the same suo moto since they themselves are likewise vulnerable as likely owners of properties in Telangana. Let print and visual media take up the hygiene concerns and protocols of the vulnerable target population that comprises even everyone including the municipality machinery updating the records in their door-to-door ambitious and untimely project.

- Seshu Chamarty, Hyderabad

Media should uphold national integrity



A day ago, a few of the reputed news channels of India have been alleged of manipulating TRP (Television Rating Point) that is used to show which programmes are viewed most. This move may be a planned one by some non-State actors in order to side-track the ongoing sensational issues like Hathras incident, SSR death case, Shaheen Bagh protests, drug scandal, etc. As reported, it seems that many high-profile elements are involved in this. Neglecting this point, many news media would be busy in targeting those, whereas the accused media house be trying to defend themselves from allegations giving a chance to the culprits of the high-profile cases to manipulate and escape. There has to be some understanding among the different media houses that their main motto should be to uphold national sovereignty and territorial integrity, not falling prey to these ambiguities. As we all know, media is considered the 4th pillar of democracy.

- M Mohan Vamsi, Sathupalli, Khammam

When pandemic messes up education

Yes, corona pandemic made education as clear as mud. It seems that this year the younger generation may not get a chance to enjoy their classroom air due to pandemic Covid-19. Though the Union government has released unlock 5.0, it made it clear that it is the prerogative of the States whether to allow or not allow student tribe to attend the classes. Further, it has pretty clearly said that for this limited activity also, nod of parents is compulsory. It gives the impression that after the said date also the normal activity of the schools looks like as a mirage as per the norms fixed by Union government. Various State governments are following diverse strategies to satisfy the learning needs of the student tribe that are forcibly clogged by the pandemic. The pandemic has thrown its vicious paw on the enthusiasm of the children in a new academic year and tumble-down that festive mood in society. From the tender age to teenage, the younger generations will start their life afresh by ignoring the bygone year and its shades on their academic life. The parents, teachers, school management, and all the stakeholders in the sphere of the education system are waiting passionately for the reopening of the schools after their enforced vacation. However, due to the pandemic Covid-19, everything has been disturbed and uncertainty prevailed everywhere in the arena of education.

The coronavirus and its rapacious nature have forced the authorities to initiate changes in

the normal procedure and process of education and exams. Owing to the pandemic coronavirus, the basic components of the education system that are the classroom, instruction and both the theory and practical examinations are subjected to change their original form to avoid viral transmission among the younger generations. It is presumable that we are going to experience a sea of change in all these processes and the governments are still not able to carve out any specific design to begin the process to avoid this contagion infection and transmission. However, our Andhra Pradesh government has shown its keenness on opening schools by giving facelift to them by launching NAADU-NEDU programme. It is my personal opinion that if everything goes right, surely the public sector schools are going to dominate with the implementation of NAADU-NEDU. Let us think about the changes and possibilities to make our younger generations academically agile.

There is no doubt that the classroom according to Kothari is the place where the country's destiny is shaped but today that dictum has to be altered. Owing to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become tough for the schools to adopt themselves to sail smoothly. The classroom has lost its significance because in no case it will satisfy the measures to prevent the transmission of viruses such as maintaining social distance, sanitation, and washing hands. Generally, normal classrooms were built keep-



ing in view of accommodating 40 or 50 students hence maintaining of social distance appears like a pipe dream. The only alternative is online teaching, but it is also not satisfying 100 percent of children because it will be a bad wish to expect that all children should have the smartphones in their hands. Therefore, to reach more number of students it is better to continue the classes through the Doordarshan and to go for on-line instruction or online distance learning (ODL). At present, most of the States are following this route because TV is an efficient media to reach the student tribe. The unlock 5.0 is also insisting for online classes and distance mode of learning. It is noticeable that the parent tribe is also not ready to send their wards to the schools until their managements ensure the safety of the same.

Instruction is the area where we can see more ground-break-

ing changes that can support the learning of the child during this pandemic. We are all aware of that teaching a complex process and no gadget can replace the teacher. However, these difficult circumstances for the teaching-learning process are making on-line instruction is the best practice to keep the students engaged in the learning process. The teachers of the contemporary era should have to adapt themselves to the digital teaching techniques that can help them in teaching. The coronavirus has compelled the teaching tribe to explore the students through various means to compensate the skipped classes during the consequent lockdown and unlock periods. It is well and good itself to produce tech-savvy teachers to face future challenges that can disturb the normal schooling process. The teaching tribe is now using various apps like WhatsApp, Zoom, Jio Meet and webinars for the

instruction. The NCERT and SCERT's of the States are involving the teaching tribe in various activities to safeguard the interests of the children. Further, the Unlock 5.0 rules have given free hand to the State governments to allow the academic activity in the schools by following preventive measures of pandemic.

Assessment is the conventional process through that we can only assess the scholastic achievement of the children. However, many reform committees were opined that they are stress mounting, yet our system has no option. They are useful to promote and certify the completion of a particular course; further, useful to determine the qualification as academic and professional. However, the pandemic corona had a severe effect on this process because it requires a conducive environment for the conduct of the same. Now, the universities and many testing agencies are on the track

and administering various exams successfully by following the Covid norms. The percentage of attendance speaks that the students and their parents are not panic towards the pandemic.

The UGC has already instructed all the universities to promote all the students except final semester and made it clear to complete the final year exams by September 30 with all precautionary measures that can prune the infections rate among students. It is noticeable that some deemed universities and others have already started the examinations in online mode to avoid the dislocation of the academic schedule. So, at present, administering examinations in online mode is the best option. After the successful administration of NEET and JEE entrance tests all over the country and APPSC exams for Secretariat staff has given enough confidence to the authorities to propel their future endeavours.

Yes, it is a fact that the pandemic has made many things nebulous and messy; it is the right time for us to think positively. We have been compelled to fight with an invisible contagion and at the same time to complete our task without any damage. By practising, the preventive measures to check the viral transmission we need to move on positively with great confidence. It is so right that "Instead of worrying about what you cannot control, shift your energy to what you can create".

- E Gajendra Nath Reddy, Badvel, Kadapa dist, AP

‘My kin had great expectations, but I couldn’t make it’

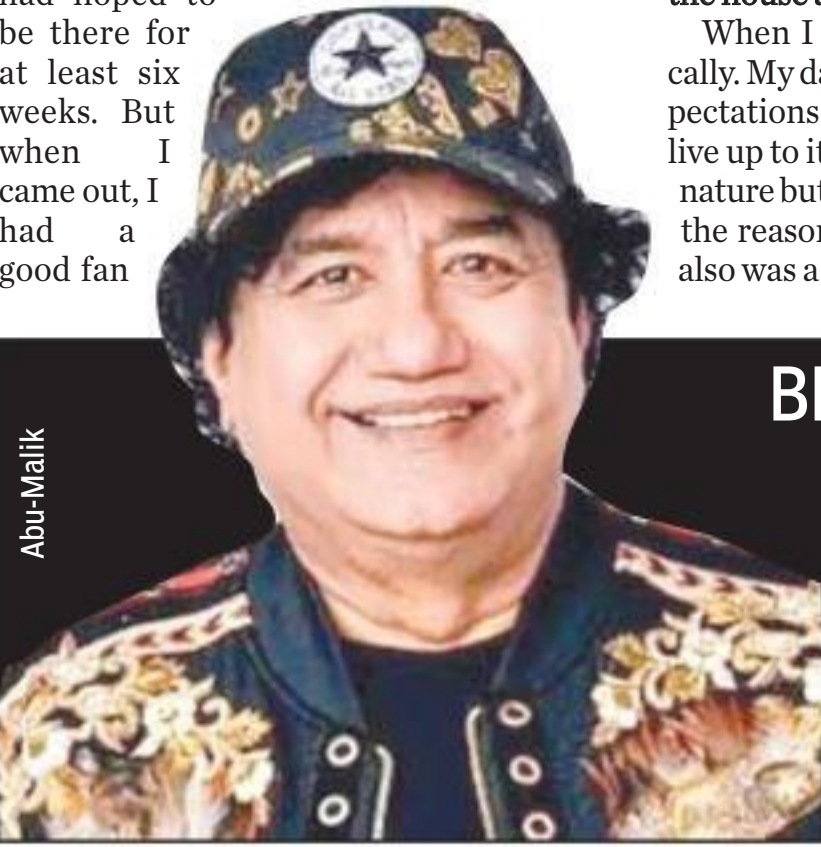
PURNA SINGH

Bigg Boss 13 contestant Abu Malik who is also popularly known as Fifi, is a music composer, music director, international show organiser and actor.

Appeared in a few films, including Salman Khan starrer ‘Pyar Kiya To Darna Kya’, he reveals about BB14, Salman Khan, brother Anu Malik, Nephews Armaan and Amaal Malik in an bold interview with The Hans India.

Tell us something about your journey in Bigg Boss 13 show?

It was a fantastic and unexpected journey. I had fun singing my new songs and trying to get some mileage out of the show. I was disappointed being evicted early as I had hoped to be there for at least six weeks. But when I came out, I had a good fan



following even with little kids and families which was wonderful.

How this year will be different than last at Bigg Boss house?

This year the season had to begin differently because of Covid-19 so the show has been reconceived to reduce physical interaction. The premiere was devoid of audience and full precaution is in place in the big boss house. The season is going to be tough because the new contestant will have to live up to the entertainment value set by BB13. The show has participants from BB13 who will be participating regularly to boost this year’s contestants. But I’m sure that it will be entertainment superclass as usual.

Share your feelings when you came out of the house after weeks?

When I came out, I was unhappy basically. My daughter and friends had high expectations from me, and I guess I did not live up to it. I am robust, funny and loud by nature but I am not crude or nasty that was the reason I was not in the conflicts. Age also was a factor that was not on my side. I

BB13 contestant and musician Abu Malik on Big Boss 13 experience

felt if this show had come earlier to me, I would have been in the top five.

This year’s contestants have lived in their houses for months - do you think still they will enjoy locking themselves in the BB house?

Inside the house, even if you are locked in, the entertainment value inside with the games with the conflicts and the stress makes great entertainment for all the members. This house is like no other house in the world.

Your bond with Salman Khan?

Salman Khan and his entire family is known to me since ‘Maine Pyar Kiya’ days. I have done live shows with him in the USA, Canada, Australia, Maldives etc. We have always been friends and have respect for each other. Though surprising, I did not meet him even once after 1998 before that I acted in his movie ‘Pyar Kiya Toh Darna Kya’. I just went my way and he was always very busy, so I thought why unnecessarily trouble or waste his time. It was my luck that we met on the stage of Bigg Boss 13 after 24 years. And connected as if to say we were never away from each other. He is a great guy and he always wanted me to compose songs for him, but I felt live show business was more lucrative.

Any comment on BB14 contestants?

Bigg Boss 14 will be tough for young contestants as they will be constantly compared to Bigg Boss 13. Audience expectations will be also high like previous year. It’s a difficult call with the combination of Bigg Boss 13 just clubbed together. You never know in

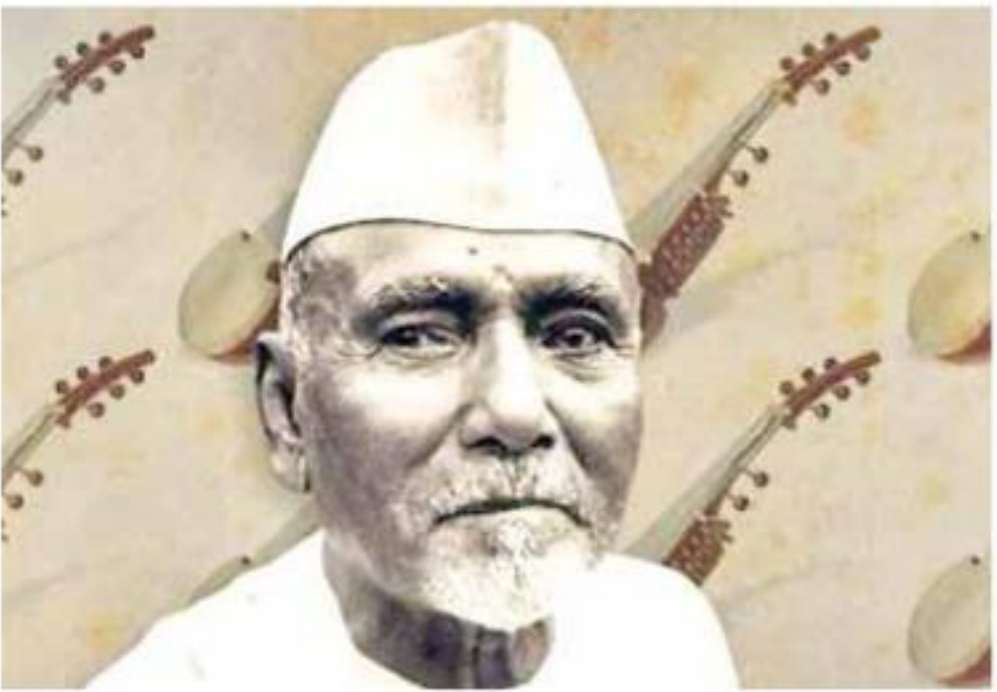
show business what will rock next.

Any plans in future to see Abu Malik collaborating with brother Annu Malik? Or with hitmakers nephew’s Armaan and Amaal Malik?

Both my brothers and their families have done fantastically in music. I did two Hollywood films as a music director and five musical albums as a singer and got some success, but I was only interested in live shows. I have started recording new songs as a composer programmer and a lyricist 4 years back and I am pursuing it seriously. I would love to collaborate with my brothers and nephews but the fact remains, will they collaborate with me? In the music industry, people come together only if you have equal popularity status otherwise not. If I earn my stripes they will work with me or avoid me like plague if I ask them to collaborate with me, because they are sure I will benefit more than them as they do not need to ride on me as I need to ride in them. When tables turn we will collaborate.

What is next with you?

I am setting up wonderful recording studio called Malik & Symphony Analog Recording Studio. This is an analog set up and it’s a brand-new machine which will turn out fantastic music warm mixes and mastered songs. On 17th October it will be open for all artists. I have also given 20 songs to TIPS and wish to release 100 love songs on Valentine’s Day digitally with a title ‘Love Kisses & Heartbreaks’. I’m also about to set a world record by 400 minutes of non-stop love songs by a single composer and 50 wonderful vocalists.



USTAD ALLAUDDIN KHAN’S BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Fans upset over lack of celebration

SANDEEP PAURANIK

Hundreds of admirers of Ustad Allauddin Khan are aggrieved over non-observance of the birth anniversary of one of the greatest virtuosos of Hindustani classical music.

Born on October 8, 1862 in Bangladesh, Khan was a legendary musician in Maihar ruler’s court and laid the foundation of the iconic Maihar gharana of music.

Maihar, in Madhya Pradesh’s Satna district, is renowned in the world of arts as the karmabhoomi of Baba Allauddin Khan, who was an accomplished ‘sarod’ player, multi-instrumentalist and teacher of Hindustani classical music.

But officials connected with the Ustad Allauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Academy in state capital Bhopal maintain that the birth anniversary of the master artiste could not be celebrated owing to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Ustad Allauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Academy stands in his name in Bhopal while a music college in the name of one of the most notable masters of classical music in the 20th century was set up in Maihar.

One of the path-breaking practices that Khan started in his ‘gharana’ was that the headship was not passed on to the members of his family but through the ‘guru-shishya’ tradition.

Arif Tanveer, a relative of Khan, complains that even though governments have spent crores of rupees to launch buildings in the names of renowned musicians and other artistes, the country has not been able to produce music legends in the class of Khan, Bhimsen Joshi and Pandit Ravi Shankar since they are not even remembered on their birth and death anniversaries in a proper manner.

“The apathy of the authorities towards Indian music and musicians is worrisome,” he said.

Then Maihar ruler Brijnath Singh had brought Khan, popularly known as Baba Allauddin Khan, to his court at the start of the 20th century as he was impressed with his talent.

Khan would, till he was in good health, regularly visit Mata Sharda Devi’s temple in Maihar and sing devotional songs.

In 1954, the Sangeet Natak Akademi awarded him the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship for lifetime contribution to Indian music. In 1955, Khan established a college of music in Maihar. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1958, Padma Vibhushan in 1971.

Khan, credited with a number of new ‘ragas’, died on September 6, 1972 in Maihar.

There is an interesting story behind the ‘Maihar Band’ set up by Ustad Allauddin Khan.

Old-timers recalled that a plague swept through Maihar in 1918-19 and a lot of children lost their parents to the disaster. The renowned musician gathered these children and trained them in wind, percussion and string instruments as per their interests. It finally led to the formation of the ‘Maihar Vadya Vrind’.

Social activist and journalist Nandlal Singh said that the master musician may have been a Muslim, but he was a living example of communal harmony. His secular credentials can be gauged from the very fact that his house has two names - Madina Bhavan and Shanti Kutir.

Renowned artist Pareshe Maity has created a 34-foot high, 20-foot long and 8-foot wide sculpture titled ‘Maihar’ on the lawns of Art Ichol to pay tribute to Mata Sharda and Ustad Allauddin Khan.

LFF offers beacon of hope to Covid-hit industry

PAUL SANDLE & JONATHAN SHENFIELD

The pizzazz of the red carpet will be lacking and fewer films will be on offer at this year’s London Film Festival (LFF), but fans can still enjoy a broad programme, either on the big screen while socially distanced or streamed into their own homes.

Festival director Tricia Tuttle said the hybrid model meant she could deliver a vibrant event to audiences, in cinemas in London and beyond as well as online, despite the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. “This year there really is no physical locus of the festival,” Tuttle said in an interview on Thursday. Social distancing, which reduces the capacity of cinemas to about 30% of normal levels, has triggered an expansion of the festival beyond its home at the British Film Institute (BFI) on London’s South Bank and other independent cinemas in the capital to cities such as Manchester, Bristol and Sheffield.

“Even if you don’t live in a city that has a great independent cinema, you can still watch almost all of the festival on the BFI Player, which is our digital cinema,” Tuttle said.

This year the festival will showcase 60 feature films from Britain and around the world, down from the usual 220 or so, but variety will not be sacrificed.

“What we’re trying to achieve is different voices, different perspectives,” Tuttle said. “There are over 40 countries represented in the programme, so it’s still an international programme but it’s also a celebration of cinema.” “UK cinema is also really, really important to us. It’s very vibrant.”

The festival opened on Wednesday with British filmmaker Steve McQueen’s “Mangrove”, which tells the story of a group of Black activists in London 50 years ago. It closes on Oct. 18 with “Ammonite”, a romantic drama written and directed by Francis Lee, starring Kate Winslet and Saoirse Ronan.

Worldwide, however, cinema is struggling commercially to survive after Covid-19 caused theatres to shut or

cut capacity, and major studios to postpone the blockbusters that rake in the cash. Later on Cineworld will temporarily shutter its 127 Cineworld and Picturehouse cinemas in Britain and 536 Regal theatres in the United States, blaming the reluctance of Hollywood studios to release films such as the new James Bond.

Oliver Meek, executive director of the independent Rio cinema in east London, said Hollywood’s response to the pandemic was a huge blow. “We build our programme as much as possible around the big hits,” he said.

“Whilst we have quite a diverse programme here and play a lot of independent films, we are reliant on three or four films a year to really hit big box office.” If the studios wait until life gets back to normal, he said, “there’s very sadly a strong chance that lots and lots of cinemas won’t be here to show those films”.

Tuttle said she hoped the industry would pull together to face the challenge. “We’re working collaboratively with cinemas around the country,” she said. “It’s a moment of resistance, of defiance.”



ROLI SRIVASTAVA

A police sting that busted a prostitution ring and triggered a back-and-forth in the courts has revealed a conflict in Indian law over a woman’s right to sell sex and a State’s right to stop her.

It all comes down to female choice, according to a landmark legal ruling last month that hands a rare victory to prostitutes in a land which affords women scant sexual freedom.

“You cannot rehabilitate anyone against their will. There has to be consent,” the women’s lawyer Siddharth Jaiswal told this correspondent.

The case began last year when a Mumbai court prevented three sex workers from leaving the protective home they were forcibly moved to after police rescued them from prostitution.

Despite their opposition, the court said they should be counselled against sex work, learn new skills and find fresh jobs. It said the trio needed State “care and protection”.

That order was overturned last month by the Bombay High Court, which upheld the women’s right “to choose their own vocation”, judgment campaigners say should help other adult sex workers break free from enforced protection.

“The consent of the victim is never taken before they are taken into shelters. The victim themselves are not aware of their rights,” said Jaiswal. “There has to be consent. It



becomes punishment otherwise.”

The case is key as India’s Immoral Traffic Prevention Act - applied in brothel raids and sex worker rescues - fails to distinguish between victims of trafficking and women doing sex work out of choice, lawyers and campaigners said.

Court says sex work is a woman’s choice

Adult sex workers rounded up by police are housed in shelters for 21 days for verification and medical tests, among other formalities, according to the law.

After the 21 days, courts can impose a further detention of up to three years, based on a woman’s family background and the circumstances that led them into prostitution.

“The belief is that no woman can take sex work by choice, that they are all trafficked... they infantilise adult women,” said Smrajit Jana, founder of Durbur

Mahila Samanwaya Committee, a collective of 65,000 sex workers in Kolkata. “But (the high court) did not confuse morality with livelihood... it distinguished between trafficking and sex work,” said Jana.

“It is very rare.” It took a year for the three women to win their freedom after they were rounded up for selling sex at a guesthouse in suburban Mumbai after police acted on a tipoff.

“We have come out with great difficulty,” one of them told the Thomson Reuters Foundation after her release last month.

The trio - all in their early 20s, two of them sisters - declined an interview request for fear of being identified and alienated from their extended families. The women said they were taken to a shelter, could see their parents and make a phone call home once a month. “We had thought we will be out in 21 days... but then we got a year,” one of them said. “We are relieved to be back with our family now,” she said. The mother of the two sisters said she hoped the order would help other women in shelters get out.

A 2018 study of about 250 adult sex workers found that about 80% returned to prostitution after getting out of a shelter.

It found many of the women had to take out loans to engage lawyers and help dependent families. Campaigners have mounted protests on behalf of sex workers and many have

tried to escape.

At the 100+ shelters in operation nationwide, thousands of women undergo mandatory counselling, as well as help with cleaning and cooking and learn skills if they so wish.

Only a few have access to legal help, campaigners said, and even fewer challenge their fate.

“Most don’t since they don’t have access to lawyers or resources to engage a lawyer. They end up staying in these homes,” said Tripti Tandon, executive director, Lawyers Collective, that takes up cases of marginalised communities.

Pramila Sharma of non-profit Kshamata records the testimonies of rescued women at eight shelters in Mumbai and explains how they can learn a skill during their lockdown.

The charity is among a host of non-profits that offer women training - be it in tailoring, beauty care, nursing or housekeeping - and has placed sex workers in related jobs.

“Nobody likes staying in a shelter. Everybody has the right, the choice to do what they want to, but then there is a big gap between what the high court has said and the societal mindset about women,” said Sharma, a senior field coordinator. “The society will not recognise women doing sex work as a right. Women are not allowed to think for themselves.” - (Thomson Reuters Foundation)

LOT launches festive offers

LOT Mobiles Private Limited, a leading player in mobile handsets retailing, announced attractive offers and discounts for the upcoming festive season. The mobile handset retailer has over 125 stores across Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

Under its Dasara & Diwali Dhamaka offer, the retail chain is rewarding customers with up to 6,000 cash points on every handset purchase. It also has on offer discount up to 65 per cent, and 10 per cent cash back on purchases made with debit and credit cards of major banks.

Besides, customers can save up to 50 per cent on mobile handset and television combo offers. The company is selling smart television sets at attractive prices



during this festive season. The retail chain is also giving large number of prizes during the festive season.

It is also offering free home delivery within 90 minutes for those who buy mobiles and other devices online.

Customers can also buy products by making payments in instalments. Under this, customers can take delivery of new mobile handset by paying Rs 1 through debit card. The remaining amount will

have to be paid in zero interest EMIs.

"Our Dasara & Diwali Dhamaka offers are receiving tremendous response from customers. We are offering a prize on every purchase," the company said.

LOT Mobiles has created a sensation in mobile devices retailing in South India. We have established all LOT showrooms with latest facilities. Latest accessories are also on sale at our showrooms, it added.

BRIJ KHANDELWAL

The bustling Fatehabad road and Taj ganj area that was till February wearing festive colours and reverberating with sounds of tourists flocking to the 17th century Mughal mausoleum, now looks like a ghost city.

Covid hit Agra's tourism industry hard. With months of lockdown and suspension of transport facilities, hoteliers and travel agents here are finding it difficult to go back to the old normal. Industry stake holders say not just opening up of flights and issuing of visas but a lot of impetus is required to bring back the lost charm.

"After the Taj Mahal and other monuments were shut down mid-March to stall the spread of the Coronavirus infection, lakhs of employees and tour agents are jobless. Unfortunately, the uncertainty continues with little hope for the early revival of the industry," says Surendra Sharma, senior industry leader, founder president of Agra Hotels and Restaurants Association.

The bigger hotels are now starting to reopen expecting the momentum to return in November when air connectivity will be restored and restrictions on mobility reduced.

"This has been a healing time for both, the monuments and the hotels which have been able to carry out major repairs and streamlining of facilities. But people who got their livelihood from these sectors have found making ends meet difficult," Sharma said.

Stakeholders in the tourism sector have appealed to the Prime Minister and the Union Finance Minister to consider a package and offer tax relief to bolster the sagging spirits of the



Covid hit Agra's tourism industry hard. With months of lockdown and suspension of transport facilities, hoteliers and travel agents here are finding it difficult to go back to the old normal

industry. "Tourism industry is the worst affected due to Covid pandemic and will surely be the last to recover," Sunil Gupta, Director of the Travel Bureau and Chairman IATO North. He hoped Narendra Modi would respond to the sector's appeal to save it from a collapse.

The industry which contributes approximately 10 per cent of the GDP, employing over 5 crore people, "is in shambles" rued Gupta as the loss of tourism business amounted to approximately Rs 15 lakh crores with 75 per cent job loss.

"In Agra, over 4 lakh people are dependent on tourism and number much greater indirectly," said Gupta. Tourism hubs of the city are totally deserted as most cafes, restaurants, small hotels, rooftop bars, tourist shops remain closed despite the unlock due as tourists are absent. The Taj Mahal was closed on March

17, and international flights and Visas were stopped - forcing a total shutdown of tourism activities in Agra.

"Now after seven months we all face the challenges of eking out a livelihood while we learn to live with Covid," says Gupta. "Since tourism is heavily dependent on foreign tourists it is urgent to start international flights and issue Visas online. So far we do not see any government help to this vital sector despite repeated requests from travel operators and agents including IATO (Indian Association of Tour Operators)," he added.

IATO has been continuously pleading with the Ministry of Tourism, Finance, Commerce, Niti Ayog, RBI, MSME, SEPC, etc but no encouraging response has so far come from these institutions.

"The IATO has now started a

"Postcard Campaign" to draw the attention of Modi, who has twice spoken about the importance of T for Tourism from the ramparts of Delhi's Red Fort.

"One lakh postcards are being sent by all affected including drivers, guides, taxi drivers, and their families," said IATO chairman.

"Tourism, the worst-hit sector due to the pandemic, is not reviving after the unlock although the hotels, restaurants, and monuments have been opened with proper SOP's in place to ensure the safety of tourists," said Rajiv Tiwari, a senior tourism industry leader in Agra, as well.

"Trains and domestic flights connecting tourist destinations are not fully operational. Due to this and due to fear of Covid-19, the domestic tourists are hesitating to travel. Only a few from nearby places mostly on weekends are travelling," Tiwari said. "International flights are not operating to/from India nor the Indian government is issuing tourist Visas hence we do not expect foreign tourists in near future in India since they plan their tours months in advance. It seems that tourism whose contribution to GDP of the country is nearly 10 per cent and is a job-oriented industry is not a priority with the government," he added.

Tiwari said all this is "badly affecting the livelihood of the people associated with tourism directly or indirectly. Guides, drivers, handicraft artisans are left hand to mouth. Hotels, travel agents, tour operators, emporia are at the verge of shutting down. The government should immediately help this industry by providing interest-free loans for a year, rebates in GST, waiving off fixed charges on electricity bills etc. "The operation of interna-

tional flights should start immediately and visas be issued to travellers. More importantly, all stakeholders have to create confidence in tourists that travelling in India is safe for tourists."

These are just some of the common points raised by a cross section of the industry.

The secretary of the Agra Development Foundation, KC Jain said: "Post-Lockdown, we need to take proactive initiatives to promote tourism in Agra. To begin with, daily full or half a day tours of the city should be started for tourists to enable them to visit lesser-known monuments like Mehtab Bagh, Etmadaulla (Baby Taj), Chini Ka Roza, Rambagh, Lal Taj Mahal, Dayalbagh Samadhi, Sikandara and Mariyam Tomb, in safe, sanitized air-conditioned coaches.

"Tours by private operators to the Taj Nature Walk, Soor Sarovar Bird Sanctuary (Keetham) with boating, Bear Rescue Centre, Elephant Rescue Centre, Chambal Safari, Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur). Such tours should be accompanied by nature guides to explain about the biodiversity, flora and fauna, butterflies, birds, native trees and shrubs, animals.

Live performances by local artistes at the heritage sites could be a big draw. Folk dances, raas leela, Krishan Leela, Holi, Mayur Dance, musical concerts, classical dances etc. at such places in the tourism zone like Shahjahan Garden, Taj Nagari Phase-2 Zonal Park, Taj View Point (near Mehtab Bagh), Taj Nature Walk etc. -- it would provide a wonderful opportunity to the visitors to witness the cultural heritage.

"Initially, some financial support should be extended to the local artist until the groups become self-dependent," Jain said. (IANS)

Bank credit offtake remains poor

Although the banks remain flush with liquidity and interest rates lowered significantly, credit offtake from banks was very low and "anaemic" during the first half of the current financial year (2020-21).

The low credit offtake can be attributed to the weak demand and persistent uncertainty amid the pandemic. "During H1 2020-21, bank credit offtake was anaemic, reflecting weak demand and uncertainty in the wake of the pandemic," showed the Monetary Policy Report for the October 2020 released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

It showed that non-food credit growth (y-o-y) was 5.1 per cent as of September 25, 2020, lower than 8.6 per cent a year ago, driven by weak momentum and base effects. It noted that the slowdown in credit growth was spread across all bank groups, especially foreign banks.

Credit growth of the public sector banks remained modest, although with some uptick since March 2020.

"Of the incremental credit extended by the scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) on a year-on-year basis (September 27, 2019 to September 25, 2020), 62.3 per cent was provided by the public sector banks and 41.2 per cent by the private sector banks, while the share of the foreign banks turned negative," said the report. The deceleration in non-food credit growth was broad-based, with credit offtake slowing down in all the major sectors. Though personal loans and credit to agriculture registered some improvement in July 2020, the momentum could not be sustained in August. Credit growth to services and industrial sectors has also tapered off after showing some promise in the Q1 of FY21.

Personal loans accounted for the largest share of total credit flow in August 2020, followed by services. While the share of personal loans, services and agriculture increased in August 2020 vis-a-vis the previous year, the share of industry contracted.



End users driving demand for homes

Among key sectors, residential real estate witnessing increase in sales

In the absence of a major fiscal stimulus from the government, it seems consumer demand is coming to the rescue of the economy, and residential real estate has been among the key sectors to witness a return of interest among home buyers after the lifting of the lockdown, with sales number increasing significantly.

Housing sales across the seven top realty markets doubled during the July-September quarter.

Data by PropEquity showed that sales or absorption of housing units increased by 104 per cent across the cities in the third quarter of 2020 to 50,983 units versus 24,936 units in the previous quarter.

Niranjan Hiranandani, the President of National Real Estate Development Council (Naredco) said that there is "definitely a revival". "Property registration data for the month of September says it all. Recovering from the effects of the pandemic-induced lockdowns, buyer sentiment is on the uptick," Hiranandani said.

He cited low interest rates and offers given by developers as reasons for the return of demand.

"The other side is, owning a house turning into a 'prime need' in the aftermath of the pandemic. Demand for spacious homes

Property registration data for the month of September says it all. Recovering from the effects of the pandemic-induced lockdowns, buyer sentiment is on the uptick

- Naredco president Niranjan Hiranandani



with additional flexi space has registered a surge, especially in the 'ready to move in' category. The incentives by the Government of India for first time home buyers have had a positive effect," said Hiranandani.

Not just sales, supplies also increased during the July-September quarter. The new supply or launches of housing units also increased by 126 per cent during the same period to 38,131 units from 16,808 units in Q2 2020 as developers launched several projects post the lockdown, as per PropEquity.

As a result of the rise in sales, the inventory declined to 2 per cent to 7.96 lakhs. Delhi NCR witnessed 295 per cent home

sales growth in Q3 2020 versus Q2 2020 while other cities including Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, MMR and Pune clocked 86 per cent, 131 per cent, 159 per cent, 89 per cent, 70 per cent and 72 per cent growth respectively. Anuj Puri, Chairman, Anarock Property Consultants said that the revival in the housing segment is being driven primarily by end-users.

"There are several reasons - property rates have remained stagnant for almost seven years now and if we take into account the inflation rate, the prices have corrected significantly across all the micro markets. Home loan interest rates are at a 15-year low," he said. Arvind Nan-

dan, Managing Director for Research & Consulting at Savills India, however, is of the view that it would be too early to draw a conclusion on the revival of the market at this point.

He noted that while potential homebuyers can be seen gradually coming back to the market since the unlock, "it would be premature to conclude as demand revival".

Nandan said that the real estate market's recovery could take time till mid-2021. He also said that demand is likely to be focused on suburban and extended suburban projects.

The increase in demand is not just evident in the residential segment as the commercial

space too has witnessed an uptick. India's office market witnessed a net absorption of 5.4 million square feet in quarter ending September 2020 (Q3), an increase of 64 per cent versus quarter ending June 2020 (Q2), as per data from JLL Research.

The third quarter office rebound growth was led by Bengaluru and Hyderabad, which together accounted for nearly 80 per cent of the net absorption in Q3 2020. The heightened activity in Bengaluru indicates a gradual resurgence in take up of spaces coupled with the translation of pent up demand from Q2 this year.

"While we continue to see the impact of the pandemic on various businesses, there is a significant surge in activity across most office markets under consideration. This is seen in gross leasing which more than doubled from the previous quarter at 13.8 million sq ft," Ramesh Nair, CEO and Country Head, India, JLL.

At the same time, it is important to note that large and mid-sized occupiers across major markets continue to review their real estate portfolios in a bid to optimise cost, higher emphasis is being given on sustainability and employee well-being as well as adoption of flexible working practices, he said.

RBI policy, US stimulus hope to strengthen rupee

ROHIT VAID

The Reserve Bank's accommodative policy along with a likely US stimulus package are expected to strengthen the Indian rupee in the short run.

Additionally, fund inflows channelled towards stock markets and corporate deals will be other factors for the rise in the rupee's value, cited analysts. However, the upcoming US elections along with

domestic macroeconomic inflation data might dampen sentiments.

"The policy outcome had a knee-jerk reaction on the USDINR spot and dropped close to the strong support zone of 73. With the optimism over the US fiscal stimulus deal, we expect a corrective leg towards 72.75 zones in the USDINR spot," said Rahul Gupta, Head of Research-Currency at Emkay Global Financial Services.

Fund inflows channelled towards stock markets and corporate deals will be other factors for the rise in the rupee's value, cite analysts



"However, the downside is limited as we head towards the US election and that there could be plenty of political uncertainties down the road. So

for next week, we expect the USDINR spot to trade within 72.75-73.50 levels." Last Friday, the Reserve Bank made an expected move by retain-

ing key lending rates, but cheered investors and home buyers by giving a liquidity boost and an optimistic outlook. The RBI said it will resort to on-tap long-term repo operations and open market bond purchases to ensure liquidity in the banking system. It has also eased capital requirements on home loans to spur lending to the real estate sector. "The aggressive accommodative policy of the Central bank supported

bond and rupee. The weakness in dollar index, stronger domestic equities and foreign fund inflows altogether backed rupee gains," said Devarsh Vakil - Deputy Head of Retail Research at HDFC Securities. "For next week US fiscal stimulus negotiations and opinion polls of the US presidential election will drive the currency markets. Spot USDINR is having resistance at 74 and support at 72.90 for the next week."

QUIZ NO. 143

HANS BIZ QUIZ

Theme: World Mental Health Day

1. It is no secret that mental disorders cause untold human misery. 10% of the world's population is affected and that 20% of children and adolescents have some mental disorder. Mental disorders account for what % of non-fatal disease burden worldwide?
a) 48% b) 41%
c) 32% d) 26%

2. The global cost of lost production amounts to more than 10 billion days of lost work annually. The lost economic output caused by untreated mental disorders as a result of diminished productivity at work, reduced rates of labour participation, and increased welfare payments. What is the value of the total global cost of the lost production per year?
a) \$20 trillion b) \$12 trillion
c) \$8 trillion d) \$1 trillion

3. 75% of people still use terminology associated with stigma and prejudice to describe mental illnesses. As per the World Health Organization, how much money do the low- and middle-income countries spend on treatment and prevention of mental disorders?
a) \$1 to \$2 per person
b) \$5 to \$7 per person
c) \$10 to \$15 per person
d) \$25 to \$50 per person

4. This circular relationship between mental disorders and poverty creates a cycle that leads to ever-rising rates for both mental disorders and poverty. What is the global cost of mental disorders estimated to be in 2030?
a) \$6 trillion b) \$12 trillion
c) \$18 trillion d) \$24 trillion

5. Low- and middle-income countries bore 54 per cent of the global cost of mental disorders in the past decade, and by 2030, the rate is projected to reach 58 per cent. What was the global cost of mental disorders in 2010?
a) \$1.5 trillion b) \$2.5 trillion
c) \$4.5 trillion d) \$7.5 trillion

6. There is also significant evidence showing that social conditions associated with poverty create stress and



trigger mental disorders and that the labour insecurity and the health care costs associated with mental disorders, in turn, move many people into poverty. What is the current estimate of global median expenditure on mental health?

a) \$17.5 per person b) \$12.5 per person
c) \$5.5 per person d) \$2.5 per person

7. Curing all depression and anxiety disorders in a country would boost GDP by what percent?
a) 0.5% b) 2%
c) 4% d) 6%

8. The proportional contribution of mental disorders in India to the total disease burden has almost doubled since 1990. One person in seven Indians suffers from mental illnesses. What was the budget allocation for the National Mental Health Programme for 2019-20?

a) Rs 40 crore b) Rs 240 crore
c) Rs 740 crore d) Rs 1400 crore

9. According to the Indian Journal of Psychiatry, what is the cost that the Government of India incurs for the complete implementation of the Mental Healthcare Act 2017?

a) Rs 14000 crore b) Rs 24000 crore
c) Rs 44000 crore d) Rs 94000 crore

10. Failure to treat mental disorders can be a significant contributor to impoverishment at the household level and diminished economic growth and social wellbeing at the national level. As per the research, for every \$1 put into the treatment for common mental disorders, what is the return in improved health and productivity?

a) \$2 b) \$4
c) \$8 d) \$11

The Hans Biz Quiz has been compiled by **Sunil Dhavala**, CEO, The Third Umpire Media. He had held senior management roles at Bertelsmann, NGC, Fox Broadcasting, Star TV and others. He is an alumnus of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade

KEY

10 2D 3A 4A 5B 6D 7C 8A 9D 10B



Paris (IANS): World no.1 Novak Djokovic survived a fightback from fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in their French Open semi-final to book a title clash against the rampant Rafael Nadal. Djokovic beat Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-2, 5-7, 4-6 in a match that lasted three hours and 54 minutes. This was the fourth time in Djokovic's career where he was taken to five sets in the semi-final stage at Roland-Garros.

A double break helped Djokovic take command of the second set and a late break in the third saw him serve for the match at 5-4.

Tsitsipas clung on though, saving a match point before breaking his opponent to draw level, finally converting a break point for the first time in the whole contest, on his 11th opportunity. Djokovic saved set point in game 12 but a sensational Tsitsipas down-the-line forehand winner saw the 22-year-old break again to force a fourth set.

Tsitsipas claimed a fifth game in a row to leap to a 2-0 advantage in the fourth set. But that just prompted Djokovic to snatch the momentum right back as he drew level. From 40-15 up, Djokovic got broken in the 10th game on a netted drop shot attempt to

enter a deciding set against Tsitsipas.

He was quick to reverse the momentum in the fifth. Djokovic raced to a double-break lead in the decider and wrapped up the win in three hours and 54 minutes.

"Credit to him (Tsitsipas) for fighting back. He just played terrific tennis, especially in the fourth set when he was facing break points... He's a fighter. He's one of the best players in the world... There was a lot at stake for him," said Djokovic after the match as per the ATP Tour website.

"He was motivated to try to turn the match around, which he did very well. But in the end I think he ran out of gas. That's when I stepped it up, used my opportunities when they were presented in the fifth and closed out the

match in a great fashion," he added.

Djokovic is chasing an 18th Grand Slam title while Nadal is chasing his 20th.

"I was definitely not pleased with the way I played the finishing stages of the third and fourth sets, but I was very pleased with the way I kept my composure mentally throughout the entire match," said the world number one. "I did feel that even though I lost the third and fourth, I still felt like I was the better player on the court. I had more control. I just felt comfortable playing," he added. Djokovic will now play 'King of Clay' Rafael Nadal in the summit clash. Djokovic owns a 29-26 head to head advantage against the Spaniard, but Nadal has won six of their seven meetings at this event.

TELANGANA STATE JUNIOR REGATTA

Preethi proves her mettle on day two

Hyderabad: After the storm on Friday the weather on Saturday was extremely light, fluky but yet challenging with huge wind shifts.

Telangana State Junior Regatta is the first major sporting event happening with participants from all across India. As many as 56 participants are competing in various categories and the event is scheduled to conclude on Sunday.

Only one race could be sailed on day two, and Preethi Kongari of Medak led from start to finish and completed the race with just one minute to spare but with a huge lead.

Preethi from Government College Marredpally has just graduated from the Sub Juniors and is all set to win the State Junior Championships on debut leaving the more experienced Jaikiran Bolli and Majji Lalitha behind.

Jaikiran trailing in last position climbed back to fourth, thanks to the shifty winds, leaving him in 2nd position overall in Group A qualifiers.

No more sailing was possible as the wind dropped to zero knots.



Overall tally at the end of racing in Group A on day two are as follows

1. Preethi Kongari	4 Points
2. Jaikiran Bolli	9 Points
3. Teja Kethavath	14 points
4. Ravali Parandi	15 points



KKR snatch two-run thrilling win over KXIP

Abu Dhabi (IANS): Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) on Saturday snatched victory from the jaws of defeat against Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium. Defending a target of 165, KKR conceded just 13 runs and took three wickets in the last two overs to win the match by two runs.

KXIP were cruising for much of the chase thanks to a 115-run opening stand between captain KL Rahul and Mayank Agarwal and were 143/1 at the start of the 18th, needing just 22 to win off 18 balls. Sunil Narine (2/28) however conceded just two runs and took the wicket of the dangerous Nicholas Pooran (16) after which Prasidh Krishna (3/29) took two wickets, including that of Rahul (74) and conceded just six in the 19th.

It left KXIP needing 14 to win off the last over but that Narine bowled. Glenn Maxwell (10) hit a four off the second ball and took a single to bring the deficit down to seven needed off the last two balls.

However, Mandeep Singh (0) holed out at deep midwicket which left Maxwell with having to hit a six off the last ball to take the game to Super Over. He



almost went all the way, hitting the ball over cover but it landed just in front of the boundary and the umpire declared four.

Earlier, KKR captain Dinesh Karthik finally found form with the bat as he smashed 58 off 29 balls to take his side to 164/4 against Kings XI Punjab.

It was Karthik's first half-century in the ongoing IPL season, while Shubman Gill (57) too raced to his second fifty of the tournament.

Brief scores: KKR 164/6 in 20 overs (Dinesh Karthik 58, Shubman Gill 57; Arshdeep Singh 1/25) vs KXIP 162/5 in 20 overs (KL Rahul 74, Mayank Agarwal 56; Prasidh Krishna 3/29).

TODAY'S MATCH

Sunrisers Hyderabad vs Rajasthan Royals at 3.30pm
Mumbai Indians vs Delhi Capitals at 7.30pm

Miandad concerned about future of cricket in Pakistan

Lahore (IANS): Former Pakistan captain Javed Miandad has expressed his concern regarding the future of country's cricket, saying the foundation of the sport has been ripped out and replaced which, according to him, does not happen anywhere in the world.

"I do not want to intrude in the workings in the PCB. Whatever the board is doing, time will clear if it is right or wrong. I hope things turn out well," Miandad said on Friday as per Cricket Pakistan.

"In the last 20 years, cricket has not been played the way it is being played currently. Throughout the world, they never change their foundation in the way cricket is played. They fine-tune it," he added.

Miandad, who played 124 Tests and 233 ODIs for Pakistan, further said throughout his career he played his cricket with dignity.

"I played cricket with dignity. Everyone knows that. Even if people don't agree with that, I don't care. People give me love and respect which is my income. People here are envious and hypocritical. Every player is like a kid and I wish them the best of luck," he said.

Our batting needs to click, says Steve Smith

Sharjah (IANS): Following their fourth consecutive loss in the ongoing Indian Premier League (IPL) season, Rajasthan Royals skipper Steve Smith has admitted that their batting has not been up to the mark and that's something which they need to address in order to bounce back in the tournament.

On Friday, Rajasthan suffered a crushing 46-run defeat against Delhi Capitals. They did well to restrict

Delhi Capitals to 184/8, presumably a below-par score at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium. However, the batters could not rise to the occasion and all the team could manage was 138 before being bowled out in the 20th over.

"It's been difficult four games for us. We've not been able to get in the performances under pressure and that has hurt us. We bowled and fielded well for large parts of the game against Delhi and that's a positive for

us," said Smith as per a release issued by the franchise.

"Our batting needs to click for us, we have not been able to get a good start in our four games and the top four just haven't been able to score a lot of runs in games, which has been detrimental for us and we'll have to address that and try to bounce back from this situation," he added.

The Rajasthan captain further called on his team, currently lying at

the seventh spot in the points table, to come out with their "best show" against SunRisers Hyderabad in their next game scheduled to be played on Sunday in Dubai.

"The games are coming in thick and fast so we need to adjust quickly and put on our best show against a strong Sunrisers team who've got a good overall team, we'll have to be at our very best to beat them," the 31-year-old said.



Rabada continues to hold Purple Cap, Orange stays with KL

Sharjah (IANS): Kagiso Rabada consolidated his numero uno position in the list of leading wicket-takers in the ongoing Indian Premier League season following the conclusion of the 23rd IPL 2020 match between Delhi Capitals and Rajasthan Royals which the Shreyas Iyer-led side won by 46 runs. On Friday evening, Rabada returned with figures of 3/35 in his 3.4 overs and in the process took his tournament tally to 15 to hold onto the Purple Cap. He is followed by Mumbai Indians' Jasprit Bumrah, who has 11 wickets in six games. Bumrah's teammate Trent Boult is third on the list with 10 wickets from six matches.

Meanwhile, Kings XI Punjab captain KL Rahul continues to hold onto the Orange Cap, having scored 313 runs in six games. He is followed by Chennai Super Kings' Faf du Plessis who has 299 runs to his name from six games. Kings XI opener Mayank Agarwal is third



IPL betting racket busted, 17 held in south Delhi raid

New Delhi (IANS): Seventeen persons were arrested on charges of gambling and betting, including on IPL cricket matches, in south Delhi's Devli village, Delhi Police said on Saturday.

Those arrested during late night raid on Friday were found betting on the cricket match between Delhi Capitals (DC) vs Royal Chal-

lengers Bangalore (RCB) during the IPL Season 2020 and gambling through various other methods like charts and playing cards. The betting module used six sets of walkie-talkies to communicate and keep a tab on the movement of police.

Mobile phones, TV sets with DTH connection for viewing live cricket matches, a wireless

Internet router, Rs 81,000 in cash, 10 decks of playing cards, five gambling charts and gambling chips were seized from the accused.

"Three persons were tasked to check the scores of cricket matches and inform betters for revising rates of betting, while others were into gambling and betting through various other means," DCP South Delhi Atul Thakur said. A case under Sections 3, 4, 9, and 55 of the Delhi Public Gambling Act, 1955 was registered at the Neb Sarai police station.

Looking forward to host many more big tourneys at Kalinga Stadium: HI

New Delhi (IANS): The Kalinga Stadium has completed a two-year milestone since being refurbished for the Hockey men's World Cup held in Bhubaneswar in 2018. Before the World Cup, both practice and main turfs were re-laid with new blue turf as per the FIH specifications. The capacity of the main stadium was increased to 15,000. Two new galleries, one on north and other on the south side, were added to the iconic venue, making it a total of four grand stands.

The opening of the refurbished Kalinga Stadium was marked with an exhibition match between hockey legends Dhanraj Pillay and Dilip Tirkey's teams on October 10, 2018.