



# THE HANS INDIA

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## WINDOWS



People buy 'Bhut Jolokia', or Ghost Pepper, at a vegetable market in Guwahati, Thursday. It is said to be one of the hottest pepper in the world.

## Jawahar Reddy to take over as TTD EO on Oct 9

**Tirupati:** Special Chief Secretary to the AP government Dr KS Jawahar Reddy will be the new Executive Officer of the Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams. It may be mentioned here that EO Anil Kumar Singhal was transferred to the Health department as Principal Secretary on Wednesday evening. Jawahar Reddy is known for effectively handling corona pandemic by introducing many reforms in the Health department. Reddy is likely to take over as the TTD EO on October 9. Sources said that Reddy had chosen October 9 as the date to take charge since there were many issues that need to be explained to his successor Anil Kumar Singhal in the wake of the present corona crisis.

## BUSINESS



**Mfg sees fastest growth in 8 yrs** **P6**

## NATION



**Jungle Raj in UP has no limits: Cong on Balrampur rape case** **P3**



## GANDHI JAYANTHI TODAY



As India celebrates 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi today, a child in Gandhi's costume seen walking on the Tank Bund in Hyderabad on Thursday. Photo: Adula Krishna

## Ready to fight even with God to protect farmers: KCR

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** Declaring that he would not mind fighting even with 'God' to protect the interests of agriculture and farmers in the state, Chief Minister K Chandrababhu Naidu said that they would make a powerful presentation rebutting the arguments of the neighbouring Andhra Pradesh regarding objections raised on projects like Kaleshwaram, Palamuru Rangareddy lift scheme and other projects. The Chief Minister, who held a crucial meeting on Thursday with senior officials, is learnt to have finalised the strategy and the presentation to be made during the meeting of the apex council on October 6. **Continued on Page 5**

# High drama as cops detain Gandhis

UP cops take Rahul, Priyanka back to Delhi ■ BSP demands Yogi's resignation

**New Delhi:** There was high drama on the Yamuna Expressway outside Greater Noida on Thursday as Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra tried to travel to Hathras and were detained by the police. They were on their way to meet the family members of the 19-year-old Dalit woman who died on Tuesday, days after being allegedly gang-raped and brutally assaulted by four upper caste men.

The Uttar Pradesh Police stopped the Gandhis and Congress workers from proceeding ahead in their vehicles, following which Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi got off their cars and started walking on the road amid sloganeering from Congress workers.

The police tried to stop them from moving ahead and later detained them under preventive custody. Rahul Gandhi fell on the ground as he was pushed by the cops during a scuffle who tried to stop him and others. He later said the cops lathi-charged him and pushed him to the ground. "In the times of sorrow, loved ones are not left alone. The state of Jungle raj is such in UP that meeting a family in mourning also scares the government. Do not be so much afraid, Chief Minister!" Rahul Gandhi posted on Twitter on Thursday.

**Continued on Page 5**



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi slumps after police personnel allegedly manhandled him while he was on his way to Hathras

## 'INDIA A HOLY LAND, NOW A LAND OF RAPISTS,' OBSERVES MADRAS HC

**Chennai:** The Madras High Court on Thursday commented that the holy 'Bharathabhoomi' (India) has now turned into "a land of rapists" where a rape occurs every 15 minutes.

The court was hearing a case relating to migrant labour filed by advocate A P Suryaprakasam. At that point the advocate pointed to the rape of an Assamese migrant

worker in Tiruppur district.

"I had pleaded with the court to provide shelter and care for the affected woman and to direct the Director General of Police to set up a special investigation team headed by Inspector General, Coimbatore. I had also prayed to the court to direct the government to provide her with financial assistance under the

victims' compensation scheme," Suryaprakasam said.

While granting all his prayers, the court observed that "Bharathabhoomi", a holy land, has now become a land of rapists, where a rape occurs every 15 minutes.

Six persons had allegedly raped a 22-year-old migrant worker from Assam in Tiruppur district.

## After Hathras, another woman raped, killed in UP

**Balrampur:** Even as the embers of the Hathras incident continue to smoulder, yet another incident of a Dalit woman being gang-raped and killed in Balrampur district has taken place. According to reports, a 22-year-old Dalit college student was raped and brutalized in the Gaisari village of Balrampur on Tuesday. Two persons have been arrested in connection with the crime. The woman, a second-year B Com student, had gone to a college in a nearby town to pay her fees on Tuesday. According to the family, she also worked in a private firm. The girl did not return home till late in the evening and the family made several attempts to contact her on her phone. Later in the night, the woman reportedly came home in a rickshaw in a semi-conscious state. She had a cannula injected in her forehead which indicated that she had undergone treatment. **Cont'd on Page 5**

**NCW grills UP police over hurried cremation** **P5**

## SC directs refund of air tickets during lockdown

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Thursday directed refund of air tickets, domestic and international, for travel during the COVID-19 lockdown period from March 25 to May 24 within three weeks from the date of the cancellation of flights.

Accepting the Centre's proposal, the top court directed that if the tickets have been booked through an agent for travel within the lockdown period, in all such cases full refund shall be given by the



airlines immediately and the amount shall be passed on immediately by the agent to the passengers.

It said, if on account of financial distress, any airline/airlines are not able to refund then they shall provide

credit shell, equal to the amount of fare collected, in the name of the passenger when the booking is done either directly by the passenger or through a travel agent so as to consume the same on or before March 31, 2021.

It is open to passengers either to utilise such credit shell up to March 31, 2021 on any route of choice or transfer the credit shell to any person, including the travel agent concerned, and the airlines shall honour such a transfer, the

top court said. A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, R Subhash Reddy and M R Shah said the suggestions and formulations arrived at the meeting held by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MCA), Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), which are acceptable to majority stakeholders.

The top court's verdict came on a batch of petitions, including by NGOs and passengers' associations, seeking complete refund of ticket fare for the flights cancelled.

## GoM to pitch for release of IGST dues from Centre

**Hyderabad:** The Group of Ministers looking after Integrated Goods and Service Taxes (IGST) have agreed to recommend to the Union Government to release IGST dues to the state. Telangana State Minister for Finance T Harish Rao on Thursday, during a virtual meeting with the GoM, urged the Centre to release Rs 25,058 crore which has been pending for long.

**Continued on Page 5**

## CINEMAS TO REOPEN FROM OCT 15

## Shares of multiplex operators zoom up

**New Delhi:** Stocks of multiplex operators PVR and INOX Leisure on Thursday jumped up to 18 per cent after the Union Home Ministry issued new guidelines for the opening of cinemas, theatres and multiplexes with up to 50 per cent of their seating capacity from October 15.

Shares of PVR zoomed 14.99 per cent to Rs 1,395 on the BSE.

INOX Leisure shares jumped 17.63 per cent to Rs 318.20 on the BSE.

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday issued new guidelines for permitting more ac-

tivities in areas outside containment zones that include opening of cinemas, theatres and multiplexes with up to 50 per cent of their seating capacity from October 15.

In a statement, it said the activities permitted from October 15, in areas outside the containment zones include cinemas, theatres and multiplexes that can open with up to 50 per cent of their seating capacity, for which the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) will be issued by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

**POLITICKLE by MANJUL**



**HOW THINGS APPEAR...**



**HOW THEY ARE...**



## Legislation in US Senate to boost clean energy ties with India

**Washington:** A top Democratic senator has introduced a legislation in the US Senate to establish a forum for cooperation with India on clean energy technologies and energy transmission.

Introduced by Senator Robert Menendez, a ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Prioritising Clean Energy and Climate Cooperation with India Act seeks to establish the US-India Clean Energy and Power Transmission Partnership (CEPTP) as the main forum for cooperation between the two nations on clean energy technologies.

The activities under the CEPTP include promoting joint research and development on clean energy technologies, encouraging US private investment in the Indian clean energy market and supporting initiatives to develop new and renewable energy generation capacity in India.

The legislation also promotes US-India cooperation on climate resilience and risk reduction, a statement said.

"Given the shared threat of climate change and India's growing need for electricity, there is a strong case to be made for



strengthening the US-India clean energy partnership," Menendez said.

"In that vein, I am introducing this legislation having witnessed firsthand the positive results that come when our nations work as a team to tackle common challenges," he said.

It also sought America's participation in the International Solar Alliance led by India which is playing a key role in mobilising significant international investment in solar energy.

**Continued on Page 5**

## Air India One, equipped with missile systems, lands in Delhi

PURNA SINGH

**New Delhi:** The long wait for 'Air India One' for India's VIP fleet is over. 'Air India One' aircraft has arrived at the Delhi International Airport. The first of the two 'Air India One' aircraft purchased for the President, Vice President and Prime Minister arrived in India on Thursday evening.

The aircraft was scheduled to be delivered by aircraft manufacturer Boeing to Air India in July but its delivery was delayed twice – once in July for a few weeks due to COVID-19



pandemic and then in August for a few weeks due to technical reasons – Aviation ministry officials said.

Air India One is equipped with an ad-

vanced missile defence systems and secured communication systems that allow availing audio and video communication functions mid-air without

any worries of hacking or being taped," sources familiar with the details said.

The aircraft B-777 is a replacement of wide-body

aircraft Boeing B-747 jumbo aircraft whose call sign is Air India One. The interior design of the aircraft is very attractive, which was modified recently by Boeing, apart from other customisations.

"The aircraft has a big suit/cabin for the VIP, a mini medical centre has also been set up in the aircraft. It also has a standard space for the press. The rear seats are of the Economy class category while the rest of the seats are Business class. B777 aircraft can fly over 17 hours continuously," informed

the sources.

Air India pilots will also be a part of the aircraft operating team till the IAF pilots gain expertise in handling the variant. Air India Engineering Services Limited (AIESL) will take care of the maintenance of the aircraft. The new aircraft will be operated fully by IAF pilots in due course of time.

The colour of Air India Boeing 777 had been totally changed including changes to the design of the aircraft as per the recommendations and further approval by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).



# Womenia

TWEET PATROL



**MALLIKA SHERAWAT**  
@MALLIKASHERAWAT

Congratulations dear  
@SonuSood , so well deserved  
& so inspiring



VASAVI KALERU

Hyderabad-born actress Swathi Deekshith's special entry into the popular reality show BigBoss4-Telugu on Thursday has surprised the audience. Her predictions seem to be absolute when we compare with the ongoing situations in the house that within four days of her entry, the actress has to face nomination for eviction.

Swathi says, "I am really glad to be a part of BigBoss season 4. I received the opportunity to participate in Big Boss last two years, but I could not make it because of health issues. I hope this is the right time to meet my audience and I am expecting their love and support in the game show. I'm all ready to entertain them with my special entry."

Swathi Dheekshith is presenting a neck-to-

neck competition with the inmates of the house. As a Telugu speaking actress, Swathi is confident that she would gain much love from the Telugu fans with her amazing role play in the reality game show.

Swathi made her remarkable entry to television screen with 'Andamaina Bhamalu', a television show in 2009 and nailed the title. However, she was first noticed by the audience with her debut as an actress in Bengali movie "Tor Naam" in 2012. Later, Swathi presented her debut in Tollywood Industry with the movie "Breakup" and the elegant actress created her own style and fame by sharing screen with Allari Naresh in Jump Jillani.

She acquired a breakthrough after being a component throughout Ram Gopal Varma's horror movie Patta Pagalu, but the movie was not launched. In 2017, Swathi made her

Tamil debut with the movie titled 'Sathura Adi 3500'. Within no time she bagged her second Tamil movie titled "Simba" along with Bharath.

At present the actress is busy shooting for a prominent web series and now she has made some of her time to meet the audience breaking her regular routine through Bigg Boss 4.

"It was very difficult for me to take my father's role, I never imagined that I would lead my life without my father's guidance. I am independent and always used to make my own decisions, I have made mistakes, but I don't regret at all as I take it as learning experience for become a better person. I

was cheated, I was mistreated and of course after my father's demise, I see myself as a responsible person, fearless, and confident," says the actress.

Swathi was offered female lead role for Rx100 Movie but she signed off from the project after

shooting for a week as she felt uncomfortable doing a role not suiting her personality and character. "For me comfort and self-respect are more important than money and fame. I respect my family, so want to do things which they feel proud of," she ends.

## Swathi makes surprising entry into Big Boss

### SWATHI SHARES HER EXCITEMENT BEFORE SHE ENTERING THE BIG BOSS HOUSE AND PREDICTS ABOUT A FEW ENEMY AND FRIENDLY CONTESTANTS

## How to keep your skin healthy in changing season

PUJA GUPTA

The COVID-19 pandemic has left everyone to take precautions to avoid the spread. This means that it has become imperative for everyone to wear a mask no matter where they're headed to but there is a problem. Excessive use of face mask may not be good for your skin and one may develop acne. Maskne is one of the biggest skin conditions caused by the constant use of mask.

Maskne is a type of acne that usually appear in areas covered by the mask and also the parts of the face where the mask and face shields touch the skin. Mask is to essentially

protect your nose and mouth from catching bacteria by trapping the air you inhale and exhale. This phenomenon teamed up with the sweat makes it the perfect atmosphere for bacteria to take home on your skin.

The moisture soaked up under the mask makes it favorable for bacteria to toy around on the layers of your skin. Adding to this is the sweat that helps the bacteria in clogging the pores and hence causing acne.

Plabita Sharma, The Body Shop Expert shares ways to prevent Maskne and keep your skin healthy during changing season.

#### Change your mask regularly

Make sure to wear masks that do not trap the sweats. The use and throw medical masks work the best and help prevent skin issues. Masks with multiple layers of cloth will only store more bacteria. Even if you use those, make sure to rinse them thoroughly with soap and water after every use.

#### Wash your face

Use a gentle cleanser that is free of fragrance and oil and rinse with lukewarm water. Avoid over-washing your face to prevent dryness and inflammation of skin. If you have dry skin, a creamy brightening face wash is ideal to use at least once a week. If you have oily, acne-prone skin, then a gel-based face wash is going to be a savior for your skin.

#### Toner Tales

The skin toners you use will determine how your skin fares this season. Make sure to avoid any harsh skin toners that contain alcohol. Use natural toners that contain ingredients like tea tree, Aloe Vera, cucumber etc.

#### Apply Moisturiser

Invest in a rich moisturiser with hyaluronic acid and ceramides. Apply moisturiser during the day as well as at night, or whenever your skin feels dry. Refrain from oil-based moisturisers and use water-based moisturizer, ones that do not clog the

pores. Not only will this keep your skin hydrated, it will also act as a barrier between your face and your mask, reducing friction

#### Skip the makeup

Avoid makeup if you can. Powder and cream products both will mix with the sweat and clog pores which is something we absolutely do not want.

If you cannot avoid make up, micellar water is a good idea to remove the makeup

#### Use Spot Correctors

They can treat acne lesions. Gel correctors or even acne patches can help control your acne. If you don't have any of those items, try tea tree oil or clove oil on the pimple and see how the acne reduces.

#### SPF is a must

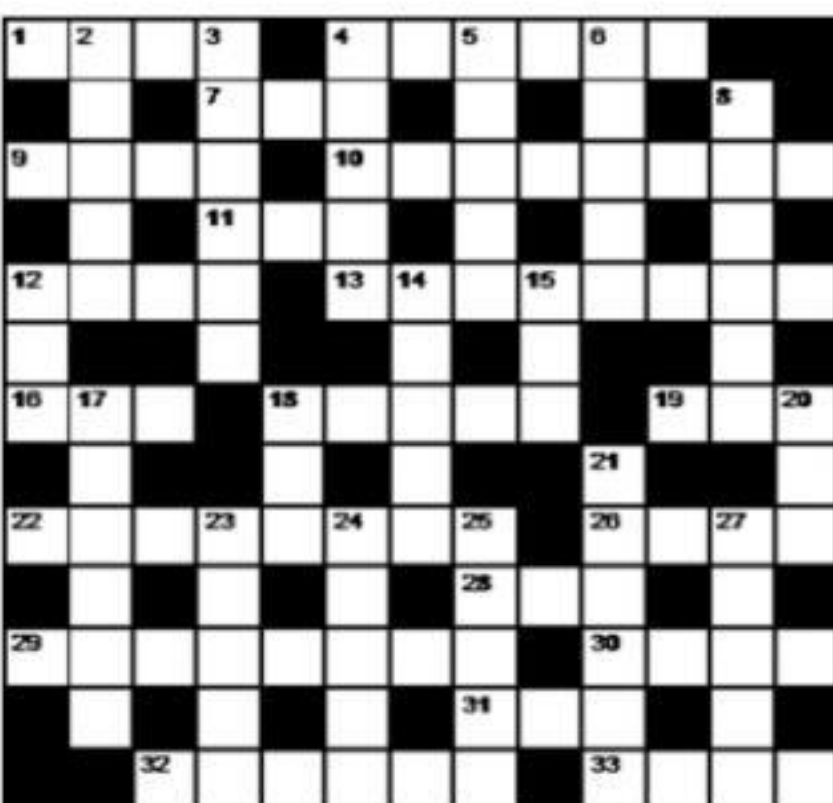
A rainy or cloudy day doesn't mean your skin is safe from the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. Use a good sunscreen every day to avoid any skin problem.



## Styling & fashion tips for women over 30

Before you begin contemplating all that you possess or experience your closet, look at a portion of these design tips and tricks on what you should 'forget and forgive' and what you should confidently replace them with, in your 30s. Prepared to enter the adult universe of style and investigate the stunning choices in garments for ladies in their 30s? Here is the list...

- Replace bright colours with lighter colours like pastel pink, white, lavender or aqua blue. Such hues look sleek and smooth and will assist you with including the ideal style remainder in your look. Wear them with brilliant lipsticks and you'll wind up looking unpretentious yet hot simultaneously.
- Go for Sheath and move dresses - which complement your curves, perfectly and serenely! Be it a brunch, formal occasion or an evening gathering, nothing talks more exquisitely than this style statement.
- It's time to 'button' it up with chic shirts. They make you look savvy and perfect, and prepared to take on the world. You can either fold them inside your pants or a pencil skirt or pair it up with a cheeky little coat.
- Go for flare it up with splendid, Anarkali Kurti dresses. Pair them with a clear dupatta or beautification studs.
- You can never have enough high-abdomen pants in your storeroom. They'll go with pretty much every adornment or top and look stylish AF.
- Pencil skirts and blouses. 'Cause let's face it. No matter how sexy you may look, it's always better to opt for something more sophisticated and glamorous. Plus, pencil skirts are so flattering on our curves.
- Say goodbye to those extremely ripped/distressed jeans. Opt for double-shaded jeans and pair them up with colourful tops for a sweet and sassy look.
- Maxi dresses or colourful kaftans should be your new best friends in summers. They're loose, figure-flattering and look absolutely beautiful!
- Comfortable pumps and platform heels. Not only do these 'complete' every outfit perfectly but make you feel 10 times more confident.
- Nothing seems classier than a good-quality, handbag. It adds the perfect little charm to your overall look and a hint of sophistication.



SOLUTION TO OCTOBER 1

### CROSSWORD

#### Across

- Computer screen symbol (4)
- Not perfectly circular ? (6)
- Counterparts of "downs" (3)
- Movie (4)
- Everlasting (8)
- Cricket sundry (3)
- Bamboo stalk (4)
- Now Zimbabwe (8)
- A dog's foot (3)
- Mendacity (5)
- Vitality (3)
- Gossips, grapevines or rumours (8)
- Coil (4)
- Mentalist Geller (3)
- Indistinct (8)
- A state of mind (4)
- Centre of a wheel (3)

- Top Florentine family (6)
- Pace (4)

#### Down

- Porcelain (5)
- Quantity (6)
- Willow (5)
- Midway state (5)
- Care for (5)
- Pacific island (6)
- Drinking vessel (3)
- Pilose (5)
- Excavated (3)
- Summits, top points (6)
- Fleur-de-\_\_\_\_ (3)
- Head of hair (3)
- Mounts, ascends (6)
- Path (5)
- Garlic-flavoured mayonnaise (5)
- Japanese rolls (5)
- Atmospheric layer (5)

### SUDOKU



SOLUTION TO OCTOBER 1

### NEWS ROUNDUP

## KAJOL'S QUIP: 'IS IT OCTOBER ALREADY?'

Actress Kajol cannot believe it is October already, going by her social media post on Thursday.

"Is it October already? Right, anytime now you will wish me Christmas too!" went Kajol's witty caption on Instagram, tagged #TheYear2020

The note came with a close-up still she posted from the 1997 blockbuster "Ishq". She was paired opposite Ajay Devgn in the film and the couple would subsequently get married two years later. The film also starred Aamir Khan and Juhi Chawla.

A couple of days ago the actress had shared tips on how to get the perfect picture. "Now pose candidly and smile! There you have your perfect picture," Kajol wrote as the caption.

The 46-year-old star will soon make her digital debut in "Tribhanga", directed by Renuka Shahane.





# SC: Covid-led eco slowdown no ground to deny proper wages to workers



**New Delhi (IANS):** The Supreme Court on Thursday said the burden of economic slowdown cannot be put on workers alone, who are the backbone of the economic activity, and quashed the Gujarat government notification exempting factories from paying overtime wages to the workers. A bench headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud said the court is aware of the financial hard-

ships faced by the factories, amid the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and also due to the lockdowns. However, this economic slowdown cannot burden the workers, and the ongoing pandemic cannot become a potent reason to override the statutory provisions providing dignity and the right to proper wages to the workers. The top court noted that the statutory rights of workers

should not have been done away by the Gujarat government, as the pandemic is not an internal emergency threatening the security of the country. The apex court order came on a plea challenging the notification of the Gujarat Labour and Employment Department, which granted exemptions to all factories in Gujarat from provisions of the Factories Act, 1948, relating to daily working hours,

weekly working hours, intervals for rest and spread-overs of adult workers, and even from the duty to pay overtime wages at double rate as fixed under section 59 of the Act. The plea contended that April 17 notification "is patently illegal, violative and unnaturally unjust of various fundamental rights, statutory rights and labour laws." The plea has been filed by the

Gujarat Mazdoor Sabha, a registered trade union, and others through advocate Aparna Bhat. The plea contended that the notification granted exemption from the provisions of the Act for the period from April 20 to July 19, 2020. A bench of Justices D.Y. Chandrachud and K.M. Joseph took up the plea through video conferencing and issued notice after a hearing.

# Jungle Raj in UP has no limits: Cong on Balrampur rape case

- 'Hathras-like incidents won't be tolerated in Maha'
- Impose President's Rule in Uttar Pradesh: Mayawati
- BJP MP Hans Raj Hans seeks action against officials

**Lucknow:** The "jungle raj" that has spread in Uttar Pradesh has no limits and the time for accountability is now, the Congress said on Thursday as a Dalit woman in the state's Balrampur district died after being allegedly raped by two men. Several Congress leaders, including former president Rahul Gandhi, reacted to the two incidents.

Alleging that "atrocities" on women and the government's brazenness is continuing, Rahul Gandhi said, "Did not give respect when alive and also snatched the dignity in death." His tweet in Hindi referenced the Hathras gangrape victim's family being allegedly denied the right to properly perform her last rites. "BJP's



slogan is not 'save girl child', it is 'hide facts, save power'," he added, using the hashtag 'Balrampurhorror'. Gandhi was referring to the Centre's scheme 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao'. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Congress general secretary in-charge of UP, said a gruesome

incident like Hathras has taken place in Balrampur too. "The jungle raj spread in UP has no limits. Law and order is not run by marketing and speeches. This is time for accountability of the Uttar Pradesh chief minister. The public wants accountability,"

Priyanka Gandhi added. Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray on Thursday said that Hathras-like incidents will not be tolerated in the state and those indulging in crime against women would be dealt with severely. His statement comes amid a nationwide outrage over the death of a 19-year-old Dalit woman from Uttar Pradesh's Hathras on Tuesday, days after she was raped by four men on September 14.

Raising questions on the law and order situation in Uttar Pradesh, BSP chief Mayawati on Thursday demanded that the leadership should be changed or president's rule be imposed in the state.

Delhi BJP MP Hans Raj Hans demanded that the Uttar Pradesh government led by his party leader Yogi Adityanath take "strict action" against officials responsible for the hasty cremation of the Hathras gangrape victim.

## Woman's body found stuffed in box

**Gorakhpur (PTI):** The body of an unidentified woman was found stuffed in a box lying in the Maniram area in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur district on Thursday, police said. The police said there was no visible injury marks on the body of the woman, who is believed to be in her early 30s. She was wearing a red dress and put on vermilion and bindi on her forehead.

"Prima facie, it seems that the

woman was killed somewhere else, and her body stuffed in a box and thrown at Gholhawa embankment in the Maniram area," Superintendent of Police (North) Arvind Pandey said. "There is a tattoo on her hand. Some clothes, medicines and a "mangalsutra" were found in a packet inside the box. It seems that it is a case of domestic violence and she was strangled to death," he said, adding that the matter will be clear after post-

mortem and investigation. Efforts are on to ascertain the identity of the woman, the police officer said. In another shocking incident, a woman was found hanging in her house along with her three kids at Dibiyaapur area of Aurraya district in Uttar Pradesh. According to the police, the bodies were found hanging with a saree from a hook in the room at their house on Thursday afternoon.

## India's tally over 63L, recoveries nearly 53L

**New Delhi (IANS):** With a spike of 86,821 coronavirus cases and 1,181 deaths in 24 hours, India's tally on Thursday mounted to 63,12,584 cases. Out of the total cases, 9,40,705 are currently active, 52,73,201 have been discharged, while 98,678 lost the battle against the viral disease. While the recovery rate stands at a whopping high of 83.53 per cent, the fatality rate has come down to 1.56 per cent, the data from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said.

Maharashtra continues to be the worst-hit with a total of 13,84,446 cases, including 36,662 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 14,23,052 sample tests in a single day on Wednesday, taking the total number of samples tested so far to 7,56,19,781.



### Congress treasurer Ahmed Patel tests +ve

**New Delhi (IANS)** Congress treasurer Ahmed Patel has tested positive for Covid-19 and he has asked all those who came in close contact with him to isolate themselves and get tested. "I have tested positive for Covid-19. I request all those who came in close contact with me recently to self isolate," Patel tweeted.

The Congress leader was recently seen in the concluded Parliament session where he was seen opposing the farm Bills in Rajya Sabha.

Earlier, Vice President and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha Venkaiah Naidu had also tested positive.



### 'Super-spreaders' main reason for spike in cases'

**New Delhi:** The transmission of COVID-19 in India has been driven mainly by super-spreaders a study by the largest contact tracing study in the country has revealed. The study has also claimed that children have been a key factor in the virus' spread throughout the country.

Researchers have found that over 70 per cent of COVID-19 infected patients in the country did not infect any of their contacts, while 8 per cent of infected individuals accounted for 60 per cent of observed new infections.

Half-million people were studied and it was found that both cases and deaths due to the disease have been more heavily concentrated in the 40-69 year age group. The researchers also found a high prevalence of infection among children.

The study, published in Science journal on Wednesday, assessed the disease transmission patterns in 5,75,071 individuals exposed to 84,965 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh based on data collected by tens of thousands of contact tracers.

According to the scientists, the findings offer a peek into the pandemic's trajectory. The study noted that contacts with the same age were associated with the greatest infection risk-- a pattern, which the researchers said, was strongest among children between 0-14 years of age, and among adults older than 65 years. They said the proportion of deaths to the number of infected people, known as the case-fatality ratio (CFR), spanned 0.05 per cent at ages 5-17 years to 16.6 per cent at ages exceeding 85.

Follow-up testing of exposed contacts revealed that 70 per cent of infected individuals did not infect any of their contacts, while 8 per cent of coronavirus positive patients accounted for 60 per cent of observed new infections.

The researchers said this finding presents the largest empirical demonstration of super-spreading, which is when an unusually large number of individuals are infected by few other people. They said the findings "may indicate the identification of less-severe infections through active case-finding."



## Japan's 'Twitter killer' eliminated 9 people with 'consent'

**Tokyo:** A Japanese man dubbed the "Twitter killer" for luring his victims on social media admitted in court to murdering nine people, local media said.

But lawyers for Takahiro Shiraishi, 29, argued the charges should be reduced because the victims -- who had expressed suicidal thoughts -- gave their consent to be killed.

Shiraishi, who is also accused of dismembering his victims and storing body parts in coolboxes, did not contest nine counts of murder, saying they "are all correct", public broadcaster NHK reported. He is also facing rape charges, according to media reports.

Shiraishi is accused of using Twitter to contact victims aged between 15 and 26 who posted online about taking their own lives, telling them he could help them in their plans -- or even die alongside them.

If convicted of murder, Shiraishi faces the death penalty, which is carried out by hanging in Japan.

But his lawyers want the charges against him reduced to "murder with consent", which carries a prison sentence of between six months and seven years.

In an interview with the Mainichi Shimbun daily, Shiraishi said he disagreed with his lawyers and would tell prosecutors that he had "killed without consent".

"There were bruises on the back of the victims' heads. It means there was no consent and I did it so that they wouldn't resist," he said in comments published on Wednesday.

Shiraishi was detained three years ago by police investigating the disappearance of a 23-year-old woman who had reportedly tweeted about wanting to kill herself.

After she went missing, her brother apparently gained access to her Twitter account, and noticed a suspicious handle.

Police uncovered a grisly house of horrors behind Shiraishi's front door on the morning of Halloween in 2017.

Nine dismembered bodies, with as many as 240 bone parts stashed in coolers and toolboxes, had been sprinkled with cat litter in a bid to hide the evidence.

Shiraishi told the Mainichi Shimbun he "didn't plan on getting caught" and boasted of not being identified until his final killing.

## Rahul to hold tractor rallies across Punjab from Oct 3

**Chandigarh (IANS):** Joined by Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi will lead tractor rallies across Punjab from October 3 to 5, in protest against the Centre's recently enacted farm laws, party sources said on Thursday. All Punjab Ministers and Congress MLAs will participate in the protest rallies, along with AICC General Secretary in-charge of Punjab affairs, Harish Rawat, and state president Sunil Jakhar, to give voice to the angst and pain of the farmers, whose livelihood and future has been put at stake by the central legislations, the party said.

The tractor rallies, expected to be supported by farmer organisations across the state, will cover more than 50 kms, spread over three days in various districts and constituencies, according to a Punjab Congress spokesperson. The rallies are scheduled at around 11 a.m. on each of the three days, and will be conducted amid strict Covid protocols. On the last day, October 5, the protest will enter Haryana, for a series of programmes there.

## Assam recruitment scam: BJP leader Deka surrenders

**Guwahati (PTI):** BJP leader and one of the prime accused in Assam police recruitment scam, Diban Deka, has surrendered before the police in the state's Barpeta district.

Deka, who, along with former DIG PK Dutta, had been absconding since the scam came to light, surrendered on Wednesday night in Pathacharkuchi area, a police officer said.

He has been brought to Guwahati for further interrogation, the officer said.

Examination to recruit unarmed sub-inspectors was cancelled on September 20, minutes after it began, as the question paper was found to have been leaked on social media.

Over 20 people have been arrested in this connection.

State Level Police Recruitment Board (SLPRB) chairman Pradeep Kumar subsequently resigned on September 27 taking "moral responsibility" for the leak.

Police had issued look out notices and announced an award of Rs one lakh each for any information which could lead to the arrest of Deka and Dutta.

The former DIG is yet to be traced and it is suspected that he was holed up somewhere near the India-Nepal border.



## 3 soldiers killed in Pak shelling

**Srinagar:** Three soldiers of the Indian army were killed and five others injured in separate incidents during heavy shelling by Pakistan along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir. The army said a fitting reply is being given to Pakistan, which is using mortars to target Indian positions. There is no clarity on whether the Pakistan army has suffered any casualty.

The unprovoked ceasefire violation started on Wednesday night with firing of small arms and intense shelling of mortars in the Mankote and Krishna Ghati sectors,

a defense spokesman said. The two soldiers were killed and four others were injured when Pakistan army started firing mortars in Nowgam sector of Kupwara district in North Kashmir on Thursday morning. The injured persons are being evacuated, the spokesman said. Earlier, a soldier was killed in Poonch sector and another was injured after Pakistan army violated ceasefire and started heavy firing on Indian positions. Over the last five days, Pakistan has been targeting villages in Poonch in which some livestock were injured on Tuesday.

## FILMMAKER KASHYAP QUESTIONED

**Mumbai:** Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap was questioned in a rape case filed by an actor last week. The Producer-Director has called the allegations that he raped the actor at his house in 2013 as "baseless" and said he intends to take legal action in the matter. His lawyer Priyanka Khimani is also at the police station. The summons was issued after the actor met Maharashtra Governor BS Koshiyari along with Rajya Sabha MP and Union Minister Ramdas Athawale seeking Kashyap's arrest. She had questioned the "delay" in arresting Anurag Kashyap and said she would resort to a hunger strike if no



action is taken.

On Monday, while addressing the media with Minister Athawale, the actor had said she is facing a threat to her life and demanded Y-plus security. Athawale, who has backed the actor's demand for Kashyap's arrest and security cover, said his party RPI(A) would protect her.

The actor had recently accused Kashyap of forcing him-

self on her in 2013. According to the actor, he had named three other actors as being "just a call away." In response, she claimed to have told Kashyap, "You have given a chance to Richa Chadha, Mahie Gill, Huma Qureshi... they are so nominal looking girls. Generally, directors don't give them chance but you have done a great job. But I am not mentally prepared for this right now (sic)."

The filmmaker has issued a statement through his lawyer stating that he was "deeply pained by the false allegations of sexual misconduct that have recently surfaced against him".

# September accounts for 41.53 per cent of total Corona cases in country

PAYAL BANERJEE

**New Delhi (PTI):** September accounted for 41.53 per cent of the total COVID-19 cases in the country, with 26,21,418 infections of the over 63 lakh cases being reported in the month alone.

The past month also saw 33,390 deaths due to the disease, which is around 33.84 per cent of the total 98,678 deaths recorded so far.

September witnessed 24,33,319

people recuperating from coronavirus infection contributing to around 46.15 per cent of the total 52,73,201 recoveries registered so far in the country.

India is at number one position in terms of the number of recovered coronavirus cases followed by Brazil and the US, according to the Johns Hopkins University, which has been compiling COVID-19 data from all over the world.

India is the second worst hit nation

in terms of COVID-19 cases after the US, while it is in the third spot in terms of fatalities globally after the US and Brazil, according to the JHU data.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16 and crossed 60 lakh on September 28.

It took 110 days for the COVID-19 cases in the country to reach one-

lakh mark, while it had taken 59 days more to go past the 10-lakh post. The cases jumped from 10 lakh to 20 lakh in 21 days, then it took 16 more days to race past 30 lakh, 13 days more to cross the 40-lakh mark, 11 days to go past 50 lakh and 12 days to cross 60 lakh.

According to the Union Health Ministry data updated at 8 am on Thursday, India's COVID-19 cases mounted to 63,12,584 with 86,821 infections being reported in a day, while

52,73,201 people have recuperated so far from the disease pushing the recovery rate to 83.53 per cent.

The death toll due to COVID-19 climbed to 98,678 with the virus claiming 1,181 lives in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 7,56,19,781 samples have been tested up to September 30 with 14,23,052 samples being tested on Wednesday.





## From Hindustan to Rapistan!

By the time you are reading this, a 100 more women may have been raped in the country justifying once again the sobriquet it has earned: 'Rapistan'. And Uttar Pradesh would have topped the list after compilation of these reports. Most among these would be the hapless dalits in this land of "Yogi". Whole nation was left benumbed after "Nirbhaya" - a name given to the victims of sexual violence proudly by our shameless rulers in 2012. - and we thought a new law by the name would be a deterrent. How wrong we were!

It seems every underprivileged woman born in this country is entitled to be a 'Nirbhaya'. Because no one cares for them. Society watches silently when they are teased, harassed, kidnapped and raped. A few in the country hold candle light vigils for those who die anonymously (because they are only named Nirbhaya, Dishas etc) and are deprived of final rites. If

we think it happened in Hathras in UP now for the first time, we are again wrong. We don't know what name would be given to her, but she is not the only one to be done away with from not only the public gaze but also from that of her kin.

Remember Nirbhaya? When her body came back from Singapore, her parents were forced to agree for the final rites by the authorities in the early hours of the day before the world woke up. Of course, the 'high command' of the Congress was present at Nirbhaya's house to convince the family to fall in line. What happened in Hathras is no different. These women all go the same way.

India reported 4,05,861 cases of crimes against women in 2019 and Uttar Pradesh topped the list with 59,853 such incidents, according to the annual National Crime Record Bureau's "Crime in India" 2019 report released recently. From 2018, the rate of crime against women has risen by 7.3 per cent, with the country recording an average 87 rape cases every day in 2019. Assam reported the highest rate of crimes against women at 117.8 per lakh population.

"Majority of these cases under the Indian Penal

Code were registered under 'cruelty by husband or his relatives' (30.9 per cent) followed by 'Assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty' (21.8 per cent), 'kidnapping and abduction of women' (17.9 per cent)," the NCRB data for 2019 showed.

The crime bureau data also showed a significant rise in cases of crimes against children. From 2018, crimes against children have gone up by 4.5 per cent in 2019. A total of 1.48 lakh cases of crime against children were registered in 2019. Of these, about 46.6 per cent were cases of kidnapping and 35.3 per cent cases were related to sexual offences.

Uttar Pradesh also had the highest number of crimes against girl children under the POCSO Act with 7,444 cases, followed by Maharashtra (6,402) and Madhya Pradesh (6,053). The NCRB collected data from 36 states and Union Territories and 53 metropolitan cities. The Home Ministry said West Bengal did not share its latest data and its 2018 data has been used to arrive at national and city-wise figures. Who knows, we may even be asked to celebrate a booming candle-making industry under the "Atma Nirbhar" programme in future!

# Farmers shouldn't worry about MSP and get misguided

KAILASH CHAUDHARY

Farmers shouldn't worry about the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for their crops as new farm laws will not affect procurement operations carried out by the government agencies. Farmers are 'Anndata' who produce grains to feed 130 crore people of the country, and betterment of 'Anndata' is the priority of Modi government. Therefore, they should not be misguided on the issue of MSP.

The country realises the importance of farmers in the extraordinary situation of Covid-19 pandemic as India is food surplus state today by the virtue of their efforts and the government could start the program of free distribution of food during this difficult time as there was sufficient foodgrains in the government's vaults.

Interest of farmers are paramount in all the decisions of Modi government because this government is of the firm view that if a farmer is prosperous than country will also be prosperous. After coming to power, Modi Government has implemented recommendations of Swaminathan Commission on MSP so as to ensure that farmers get more than 50 per cent benefit with MSP for the costs of their crops.

Due to the efforts of Modi government, record purchase of wheat on MSP was done even during the Covid period. Besides, government has purchased pulses and oilseed crops of the farmers on MSP with reasonable price. During this Kharif season, purchasing of grains have started before time whereas purchasing of some crops on MSP will begin from October 1.

With a view to provide better price for the crops, all efforts are being made by the government and with this purpose, reform programs in agriculture sector through new laws are being implemented. This government has a target to double the income of farmers by 2022 and the government will not take any step which will create hurdle in the prosperity of grain growers.

The Modi government has brought overall changes in agriculture sector during Corona time with the intention of economic freedom and prosperity of the farmers and has taken three important decisions. It also brought three ordinances which were presented as legislations in the Monsoon session of Parliament and with the signature of President Ram Nath Kovind, these legislations have become law.

This will not only help in fulfilling the dream of Modi govern-



ment to develop 'one country, one market' for the marketing of agricultural products but will also pave the way to recognise agriculture as an industry. Now farmers will be able to decide the prices of their crops. Under these circumstances, they need not to worry about MSP.

The MSP of wheat, Sorgham, green gram, niger and coconut has increased from Rs 525 to Rs 4,800 per quintal from 2014-15 to 2020-21. Similarly, MSP of other crops has also increased significantly during the tenure of Modi government.

The Central government has increased the number of purchase centers to make arrangements for the purchase of Rabi season crops during Corona time. As a result, record purchase of wheat could be made and huge increase in purchase of other crops was also observed. During last Kharif season, government agencies had purchased 389.85 lakh tonne wheat directly from the farmers which is now a record level for which farmers were paid Rs 75,000 crore. As against the purchase of paddy during 2014-15, there was an increase of about 80 per cent during 2019.

Central government has been continuously working in the interest of farmers. Including wheat, grain, pulses and oilseeds, an amount of Rs 2,19,234 crore as MSP was paid to farmers during 2020. This amount is 120 per cent more as compared to the amount paid during last year. As such, during last year, a total amount of Rs 99,653 crore was paid.

MSP of the crops is required to be paid to farmers in case the farmers are not getting fair price of their crops. But, when a farmer himself will decide the price of

his products, then there is no need to worry about MSP. The people raising doubts on the intention of Modi government on MSP are just misguiding the farmers to safeguard their vested political interests. Therefore, the farmers need not get misguided. The Government of India led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has framed three ordinances related to agriculture only with one objective - that is to bring the happiness in the life of farmers.

When the Government of India has taken effective steps to handle the complicated situation of infection of coronavirus in the country, the harvesting season of Rabi crops was going on and it was the season of sowing summer crops.

Therefore, sowing, harvesting, transportation, marketing of crops have been kept free from complete lockdown by the government but due to the closure of commodity mandis operated by the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC), farmers faced the problems. They were not able to sell their crops.

In these circumstance, through the ordinance, the government fulfilled the dream of farmers "one country one agricultural produce market" by giving farmers the freedom to sell crops anywhere and to anyone in the country.

When storage, transportation, processing along with value addition, series facilities of corps will be better, the farmers will get better prices of their crops.

Today, only 22 scheduled crops have been identified for MSP, while government desires that farmers of the country should get better prices of all agriculture and horticulture crops. Only for this purpose,

decades old laws (Essential Commodities Act 1955) has been amended and such ordinances have been framed under which farmers can sell their produce anywhere in India without any hurdle. Also, farmers will be confident of getting the price even before farming. For this provision of contract farming has been made. Under this provision, the farmer will get assured price at the time of sowing crops and they will also get additional price, if any, at the time harvesting. It will be an agreement of the crops, but not of the agriculture land of the farmers.

Grains, pluses, oilseeds and edible oils including potatoes, onions, tomatoes have been removed from the list of essential commodities by the amending Essential Commodities Act 1955. Now private investors will come forward for storage, processing and value addition of these agriculture produces for which farmers will get better and beneficial prices of their produces.

Often it is observed that prices of horticultural produce in the market yards, of their area of cultivation are very low, while fruits and vegetables sell at high prices in the consumer markets. In fact, the chain from producer to consumer has many middlemen in between who earn heavy profits while farmers get lower prices for their produce. The government has brought these legal changes to remove middlemen from supply chain, as a result of which the farmers can now sell their produce directly to wholesale traders, retail traders and processors. This will ensure fair and remunerative prices to the farmers for their crops.

Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020 is a histori-

cal decision of Modi Government. As per this act, farmers have got freedom to sell their crops to anyone, anywhere in the country which was not the position earlier. Earlier, farmers had to remain dependent on aadhtiyas and traders in the markets, run under Agricultural Produce Market Act. Bids were called for their crops. Is there any system of bids for sale of any industrial product? Perhaps not. Because prices of industrial products are pre-determined and right to fix the prices lies in the hands of the industrialists. Companies fix prices of their products, then why should prices of farmers' produce be fixed by some middleman? Prime Minister Narendra Modi realised this problem of the farmers. After coming to power, Modi has taken a series of farmer's friendly decisions, for their progress and prosperity. The laws introduced for reforms in Agriculture and Allied Sector are in the interest of farmers.

Those who are terming them as a step towards benefiting corporate and private capitalists want to politicise this issue, as they are left with no issue for taking political mileage. Those people, who are claiming that Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance Act, 2020 will be beneficial to the corporate sector, should know that Modi government has set a target of formation of 10,000 Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs) in the country. In fact, this will enable farmers participation from stage of producing crops to marketing them, meaning thereby that the producers will be the sellers also. These decisions will undoubtedly attract private investments and direct foreign investments also and biggest beneficiaries of this decision will be farmers.

In the first term of Modi government itself, MSPs of several crops were increased while implementing recommendations of Swaminathan Committee. While fixing MSPs, Swaminathan formula is being followed. This government has implemented 200 out of 201 recommendations of Swaminathan Committee which were awaited for years. Those who are misleading farmers on the issue of MSP, their governments did not show any interest in implementing the recommendations of Swaminathan Committee. So there is no need to be misled in the matter of MSPs. MSPs are there to last forever.

**(The author is the Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare. The views expressed are his personal).**

row also rewarded by any promotion or not?

Narayan Hari, Chandigarh

## Future of cinema halls

The Government of India on Wednesday issued new guidelines for reopening of cinema halls under Un-lock 5.0. They have been asked to function with 50% seating capacity. Since at the end the decision of the CMs will matter and hence it would be interesting to see how many states approve for it. Multiplex operators are trying really hard to open up the cinemas because of the growing losses due to COVID. Also, another problem will be that of content as all the films that were ready and complete for the release, have now been acquired by OTT platforms. So, the future of talkies cinema still remains uncertain.

Anushka Rawal, Ujjain

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## A vision document for World Telugu University

PROF K YADAGIRI

The Telugu University Came in to being on December 2, 1985 as a symbol of resurgence of Telugu arts and culture, due to the vision of the then Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao.

Telugu University (Hyderabad) is 35 years old now. Its main objectives were the comprehensive development of our sacred Telugu language, fine arts, culture and its sciences, but such a university never registered a proper growth following the exit of NTR from political power. The later governments never paid due attention to the development of the university.

Telangana State emerged as a separate entity 30 years later under the dynamic leadership of KCR. Following KCR's emergence as the first CM of Telangana State, Telangana language, literature and culture found a new impetus. The entire Telangana region began to cherish the vibrant culture of the land in several diverse forms for the first time under the forward looking leadership of KCR.

Drawing inspiration from the visionary leadership of KCR, Telangana poets, writers and its artists began their march in the direction of the development of Telangana in the sphere of Telangana culture, fine arts, language, and literature. It had been possible for the cultural ambassadors of Telangana to organise a World Telugu Conference in Hyderabad in 2017 under the unique leadership of CM KCR. Such an excellent conference organised in Hyderabad acted as a catalyst for an integrated and comprehensive development of Telangana culture.

CM KCR spent money lavishly on the conference and succeeded in drawing the attention of the people and artists of Telangana with in Telangana and the Telangana Diaspora scattered all over the world. The conference registered instantaneous success due to the broad vision and large heartedness of KCR. The people of Telangana all over the world realised for the first time that they have a great CM, dedicated to the revival of the submerged values of Telangana in every field of activity, particularly in the areas of Telangana folk songs, fine arts, language, its dialects, literature and particularly revival of Batukamma festival, unique to Telangana.

Telugu University located in the heart of Hyderabad city looks up to KCR for the revival and renaissance of Telangana culture in all its manifestations in the context of the growth, development and transformation of the present Telugu University as a world Telugu university. Let me spell out some of my views.

1. The Very nomenclature and contours of the present Telugu University need to be drastically changed under the able leadership of KCR. The University needs to be transformed as a symbol of the glory reflecting the pride and the ancestry of the people of Telangana, on the lines of the World Telangana Conference organised under KCR's leadership in 2017. The nomenclature of the Telugu University could be renamed either as World Telugu University or as International Telugu University.
2. The Telugu University could be named after the great poets of Telangana like Mahakavi Pothana, Palkurki Somanatha, Mallinatha Suri (resident of Medak) or Vidyaranya swamy (resident of Warangal), who epitomise Telangana Pride and its grandeur of the by-gone times.
3. The University needs to expand its scope and its activities by making necessary amend-

ments to the Telangana Education Act to changes its nomenclature as the World Telugu University.

4. Financial Resources are like oxygen to any institution for its maintenance and its autonomy. Let me suggest the following measures for strengthening the financial resources of the Telugu University

a) Revival and reconsideration of the existing resources of the University.

b) Several Telugus in the diaspora all over the world could be enrolled as affiliate members of the Telugu University on a permanent basis for strengthening the financial resources of the University. Funds can be raised from various Indian State governments, where with overwhelming Telugu population and the resourceful Telugu people in these states. An MoU could be reached with all these governments, groups of Telugu people and individuals.

c) Donations may be collected from the resourceful industrialists and rich individuals residing in Telangana, and other states and countries who are known for their interests in developing the rich Telangana Cultural Heritage.

d) Funds could also be collected from several central agencies like the UGC, ICHR, CSIT, CIL, Central Sahitya Academy etc, by organising seminars, programmes, workshops and publication of books.

e) Funds could be sought from FOSSIL for strengthening various folklore -ballads, song recitals and performance of folklore.

f) Funds can be sought from the Central government for the promotion of fine arts like music and various dance forms including tribals.

g) Programmes in distance education in Telugu need to be accessible to the admirers and lovers of Telugu culture outside Telangana, and all such programmes should be conducted competently for enhancing funding for the Telugu University.

h) Telugu language certificate programmes need to be organised for those interested in the Telugu Language outside Telangana and the non-Telugu officers serving the Telangana state for the purpose of rising funds for the Telugu University

i) Publication of a monthly magazine meant for the promotion of Telugu language and culture such a magazine needs to be published every month regularly. At least one lakh magazines should be published every month and sold to several institutions and individuals for rising funds for the university.

j) Strengthening financial resources through the sale of books published by the Telugu University.

Raising financial resources for the Telugu University is an important activity. However, yet another significant activity is to promote Telugu Culture and its language throughout the world where there are clusters of Telugu people in any part of the world. Actually this can be done a little more imaginatively.

Just as the Telugu Akademi attained financial self sufficiency by acquiring Rs. 400 crore through various means, Telugu University can also explore such avenues for obtaining an amount of Rs. 500 crore in a similar fashion in the direction of having a surplus money for which several measures have been suggested in this note.

**(The author is Former Director, Telugu Akademi)**

## LETTERS

### Questionable judgement

The September 30 CBI special court verdict is historic, surprising and controversial. It reminds one of the popular saying in Telugu, roughly it is "nobody eats food but nothing remaining in the vessel". Similarly the demolition occurred but all are acquitted. These types of judicial proceedings certainly erode the dignity of the judicial system in India. Further the common people will come to conclusion that anything is possible in UP by taking incidents like arrest and harassment of Doctor Kalif Khan and latest gang rape at Hathras.

Pratapa Reddy Yaramala, Tiruvuru

II

A special CBI court giving a clean chit to BJP leader Atul Advani, former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh and 30 others in the Babri Masjid demolition case citing lack of credible evidence may bring a

sigh of relief to the saffron leadership but made many question its credibility. The CBI had relied on newspaper evidence and video cassettes but pointed out their originals were not produced for authentication. The court also observed that the late VHP president Ashok Singhal wanted to save the structure because Ram idols were inside. Is the verdict a travesty of justice or otherwise?

N J Ravi Chander, Bengaluru

III

This demolition incident was a well-planned conspiracy that the mob of people would attack the mosque only and only because the BJP was doing politics in the name of Ram temple and not Hindu and Muslim. In Advani's Rath Yatra, the matter of building a temple instead of a mosque was being spoken everywhere. Yet on what basis does the CBI consider this incident to be a sudden incident and acquit the accused. Now the thing to look forward will be that, like Ranjan Gogoi, does the judge who announces decision tomorrow



# Village Sectts put paid to graft in govt services: Peddireddy

- Minister Peddireddy asks people to clap at 7 pm on Friday to compliment their services
- Says 4 lakh unemployed youth were employed at once with this scheme
- At the rate of 1 for 50 houses, 1,93,006 village volunteers and 68,913 ward volunteers were appointed

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Vijayawada:** Panchayat raj and rural development minister Peddireddy Ramchandra Reddy appealed to people to clap at 7 pm on Friday (October 2) outside their houses to compliment the services of the village and ward volunteers for completing one year of the service.

While addressing the media here on Thursday, the minister said, "The secretariat system is helping people to receive the welfare schemes at their



Minister for Panchayat Raj Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy flanked by principal secretary Ajay Jain and Panchayat Raj secretary Girija Sankar addressing the media in Vijayawada on Thursday

doorsteps. It was unprecedented that four lakh unemployed youth secured jobs at a onceand nowhere in the country were such steps taken".

The minister said that the village secretariats are providing 543 civic services to people without giving any scope for corruption. The Union Cabinet secretary complimented the efforts of the state government in providing services to people.

Recalling the appointments, he said that 1,93,006 were appointed as village volunteers, 68,913 were appointed as ward volunteers at the rate of one volunteer for every 50 houses and 1,26,725 were appointed as secretaries in secretariats throughout the state. In spite of the pandemic, the village and ward volunteers continued their services without a break.

Referring to the NREGA

works, the minister Ramchandra Reddy said that a target was set to provide 30 crore work days to the people in rural areas under National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. In the financial year of 2020-21, the was target set to provide 21 crore work days and already 20.80 crore work days were provided by now. The officials are planning to provide 28 crore work days by March this financial year, he said.

# Galla Aruna resigns from TDP, likely to join BJP

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Tirupati/Amaravati:** Former minister and TDP leader Galla Aruna Kumari resigned from TDP politburo member post and party primary membership on Thursday. She reported to have sent her resignation letter to party president N Chanrababu Naidu.

According to her close associates, Galla Aruna is going to join the BJP with support of party national leader Daggubati Purandeswari. She is said to be trying to meet party president J P Nadda in New Delhi.

But Aruna said that she tendered her resignation due to personal reasons. She said that she did not have any grievance in the party or with the leaders. "I have decided to resign as I am not able to bear the burden of discharging political duties at present," she informed the party chief. She also added that since the party has been appointing the leaders in the general body, Politburo and other commit-

- Denies any grievances in the party, cites personal reasons for her decision

- Sources say Purandeswari is making efforts to take her into saffron party

- Originally from Congress, she contested as TDP candidate in Chandragiri in 2014 but lost and was inducted into party politburo in 2018



tees, she felt that it was an appropriate time to inform the TDP supremo of her decision.

Her son Jayadev is TDP Lok Sabha member from Guntur constituency. Aruna Kumari's resignation is a major setback to TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu in his home district Chittoor. The Galla family is a well-known industrial family and has good relations with people in a few Assembly consti-

ties like Tirupati, Chandragiri, Plamaneru, Putalapattu and Chittoor.

Aruna Kumari, who was in Congress earlier, worked as minister in both K Rosaiah and N Kiran Kumar Reddy governments. She joined TDP before 2014 elections and contested from Chandragiri Assembly constituency but lost. She was appointed as politburo member in 2018.

# Jagan ignores Roja on Chittoor

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati:** Has Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy checked Nagari MLA R K Roja in the appointments to the BC Corporations in the state?

Going by the YSRCP sources, the answer seems to be yes. The fact that K J Shanti has been appointed as a chairperson of the Eediga Corporation in Chittoor district is said to have not gone down well with the Roja.

The KJ group (former Municipal chairman K J Kumar as its leader) of the YSRCP has been at loggerheads with Roja Selvamani for a long time.

The tussle between the two is well known and it is rumoured that the group worked against Roja's interests in the elections in the local bodies polls too. In fact, the group is re-

## APPOINTMENT TO BC CORPORATIONS

- Appointment of K J Shanti to Eediga Corporation said to have irked the Nagari MLA

- She reportedly sees the hand of Ministers Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy and K Narayana Swamy behind the CM's decision

husband pair of KJs had been the chairpersons of the Chittoor municipality in the past.

It is said that Roja does not see an eye to eye with the ministers from her district, Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy and K Narayana Swamy, whom she blames for the elevation of Shanti to the post now.

Roja has been the most vocal supporter of the Chief Minister and his policies and has always been at the forefront of taking on the TDP leadership over its criticism of the same.

However, she nurses disenchantment over her non-inclusion in the state Cabinet though made a chairperson of APIIC. For now, the two ministers have certainly scored over Roja, it is whispered.

ported to have obstructed Roja's programmes in several places in the district which has forced Roja to take the matter to the notice of the Chief Minister.

Locally, KJ is said to have a strong hold over the party. Both wife and

# Ashok decries bid to privatise college

## HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Vizianagaram:** Former chairman of Maharajah Alaknarayana Society for Arts and Science (MANSAS) Ashok Gajapathi Faju said an attempt is being made by the YSRCP government to demolish the reputation, dignity and stature of the trust established by his forefathers with noble objectives.

Addressing the media here on Thursday, he reacted angrily to the efforts being made to privatise the historical MR (Maha Raja) College which was one of the educational institutions set up more than 150 years ago to provide quality education to the poor students.

"Even during my tenure as

- Says MR College is not only an educational institution, but people of the region are emotionally attached to it

- Suspects that the YSRCP govt is working with an agenda to destroy the image and dignity of the trust



Ashok Gajapati Raju

MANSAS chairman, some academicians advised to privatise the colleges but the trust board had refused to do so as we felt that privatisation would damage the education system here and poor students would have to pay higher fees. In fact, MANSAS has its own constitution which can't

the image and dignity of the hundreds-years-old trust, he said MR college was not an educational institute only, but the people of this area have some emotional association with that institution.

Condemning the YSRCP government's allegations that north Andhra was neglected during the TDP rule, Ashok Gajapathi Raju said they had brought Bhogapuram international airport along with some allied industries like overhauling, maintenance, repair units here. But the present government has taken over 500 acre from the airport project. This decision would definitely affects the development of this region, he added.

# GoM to pitch for release of IGST dues from Centre

## Continued from P1

During the meeting, Harish Rao said that the Centre had deposited Rs 13,944 crore of IGST amount in the Consolidated Fund which was meant to be given to the States during 2018-19 financial year. The GoM that the state government had made several requests to the Union Finance Minister as well but still the dues were not cleared, he said.

The Minister suggested that the convenor of the IGST group of ministers and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Modi should write a letter to the Centre demanding release of the IGST dues and also include the issue in the GST council meeting slated to be held on October 5. All the members of the GoM welcomed the suggestion made by Harish Rao and decided to forward a letter to the council shortly.

He also asked for the release of Rs 1,000 crore as settlement based annual returns under IGST to Telangana in the meeting. State Finance Secretary K Ramakrishna Rao, Commercial Taxes Commissioner Nitu Kumar and other top Telangana officials were present in the meeting.

# TDP announces Mahila leaders

**Amaravati:** Condemning the ruling YSRCP's atrocities, Telugu Mahila state president and Ex-MLA Vanagalapudi Anitha called for united efforts by all sections of women in the state to fight back and give a befitting lesson to the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's government.

At a press conference, Telugu Mahila president announced the new leaders for the newly constituted committees for all the 25 parliamentary constituencies in Andhra Pradesh and asked the leaders to fight against the YSRCP government.

Anitha appealed to the TDP women's wing leaders and members to make all efforts to oppose and agitate against the atrocities and targeted attacks being committed by the ruling party leaders on

the Opposition leaders, social media activists, Dalits, temples and Constitutional institutions. The new leaders are appointed to give greater importance to women in leadership positions. As per the instructions of the party president N Chandrababu Naidu, all equations have been balanced to strengthen the Mahila wing, Anitha said.

Accusing the YSRCP of persecuting all sections of people, Anitha said, "Women were no exception in this regard and many of the victims with no stringency action being taken". She said that Telugu Mahila's new committees would take an active part in the agitations against the ruling party's excesses.

The parliamentary segment wise women presidents and general secretaries announced by Anitha are

as follows:

Araku - Vantala Rajeswari and Gabbadi Santhi Kumar, Srikakulam - Tammineni Sujata and Asa Leela Rani, Vizianagaram - Suvvadi Vanajakshi and Anuradha Begum, Visakhapatnam - Sarvasiddhi Ananta Lakshmi and Gangirala Satyavathi, Anakapalli - Adari Manjula and Ramanamma, Kakinada - Sunkara Pavani and Chapala Prashanti, Amalapuram - Pichcheti Vijaya Lakshmi and Adhikari Jaya Lakshmi, Rajahmundry - Male Vijaya Lakshmi and Deva Krupa, Narasapuram - Pasupuleti Ratna Mala and Tanuku Revati, Eluru - Chintala Venkata Ramana and Unnamatla Sunitha, Machilipatnam - Talasila Swarna Latha and Pydimukkala Krishna Kumari, Vijayawada - Chennupati Usha Rani

and Krishna Kumar, Guntur - Annabattuni Jayalakshmi and Rizwana, Narasaraopet - Dasari Udaya Sri and Gangineni Leelavathi, Bapatla - Chandolu Prithivi Latha and Pallam Sarojini, Ongole - Ravuri Padmaja and Aruna Reddy, Nandyal - Kammari Parvatamma and Bharati, Kurnool - Sk Mumtaz and Eediga Sukanya, Anantapuram - Musheera Begum and Priyanka, Hindupuram - Putturu Subbaratnamma and Rama Subbamma, Kadapa - Kranti Swetha Reddy and Kota Sridevi, Nellore - Panabaka Lakshmi and Kommali Vijayamma, Tirupati - Chakrara Usha and Mattam Sranvani Reddy, Rajampeta - K Anasuya Devi and Adveti Vijaya, and Chittoor - Karjala Aruna and Lakshmi Prasanna.

# Treat hostel kids as your own: CM to authorities

**Amaravati:** Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy instructed the officials to maintain quality and standards in Naadu-Nedu works in welfare hostels and Gurukul schools. During a review on Thursday, he said all hostels should provide quality food, sanitation and other amenities to students.

He told the authorities to own welfare hostels and treat inmates as if they are their own family members and ensure to provide a nutritious diet. The Chief Minister told the officials to prepare a checklist of the works that need to be done in the second phase of Naadu-Nedu, where all junior colleges, degree colleges, polytechnic colleges, ITIs, Gurukul schools,

and welfare hostels will be renovated. All the hostels should have good ambience, proper sanitation and good diet. He told the officials to supply uniforms, books, belts just like the regular students and also follow a similar menu like Jagananna Gorumuddha for daily meals. The officials said that nearly 4,84,862 students were enrolled in 4,772 welfare hostels across the state and almost 4,000 hostels are being operated in own buildings and the remaining are in rental spaces. In the second phase of Naadu-Nedu, all these hostels would be renovated. Deputy Chief Minister Amzath Basha, minister for social welfare P Viswaroop and officials were present.

# Legislation in US Senate to boost clean energy coop with India

## Continued from P1

It urged the US to promote research, development and private sector cooperation on the production of electric vehicles and the planning and execution of an expansive charging station network to support extensive use of electric vehicles.

The Senate legislation, running into 39 pages, asks the Trump administration to sup-

port a report, within 90 days of its passage, detailing the scope and nature of the US' participation in Mission Innovation.

Observing that the US should support the Power for All initiative created by the Government of India through technical and other forms of assistance, the legislation said that the US should support the ambitious renewable energy generation goals set by

the India through technical and other forms of assistance.

Increased demand for refrigeration and air conditioning in India, and the adoption of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, done at Montreal September 16, 1987, are driving innovation and investments in next-generation refrigeration equipment and refrigerants in India; it said.

# After Hathras, another woman raped, killed in UP

## Continued from P1

Family members said that the woman looked dazed and in a serious condition. The family rushed her to a nearby hospital, but she died on the way. The family has also alleged that the woman was lethally injected before she was raped.

Balrampur Superintendent of Police, Dev Ranjan Verma, said: "The family said that the woman did not reach home on time on Tuesday. They tried to contact her but could not get in

touch. After some time, she came home in a rickshaw with a glucose drip attached to her arm and she was in a bad state. The relatives took her to a hospital, but she died on the way."

According to the mother of the victim, she was unable to speak when she came back home and could only manage to utter the words, "I am in a lot of pain, I won't survive." "She had gone to get her admission done at 10 in the morning. We have the receipts. On her

way back, 3-4 men forcibly put her in their car, injected her and raped her. The accused broke her back and her legs and sent her back in a rickshaw. She had no strength left to even walk," the mother told reporters.

However, the Balrampur Police, in a tweet, said reports about her limbs and waist being broken are not true and these injuries have not been confirmed in the autopsy report.

# Ready to fight even with God to protect farmers: KCR

## Continued from P1

The virtual meeting will be chaired by Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy will also be participating in the meeting. At a high-level meeting with top officials of state Water Resources Department here, KCR said that the rightful share of every drop of water from Godavari and Krishna rivers would be utilised optimally. How they propose to do will be the part of the presentation which KCR would be making during the meeting, sources said. KCR pointed out that the Telangana Statehood movement was interlinked with the water issue and the farmers. Telan-

gana has exhibited how water could reach many of the areas where irrigation water was not available and this was done by making some changes in the design of the ongoing projects. It succeeded in tapping river water and diverted them to the arid fields in six year's time. This has helped in making the state granary of the country and the agriculture sector has been progressing. "We have succeeded in converting farming into a festival," the Chief Minister is learnt to have said.

Government's Chief Advisor Rajiv Sharma, CMO officials Narsing Rao, Bhoopal Reddy, Advisor (Irrigation) SK Joshi and other officials were present.

# High drama as cops detain Gandhis

## Continued from P1

"Can you tell me under which law can you stop me from marching towards Hathras. I want to go alone to Hathras and on what basis can you arrest me," Rahul Gandhi told the police officials, who responded by saying that he had violated Section 188 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) put in place due to the pandemic.

The leaders were taken away in a police jeep and kept in a guest house for some time after which they were released. It added that later in the day they headed back towards Delhi escorted by the

UP police.

"Reckless behaviour of UP Police towards @INCIndia leader Shri @RahulGandhi is extremely condemnable. It is reprehensible for those who are supposed to uphold the law to trample upon the democratic values in such a manner," NCP chief Sharad Pawar posted on Twitter. JDS chief and former PM Deve Gowda too added that the Gandhis were fighting for a 'just cause' and that protest is a democratic right.

On Thursday, BSP chief Mayawati demanded that Adityanath should be removed by BJP as the chief

minister or impose President's rule in the state while Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav demanded that an investigation under a sitting Supreme Court (SC) judge should take place in the matter.

The development is very significant as the Opposition is trying to step up pressure on Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath-led BJP government over the issue of women security. The Gandhis have got support from Opposition parties like NCP, DMK and Janata Dal (Secular), who have criticized the police action.

# NCW grills UP police over hurried cremation

**New Delhi:** The National Commission for Women (NCW) on Thursday sought an explanation from the Uttar Pradesh Police on the urgency to cremate the body of the Hathras gangrape victim in the middle of the night in the absence of her family members.

The Dalit woman was allegedly raped at a village in Hathras by four men on September 14, and she breathed her last on Tuesday at Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital.

Her body was cremated in the early hours of Wednesday, with her family alleging that

the local police forced them to conduct the last rites in the dead of the night. The police, however, said the cremation was carried out 'as per the wishes of the family'.

It has been reported that the victim's body was cremated at 2.30 am by the police without the presence of any family member. "The victim's family had reportedly appealed to the district magistrate for taking her body home for performing the last rites, however, the police went ahead with the cremation while most of her family members were away," it said.



## BIZ BRIEFS

### Kaveri Seeds in Forbes list

**Hyderabad:** Kaveri Seeds, a city-based seed company, has been featured in this year's edition of Forbes' Asia's Best Under A Billion list which highlights 200 Asia-Pacific public companies with less than \$1 billion in revenue and consistent top and bottom line growth. Setup in 1976 by GV Bhaskar Rao, Kaveri Seeds specializes in hybrid seeds. It has been a part of this list five times earlier too, starting from 2010. GV Bhaskar Rao said: "Today, Kaveri Seed has successfully forged a differentiated identity as an iconic seed company, laying the foundations for a stronger and steadier tomorrow - carrying forward its zeal to support and sustain farmer prosperity across the value chain. We strive to deliver products that not only reap a good harvest but offer optimum conditions for agricultural productivity - year after year".

### LG launches new offer

**Hyderabad:** Consumer durable brand LG Electronics launched season 2 of 'khwahishon se khushiyon tak' lucky draw offer starting from October 1. It will conclude on November 20. In this offer, consumers who have purchased LG home appliances during the offer period are eligible to participate by registering for this contest. This contest is applicable across India, except Tamil Nadu. Winners from the lucky draw will get the chance to win LG products worth Rs 5 crore. The lucky draw will be spread over seven weeks with draw every week. Additionally, there will be bumper draw announced on festival days. Vijay Babu, VP-Home Appliances, LG Electronics India, said: "We are proud to present Make In India products with great festive offers".

### Centaur unveils new drug

**Hyderabad:** Centaur Pharmaceuticals announced the launch of a new chemical entity (NCE), Woxheal, for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcers. The pharma company said it developed the new drug with German technology partner, CytoTools. As per the company, 25 per cent of people with diabetes will develop a diabetic foot ulcer in their lifetime. One in five diabetics who are hospitalised due to severe foot infection, undergo a foot amputation affecting the livelihood of the family. SD Sawant, Chairman and MD, Centaur Pharmaceuticals, said, "We were deeply concerned with the alarming rate of foot amputations in India, and wanted to discover a drug to prevent it. 15 years ago, we collaborated with CytoTools AG, Germany, who had this promising molecule for the treatment of diabetic foot ulcer".

### Discounts from Kalyan Jewellers

**Hyderabad:** Kalyan Jewellers has announced festive offers through the 300 kg Gold Give-away campaign. Customers shopping at Kalyan Jewellers will receive instantly redeemable free gift vouchers against their purchases - the total of which will amount to 300 kg. The vouchers can be redeemed against special discounts on jewellery. This offer will be valid until November 30. TS Kalyanaraman, Chairman & Managing Director, Kalyan Jewellers said, "Festivals like Navaratri and Deepavali have always been significant. This year, we are focused on helping our customers extract maximum value from their purchases, with interesting discounts and offers. We aim to provide a safe retail experience, with the best of jewellery paired with the best of offers, both in-store and online."

# Mfg sees fastest growth in 8 yrs

New orders, lower Covid curbs drive manufacturing activity to record levels in Sept

#### POSITIVE VIBES

■ Factories go full steam ■ Output prices go up ■ Exports bounce back ■ Firms operate with less staff



business confidence strengthened," Lima said.

Despite strong growth of order book volumes, Indian goods producers signalled another reduction in payroll numbers. In many cases, this was attributed to efforts to observe social distancing guidelines. Employment has now decreased for six consecutive months.

"One area that lagged behind, however, was employment. Some companies reported difficulties in hiring workers, while others suggested that staff numbers had been kept to a minimum amid efforts to observe social distancing guidelines," Lima noted.

On the prices front, output

prices rose for the first time in six months, reflecting an uptick in input costs, the survey said.

Looking ahead, almost one-third of manufacturers expect output growth in the coming 12 months, against 8 per cent that foresees a contraction, resulting in the strongest degree of overall optimism in over four years.

"When we look at the PMI average for the second quarter of fiscal year 2020/21, the result is in stark contrast to that seen in the first quarter: a rise from 35.1 to 51.6. While uncertainty about the Covid-19 pandemic remains, producers can at least for now enjoy the recovery," Lima said.

## Mkts rally, Sensex zooms 629 pts

**New Delhi:** The Indian stock market surged on Thursday with the BSE Sensex gaining 629 points on the back of improved manufacturing PMI data and automobile sales. A positive trend in the global markets also supported the domestic indices.

Healthy buying was witnessed in finance and banking stocks. The S&P BSE Banking index closed 3.73 per cent higher and the Finance index was up

3.03 per cent.

The BSE Sensex closed at

38,697.05,

higher by

629.12 points,

or 1.65 per

cent, from the

previous close

of 38,067.93. It

had opened at 38,410.20 and touched an intra-day high of 38,738.89 and a low of 38,410.20.

The Nifty50 on the National Stock Exchange closed at 11,416.95, higher by 169.40 points, or 1.51 per cent, from its previous close.

Investor sentiment was boosted after the IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) report, released on Thursday, cited a renewed expansion in export sales and input stocks as well as an improvement in business confidence during September.

Consequently, reading of the headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing PMI showed a rise from 52 in August to 56.8 in September. The latest reading was the highest in over eight-and-a-half years.

Further, auto sales numbers for the month of September, which came in on Thursday, also were largely higher on a year on year, which too boosted the sentiments.

Siddhartha Khemka, Head of Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said: "The global cues were positive on the back of better-than-expected private sector jobs data and rising hopes for additional stimulus packages.

Further positive progress towards a possible coronavirus treatment by Regeneron Pharma and promising results from Moderna's coronavirus vaccine trials also cheered the markets." On the domestic front, he noted that positive global cues, another phase of 'unlock' and a host of positive macro data lifted the sentiments and decent auto sales numbers supported the indices.



# SBI, HUL join hands to support small biz

**Hyderabad:** The country's largest bank SBI and FMCG major HUL on Thursday announced a partnership to enable easy access to credit to small retailers and also help them join the digitisation bandwagon in order to 'survive in the new world'.

Under the partnership, HUL's retailers who use the company's Shikhar app will be able to avail of credit facility for payments to distributors through an integration with State Bank of India's (SBI) Yono app.

Hindustan Unilever (HUL) Chairman and Managing Director Sanjiv Mehta said while there are around ten million retailers in India, they have faced constraints in access to credit as they have always operated in an informal environment, while they have also been reluctant to adopt digital technology.

"What our partnership does today is try to solve some of the very important constraints that the retailers and small shopkeepers face in the country today," Mehta said while addressing a virtual



press conference. SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar said with the kind of developments which are happening in the country and the digitisation of economy, "this is not only about partnership between the two giants SBI and HUL. This is the shift which is happening in the country in the way we do business and the impact which it will have on the overall productivity." He said availing of credit has always been a painful process and the partnership aims to address the issue.

"Today when we are integrating the system, HUL's Shikhar app and SBI's Yono, we are entering into some sort of new age relationship, which is nothing to do with lending money to HUL, (but) is catering to their supply chain," Kumar added.

## GST collection in Sept at ₹95,480 crore

**New Delhi:** The gross GST revenue collection in September rose sequentially to Rs 95,480 crore from August's collection, an official statement said on Thursday. In August, the gross GST collection stood at Rs 86,449 crore.

"The gross GST revenue collected in the month of September 2020 is Rs 95,480 crore, of which CGST is Rs 17,741 crore, SGST is Rs 23,131 crore, IGST is Rs 47,484 crore (including Rs 22,442 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 7,124 crore (including Rs 788 crore collected on import of goods)," the Ministry of Finance statement said.

The government has settled Rs 21,260 crore to CGST and Rs 16,997 crore to SGST from IGST as regular settlement. The total revenue earned by Central government and the state governments after regular settlement in the month of September 2020 is Rs 39,001 crore for CGST and Rs 40,128 crore for SGST.

# IT spend on WFH infra to touch 19% in 2021

In the wake of the pandemic, Indian enterprises have channelled their current IT spend towards enabling work from home, says a report

**New Delhi:** As enterprises battle pandemic-induced challenges to arm the remote workforce with secure devices and collaborative solutions for maximum productivity, the IT spend on enabling work-from-home (WFH) infrastructure is expected to touch 19 per cent in 2021, marking a 27 per cent increase, a new report said on Thursday.

Enterprise challenges in the WFH era include security concerns (75 per cent), productivity losses (67 per cent), team management (34 per cent) and the need for a greater number of devices (45 per cent), according to the new CIO survey insights from CyberMedia Research.

In the wake of the pandemic, Indian enterprises have channelled their current IT spend towards enabling WFH, indicating that this spend will increase further in the next year. Education and health-



care verticals are going to see maximum increase in spend on collaboration, the findings showed.

"Every organisation must learn to adapt to the new normal and explore the right collaboration tools that drive efficiency, enable seamless communication, and are secure and reliable at the same time," said Anil Chopra, VP-Research and Consulting, CyberMedia Research (CMR). The challenges are lack of knowledge about co-workers' availability and location (55 per cent), disconnect between business process and communication applications (52 per

cent) and loss of business because of inability to reach decision makers on the first try (43 per cent).

In the new WFH environment, marked by sudden spike in collaboration needs, enterprises seek to build agility to resolve them

"Most of the organisations are looking for accelerated adoption of digital solutions during their process of recovering and reimagining the business and its operations. However, this may vary, depending on the sector, but the reality is that there will be adoption of digital solutions that can reduce operational costs during the next normal," said Thomas George, President, CMR.

The sectors for critical products, such as pharmaceuticals are localising their supply chains and creating more stronger collaborative relationships with critical suppliers by building their digital capabilities, he added.

## Mubadala puts ₹6,247 cr in Reliance Retail Ventures

**Mumbai:** Reliance Industries on Thursday said that Abu Dhabi-based sovereign investor Mubadala Investment Company will invest Rs 6,247.5 crore into Reliance Retail Ventures.

Mubadala's investment will translate into a 1.40 per cent equity stake in RRVL on a fully diluted basis.

This is the second significant investment by Mubadala in a Reliance Industries subsidiary after the \$1.2 billion investment in Jio Platforms announced earlier this year. The investment values Reliance Retail at a pre-money equity value of Rs 4.285 lakh crore.

"We value the partnership with a knowledge-rich organization like Mubadala and acknowledge their confidence in our mission to strengthen the core of India's retail sector - the millions of small retailers, mer-



chants and shopkeepers - through the power of technology," said Mukesh Ambani, Chairman and Managing Director of Reliance Industries. Mubadala's investment and guidance will be an invaluable support in this journey, he added.

Khaldoon Al Mubarak, Managing Director and Group CEO, Mubadala Investment Company, said: "We are pleased to deepen our relationship with Reliance Industries through this investment in Reliance Retail Ventures."



# With no takers, 2.4L seats lie vacant in TS degree colleges

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** About 2.4 lakh seats are left vacant after the phase-II of the allotment of seats in the degree colleges in the State. According to the officials of Telangana State Council of Higher Education (TSCHE), 65,719 candidates have been allotted seats through Degree Online Services Telangana (DOST) at the end of the phase-II of the online admission for the current academic year.

DOST Convenor and TSCHE Vice-Chairman Prof R Limbadri and Commissioner of Collegiate Education Navin Mittal on Thursday said that a total of 41,159 candidates have registered for the phase-II allocation of seats. A total of 80,872 candidates have given web options. They include students registered for phase -II and those from the phase-I gave web options to improve their earlier seat allocation. Out of this, a total of 65,719 candidates have been allotted seats in the phase-II, they added.

Earlier, a total of 1,07,645 candidates had reserved their seats in the phase-I through the online self-reporting system. In the phase-II, gender-wise 32,601 (54 per cent) male and 27,938 (46 per cent) female candidates have been allotted the seats.

For the current academic year, a total of 4,09,450 seats are available for intake in 986 de-



► Students failing to report between October 1 to 6 will have to forego their seat, and their DOST registration will get automatically cancelled

► Candidates have to report to the finally allotted college between October 10 and 15, otherwise, they will lose their seats

► DOST registration for phase-III will commence from October 1 to 5 and candidates can give their web options till October 6

gree colleges in the State. After the two phases of allocation, Prof Limbadri said 2,41,266 seats remained vacant.

Similarly, after the second phase of allocation, 124 seats are vacant against intake of 4,018 seats available in nine university colleges. In the case of government degree colleges, 26,042 are vacant against intake of 69,660 in 123 colleges. There are 41 private aided colleges in the State with an intake capacity of 16,365 and 5,726 seats are vacant. When it comes to 812 private unaided degree colleges, 2,09,37 seats are vacant against intake of 3,19,275 seats. The intake of

132 seats in the lone railway degree college has been filled.

Students allotted seats were asked to visit the DOST website to reserve their seats through online self-reporting facility by paying the fee. However, those allotted the government degree and university colleges eligible for the fee reimbursement need not pay the same to reserve the seats.

Students failing to report between October 1 to 6 will have to forego their seat and their DOST registration will automatically be cancelled. Similarly, the candidates will have to report to the finally allotted college between

October 10 and 15, otherwise, they will lose their seats. The DOST registration for the phase-III will commence from October 1 to 5 and candidates can give their web options till October 6.

Students can opt any three subjects of their choice out of four options offered by the college within the faculty or stream, irrespective of the fixed combination offered earlier. However, mathematics and statistics are mandatory for those intending to study B.Sc in data science and mathematics is mandatory for those wish to study physics, electronics, and statistics under B.Sc Physical Science stream.

## COVID FEAR

# Congress sees big dip in voter turnout in GHMC election

The poll percentage will drastically come down this year though the Election Commission tries to convince both parties and people about the safety measures, says a senior party leader

MD NIZAMUDDIN

**Hyderabad:** The Congress party opined that measures adopted by the State Election Commission (SEC) for the GHMC elections amid COVID-19 will have direct impact on the voters' turnout and poll percentage. Citing health of voters was paramount to the party, the party chose not to respond to SEC which had sought 'option' between EVM and ballot from political parties by September end.

A senior Congress leader said that the given option by the Election Commission was not supported by the expert opinion in wake of corona pandemic. The process shrouded in mystery would not be able to encourage voters who would come out risking their lives. "The risks involved should be minimized, as people's health is paramount and voters would be taking risk while exercising their franchise," he noted

"If the SEC fails to come up with reasoning for risks involved and discloses the pros and cons of using EVM or ballot for the Municipal elections, how can it be able to win the confidence of voters. The decisions made without scientific evaluation would



obviously have impact on the overall voter turnout, which is around 50 % in normal days," he said.

With some 75,000 voters under the GHMC limits, around 35,000 to 40,000 are expected to vote under normal circumstances. But with the Covid-19 still persistent the number of voters may drop drastically. Even though the SEC is coming up with measures but without expert advice on usage of ballot or EVMs would prove to be a futile exercise.

It may be mentioned here that a delegation of TPCC Election Commission Coordination Committee met the State Election Commissioner C

Parthasarathi at his office on September 25. During the meeting, the Committee members questioned the process which was being taken forward without taking into consideration the opinions of Opposition parties. Referring to TRS's decision to go for 'option' of ballot boxes, the committee pointed out that the party failed to mention any 'reasoning' for it.

"This throws 'serious apprehensions' that reservations were made arbitrarily, without reference to polling booth wise census data. The Election Commission has failed to respond and hence we decided to not to commit any of the options provided by the SEC," added the leader.

## ARRESTED FOR PROTESTING



TPCC president and Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy being arrested by the police for leading candlelight protest against the UP police misbehavior with Rahul Gandhi and expressing solidarity with Hathras rape victim family, at Tank Bund on Thursday

# Malkajgiri cops bust fake news of kidnapping

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** The Malkajgiri police on Thursday busted fake news about a woman being kidnapped from the ECIL crossroads in broad daylight. The police issued a clarification as the video of the kidnapping went viral as it was recorded in the CCTV camera placed on the roadside.

The DCP of Malkajgiri, Rakshita K Murthy, said that the video was being circulated on multiple groups and was being said that the kidnapping occurred in broad daylight at ECIL crossroads. "When we started investigating the matter, we came to know that the incident occurred in Kolar district of Karnataka, but it did not happen in Hyderabad. However, some miscre-

ants wanted to defame the hard work of police and circulated it with a wrong caption," she said.

"Moreover, when we checked with the local police in Kolar district, it was informed that the kidnappers were arrested the next day and it was an issue related to love. As the girl did not accept the proposal of the boy, he kidnapped her in a van," added the officer.

## Mumaith Khan files complaint against cabbie

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** Tollywood Actress Mumaith Khan on Thursday evening filed a police complaint against a cab driver, Raju, at Punjagutta police station. The actress in her complaint noted that though she does not have to pay due amount of Rs 15,000 to the driver, he was spreading rumors on social media about the payment of money, and defaming her name. She requested the police to take necessary action against the person.

The police confirmed that they received a complaint against Raju and the matter was being investigated. A few days ago, the actress went on a Goa trip in Raju's cab that was booked for three days. However, the trip went on for eight days and the driver alleged that he was not paid his due for extra days besides the toll charges. He said food and accommodation were also not provided to him. However, a case has been registered and the matter is being investigated.

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** 'Liberate and Save Hyderabad' will be the BJP's slogan for the ensuing GHMC polls. Addressing media here on Thursday, BJP MLC N Ramachander Rao urged people to liberate and save the Hyderabad city from the clutches of the ruling TRS and MIM. He alleged that the duo has utterly neglected overall development of the State capital.

Expressing confidence of his party will more than 80 divisions and get the mayor seat this time, he asked the ruling party, as to, why people should vote for it? The BJP leader said the hollowness of the tall promises made by the TRS has been exposed during the rains lashed the city recently.

"A 60- minute rain in Hyderabad is paralysing the city, throwing the normal life out of gear and the recent rains have claimed three lives," he added. The Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao claims to have spent Rs 60,000 crore for the development of the city. It was to once again to mislead people in the wake of ensuing GHMC elections.

## Saffron party hopes to win more than 80 seats and mayor seat Accuses TRS of trying to mislead people with an undelivered 2BHK promise

The city would not have faced such hardships during the rains had the TRS corporators and GHMC machinery taken necessary steps to improve the conditions. He accused that the TRS and KTR are trying to fool the people promising to distribute double bedroom houses. "It was the same promise on which the TRS had won GHMC elections earlier, but failed to deliver on it. Now, it is trying to mislead people showcasing a failed and undelivered electoral promise to win the elections."

Ramachander Rao said people, particularly of Hyderabad city have realised that they were taken for a ride by the TRS earlier.

Now, they will teach a lesson to the ruling party and its natural friendly MIM, who had reached to a tactical understanding to deceive Hyder-

abadis to win elections.

He said that the TRS leaders and ministers are on an inauguration spree of bridges ahead of the GHMC elections. BJP supports construction of bridges, but, bridges alone won't mean the development of Hyderabad.

People should get adequate basic facilities for the improvement of their living standard, he added.

Referring to reports that Municipal Administration Minister KTR is not happy with the performance of some party corporators, he said "it was not some corporators, but, the performance of all the ruling party corporators is coming under questioning. Because of the number of cases involving them and their highhandedness on city people."

The BJP leader said the TRS claim of filling of 1.5 lakh jobs is a pack of lies. The data of the State government and the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) did not match with one another. He said educated unemployed youth, government employees and private teachers are not happy with the performance of the government, he said.

## BOOST TO GREEN DRIVE



Well-known actor Prakash Raj planting a sapling at his house in Hyderabad after accepting Green India Challenge thrown by TRS MP J Santhosh Kumar on Thursday

# Bitcoin fraud unearthed; kingpin held for cheating investors

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** The cybercrime wing of Hyderabad Police on Thursday arrested a bitcoin fraudster who had cheated several persons on the pretext of giving them huge returns if invested in bitcoins. The accused was identified as Sirimalla Nagaraju.

According to police, the accused and his other friends formed a gang with an intention to cheat gullible persons on the pretext of offering them huge returns if they invest money online for bitcoin business. In such a way the gang spread all over the country and they cheated almost 1200 persons while earning Rs. 52 crore from the investors.

Investigating officer K Srinivas Rao said that the issue came to light when one Ramakrishna filed a complaint with the CCS and alleged that he was cheated by the said person.

"Based on his complaint the

investigation began and it was revealed that the accused person was not alone in this business, in fact there are several others but they are not based in Hyderabad. The accused was in charge of Hyderabad and was given the responsibility to lure gullible persons to invest money online through their websites, Rosneftthedegfund.ru, rhfcoin.com, rhfgold.com, eurescoin.com and were promised huge returns after investing regularly for a period of 18 weeks," stated the officer.

The accused person cheated around 250 depositors in Telangana and accumulated Rs 10 crore from them. He was arrested under various sections of IPC and remanded to judicial custody"

Special teams have been formed to nab the other accused persons in the State and a letter has been written to the Union Home Ministry about the scam happening all over India on the pretext of bitcoins.



# GHMC moots sanitation works for pvt agencies

HANS NEWS SERVICE

**Hyderabad:** The GHMC Standing Committee meeting chaired by Mayor Bonthu Rammoan was held here on Thursday. Eight aspects were discussed and approved. A resolution was passed to request the government for handing over sanitation works under 30 circles coming to a stretch of 1,176 km to agencies. Another resolution was passed to regularise 650 garbage collecting autos on driver-cum-owner

basis. The Mayor directed officials to ensure that the existing Swachh autos were serviced and remodelled. Appointments to dependents of deceased outsourcing employees in the sanitation department, replacement of employees aged above 60 years, laying off those not attending duties for more than a month without any notice were some other aspects discussed at the meeting.

GHMC Commissioner Lokesh Kumar, standing committee members Gandam Jyotsna, Mu-

draboina Srinivasa Rao, Juveriya Fatima, Meerbasit Ali, Sama Swapna, Meerja Mustaffa Beig, Sunnam Rajmohan, Mahamood Nazeeruddin, Muta Padma Nares, Kolanu Lakshmi, P Sindhu, Sabitha Kishore, A Aruna, Zonal Commissioners N Ravi Kiran, Upender Reddy, B Mamatha, B Srinivas Reddy, Pravenya, Samrat, Ashok, Town Planning director Srinivasa Rao, Enforcement Director Vishwa-jeet Kampati and others were among those present.



## FRENCH OPEN

## Nadal, Thiem breeze into third round

**Paris (IANS):** Rafael Nadal, the 12-time Roland Garros champion, completed another overwhelming show at the ongoing French Open as he registered a straight-sets win No. 236 Mackenzie McDonald to progress to the next round.

On Wednesday, the 'King of Clay' defeated McDonald 6-1, 6-0, 6-3 in just one hour and 40 minutes to improve his record at the clay court grand slam to 95-2.

"I am very happy," Nadal said after his triumph as per the ATP Tour website. "(It) will be another difficult match against Travaglia or Nishikori. I hope to play a good level. It's always very special to play here in Paris, especially here on Court Philippe-Chatrier, so I'm very happy to play another time," he added.

Second seed Nadal will now face Italy's Stefano Travaglia in the round of 32. The latter survived a five-set thriller against Japan's Nishikori Kei to advance 6-4, 2-6, 7-6 (7), 4-6, 6-2.

In the other men's singles clash, newly-crowned US Open champion Dominic Thiem extended his winning streak to nine matches, defeating American

qualifier Jack Sock 6-1, 6-3, 7-6 (6) in two hours and 22 minutes. He will next face No. 28 seed Casper Ruud.

Meanwhile, in women's singles, top seed Simona Halep beat her fellow Romanian Irina-Camelia Begu 6-3, 6-4 to book a spot in the third round, while third seed Elina Svitolina of Ukraine overcame defeated Mexican qualifier

Renata Zarazua 6-3, 0-6, 6-2 to keep on track for her maiden Grand Slam title.

## SHARAN EXITS IN OPENING ROUND

**Paris (IANS):** India's Divij Sharan and his South Korean partner Kwon Soon-woo bowed out of the ongoing French Open after suffering a hard-fought defeat in the opening round of the men's doubles event.

On Wednesday, the unseeded pair of Sharan and Soon-woo lost 2-6, 6-4, 4-6 to the 16th seeded Croatian-American duo of Franko Skugor and Austin Krajicek to crash out of the clay court grand slam. Last month at the US Open, Sharan had suffered a first-round exit when he, along with his Serbian men's doubles partner Nikola Patic, suffered a 4-6, 6-3, 3-6 defeat against Nikola Mektic and Wesley Koolhof.

Rohan Bopanna is now the only Indian left at the Roland Garros and along with his Canadian partner Denis Shapovalov, he is slated to begin his men's doubles campaign against Jack Sock and Vasek Pospisil on Thursday.



## IPL

## Orange Cap stays with KL, Rabada holds onto Purple

**Dubai (IANS):** Kings XI Punjab's KL Rahul and Kagiso Rabada of Delhi Capitals continue to lead the respective batting and bowling charts in the ongoing edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Rahul has so far scored 222 runs in three matches, including one hundred and a half century for Kings XI and has the Orange Cap. He is followed by teammate Mayank Agarwal (221 runs in three games) and Chennai Super Kings' Faf du Plessis (173 runs in three games).

In the bowlers' list, Rabada is currently in possession of the Purple Cap with seven wickets in three matches, having an average of 10.71. Mohammad Shami of Kings XI (seven wickets in three games with average of 11.71) and Chennai's Sam Curran (five wickets in three games) are the next two top wicket-takers.

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

In the points table, Delhi Capitals have once again made it to the top spot, courtesy Rajasthan Royals' defeat against Kolkata Knight Riders which the Dinesh



Karthik-led side won by 37 runs at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Wednesday evening.

Capitals have four points from three games and are followed by Knight Riders and Royals. On Thursday, Kings XI Punjab will take on Mumbai Indians at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi.

## Today's fixture

**CHENNAI SUPER KINGS VS  
SUNRISERS HYDERABAD  
AT 7.30PM**

## Shafali, Smriti &amp; Jemimah continue to remain in top 10 in T20Is

**Brisbane (IANS):** Indian batters Shafali Verma, Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues have been able to remain in the top 10 of the ICC T20I rankings for batswomen. While Verma is the highest ranked Indian batter at the third spot, Mandhana and Rodrigues have also been able to hold their respective seventh and ninth places in the list led by Australia's Beth Mooney.

In the bowlers' rankings, Deepti Sharma remains the highest ranked Indian, currently occupying the sixth spot. She is followed by Radha Yadav and Poonam Yadav at seventh and eighth places respectively.

Among all-rounders, Deepti remains the only Indian in top 10, currently placed at the fourth spot.

Meanwhile, Australia all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner and captain Meg Lanning have advanced in the batters' rankings after finishing as the leading run-scorers in their three-match home series against New Zealand that they won 2-1.

Gardner's series-topping 90 runs, which came in only two innings, won her the player of the series award and lifted her seven places to a career best-equaling 18th position among batters. Lanning, who has been top-ranked in both ODIs and T20Is in the past, has advanced one spot to take fifth position after aggregating 71 runs in the series.

For White Ferns, former captain Suzie Bates and present captain Sophie Devine have retained their second and



Smriti Mandhana



Shafali Verma



Jemimah Rodrigues

fourth positions, respectively, while another former captain, left-hander Amy Satterthwaite, has re-entered the rankings in 35th position after finishing as the highest scorer from her side with 69 runs. Satterthwaite was on maternity leave for 18 months, during which she missed this year's T20 World Cup in Australia.

Australia leg-spinner Georgia Wareham has reached a career best-equaling 10th position after her five wickets in the series helped her advance five places, while left-arm spinner Sophie Molineux (up two places to 13th) and seam bowler Delissa Kimmince (up eight places to 22nd) have also progressed in the bowlers' list.

## AFL competitions to begin with event for throwers from Oct 26

**New Delhi (IANS):** The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) has finalised its deferred calendar for the year 2020-21 wherein the competitions will resume with 1st National Open Throws Championships in Patiala on October 26-27.

Apart from that, a few zonal events in November and the national youth championships in Vijaywada in December are the other competitions slated to be held this year.

"The competition calendar was re-drawn keeping in mind the rise in the Covid-19 cases across the country, now it has been again prepared pushing most of the competitions towards the end of this year and the beginning of the next year. Our first competition will be for throwers in October end," said Adille J Sumariwalla, AFI President, in a statement on Wednesday.

"AFI is duty bound to provide competitions to our athletes but due to the prevailing circumstances we have to take care of the safety of our athletes," he added. As per the calendar, the first Indian Grand Prix in Thiruvananthapuram will be held on February 12. This will be followed by the second and third Grand Prix events on February 19 and 27 in Thiruvananthapuram and Patiala respectively.

The 2021 Federation Cup Senior National Championships will be held in Patiala from March 10-14.

The National Inter-State Senior Athletics Championships will be held in Bengaluru from June 25-29. The calendar also includes the first National Under-23 Championships to be held in the national capital from August 24-26.

## '4-2-3-1' formation best system for Indian football, says Stimac

**New Delhi (IANS):** Football head coach Igor Stimac believes the '4-2-3-1' formation is the "best system for Indian football".

"We have had to adapt to a system where players would play more with the ball and spectators would love to watch. We have switched to 4-2-3-1 where the game starts from the goalkeeper and the centre-backs play a major role in controlling the game," Stimac said on Wednesday during the international virtual coaching conference, as per an AIFF release.

"There are connected movements and players need to be intelligent to make quick decisions. Full-backs need to make a run forward so they find free spaces in between and hurt the opponent. They need to learn to run behind the opponent backline. Even wingers can come inside and fullbacks go the side-lines to utilise free space," he added.

Stimac, who coached Croatia to qualify for the FIFA World Cup Brazil 2014, further referred to the Indian team's improvement in recent times



since switching to the aforementioned formation.

"We are really proud of the players how they have executed their job so far. They have been doing the right job. There has been an overall improvement," Stimac said.

"Number of passes as well as the duration of playing with the ball has gone up significantly. We are constantly working on improving the numbers and raising the bar," he added.

Stimac also advised Indian coaches to utilise every moment to enhance their "knowledge" and guide the players to improve their "mindset" in order for them to become a better player.

## 269 million viewers watched IPL in first week

**New Delhi (IANS):** The opening week of the 13th edition of the Indian Premier League (IPL) being played in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) was watched by 269 million viewers, 11 million more per match compared to the like period of last year's edition. According to a BARC-Nielsen report titled "Television Viewership and Advertising Consumption of IPL-13 2020", the opening week of the ongoing IPL edition saw a 15 per cent growth in viewing minutes as compared to 2019.

The opening week of IPL 2020 witnessed a 21 per cent growth in average impressions per match as compared to the 2019 edition of the cash-rich league, despite holding one match less and fewer channels showing the league than in 2019. The tournament, in the first week, registered 60.6 billion viewing minutes across seven matches and 21 channels.

As per the report, the tournament opener

between defending champions Mumbai Indians and Chennai Super Kings on September 19 attracted a viewership of 52 million impressions (which is 29 per cent higher than in 2019) and was watched by 158 million viewers (21 per cent higher than in 2019). BCCI Secretary Jay Shah had on September 22 said that the CSK-MI match played at the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi was watched by 20 crore people.

"Opening match of #Dream11IPL sets a new record! As per BARC, an unprecedented 20 crore people tuned in to watch the match. Highest ever opening day viewership for any sporting league in any country- no league has ever opened as big as this," Shah had tweeted. According to the report, matches 2 to 7 garnered more than 34 million impressions and were watched by over 100 million viewers match on match (the highest being the one between CSK and MI, which was watched by 158 million viewers).

## NorthEast United FC sign striker VP Suhair

**New Delhi (IANS):** NorthEast United FC have signed Kerala-born striker VP Suhair ahead of the 2020-21 Indian Super League (ISL) season. The forward had a strong 2019-20 campaign with I-League champions Mohun Bagan AC, scoring twice and assisting two times in 16 appearances for the Mariners. After a successful season with Mohun Bagan, Suhair will look to replicate his form for the Highlanders, with the 28-year-old looking set to make his ISL debut during the 2020-21 campaign. He will look to link up with Federico Gallego and Luis Machado, who will be a part of NorthEast next season under new head coach Gerard Nus.

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