

**ANALYSIS 7**  
KCR GOES BALLISTIC  
AGAINST MODI GOVT?

**MONEY 8**  
PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF DIGITAL  
CURRENCY FOR WHOLESALE, RETAIL

**SPORTS 11**  
INDIA NEED TO HELP  
KOHLI: PONTING

VIJAYAWADA, THURSDAY, JULY 21, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



# the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



'I HAVE GOT A LOT  
OF APPRECIATION,  
BUT NOT ENOUGH  
RECOGNITION'

Page 12

## CLASHES, BIDDING, RIGGING: VOTE TO PICK FINAL 2 IN UK; PM RACE HEATS UP

The hottest day in history may be over but the heat of the Conservative Party leadership battle intensified on Wednesday as Tory lawmakers cast their last round of votes to determine the final two candidates in the race to replace Boris Johnson as British Prime Minister. Rishi Sunak is holding firm as the frontrunner with 118 votes from Tuesday's secret ballot, but the fact that he gained just three votes from Tom Tugendhat's camp after the Tory backbencher's elimination has triggered intense speculation over tactical voting and even rigging.

## CORDELIA TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES TO BRING 11-DECK VESSEL TO BENGAL

Cordelia Cruises has expressed interest to explore possibilities to bring its 11-deck ship to West Bengal as the cruise liner plans to expand services and add new destinations for the next sailing season on the east coast, officials said on Wednesday. Authorities of Syama Prasad Mookherjee Port, Kolkata are also keen to bring such big ships to promote cruise tourism in the state, they said. However, the major challenge for large cruise liners to operate in Kolkata is the low draft in the Hooghly river system, a port official said.

## WICKREMESINGHE ELECTED NEW SRI LANKAN PRESIDENT BY PARLIAMENT

Veteran politician Ranil Wickremesinghe was on Wednesday elected as Sri Lanka's President by Parliament, in a rare move that could provide continuity for ongoing discussions with the IMF for a bailout for the cash-strapped nation but a development likely to anger anti-government protesters who have been demanding his resignation from office for weeks. The 73-year-old Acting President and six-time former prime minister won a parliamentary ballot after his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled the country amid escalating protests over an economic crisis marked by dire shortages of essential imports such as fuel, medicine and food.

## BREEDING OF MOSQUITO LARVAE FOUND ON PREMISES OF MANY GOVT OFFICES

Seventy-six legal notices have been sent to multiple authorities after mosquito larvae were found breeding on the premises of several government offices in Delhi in the last few months, civic officials said on Wednesday. Dengue cases have been recorded earlier this year due to weather conditions being congenial for mosquito-breeding. Nearly 160 dengue cases have been reported in the national capital so far this year, including at least 15 in July, according to a report. A senior official on Wednesday said action was being taken as part of a special drive by the MCD to check the spread of dengue and other vector-borne diseases.

# CM lays stone for Ramayapatnam Port

Port will be built at an initial cost of Rs 3736.14 crore

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy performed Bhumii Puja at Ramayapatnam Port, marking the start of the construction works at an initial cost of Rs 3736.14 crore, here on Wednesday.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said that there were only six ports in the State and added that the current government was setting up four more including Ramayapatnam to boost economic activity, employment opportunities and overall development.

He assured that each port would provide indirect employment to lakhs of people as the government was also setting up nine fishing harbours in addition to Bhavanapadu, Kakinada Gateway, Machilipatnam, and Ramayapatnam ports.

He said that at Ramayapatnam Port, Rs 3,740 crore would be spent for constructing four berths with a handling capacity of 25 million tonnes, where six additional



At Ramayapatnam Port, Rs 3,740 crore would be spent for constructing four berths with a handling capacity of 25 million tonnes, where six additional berths could be added in the future with Rs 200 crore for each for handling over 50 million tonnes.

berths could be added in the future with Rs 200 crore for each for handling over 50 million tonnes. He stated that with the construction of four ports, 100 million tonnes of cargo handling could be added to the existing capacity of 228 million tonnes.

Taking a dig at the previous

TDP government, the Chief Minister recalled the foundation stone-laying ceremony of Ramayapatnam Port performed by former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu in February 2019, just two months before the general elections.

He stated that Chandrababu

Naidu did nothing in his five-year rule other than betraying people by laying a foundation without any DPR or land acquisition. Unlike the previous government, he said, the current government procured 850 acres of land for constructing the port.



## DPR for Visakhapatnam beach corridor being prepared: Gadkari

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Visakhapatnam-Bhogapuram Beach Corridor is under preparation, Minister Nitin Gadkari said while answering a question of MP GVL Narasimha Rao in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday. In reply to a Question whether the Andhra Pradesh Government has proposed to the Ministry for the development of Visakhapatnam-Bhogapuram beach corridor, the Union Minister for Roads Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari answered in the affirmative.

# Who will be 15<sup>th</sup> President of India?

Counting begins at 11AM today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Thursday will know who will succeed incumbent Ram Nath Kovind to become the country's 15th President, as counting of votes for the presidential election begins at 11am at the Parliament House here.

Ruling NDA's Droupadi Murmu and Opposition's Yashwant Sinha are pitted against each other in the contest, with votes clearly stacked in favour of Murmu, who, if elected, will be the first tribal woman to occupy the top constitutional post in the country.

Kovind's tenure is ending on July 24 and the new president will take oath on July 25. With ballot boxes from all states having reached the Parliament House, poll officials are ready for the counting in room number 63, the strongroom of Parliament where the boxes are guarded behind a round the clock security.



Rajya Sabha Secretary General P C Mody, who is the Chief Returning Officer for the poll, will oversee the counting Thursday, the result of which is likely to be declared by the evening.

Mody will first brief on the poll trends after all votes of MPs have been counted, and then again after votes of 10 states in alphabetical order have been counted.

Sources said he will brief once more on the poll trends after votes of 20 states have been counted, and then finally declare the result after the total counting.



## Sonia to appear before ED today

Cong plans protests

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress will hold protests across the country against the questioning of its chief Sonia Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate on Thursday, the opposition party said while slamming the agency's action against its top leadership as "political vendetta".

The Congress president is set to appear before the ED on Thursday in a money laundering case related to the National Herald-AJL case and top Congress leaders will converge at the AICC headquarters for the protests.

# Ekalavya schools achieve 100% results

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Ekalavya Model Residential Schools (EMRs) in Andhra Pradesh have achieved 100 per cent results. A total of 28 Ekalavya schools were sanctioned for Andhra Pradesh, including that of Adateegala and Rampachodavaram in East Godavari district, and all 28 EMRS are reported to be functional as on date.

In a written reply to YSRCP Rajya Sabha member V Vijaysai Reddy on Wednesday, Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Renuka Singh Saruta said there was 100pc pass percentage in Classes X and XII of EMRSs in Andhra Pradesh in the academic year 2020-2021.

As per the alumni data available, during academic year 2019-20, around 64 per cent of students took admission in under graduation courses -- around seven per cent in engineering courses, 1.6 pc in medical courses, nine per cent in courses for medical allied services and six per cent in other professional courses.

Further, a detailed Managerial Information System (MIS) for EMRSs has been developed by the National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS) with several modules, which have facilities to secure various information about the students



In a written reply to YSRCP Rajya Sabha member V Vijaysai Reddy on Wednesday, Union Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Renuka Singh Saruta said there was 100pc pass percentage in Classes X and XII of EMRSs in Andhra Pradesh in the academic year 2020-2021.

including alumni of EMRSs. The Union Minister further said that Going Online as Leaders (GOAL) was a joint initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Meta (formerly Facebook), which aims at digital empowerment of tribal youth and women through concept of mentor and mentee with online training modules across States by providing them plethora of opportunities of life skills, digital literacy, leadership and entrepreneurship with online training modules.

# Polavaram will submerge Bhadrachalam

NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

The damage caused by the recent heavy floods to the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project has been put at Rs.20-25 crore, according to Special Chief Secretary Rajat Kumar.

The Special CS reviewed the impacts of heavy rains and floods in the state on Wednesday, security issues concerning SRSP, Kadem and Kaleswaram projects as well as threats to Bhadrachalam.

As per the agreement, the loss to Kaleshwaram project caused by the floods will be borne by the company maintaining the project. Rajat Kumar clarified that repair works



relating to the Kaleshwaram pump houses would be completed in 45 days. The Special Chief Secretary said that Bhadrachalam and Parnashala would also be submerged, along with lakhs of acres of land, under the Polavaram project being constructed by the Andhra Pradesh government.

## China plans new highway along LAC with India

PNS ■ BEIJING

China plans to build a new highway along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India as part of Beijing's efforts to strengthen its strategic position and project its power, a media report said on Wednesday.

The highway, spanning from Lhunze county in Tibet to Mazha in Kashgar, Xinjiang region, is among 345 construction plans proposed in the new national programme, which aims to build a total of 461,000 kms of highway and motorway by 2035, as China seeks to revive its faltering economy with infrastructure investment, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

# TRS and YSRCP adopt different paths in Parliament

BJP trying to widen gap between Telugu CMs

SNCN ACHARYULU  
■ HYDERABAD

The ruling parties of the Telugu states are following different paths in the ongoing session of Parliament. While the ruling party of Telangana State, Telangana Rashtira Samiti, is sailing with opposition parties, the ruling party of Andhra Pradesh, YSR Congress Party, is indirectly supporting the Bharatiya Janata Party, which is



heading the NDA government at the Centre.

The Chief Ministers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh were political enemies till 2019,

post bifurcation of the combined Andhra Pradesh state. Soon after YS Jaganmohan Reddy became the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh in 2019, the Chief Ministers of Telugu states cooperated with each other till Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao started hardening his stand against BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

**TODAY**

**ALMANAC**

Month & Paksham:  
Tithi: Ashtami: Jul 20 07:36 AM to Jul 21 08:12 AM  
Navami: Jul 21 08:12 AM to Jul 22 09:32 AM

Nakshatram:  
Ashwini: Jul 20 12:50 PM to Jul 21 02:17 PM  
Bharani: Jul 21 02:17 PM to Jul 22 04:25 PM

Rahukalam: 1:59 PM to 3:35 PM  
Yamagandam: 5:55 AM to 7:32 AM  
Varjyam: 12:44 AM to 02:29 AM  
Gulika: 9:09 AM to 10:45 AM  
Amritakalam: 06:39 AM to 08:21 AM  
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:56 AM to 12:48 PM

**VIJAYAWADA WEATHER**

Forecast: Partly cloudy  
Temp: 33°C  
Humidity: 77%  
Sunrise: 5:45 AM  
Sunset: 6:43 PM  
Updated: JULY 20, 2022 5:00 PM

# Events galore to mark Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Identification of roundabouts and markets to be decked up in the tricolour, prabhat pheris by school students, illumination of flyovers are some of the events planned to make the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign beginning July 22 a memorable one, an official statement said on Wednesday.

The preparations are also underway for the 75th anniversary of India's Independence, said the L-G office's statement.

Prominent roads in the city, markets, flyovers, roundabouts, and schools and hospitals of civic agencies will be decked up in the colours of the national flag, said the statement, adding that all employees of

urban local bodies (ULB) will have the tricolour pinned on their lapels.

The directives come following a meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday which was attended by all Governors, Lt Governors, chief ministers and administrators of Union territories.

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) will identify prominent roads like Sardar Patel Marg and Shanti Path, and important market areas in their respective jurisdictions to be decorated with the tricolour to give a celebratory look to the entire city from August 13 to August 15. The Delhi Development Authority (DDA) will carry out similar exercise in the markets owned and controlled by it.



The flyovers in the NDMC area will be illuminated in the colours of the national flag during this period,

and municipal schools and hospitals will hoist the flag in their premises at a prominent location

from August 13 to 15. All employees of ULBs, irrespective of rank and designation, will wear lapel pins of the tricolour in the days running up to the 75th Independence Day and they will be encouraged to purchase these pins.

ULBs will identify important roundabouts in their area for the display of tricolour through different means like floral boards, flags, and illumination in the colors of the national flag, said the statement.

All the departments of Delhi government, apart from MCD, NDMC, DDA and Delhi Police, have been asked by L-G V K Saxena to make concerted efforts for popularising the Har Ghar Tiranga' initiative by ensuring maximum people's participation.

# 7 judicial officers to be elevated as HC judges

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Supreme Court Collegium, at its meeting held on Wednesday, approved the proposal for elevation of seven judicial officers as judges in the Andhra Pradesh High Court.

The elevated judges are Adusumalli Venkata Ravindra Babu, Vakkalagadda Radha Krishna Krupa Sagar, Sivasunder Bandaru, Srinivas Vutukuru, Boppana Varaha Lakshmi Narasimha Chakravarthi, Tallapragada Mallikarjuna Rao, and Duppla Venkata Ramana.



DRAUPADI MURMU'S PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATURE

# History in the making by, to, and for the people

The Presidential elections in the largest democracy in the world have ushered in the winds of a change that is nothing less than revolutionary. Draupadi Murmu, a leader from Odisha, and the first lady Governor of Jharkhand, is the candidate of the National Democratic Alliance to stand for the 15th President of the Republic of India. The fact that Murmu is contesting for the highest office is a definitive and clear recognition of a people, hitherto considered marginal, as having not only become an inalienable part of India, but are also at the pinnacles of power and honour. As the children of India, they are stakeholders in the country's future and progress. What had been the dream of Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar and other national leaders is just

a heartbeat away from realisation with her election. The commitment of the NDA to the people, manifested sometimes sartorially, in Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and constantly in their policies and principles, has now reached the highest point politically. It is one of the most triumphant moments, democratically speaking, that one of India's tribal daughters will be chosen for the highest office on the nation's festive occasion of seventy-five golden years of Independence—Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The rise of Murmu as a candidate for the highest office is a study in simplicity and service. No one was surprised by the NDA's choice. She began her career as an Assistant Teacher in a school in Rairangpur, Odisha. She later served as a Junior Assistant in the

**Murmu showed her statesmanship as Governor during the unrest among some tribal people of Jharkhand in the Pathalgadi Movement. The tribals were protesting against the proposed state laws for the acquisition of tribal land. Murmu withheld her assent, returning the Bill for the Government's reconsideration, playing a major role in protecting the weak.**

Irrigation and Power Department, Government of Odisha. She was elected the Councillor of Rairangpur in Odisha and was made the Vice President of the Scheduled Tribes Morcha the same year. Murmu was elected MLA from the Rairangpur constituency in 2000, and headed the Department of Transport and Commerce in the BJP-supported Biju Janata Dal government. Her exceptional services as the Minister

of Fisheries and Animal Husbandry won her the Nilakantha Award for the Best MLA of 2007. She was the National Executive Member of the Scheduled Tribes Morcha of the BJP from 2013 to 2015. Murmu moved on to make history as the first woman hailing from the Scheduled Tribes to be sworn in as the Governor of the State of Jharkhand, and to have completed her five-year term successfully.



E SURESH KUMAR

Murmu showed her statesmanship as Governor during the unrest among some tribal people of Jharkhand in the Pathalgadi Movement. The tribals were protesting against the proposed state laws for the acquisition of tribal land. Murmu withheld her assent,

returning the Bill for the Government's reconsideration, playing a major role in protecting the weak. Her non-partisan attitude was universally appreciated, irrespective of party affiliations.

There was an assertion by the British, which, paraphrased, reads that the Adivasi culture constituted material that had not yet been, at the time, made part of the Hindu and Indian culture, and Murmu's candidature is recognition that this has been achieved peacefully and comprehensively. The choice of Murmu as the NDA's Presidential candidate has once again reassured the marginal communities that they have been, and always will be, loved and cherished by Mother India. John Locke once said "Social equality can be achieved only through

political equality." The candidature of Draupadi Murmu for the highest office is a clear statement of the commitment of the Government to include the till-recently marginalized people, erasing the divisive boundaries of class, caste, and cultural affiliations. The choice of a Presidential candidate is of a piece with the welfare programmes implemented during the last eight years. Cutting across most party lines, the choice of the candidature of Murmu is a heartwarming instance of harmony, unity, and equality in the country. Once again it has been proved that leadership and statesmanship lie in making deeply informed decisions. Everywhere in the world, the concept of development lies not in tall claims of the powers-that-be, but in the reaching out to the last person, and

showing that s/he is a valuable and respected stakeholder. This has happened in India, demonstrating that even those living in places far away from the centres of power are equal stakeholders in the nation's present and future. It will be proved as India, in her 75th year of Independence, celebrates her true demographic and democratic potential with yet another achievement as a lady President ascends the highest office of the land—an announcement to the world of India coming of age as a global leader, ahead of many 'advanced' nations that are yet to even hope for a lady Head of State.

(The author is a Member, UGC, New Delhi, and Vice Chancellor, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, Shillong, and Lucknow)

## Renewable energy: Need for India-US collaboration stressed

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Public Affairs Officer at the US Consulate in Hyderabad, David Moyer, noted that the United States and India had a long history of collaboration in the energy sector. He was speaking at a session on renewable energy, jointly organised by CII and the US Consulate in Vijayawada on Wednesday.

"By bringing together US and Indian experts from the private and public sectors to discuss the present and future of renewable energy, we are able to continue that collaboration today," Moyer said. As part of the continuing engagement and collaboration between India and the United States, the US Consulate in Hyderabad and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Andhra Pradesh launched the first session of the joint Renewable Energy Speaker Series in Vijayawada on Wednesday.

The objective of the series is to advance collaboration between the United States and India, with a special focus on the State of Andhra



Pradesh, one of India's leading States in India's renewable energy revolution journey.

While the impact of climate change is being felt globally, India is expected to bear more adverse impacts and consequences from this crisis. With the launch of the "U.S.-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership" at the Leader's Summit last year, India and the United States are poised to be leading players on the world stage for climate action via the Strategic Clean Energy Partnership and common

focus on renewable sources of energy.

State Energy Secretary K Vijayanand spoke on the renewable energy sector in Andhra Pradesh and the progressive policies which made the State the leader in renewable energy in India.

CII Andhra Pradesh chairman Neeraj Sarma said that the aim of the session was to create a sustained engagement between India and the United States towards building a consistent narrative and creating an enabling environment for greater collaboration in the renewable energy sector.

California Energy Commission Vice Chair Siva Gunda, National Bureau of Asian Research (NBR) Senior Advisor Clara Gillispie, and First Solar, India, Vice President and Country Managing Director Sujoy Ghosh, talked about the best practices from the United States in developing responsible solar and wind energy policies and projects that could be leveraged by Andhra Pradesh to help it achieve its renewable energy goals.

## Stamps, rare coins on display at Vizag Railway Station

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Philatelist A Krishna Rao displayed a wide range of stamp collections and coins at the Gate No.1 of Visakhapatnam Railway station, near the art gallery as part of ongoing Iconic Week celebrations of Azadi Ki Amrit Mahotsav.

A wide range of currency notes and rare coins of various countries and ages were displayed at the station. Passengers gathered in crowds to take a glimpse of those extinct items.

Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Anup Sapathy accompanied by ADRM (Operations) Manoj Kumar Sahoo, Senior Divisional Personnel Officer RNA Parida and other officers visited the exhibition. DRM expressed surprise to see such varied coins and stamp collection. He appreciated the efforts of Krishna Rao, who is a retired railway employee of Waltair Division.

The philatelist exhibited everything from metallic coins to paper money, issued from 1835 to 1947 and till date.

## 'Rotary International played key role in eradication of polio'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Rotary International President Jennifer Jones, addressing a press meet here on Wednesday, said that Rotary international had seven areas of focus to serve humanity, which were water and sanitation, economic and community development, maternal and child health development, supporting the environment, basic education and literacy, disease prevention and treatment peace and conflict prevention/resolution.

Jenifer Jones visited the Rotary club of Vijayawada Midtown on Wednesday. She stated that Rotary international played a big role in eradication of polio across the globe. She said, "I am incredibly excited to become the first president in the last 117 years not just because I am a woman but for the agenda I have for serving the society through Rotary."

Jenifer Jones said the environment protection will be focused through Rotary as it is different from country to country. She further said that Rotary is encouraging



women in joining the Rotary movement and appreciated men who are encouraging their spouse in joining rotary with good thought of service. She also expressed confidence that all the Rotarians turn out to be future leaders.

Explaining about the role of Rotary international during Covid, Jones said that the polio workers across 70 countries have been utilized to address the problem of Covid under which pooled millions of dollars to arrange the PPE kits, oxygen concentrators and masks and provided food to the isolated patients.

Rotary District Governor

Rtn Bhaskar Ram has informed that Rotary district 3020 is spread from districts from NTR to Srikakulam and informed about the development of parks with Rs 1.70 crore. He also informed that the Rotary will undertake burial ground development in the cities of Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam and Kakinada.

Rotary past district governors Rtn Sam Movva, Rtn Lakshmi Narayana, Rotary club of Vijayawada Midtown President Rtn Krishna Prabhu, Secretary KSN Babu and other Board of directors were also present.

## CM lays stone for Ramayapatnam...

Continued from Page 1

On the occasion, the Chief Minister thanked the people of villages Mondivaripalem, Avularipalem, Karlapalem, Ravuru, Chevuru, and Salipeta for giving their lands to the port and later distributed R&R pattas to the displaced families.

He sanctioned development works in the Kandukur constituency. Rs 25 crore was allotted for a bypass road at a stretch of 6.2 km and Rs 27 crore for the construction of a left bank canal for the Rallapadu project.

Ministers Kakani Govardhan Reddy, Gudivada Amarnath, Ambati Rambabu, MP Prabhakar Reddy, MLAs M Mahidhar Reddy, R Pratap Kumar Reddy, and other officials were present.

## Who will be 15<sup>th</sup> President...

Continued from Page 1

All ballot boxes from state assemblies had reached the Parliament's strongroom on Tuesday evening and have been locked there since. The ballot boxes had been flown into the national capital as Mr Ballot Box' from across the states. 'Mr Ballot Box' came seated in the front row of aircraft under the watchful gaze of the Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) of their respective states.

The Election Commission had on Monday posted photographs of the sealed ballot boxes onboard flights accompanied by AROs. According to the EC, each ballot box was issued an e-ticket under the name 'Mr Ballot Box'. Polling for the presidential election was held between 10am to 5pm Monday at 31 locations including the Parliament house and 30 centres within state legislative assemblies.

There are also reports of cross-voting in favour of Murmu in a number of states. There is no whip issued to members in the presidential poll. MPs of

both, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, except nominated MPs, and all MLAs in legislative assembly in all states act as electors in the presidential poll.

A total of 4,809 electors, comprising 776 MPs and 4,033 elected MLAs, are entitled to vote in the election, but nominated MPs and MLAs, and Members of Legislative Council are not.

Over 99 per cent of the total electors had cast their ballot in the poll that took place Monday, according to the Election Commission.

Eight MPs, including BJP MPs Sunny Deol and Sanjay Dhotre, were among those who missed casting their votes.

Actor-politician Deol missed voting since he is abroad for medical treatment, while Dhotre gave it a pass since he was in the ICU.

Two MPs each from BJP and Shiv Sena, and one each from the BSP, Congress, SP, and AIMIM missed voting in the Monday polls.

Kovind had become the President after polling 7,02,044 votes out of a total of 10,69,358 votes, while his rival Meira Kumar polled only 3,67,314 votes.

## DPR for Visakhapatnam beach corridor being...

Continued from Page 1

Gadkari stated that the State Government of Andhra Pradesh has proposed to the Ministry to develop the existing beach road connecting Visakhapatnam port container terminal to NH-16 at Bhogapuram via Rishikonda and Bhemili to six lane standards.

Mr. Gadkari further stated that the Ministry of Road Transport and Highway (MORTH) vide Office Memorandum dated December 24, 2020 had directed NHAI to initiate preparation of DPR. Later, NHAI had already appointed a DPR consultant for feasibility cum DPR of the project. DPR preparation is in progress, he made it clear, adding that based on the outcome of the feasibility cum DPR of the subject stretch appropriate decision would be taken, Mr.Gadkari stated

in the written response.

Asked whether there was a plan to provide alternative connecting road from Gangavaram Port to National Highway 16/516E via Steel Plant to ward-off pollution problems faced by villagers in Gajuwaka Assembly, Nitin Gadkari stated that the NHAI has recently awarded a feasibility cum DPR to study this aspect. Based on the outcome of the study, a final decision will be taken in this regard, the Minister stated. Responding to the Minister's replies, GVL Narasimha Rao stated that the Narendra Modi headed government at the Centre had sanctioned a huge sum of funds for highways development in the state and thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari for the special attention given to Andhra Pradesh.

## 'Some want Dalit Bandhu to fail'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for IT and Municipal Administration K T Rama Rao on Wednesday said that a section of people want the Dalit Bandhu scheme to fail.

He was inaugurating the Dalit Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DICC) Business Facilitation Centre and Model Career Centre in Hyderabad.

Speaking on the occasion, KTR said, "We don't want to distribute Dalit Bandhu like peanuts. Some people say that the scheme was aimed at gaining political advantage.

The fact is that in the socio-economic survey, at the bottom of the pyramid are Dalit, tribal and minorities. Indira Gandhi said Garibi Hatao, Modi is saying Garibon ko Hatao. It shouldn't just be a slogan, you have to start somewhere for some section and then apply it to everyone."

He said that some people are trying to attach political motives and portray it with suspicion. In Siricilla, under Dalit Bandhu, we try to discourage beneficiaries to opt for vehicles. If everyone buys tractors and harvesters, the programme will fail.

## Polavaram will...

Continued from Page 1

Rajat said there was threat to historical areas along with crop loss due to backwaters. "Bhadrachalam and Parnashala will also submerge. We have written many letters to the Centre to conduct a study on Polavaram backwater. It is stated that the Centre has not yet responded on the backwater damage and other issues". Rajat Kumar mentioned that there was no mishap at the Kadem project, considering it was repaired recently. The heavy rain recorded recently at Kadem project was unprecedented in the last 100 years. So, it was not correct to suggest that the state government was not prepared to tackle floods and rains. He described as 'baseless' media reports and estimates about flood damage.

**GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH REVENUE DEPARTMENT**  
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE  
Rt.No.Rev.05-22011/25/2022-Part.4, K SEC-CSSL, Dt.19.07.2022  
Name of the work: Establishing GIS Cell at CSS&LRs Department, Government of AP to Develop WebGIS application and Mobile GIS applications.  
Opening date for sale of bid tender document: 20.07.2022 @ 10.30 AM. Online downloading bids visit: www.approcurement.gov.in. For details visit: www.cslr.ap.gov.in/cslr. Sd/- Commissioner, SS&LRs, AP, Vijayawada.



# Animal Husbandry Dept mulls increasing milk collection

Add Automatic Collection Units and Bulk Milk Chilling Units to be set up in NTR district

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Animal Husbandry Department is considering increasing milk collection in the NTR district by setting up Automatic Collection Units (AMCU) and Bulk Milk Chilling Units (BMCU) under the Jagannanna Palavelluva scheme, for which the State government has tied up with Amul.

With the objective of encouraging women dairy farmers and boosting dairy farming in the district, the district administration is focusing on setting up more milk collection centres. The combined Krishna district had 37,400 identified women dairy farmers in 264 villages. However, after the reorganisation of the districts, the NTR district ended up with 95 milk collection centres. According to sources, the department collects 4,000 litres of milk per day from 4,000 identified milk producers --



3,000 litres in the morning and 1,000 litres in the evening. All the collected milk is sent to Nuzvid BMCU for further processing, the source said. As of now, the department is collecting milk in 95 villages in seven mandals, and is planning to set up 272 AMCUs and 112 BMCUs

across the district. The State government has allotted sites to set up these centres and orders in this regard have been issued to tahsildars. Recently, District Collector S Dilli Rao convened a meeting to discuss site allotment with Revenue and Animal Husbandry Department officials

and gave instructions to speed up land handover.

According to Jagannanna Palavelluva nodal officer Dr. P Lalith Kumar, the milk is collected from G Konduru, Mylavaram, Reddigudem, Gampalagudem, A Konduru, Tiruvuru, and Vissannapeta.

The department is planning to extend milk collection to the remaining villages very soon, he said.

The Revenue Department has identified sites at 112 RBK villages to construct AMCUs, he added. He further said that the State government had allotted Rs.64.32 crore for constructing the AMCUs and BMCUs. As per the orders, Rs.15 lakh has been allotted for AMCUs and Rs.21 lakh, for BMCUs, he said. An AMCU should be set up on three cents of land and a BMCU, on five cents. They would be constructed using MGNREGA funds, he added.

He said that the Andhra Pradesh Dairy Development sold 10,000 litres of packaged milk in the name of Amul in Vijayawada only. "The demand for Amul milk is increasing day by day and the department collects milk from Guntur and West Godavari," he said.

# Minister seeks proposals to develop Lidcap



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Social Welfare Meruga Nagarjuna has said that the State government is keen on developing the Leather Industries Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh Limited (Lidcap), and the department officials should prepare proposals as early as possible. "Collect the details of lands and assets, and chalk out a plan on making use of them," he said. Minister Nagarjuna convened a meeting with

Lidcap officials at his chamber at the secretariat on Wednesday. He enquired the officials about the details of Lidcap lands, assets, and other properties. He asked them to submit a detailed report within one week. He also asked them about earlier schemes, how they were run, and why they were stopped.

Minister Nagarjuna asked the officials whether there were any chances of bringing the Lidcap lands into use.

He further said that he would not tolerate negligence in col-

lecting the details of lands and assets. For the development of Lidcap, he said that he would meet Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. "Take necessary steps to protect the Lidcap assets in the State. Lidcap has a big property in the heart of Vijayawada. The officials should prepare plans for utilising the land," he said.

Lidcap Vice-Chairman and Managing Director Dola Sankar, General Manager Swarnalatha, and others were present.

# AP govt first among States on welfare front: MLA Vishnu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The YSRCP government stands first among the States in the country by implementing welfare schemes, said Vijayawada Central MLA Malladi Vishnu. "Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is an inspiration to other CMs," he said.

MLA Malladi Vishnu conducted 'Gadapa Gadapaku Mana Prabhutvam' at the Bhavajipet area of the 27th division in Vijayawada on Wednesday. He enquired about the problems faced by the people and the Covid-19 vaccination. Those who had taken the first two doses should take a booster dose, he said.

MLA Vishnu said that health secretaries and Arogya Mitras should take the responsibility to bring the people to

**"However, if anyone is unable to go to the health center, the department staff should go to their houses and give them vaccination," he said**



health centers. "However, if anyone is unable to go to the health center, the department staff should go to their houses and give them vaccination," he said.

He noticed the electrical wires hanging down and directed the officials to fix them. VMC sanitation staff should collect garbage from the houses and maintain the roads and streets clean, he said.

Rs.45.70 lakh was sanctioned for construction of underground drainage and roads at Bhavajipet and the works would be started shortly, he added.

VMC Deputy Mayor Avuthu Sri Sailaja, corporators K Malliswari, Bali Govind, Zonal Commissioner Ambedkar, AMOH Rama Koteswara Rao, and others were present.

# Weightlifters Koteswara Rao, Vishnu Vardhan for Natl Games



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Weightlifters BSD Vishnu Vardhan and Koteswara Rao will participate in the National Games, which will begin in Gujarat on September 27. Both of them belong to the Krishna district. According to Krishna District Weightlifting Association (KDWA) president Chennupati Vazeer and secretary K Damodara Rao, the two weightlifters have been

selected for the Andhra Pradesh team. The Indian Weightlifting Federation confirmed the selections, they said. Vazeer and Damodara Rao felicitated them at a programme held at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation Stadium in Vijayawada on Wednesday. Sports Authority of India (SAI)'s Weightlifting Coach VN Rajasekhar congratulated Koteswara Rao and Vishnu Vardhan.

# Officials asked to stop water pollution in Vijayawada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar has directed the officials concerned to take necessary steps to stop the water pollution in the city and to maintain water pipelines properly.

The VMC Commissioner visited the 48th, 51st, and 35th divisions in Vijayawada on Wednesday. He inspected water pipelines and drainage systems, and listened to the problems faced by the local people. He directed the officials to resolve all the problems as early as possible and maintain roads and drainages properly to ensure smooth flow of drain water. Sanitation authorities should take necessary steps to remove silt in the drainage, he said. He added that engineering officials should increase the



height of drinking water pipelines. Namma toilets should be made operational immediately, he added.

He instructed the officers to complete the fencing work of the canal bund at Purnanandam Pet and conduct repairs to fencing which slipped into the canal bund at

the CK Reddy road. He was unhappy over the incomplete painting work at Eat Street at MG Road in the city. He directed the officials concerned to complete the work immediately. VMC Chief Engineer M Prabhakar, Executive Engineer Narayana Murthy and others were present.

# RTC Chairman visits Central Hospital, ZSTC

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

APSRTC Chairman A Mallikharjuna Reddy visited the RTC's Central Hospital and held a meeting with officials concerned at Vidyadharapuram in Vijayawada on Wednesday. Senior Medical Officer and Superintendent Dr. DVS Apparao explained the services being rendered to the staff and their family members in the departments of General Medicine, Dental, Ortho, and Ophthalmology. The Chairman inspected all the Wings and also operation theatres scrupulously. He expressed satisfaction and advised the CMO and the

staff to render their services to the satisfaction of the patients.

He visited ZSTC and addressed the ongoing training programme for depot managers. He explained the corporation's present financial position and urged them to strive hard to achieve the best results to bring out the organisation from losses. Later, the chairman visited the Tyre Retreading Shop and inspected all wings. APSRTC Vijayawada Zone Executive Director Gidugu Venkateswara Rao, DyCAO Kongara Ramachandra Rao, ZWS works manager Vanisree, AWE (Tyres) Naik, and others accompanied him.



# Fever deaths: Rs.1 lakh aid given to kin



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Gannavaram MLA Dr. Vallabhaneni Vamsi Mohan has announced Rs.1 lakh financial assistance to the kin of the people who died of viral fever and diarrhea at Tempalli recently. Gannavaram Mandal Parishad President Anagani Ravi, ZPTC member Annavarapu Elizabeth Rani, and MPTC member Jonnalagadda Rangamma handed over the financial

assistance to the victims' family members on Wednesday. MLA Vamsi said that he was monitoring the situation and holding discussions with Krishna District Collector P Ranjith Basha and Health Department officials. "I told the Krishna Collector and RWS officer to lay a drinking water pipeline in Tempalli village. Works will be done spending Rs 1.32 crore. Also, works worth another Rs.1.60 crore will be

taken up in the village for the development of CC roads and the drainage system," he said.

To supply safe drinking water to the people, the water plant with 5,000-litre capacity should be tested. MPP, ZPTC, MPTC members, sarpanch, and other people's representatives should be available at any time to serve the victims' families as well as those who are undergoing treatment, he added.

# 'Polavaram works stopped after YSRCP came to power'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former MLA and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) senior leader Bonda Uma said here on Wednesday that when 70 per cent of the Polavaram project works were completed during the TDP regime, after the YSRCP came to power these works were completely brought to a halt.

Talking to media persons here, Uma said that when Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is taking complete rest in his Tadepalle palace in AC rooms and the Ministers of his Cabinet in their houses, the flood victims are spending their time under constant threat. The Rs 500 cr which is claimed to have been paid to Polavaram displaced has gone into whose account, he asked.

The Polavaram project is a result of series of fights but the YSRCP Government is not taking any interest to complete it, the former MLA said adding that when N Chandrababu Naidu, in his capacity as the chief minister

of the State used to conduct review meetings every Monday on Polavaram.

The TDP during its regime completed 70 per cent of the works of this most prestigious project by spending Rs 11,000 cr but after Jagan Mohan Reddy came to power this Government totally watered down the project, he stated. This is not the version of the TDP but the fact was mentioned on the floor of Parliament itself on March 5, 2020, by none other than the Water Resources wing.

During his padayatra, Jagan promised that the Polavaram project will be completed by 2020 after the YSRCP comes to power. But after assuming power, he extended it to 2022 and the Union Minister for Water Resources, replying to a question to TDP MP Kanakamedala Ravinda Kumar, told Parliament that after the Jagan Mohan Reddy Government came to power in 2019, Polavaram was completely subjected to negligence.

# Pallavotsavam observed at Tirumala



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Pallavotsavam fete was observed with religious pomp in Tirumala on Wednesday in the advent of Uttarabhadra, the birth star of Mysore Maharaja.

As part of the festivities, in a grand procession, the Utsava deities have reached Karnataka choultry after the Sahasra Deepalankara seva. Mysore Samsthan and Karnataka government representatives presented special harati on the occasion.

Temple DyEO Ramesh Babu, Peshkar Srihari and Parupattandar Tulasi Prasad were also present.

# AP moving on the lines of Lanka, says Payyavula

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) on Wednesday expressed serious concern over the deeper financial crisis in Andhra Pradesh, which is pushing the State into the worst economic emergency.

Talking to media persons over Zoom, party MLA and Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee Payyavula Kesav said that the TDP had been saying for the past four months that the State was following the path of Sri Lanka. The Andhra Pradesh Government has borrowed funds four times more than Sri Lanka and challenged the Jagan Mohan Reddy Government whether it is ready for an open

**"This is only a tip of the iceberg," the TDP leader said and expressed serious concern that a special financial situation is prevailing in the state.**



and special audit. "The Centre has red-flagged 'disturbing trends' in the financial crisis of 10 States, including Andhra Pradesh, and cited the economic crunch in Sri Lanka," Payyavula Kesav said, adding that high off-budget borrow-

ings, escrowing of future revenue and loans secured against public assets were the primary reasons for this disastrous situation.

An in-depth study should be done on the financial situation of the State as Andhra Pradesh

is in the most perilous situation, he added. Pointing out that the Reserve Bank of India had prepared the risk analysis and the Union Finance Ministry had made a presentation on this in which Andhra Pradesh is either on top or in second place in all the index, Payyavula Kesav said that this risk analysis is made strictly on the guidelines of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"This is only a tip of the iceberg," the TDP leader said and expressed serious concern that a special financial situation is prevailing in the state. Accounts for Rs 40,000 to Rs 50,000 crore are not made public yet and if this too comes out then one can easily imag-

ine the situation, he said. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) should bring the facts to light and the qualifying certificate issued to the State by the CAG is unique as no other State till now got such certificate, he added. "If the State faces a situation like Sri Lanka, leaders may run away from the State, but the common man is the worst-hit as he will not find a place to go. We have earlier seen persons like Vijay Malya and Gotabaya running away leaving the people in the lurch," he said.

All this is because of the escalating cost of the contracts, he said and pointed out that the cost of the Jillelabanda reservoir works in Anantapur district has escalated from Rs

90-94 crore to a whopping Rs 400 crore now. Making it clear that the TDP always encouraged welfare programmes for the public, he said the Jagan Mohan Reddy government was looting the State in the name of welfare. No fertiliser subsidy for farmers nor any other welfare programme taken up for the uplift of downtrodden sections, he said.

Stating that he was ready for an open debate on the economic crisis of the State, Payyavula Kesav demanded a White Paper on the present economic situation of the State. The State government should provide the accounts details to the CAG or the CAG, with its powers, should demand them, he added.

# Collectors call for measures to control Covid-19

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Krishna District Collector P Ranjith Basha and NTR Collector S Dilli Rao on Wednesday conducted video conferences with their respective officers regarding Covid-19. The Krishna Collector said that because of the increasing Covid cases all over the country, the Health officials should increase the speed of RTPCR tests. Earlier, the collector attended Ministry of Health Medical and Family Welfare Department Secretary Rajesh Bhusan's video conference and explained the steps that are taken to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Later, at the district officers' meeting, the Collector said that

booster shots should be received by all people. He told the officials that Covid cases had increased in the villages nearby Vijayawada and so, the positivity rate of the district increased. The Health department should focus on the areas and take necessary actions to prevent containment, he said. As many as 14,95,326 people received the first dose and 16,85,921 got the second dose. Also, 2,13,082 people have been given precautionary doses. The NTR Collector informed Union Secretary Rajesh Bhusan that he would be taking all precautionary steps to control Covid. The Health Department conducted 10,122 Covid tests from June till now and 998 were tested positive, he said.



# Slush, garbage greet flood-hit victims upon return to homes

PNS ■ ELURU

Accumulated slush, garbage, mud uprooted trees and electrical poles greeted the flood victims who went to their homes after spending five days in the relief camps on Wednesday. Though the flood water receded from some of the affected villages, it took a couple of days to restore normalcy in the flood ravaged villages.

Most of the roads in the flood hit villages were seen with accumulated slush and garbage. The victims were seen cleaning their houses as well as the roads in front of their homes. Though the flood water receded from many villages, Chinturu, Etapaka, Kunavaram and Vara Ramachandrapuram villages are still in knee deep water.

The flood victims who returned to their homes on Wednesday said that the household gadgets like fridge, TV and grinders were soaked in the flood water and they should be repaired. Hundreds of two-wheelers and auto rickshaws were also submerged in flood water. Many huts and mud houses were seen caved in at the affected villages.

Talking to the media on



**The flood victims who returned to their homes on Wednesday said that the household gadgets like fridge, TV and grinders were soaked in the flood water and they should be repaired. Hundreds of two-wheelers and auto rickshaws were also submerged in flood water**

Wednesday, food relief operations special Commissioner Katamneni Bhaskar said 20,000 families were shifted to the relief camps, 19,438 families had been distributed essential commodities and 18,838

victims were being disbursed financial help announced by the government. He said that 75 medical camps were set up to provide medical facilities to the flood affected victims. Katamneni Bhaskar said that

20,248 families were affected by the floods and of which 20,000 families were shifted to relief camps. He said that 16 teams were deployed to the flood hit areas to carry out relief operations. The relief camps would continue till the last victims leave the camp for their homes, he made it clear. The sanitary staff were removing silt and garbage on the roads and drains in the flood ravaged villages. Bleaching was also being spread to ensure the spread of diseases and breeding of mosquitoes. He appealed to the victims to be

cautious of the outbreak of seasonal diseases.

The Special Commissioner said that inflows to the river Godavari had started receding. The water level in the river at present is below danger level, he informed. "Normalcy will return to all the flood affected villages very soon. All officials of all departments have been working in the flood hit areas in a coordinated manner. Relief operations are being carried out 24 hours. The government staff went to the remote villages and provided essentials to the victims. Electricity will be restored by Thursday, except at Koida village", he said.

The worst affected by the floods are the farmers as horticulture crops including papaya, vegetables, maize and plantain were badly damaged as they were submerged in the flood water for more than five days. Coconut farmers in Mamidikuduru mandal in Konaseema district lamented that their coconuts had fallen and flowering was damaged. Paddy and other crops were damaged in lakhs of acres in the six districts and enumeration of crop loss is yet to be carried out.

# Officials directed to expedite houses in Jagananna colonies



PNS ■ GUNTUR

District Collector M Venugopal Reddy directed the officials to take steps to expedite the process of construction of houses in the Jagananna colonies and instructed the nodal officers and public health officials in this regard. The Collector reviewed the progress of construction of houses in the Jagananna colonies here on Wednesday in which municipal corporation commissioner Keerthi Chekuri was present.

The Collector said that the nodal officers of the municipal corporation, the housing officers and representatives of agencies should work in coordination to resolve the problems at the field level in the construction of houses for

the poor in the Jagananna colonies. He warned of taking action if indifference of officials was found in this regard.

The district Collector inquired about the Etukur 1,2,3,4,5 layouts, Percherla, Pottur, Budampadu, Damarapalli layouts under the jurisdiction of the city corporation, the houses sanctioned in the layouts by the city corporation nodal officers, housing officers, public health officers, contractors, registration of beneficiaries, geo tagging in construction. The District Collector inquired about the details of the existing houses and the basic facilities required in the layouts. Collector Venugopal Reddy directed the authorities concerned to immediately start the works of water facil-

ity, electricity, approach roads, internal roads and jungle clearance required for the construction of houses in the layouts. Beneficiaries who have chosen option 3 should open bank accounts immediately and sign MoUs, the Collector directed them.

In the layouts where the work has not yet started, steps should be taken to start the work immediately and take it from the below basement level to the basement level, the Collector instructed the officials. The housing authorities were advised to arrange night watchmen in the layouts. Housing PD Sainath Kumar, Housing DE Prasad, Municipal corporation deputy commissioners Srinivas Rao, T Venkata Krishnaiah and Tahasildars were present.



## Janavani put off as Pawan indisposed

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Janasena party here on Wednesday announced the postponement of Janavani programme as Janasena chief K Pawan Kalyan is suffering from viral fever. Janasena political affairs committee chairman Nadendla Manohar in a statement here on Wednesday said that Pawan Kalyan is suffering from viral fever after visiting East and West Godavari district. Manohar said that the Janavani programme was postponed to July 31 from June 24. The venue and other details about the Janavani programme would be announced soon, he said. Manohar said that Pawan Kalyan is suffering from viral fever. He said that some Janasena leaders including programme committee members and security staff are also suffering from fever. The Janasena has organised Janasena programmes in Vijayawada and Bhimavaram.

## People scramble for oil as tanker overturns



PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

An oil tanker which was transporting edible oil from Chennai to Hyderabad overturned at Challagundla village in Nekarikallu mandal on Narketpally-Addanki highway on Wednesday and large numbers of people rushed there to fetch oil being leaked from tanker.

Police said that the tanker was transporting edible oil from Chennai to Hyderabad. The tanker driver lost control of the vehicle resulting in it overturned on the highway.

Large number of nearby villagers rushed to the tanker with cans and containers to fetch the oil which was leaking from the ill-fated tanker.

**Police said that the tanker was transporting edible oil from Chennai to Hyderabad. The tanker driver lost control of the vehicle resulting in it overturned on the highway**

They took away the leaked oil. The police tried to prevent the villagers from reaching the tanker but they could. The traffic on the highway was disrupted for a couple of hours due to the incident.

## TDP leaders detained before CM's Nellore programme

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Telugu Desam leaders registered their protest against detaining them from meeting Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy to submit a memorandum to him.

Kandukur Constituency TDP in-charge Induru Nageswara Rao and former MLA Divi Shivaram while addressing a press conference on Tuesday announced that they were going to meet Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy in Nellore to submit a memorandum on the issue of merging Kandukur in Nellore district

in the reorganisation of districts. The police as a precautionary measure detained the TDP leaders in their houses on Wednesday and prevented them from going to Nellore. The police detained TDP leader Nageswara Rao at Badevaripalem in Voletivari palem mandal and other leaders at various places. Large number of police deployed to his house. However, Nageswara Rao eluded police detention and reached the TDP office in Kunduru. The police rushed to the TDP office and detained him in the office. Knowing the police detained the TDP leader, a large num-

ber of TDP activists rushed to the TDP office and assembled there. They raised slogans against the police for detaining the TDP leader. They demanded that Kandukur constituency should be merged into Prakasam district again. The TDP leaders slammed the local ruling party MLA for not raising the issue before the Chief Minister. The police held TDP leader Gochipatala Moshe, BC cell state executive secretary Chilakapati Madhu city general secretary M Srunu and took them to town police station and freed them in the evening.



## Man injured in tiger's attack

PNS ■ ONGOLE

A tiger attacked a man in which he suffered bleeding injuries on his head at Palutla village Yarragondapalem mandal on Wednesday.

Forest officials said that Desavath Balu Naik and his son Shiva Krishna took cattle to the forest area for grazing. When they were returning from the forest area, a tiger, which hid itself behind a bush, pounced upon Balu Naik suddenly. He resisted the tiger by using a stick. Later he screamed for help. Scared at the commotion, the tiger ran into the forest.

Balu Naik suffered a severe slash on the head. The profusely bleeding Balu Naik was taken to the government hospital in Y. Palem. Ganjivariipalem forest range officer Subba Rao visited the victim and assured to pay the medical expenses. The tiger's attack on cattle grazers sent shock waves in the surrounding villages which plunged in panic.

This is the first instance of a tiger attacking and



injuring a man in the district. Forest ranger Subba Rao said that there are 62 tigers in the Atmakur, Nandyala, Srisailem, Giddalur and Markapuram division limits.

It may be mentioned here that last month the tiger roamed in the area of Bommalapuram village in Dornala Mandal. The farmers had not gone to their fields fearing a tiger for 15 days. The tiger also killed a cow in the forest area last year. The tigers stray into the village while questing for water to drink.

## Bullet found in monkey, removed

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

The doctors removed a bullet from the shoulder of a monkey here on Wednesday. Official sources said that the monkey suffered injuries when it attacked a pack of stray dogs at Cherukuvada village.

The injured monkey was taken to a veterinary hospital here. While treating the monkey, the veterinary doctors found a bullet in the shoulder of the

money. Operation was performed and the doctors removed the bullet. The doctors expressed surprise at the bullet pierced through the shoulder of the monkey. It is suspected that the monkey was shot with a country-made rifle or a gun which is used for practice. The animal lovers appealed to the police to investigate and take firm action against who shot the monkey with a gun.



## 71% Indians feel it is important for parents to monitor kid's online activity

SIDDHARTH KUMAR SINGH ■ HYDERABAD

About 71% of Indian adults say that it is important for the parents to monitor their children's online activity. Norton, a leading consumer cyber safety board on Tuesday released the results of a survey they conducted in India.

"Our children are naturals when it comes to advances in technology, adapting to the latest gadgets to internet apps. While this is great, research shows that parents



believe they need to educate and actively engage with their children's online activ-

ities," said Ritesh Chopra, Director, Sales and Field Marketing, India and

SAARC countries. NortonLifeLock. This latest study tells us that three-quarters of Indian parents surveyed (78%) with children under 18, discovered their children have done something on their smart devices without their permission. The most important aspect to Internet safety for kids is that parents instill the right guidelines from an early age about the Internet and the potential hazard out there, he added. According to the report, 70% of those surveyed who are married or living with part-

ners, said that their relationship with their spouse or partner has got better while they were working from home. Over half of the Indian adults said that their relationship with friends got better and 51% of the people said that relationships with their co-workers improved while working from home. The findings also revealed that 93% of the people experienced technology-related issues, most commonly unreliable or slow Internet connectivity and frequent communication issues.

## Check outbreak of seasonal diseases: Civic chief

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Municipal Corporation Commissioner Keerthi Chekuri directed the officials to take all precautionary measures to check the outbreak of seasonal diseases. The Commissioner inspected the sanitation works at Brundavan colony main road, Gujjanagundla centre and other areas here on Wednesday.

She also inspected the production of oil balls at the Malaria sanitary division located in Brindavan gardens colony and spoke to the biologist and malaria staff. Oil balls should be prepared in each division office, she directed them. Apart from registering cases of malar-



ia and dengue in the city, the measures to be taken by the city administration should be

taken on a war footing, she directed them. The Sanitation Secretary, ANM and volunteers

should jointly go door to door to educate the people about seasonal diseases and inform them to clean water tanks, tires and pots so that water would not be stored for a long period of time.

Commissioner Keerthi Chekuri said that anti-larva operations should be carried out by putting oil balls, releasing Gambusia fish in the vacant places identified by the Malaria staff. She instructed them to take preventive measures in the areas where cases are being registered. Sanitary inspectors have to ensure that there should be no negligence in the sanitation works. She warned that if heaps of garbage is found on the roads, the sani-

tary inspectors would be held responsible. The Commissioner appealed to the people to observe every Friday as Dry day and cooperate with the municipal staff to eradicate the malaria menace. She asked people to ensure that lids are put on the overhead tanks and sumps so that the mosquito breeding could be prevented.

Keerthi Chekuri urged the people of the city to take steps to remove weeds and wild plants. Low lying vacant plots should be levelled to ensure that water is not stagnated, she said. CMOH Dr. Vijayalakshmi, Biologist Madhusudan Rao, SS Rambabu and Sanitary inspector Prasad were among those who accompanied her.

## Officials directed to expedite vaccination process

PNS ■ ELURU

District Collector Prasanna Venkatesh directed the officials to expedite the process of Coronavirus vaccination.

Collector Prasanna Venkatesh spoke to the officials concerned virtually and ordered the officials to be vigilant against seasonal diseases and covid-19 in the background of the rainy season.

The Collector directed the officials to ensure that the fever survey is conducted efficiently at the level of village and ward secretariats. He directed the

**The Collector directed the officials to ensure that the fever survey is conducted efficiently at the level of village and ward secretariats**



officials to expedite the vaccination process.

Earlier, Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry Secretary Rajesh Bhushan held a video conference with the officials of the states and districts

where the number of Covid-19 cases were high and the positivity rate was high on Wednesday. He gave several suggestions on making people aware of Covid precautions and expediting the vaccination process.



INDIA CORNER

### Patiala jail official attacked, case against six inmates

Six inmates here allegedly attacked the assistant jail superintendent of the central jail, who had gone to search the barracks on Wednesday. Police said a case has been registered against the accused, including Amanpreet Singh, Gurdeep Singh, Sukhdeep Singh and Jagdeep Singh. Police said a jail inmate, Karamjit Singh, had given a written complaint to Additional Jail Superintendent Gurcharan Singh Dhaliwal that some inmates were trying to extort money from him. It has been stated in the FIR that accused Gurdeep Singh, Iqbalpreet Singh, Balkar Singh, Jagdeep Singh, Sukhdeep Singh, Rajveer Singh and Amanpreet Singh had allegedly demanded Rs 85,000 from him and threatened to kill him in case of non-payment. To investigate this, Additional Superintendent Gurcharan Singh Dhaliwal and Assistant Jail Superintendent Amarvir Singh reached the barracks.



### Manipur landslide search ops called off; final toll at 61

The Manipur government on Wednesday officially called off search operations 20 days after a massive landslide struck a railway construction site in Noney district. Sixty-one people have lost their lives in the worst natural disaster to have occurred in the northeastern state in recent memory, while 18 people were rescued, Chief Minister N Biren Singh said. Fifty-six bodies have been retrieved from under the debris. Five people, including four civilians and one Territorial Army personnel, are still missing, and it has been decided to declare them dead, he said. Thirty of the deceased are Territorial Army personnel, while the rest are railway officials, labourers and locals, he said. A massive landslide had occurred at Tupul railway yard construction site of the Jiribam-Imphal railway line on June 30.



### Cattle-carrying pickup van mows down J'khand policewoman

A woman police official engaged in a vehicle checking drive near the Jharkhand capital Ranchi was mowed down on Thursday by a pickup van allegedly involved in cattle smuggling, an officer said. Sandhya Topno, a 32-year-old Sub Inspector of Police, was conducting the vehicle checking drive at Tupudana on the outskirts of Ranchi, when the speeding vehicle carrying cattle knocked her down and fled. "She was immediately taken to Ranchi's RIMS (Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences). She succumbed to her injuries on the way to the hospital," Tupudana police station in charge Kanhaiya Singh told PTI. Ranchi City SP Anshuman Kumar said that prima facie the matter seems to be a case of cattle smuggling. "One person has been detained. The police are in search of others. Investigations are on," he said.



# Ready for debate on price rise once FM recovers: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government is ready for a debate in Parliament on price rise once Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recovers from COVID-19, the BJP asserted on Wednesday and targeted Rahul Gandhi, saying he may be "unproductive politically" but should not hurt the legislature's productivity. Union ministers Piyush Goyal, Pralhad Joshi and Smriti Irani hit out at opposition parties as both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha saw little transactions for the third straight day due to their protests on the issues of price rise and the imposition of GST on many pre-packaged and labelled food items. Both Goyal and Joshi noted that it is Sitharaman who will reply to a debate on the matter and asserted that the government is willing for the discussion as demanded by the



opposition once she recovers and is back in Parliament. They refuted the opposition's charge that the government is running away from a debate and attacked the Congress, the largest opposition party. "The Congress has a destructive attitude towards democracy. It was exposed

from Jairam Ramesh's tweet that the Congress was successful in not allowing the House to function," Goyal, who is the Leader of House in Rajya Sabha, told reporters outside parliament. The government is not running away from any debate, he said. Joshi said the Congress is

not interested in a constructive debate but in "destructive damage". He said the opposition should follow the procedure for having the debate. The Rajya Sabha Chairperson and the Lok Sabha Speaker have also expressed their readiness for the discussion but the opposition should follow the

norms, he said. Earlier in the day, Irani launched a sharp attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his party members' vociferous protests in Parliament leading to frequent adjournments in both Houses. "He may be unproductive politically but he should not dare to continuously curb Parliament's productivity," she said, alleging that Rahul Gandhi's political life has been dotted with a show of disrespect to parliamentary procedures and traditions. He is now adamant to bring down the productivity of Lok Sabha, she told reporters. As an Amethi MP between 2004 and 2019, he never posed any questions in Parliament and when he "abandoned" the constituency and became the MP of Wayanad, his attendance in Lok Sabha was less than 40 per cent in the winter session in 2019, Irani said.

# 'Concessions to passengers weigh heavily on railways'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The railways on Wednesday informed the parliament that the cost of granting concessions to passengers "weighs heavily" on the national transporter, ruling out the restoration of the facility for all categories. In a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Indian Railways is already bearing more than 50 per cent of the cost of travel, on an average, for all passengers, including senior citizens, on account of lower fare structure for passenger services. "Apart from this, due to COVID-19, passenger earnings for the last two years is less in comparison to 2019-20. These have long-term impact on the financial health of the railways. Cost of granting concessions weighs heavily on the railways, hence extending scope of concessions to all categories of passengers, including senior citizens, is not desir-



able. "In spite of these challenges, Indian Railways has continued concession in fare to four categories of persons with disabilities, 11 categories of patients and students," the minister said. He also informed that the number of senior citizen passengers travelled in reserved classes during 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 are 6.18 crore, 1.90 crore and 5.55 crore, respectively. The minister attributed the decrease in travelling of number of senior citizen passengers during 2020-

21 and 2021-22 due to the pandemic. "In 2019-20, 22.62 lakh senior citizen passengers had opted to give up concession scheme in passenger fare and gave up concessions for the sustained development of Railways with better facilities," he said. He also said that the railways has forgone Rs 4,794 crore as revenue foregone due to concessions in passenger fare to senior citizen passengers during 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 for both reserved and unreserved categories.

# 'Uddhav losing control over Sena lawmakers'



PNS ■ MUMBAI

The split in the Shiv Sena shows Uddhav Thackeray is losing control over his MLAs and MPs, but it is still early to judge if the Thackeray legacy is fading, say political experts. They are of the view that a "vertical split" in the Shiv Sena is unavoidable, with 61-year-old former Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray not being able to capitalise on the legacy of his father late Bal Thackeray, who founded the party in 1966. After a split in the Shiv Sena legislature party last month, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena on Tuesday suffered a fresh jolt with 12 of its 19 Lok Sabha members shifting allegiance to Chief Minister Eknath Shinde. Some of the grassroots party workers in Thane district, a Sena stronghold, have also joined the Shinde camp. Bal Thackeray had founded the Shiv Sena 56 years ago on the issue of Marathi pride

and later in 1990s switched over to the Hindutva agenda. Political commentator Sujata Anandan, who has also authored a book on Bal Thackeray, told PTI that a legislature unit is not a political party. MLAs and MPs come and go and they have to get re-elected. "It is too early to say in a month's time that the Thackeray legacy is fading. We have to see with whom the Shiv Sainiks rally in the next election," she said. Anandan said the breaking away of MPs and MLAs does not mean anything. "Thackeray is Shiv Sena and Shiv Sena is Thackeray," she said. She recalled that Chhagan Bhujbal and Narayan Rane had earlier split the Shiv Sena along with a few MLAs, but except these two leaders, the other legislators either re-joined the party or faded into oblivion. Uddhav Thackeray has redefined Hindutva "as a non-violent but devout Hindu" which appeals to liberal Hindus, she said.

# UP: Dissenting voices in Adityanath's second term

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Signs of trouble are visible in the second consecutive term of Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath with state ministers making dissenting voices against the functioning of the government. After the expression of anger by Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak and suspension of senior officials in the Public Works Department headed by Jitin Prasad, a fresh crisis erupted on Wednesday when Jal Shakti Minister Dinesh Khatik

offered to quit, alleging that he is being ignored by officials. Khatik expressed his desire to resign through a letter addressed to Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The letter has surfaced on social media. Earlier in July, Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak had vented his ire over transfers made in his Health Department in his absence and had sought an explanation from Additional Chief Secretary (Medical and Health) Amit Mohan Prasad over the violation of the transfer policy.

# Corrupt officers ignoring me: UP Minister offers to quit

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Jal Shakti Minister Dinesh Khatik has offered to resign, pointing out corruption in the department and alleging that he is being ignored by officials as he is a Dalit. Khatik offered to quit in a letter addressed to Union Home Minister Amit Shah. The letter has surfaced on social media. However, when the media in his native Meerut district sought his reaction, Khatik said, "There is no such issue." Sources close to the minister in Meerut said he has gone to Delhi. Khatik (44) is a two-



time MLA from the Hastinapur seat in Meerut. Soon after the minister's purported letter surfaced on social media, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav tweeted, "Where there is no honour of

being a minister but the humiliation of being a Dalit...resigning from such a discriminatory BJP government is the only way to maintain the dignity of our society." In the letter to Shah, Khatik said, "The BJP

government has been formed due to the tireless hard work and efficient leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, national president J P Nadda and Amit Shah by taking the Dalits and backwards together. "Being the Minister of State for Jal Shakti belonging to the Dalit community, no action is taken on any of my orders, nor am I informed about the schemes which are currently being run in the department. He further wrote, "No information is given by officials due to which the minister of state does not get any concrete information about the department."

# Critical patient flown 23 hours from US to Chennai for medical treatment

PNS ■ CHENNAI

In the 'longest' such initiative, a 67-year-old critical patient from Bengaluru was flown to Chennai from the US on Tuesday for treatment, travelling about 23 hours before being admitted to a corporate hospital in the city. The woman's evacuation from Portland Oregon cost about Rs one crore. Upon the patient's arrival here, renowned senior interventional cardiologist Dr Sai Satish and a team of doctors examined her. She was subjected to tests at Apollo Hospital in Chennai where she was admitted. She had developed cardiac failure whilst she was in the US with her fam-



ily and was admitted in a tertiary hospital there. "Her health subsequently deteriorated further affecting other organ systems. She went into renal failure and was stabilised on dialysis," Dr Shalini Nalwad, who founded

International Critical-Care Air Transfer Team (ICATT) along with Dr Rahul Singh Sardar, told PTI in Bengaluru. ICATT was contacted by Dr Sai Satish from Apollo, Chennai for the transfer. "The ICATT had also

transferred the longest air ambulance transfer with a single set of crew during the lockdown from Johannesburg to Chennai. Now, we broke our own record by successfully transferring a critical patient from USA to India," Dr Nalwad claimed. According to Dr Nalwad, a lot of discussion and planning was held between the treating doctors in the US, their counterparts in Chennai and ICATT members. After meticulous planning, the operation date was fixed for July 17 and the ICATT sent its flying Intensivist on July 15 to Portland directly, she said and added, a thorough bedside assessment was carried out and a transport strategy laid out.

# Two dead, one hospitalised after drinking spurious liquor



PNS ■ PATNA

At least two people have died and one has been hospitalised allegedly after drinking spurious liquor in Patna. The three friends bought liquor from a person in Alamanj area on Monday and drank it together, following which one of their bodies was found inside his house the

next morning, while another person was taken to a hospital where doctors declared him brought dead. The third friend has been hospitalised and his condition is stated to be stable. "The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination and reports are awaited, Alamanj Police Station SHO Abhijeet Kumar said.

# 'Covaxin works against emerging variants'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Pharmaceutical major Bharat Biotech on Wednesday said its COVID-19 vaccine Covaxin has proven to be safe, well-tolerated, and immunogenic in subjects in controlled clinical trials. The study has been accepted and published in Nature Scientific Reports, a high impact factor journal. A press release from the vaccine maker said the study was conducted in 184 subjects, who were randomised 1:1 and received either a booster dose of Covaxin or a placebo, six



months after the primary series of two doses. Subjects were evaluated for safety, neutralis-

ing antibody responses against variants of concern, binding antibodies against spike pro-

tein, RBD, N proteins, and for memory T and B cell responses to demonstrate cell-mediated immunity, it said. Krishna Ella, chairman and managing director, Bharat Biotech, said the team has now demonstrated that Covaxin is a multi-epitope vaccine with antibodies against spike, RBD and N proteins. "Post booster dose, it has proven neutralising antibody responses against variants of concern and long term protection through memory T and B cell responses. We have now achieved our goal of developing a safe and efficacious vac-

cine with long-term protection against a spectrum of variants," Ella said. Covaxin, is formulated uniquely such that the same dosage can be administered to adults and children alike, for primary and booster doses, making it truly a universal vaccine, the company release said. The jab is a ready-to-use liquid vaccine, stored at 2-8 degrees Celsius, with 12-months shelf life and multi-dose vial policy. Bharat Biotech has a stockpile of more than 50 million doses of Covaxin ready to be distributed as and when required.

# 'Install CCTV cameras at ration shops; streamline functioning of helpline nos'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A Parliamentary panel has recommended streamlining the functioning of helpline numbers to address grievances of PDS beneficiaries and installation of CCTV cameras at ration shops to monitor distribution and diversion. The Standing Committee on Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution, headed by TMC member Sudip Bandyopadhyay, has also recommended that the government should make indepen-



dent surprise visits and inspections at ration shops, also called fair price shops (FPSs). "...despite their being joint inspection of foodgrains stock in FCI godowns and presence of Quality Control Cells

(QCCs) in the Department of Food and Public Distribution, there are so many complaints of beneficiaries getting inferior quality of foodgrains," the committee said in a report tabled in Lok Sabha on July 19. This could be the handwork of some intermediaries which leads to diversion of good quality foodgrains and making the poor people getting inferior quality of foodgrains, it said. Sometimes, beneficiaries cannot communicate their grievances to the agencies concerned, it added.





www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

## Cancer of illegal mining

Illegal mining is rampant in the country and the mafia is ruling the roost. High time they are dealt with strictly.

So far, the murder of 57-year-old Haryana Police DSP Surender Singh at Tauru in Haryana's Nuh district has evoked Pro-forma responses from those who matter. The Pioneer reported, "Haryana ADGP (law and order) Sandeep Khirwar said a case under IPC sections 302 (murder), 307, 333, 186, 353 along with 379 and 188 has been registered, and the police will come out with full progress report very soon." Reacting to the incident, the report added,

Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar said in the case of murder of the Tauru DSP, orders have been given to take strict action. He announced a relief of Rs 1 crore to the family of the fallen cop and a job to one of his family members. Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition Bhupinder Singh Hooda called the incident shameful: "Mining mafia is going out of hand. Law and order situation is deteriorating.

MLAs are being threatened, police are also not safe. How will the public feel safe? The Government needs to act."

Everything said and done by everyone is routine. But illegal mining is a much bigger menace to be tackled with routine reactions — not just in Haryana but also in other parts of the country. In March 2012, a young Indian Police Service officer Narendra Kumar Singh was mowed down in a similar fashion in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district. The culprits, in this case, were members of an illegal mining gang.



In 2013, a 2009-batch Indian Administrative Service officer Durga Shakti Nagpal took on Noida's illegal sand mining mafia, filing 66 police cases, arresting 104 people, and seizing 81 vehicles engaged in the operations between February and July. She was fortunate that she didn't meet the fate of Narendra Kumar Singh, but she did face the consequences. The state government suspended her, though the suspension was revoked a couple of months later.

Two points need to be made here. First, gone are the days when even the most dreaded criminals and mafia dons were reluctant to physically eliminate cops. For they knew that the police don't just enforce the Indian Penal Code but also their own code, and in the latter the greatest crime is cop killing. Now even the foot soldiers in mining gangs have the temerity to murder not just constables but also senior officers.

Second, gone are also the days when Pro-forma statements like 'culprits won't be spared' and routine measures like compensation to the dead cop's family will suffice. There is something rotten in the statecraft of India. Mining gangs and other mafias are not some deranged psychopaths or some outlandish villains like Mogambo of the movie Mr. India; they are very much part of our society and, worse, political economy. They are not an external enemy; they are like cancer, debilitating the body-politic and occasionally causing big pain, such as the murder of Tauru DSP. The treatment of cancers is cut, poison, and burn. Are our political masters ready for that?

### PICTALK



People visit the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco

# Quad: India's outreach booster



SIMRAN SODHI

India has a great opportunity at hand as it is the only nation along with the US to be part of two Quads

Recently, the leaders of India, the United States, Israel and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) came together for the first Heads of State summit meet for I2U2 or the West Asia Quad. The Indo-Pacific Quad which comprises India, the US, Japan, and Australia are the other Quad that today has become an important tool of India's foreign policy. Interestingly both these 'Quad' groupings have the US and India as common members. While for the US this is more of a re-assertion of its desire to once again engage with the world actively and also to reclaim its mantle of a world leader, for India, this is a new kind of global positioning. It also offers India a great opportunity to then showcase its prowess as a strategic partner and emerging global leader not just in the Indo-Pacific but also in the Middle East region.



Much has been written about the Indo-Pacific Quad and how it brings together the four nations, in a bid to foster greater ties between themselves, and to counter and check on a China that seems to have no limits to its assertion of economic and military dominance. But the I2U2 or the West Asia Quad is still a new concept and exciting in the sense that it offers India an opportunity to build on its excellent bilateral ties with both Israel and the UAE. The strength here is also more tilted in favor of economics and the outcome of the first Summit with its emphasis on food security and clean energy point in the same direction.

U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan on board Air Force One, en route to Israel with U.S. President Joe Biden, recently was asked as to what the objective was in bringing India "into so many issues" such as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, the Quad and I2U2.

He said India was one of the most 'strategically conse-

quential countries' in the Indo-Pacific and therefore 'should play a central role in U.S. strategy. "India also had a long-standing relationship with the Gulf countries and Israel, he said, adding that the U.S. was looking forward to Mr. Modi's participation in the I2U2 summit."

His remarks indicate that the US is ready to accept a greater role and participation by India on the global scale.

India's role in the Indo-Pacific Quad gets a little constrained since every member is fudging its bets against China. While the US looks at India, Japan, and Australia as an alternative to providing security in the region, the other member states have their own calculations to make vis-a-vis China. India prefers to play cautious and diplomatic despite the Chinese aggression on its borders.



FOR INDIA, THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGE IN THE WEST ASIA QUAD IS ITS BILATERAL TIES WITH ISRAEL AND THE UAE

Japan and China share an uncomfortable history and Japan is still struggling to come to terms with its own pacifist agenda post the Second World War. Australia is also unsure of how much to push against China, given that China is Australia's biggest trading partner for both the export and import of goods.

For India, the biggest advantage in the West Asia Quad is its bilateral ties with Israel and the UAE. With a bilateral trade of \$59bn, the UAE is already India's third-largest trading partner after China and the US for 2019-20, as per the latest government data. India is also looking at concluding a free-trade pact with Israel. Both these factors make the West Asia Quad stronger and give a boost to the grouping.

For India, the membership in both the Quads then offers it a unique opportuni-

ty to assert its position as a global leader. India has been arguing about the need for a change in reforms in the United Nations Security for quite some time now. India wants it to be more representative of the new global order. India should get its rightful seat in the UNSC. But despite the promises of support from major world powers that does not seem to be happening in a realist world. However, what is interesting is to see India emerge as a key member and player in two of the most significant groupings lately. The influence of course extends from the Indo-Pacific to the Middle East, giving India an edge that few other nations today can boast of.

(The author, a Delhi-based journalist and foreign affairs analyst, holds a Masters in International Relations from the American University in Washington DC. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### THEY DON'T DESERVE OUR VOTES

Sir — It refers to "Legislators grow up please!" What we have seen in the Kerala assembly is not shocking because it has happened in the past in various other states' assemblies. What CPI (M) leader MM Mani uttered for KK Rema was disgusting, to say the least. I agree with your editorial that hypocrisy has to end now, on one side these same parties are up against the Lok Sabha speaker for categorizing certain words as unparliamentary and on another side, their party leaders are putting the temple of democracy to shame. What an irony that it is happening in a state which is known for its very high literacy rates in the country. The opposition has all the right to criticize the government's policies and ask to debate and discuss, but crossing the line of decency now and then destroys the already poor image of our politicians. If they can not be mindful of their behavior and words then they don't have any right to represent their voters.

Bal Govind | Gautam Budh Nagar

### GUIDE SRI LANKA IN TRYING TIMES

Sir — Sri Lankan parties appear divided on their preferred Presidential candidate as Mr. Gotabaya's successor. There is a need to embark on a new, constructive course. Together, it is time to commit and guide Sri Lanka towards the path of economic revival while upholding rule of law and maintaining ethnic solidarity. For six-time premier and Acting President Mr. Wickremesinghe, this is arguably the closest he has been to clinching the Presidency.

However, with Mr. Premadasa pulling out of the race and throwing his weight behind Mr. Alahapperuma, the contest may have just gotten harder for him. The last time Sri Lanka elected its President through Parliament was in 1993, following the assassination of then President Ranasinghe Premadasa. D.B. Wijetunga was then unanimously elected to the top office to complete Mr. Premadasa's term.

CK Subramaniam | Chennai

### The future is 5G



According to Qualcomm, by 2035 there will be around \$12 trillion worth of 5G-related services, including mission-critical services, enhanced mobile broadband, and industries such as retail, healthcare, education, transportation, and entertainment. 5G technology is the fifth generation of mobile networking systems that are proposed but not-yet-implemented.

Although the technologies to be used in 5G are still being figured out, it is expected

to enable self-driving cars, drones, and the download of movies in the blink of an eye. 5G is set to be the fusion of high-speed data collection and computation with billions of devices. 5G is believed to have an average speed of 800 Gbps and will have a vast array of applications ranging from the automotive sector to big data and VR.

In the Medical sector! Instead of patients approaching doctors for treatment, with 5G networks, patients and doctors can be connected worldwide. Digital imaging and scan reports can be sent anywhere across the globe for expert analysis, widening the access for patients who live far away from healthcare providers and reducing the cost of getting a second opinion. Right now, the dream of 5G is just a fantasy on the horizon. But in just a couple of years, the 5G vision will come true — and innovative breakthroughs are paramount in leading the world to an unimaginable high-tech future.

Faizan Khan | Ujjain

## SOUND BITE

To benefit the trillionaire friends of Modi, electricity will be expensive. The poor people are being maligned by saying 'Rewari culture'.

Congress leader

—Priyanka Gandhi Vadra

It is my humble and earnest request to Honorable PM Shri Narendra Modi, political parties and to the people of

India to keep helping mother Lanka and it's people to come out of this disaster.

Sri Lanka opposition leader

—Sajith Premadasa

It's highly disrespectful and offensive to spread rumors about women's bodies or speculating pregnancy. Women are scrutinized in ways that men cannot even fathom.

Actor

—Kareena Kapoor Khan

It was like a roller-coaster of emotions, but managed to win! Thank you for all your support,

Badminton player

—PV Sindhu

Lessons from Sri Lanka are very strong. They are of fiscal prudence, responsible governance and that there should not be a culture of freebies.

External Affairs minister

—S Jaishankar

## Nothing neat about it!

The National Test Agency that conducts NEET must apologize to the female students

What happened to the female students in Kerala at the NEET examination is indeed disturbing. Allegedly female students were asked to remove their innerwear and write the exam without it. It is more shocking as it happened in the most literate and socially aware state makes it even more alarming.

As per the reports, female candidates appearing for the NEET exam were forced to remove their bras to enter the examination hall in Kerala over 'security'. The incident came to light after a student's parent filed a complaint with the Kollam Rural police, alleging that his daughter and other female students were made to write the exam without their innerwear.

Now that many other students have also spoken about it, it appears a rule rather than an exception or an isolated incident. NEET aspirants have said that they were allowed to write the exam after removing bras before entering an exam center as they were told that the metal hooks were a 'security concern'. Even after the exam the students were not allowed to wear them but hold them, making them even more miserable.



This is an outrageous and ridiculous argument and smacks of gender insensitivity as the persons belong to the national testing agency, NTA that conducts the exam. The Mar Thoma Institute of Information Technology, Ayur where the exam center was located has said that the persons frisking the students were sent from the NTA, and were not assigned by the college. Though gender insensitivity prevails at the social level at least the institutions must be sensitive to it.

Equally outrageous is the response of NTA which says that nothing of this sort ever happened as they have not received any complaint. In spite of going into a denial mode, they could have well set up an internal inquiry to establish the fact. We live in a society where even rape cases go unreported so it is very unlikely that such an incident would be brought to their notice.

After the incident made headlines the police registered a case against the officials under sections 354 (Assault or criminal force to woman with intent to outrage her modesty) and 509 (Word, gesture, or act intended to insult the modesty of a woman) and made arrests/ Nonetheless it would not suffice as the NTA must apologize and adequately compensate the students who must have distressed during the exam and failed to write their exam properly.





## FIRST COLUMN

## INDIA TAKES G20 PRESIDENCY

India has chance to restore world order amid fast-changing world order



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

One of the most discussed photo opportunities from the last week was President Joe Biden's fist bump with Saudi Arabian crown prince Mohammed Bin Salman. The gesture, however awkward, was seen to be a major turnaround for the US foreign policy goals under President Biden, as the world's largest economy gradually eases to its new role in the changing geopolitical order.

President Biden's reluctant fist bump came in the backdrop of him vowing in the past to isolate Saudi Arabia in the Middle East following the killing of a journalist by the Saudi secret service. However, the changing dynamics in the geopolitical space, with Russian invasion of Ukraine leading to skyrocketing fuel and commodity prices, post-pandemic recovery hiccups, growing intimacy between Russia and China and a crucial midterm mandate for President Biden in US, seems to have weighed heavily, during his visit to the Middle East leading to the now famous photo op.

The next opportunity for President Biden to make such a statement on a multilateral stage could be in Bali in November during the upcoming G20 leaders' summit. However, there are slim chances that President Biden would be in Bali, as the Russian president Vladimir Putin has already signalled to physically attend the summit. That brings us to what happens when India takes over the G20 presidency from December 1, 2022, till November 2023. India after missing out on two early presidencies would be at the steering wheel and host a leader's summit in Delhi next year.

As run up to the G20 presidency, India has set up a secretariat headed by ex-foreign secretary and changed its key interlocutor or sherpa



from Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal to ex-Niti Ayog CEO, Amitabh Kant. The G20 is an important multilateral forum for economic cooperation between developed and developing nations, which together constitute 85 percent of global GDP and 75 per cent of international trade. India would also host the G20 secretariat during its yearlong presidency and the work stream is divided into the sherpa track and finance track.

According to data provided by the Ministry of External Affairs, India is likely to host 100 meetings under the Sherpa track on "employment, health, digital economy, trade, investment, industry, environment, climate, energy, anti-corruption, agriculture, tourism, culture, socio-economic development, education, and women empowerment". The finance track of discussions is likely to see around 40 meetings related to "international financial architecture, financial inclusion and sustainable finance, financing for infrastructure, climate finance and tax matters."

There will be further room of nearly 100 other meetings for academia, cultural showcases, workshops and seminars promoting socio-cultural diversity of India. This means a packed year ahead for the hospitality sector, civil aviation and professionals engaged in the MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions). Already one may be reading the headlines regarding India's choices of key venues around the country, from Kashmir to Varanasi to showcase a new digitally savvy, democratic, peaceful India to the world.

It will be crucial for India to steer the global economic dialogue platform in a manner which is most beneficial for the region, and the country in decades to come. The global leaders from the G20 countries already recognise India's growing importance in Southeast Asia and in overall world order. India is already in some form of bilateral, plurilateral or multilateral dialogue with most of G20, except for China, with which the relationship has turned frosty post the physical clashes in India's North-western boundaries. The redeeming feature is that many G20 partners share similar concerns about China.

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

## KCR goes ballistic against Modi Govt

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao is all geared up to launch national campaign against Modi government

VANAM JWALA  
NARASIMHA RAO  
AND  
VJM DIVAKAR

There is a vibrant message in Valmiki Ramayana's Sundara Kanda. Hanuman, after finding and conversing with Goddess Sita in Ashoka Vatika, disclosed loudly and made it public about her captivity that was kept as a guarded secret. If a government or the leader heading it keeps the policies and decisions that go against the people's wellbeing as secret for long, it would lead to his steep fall. Another message is that no one can survive in power for long by empty rhetoric. If the remarks made by Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao on Prime Minister Narendra Modi are intensely observed, analysed, and understood, there are several messages worth decoding.

KCR did not mince words. With courage and confidence—the virtue often missing among many political leaders—he labeled Modi as the most inefficient PM in Independent India. The Chief Minister also asserted that the government at the Centre for the past eight years has been the most corrupt and there have been scams all over the country. KCR substantiated each and every charge he made against PM Modi in his exceptional and inimitable style.

KCR said that the one and only Raj Dharma Modi and his BJP government at the center know is destabilising and then dislodging the duly-elected opposition party headed state governments by dishonesty. Under the Modi regime, there is a capital drain where several NRIs and international companies have withdrawn their investments. The arrogance of Modi governance is unparalleled and the way they were threatening the judges, journalists and those speaking against the regime had amply proved it. In addition, said KCR, PM Modi is behaving like the salesman of certain corporate houses.

KCR during his two and a half hours' media conference on July 10, 2022 in Pragathi Bhavan, Hyderabad, exposed and revealed to the nation several harsh realities about the Modi regime. The inference is that the present dispensation at the Centre shall not be allowed to continue in power for long.

KCR's media conference was in the backdrop of PM Modi's inability to answer even one question that the Chief Minister had raised while hosting the joint candidate of the Opposition in the President's election YashwantSinha on July 2.

KCR's questions focused on Modi's large-scale corrupt practices, scams running into several lakh crore rupees, economic and financial problems the country is facing due to wrong economic policies, etc. KCR said he would, however, not leave Modi, but chase him till he gets an answer.

KCR, armed with data and statistics, explained in detail several innovative schemes, programs and policies that his government in Telangana has implemented and also showed how the Central government and its agencies have praised the programs from time to time. In this con-



KCR DID NOT MINCE WORDS. WITH COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE—THE VIRTUE OFTEN MISSING AMONG MANY POLITICAL LEADERS—HE LABELED MODI AS THE MOST INEFFICIENT PM IN INDEPENDENT INDIA

(The authors are senior journalists.)



text, he repeatedly challenged PM Modi to come out with at least one policy and program of his government, which is worth mentioning. His words touched the hearts of people. He gave a clarion call to youth, intellectuals, journalists, writers, poets, and artists to march ahead to bring in a qualitative change on the Central governance. He also expressed anguish over the illegal, unconstitutional and unethical practices of the Modi government.

There were several messages from KCR's media address. Firstly, the BJP cannot govern the country. It was also clear that the BJP-led government at the Centre had not done even one program, one policy that benefited any section of the society in the past eight years. The Modi government is so inefficient that it could not provide electricity, water for irrigation or even drinking water to the people. Prices of all the essential commodities have touched the sky. There is an abnormal increase in the prices of petrol and diesel. Unemployment is at its peak. Inflation touched the new highs. The Rupee's value is falling on a daily basis. Foreign exchange reserves are fast depleting. Hence, the present BJP-led Central government should go and there should be a change at the Centre, come what may.

Despite all this, KCR seems to be not in a hurry to dislodge the BJP government at the Centre immediately. KCR said the arrogance of the BJP leaders should reach its peak by leaps and bounds, and they should

commit more and more mistakes. For such a day, if need be, TRS will play a major national role. He warned the BJP national leadership that if they try to dislodge the duly-elected governments, either in Tamil Nadu or Telangana on the lines of Maharashtra through Eknath Shinde, the people would revolt.

KCR also stated that the BJP and Congress are indulging in blame games. He said that the country needs to be pulled out from the routine politics that are at play for the past 75 years. He wanted the sort of leadership of Singapore and China for India too, which works for the welfare and development of people round the clock. He said that instead of properly utilizing the abundant youth power available in the country, the BJP is using it to flare up communal fanaticism. The BJP proved that it lacked the vision, commitment, dedication, proper attitude and leadership to take the country on the path of progress and development. There is a need to launch a peaceful revolution in the country after explaining to the people the need for a qualitative change. In that direction, KCR said the TRS, if need be, will take a national form. He is determined that the BJP should be removed from the country's politics. Only then the country will progress.

People are wondering at the way the Modi government is misruling the country and they are stunned when KCR told how respected photographs of senior journalists N Ram and Pranay Roy are circulat-

ed in social media by the BJP supporters, describing the duo as the urban Naxalite. Referring to the BJP's poll campaign slogan of the 'Double Engine government', KCR said that there is a need for a double engine government at the center on the lines of Telangana government. KCR also revealed how a group of retired judges under pressure from the BJP wrote a letter against Supreme Court Judges Justice Suryakant and Justice Pardiwala when the Apex Court Judges made relevant observations against a BJP ex-spokesperson's derogatory remark, which led to India tendering apology to several nations.

KCR also made startling revelations that all the bank scams were done under the nose of PM Modi and the PM knew about the wrongdoings. He said he would reveal all the facts and proofs on this in the days to come. The BJP government at the Centre is unable to stop the black money being stashed away in the foreign banks. KCR said that the Modi government had no awareness about the international marketing network or its impact in the country. KCR's critical observations, revelations and challenges in the media conference raise hope for an alternative leadership.

Supreme Court senior counsel Prashant Bhushan appreciated KCR for boldly exposing Modi. In his tweet, he praised KCR for digging into the corrupt practices of Modi. KCR's media conference also went viral on social media with posts from umpteen political analysts.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

"FOR THE FIRST TIME ARMY IS ASKING CASTE OF CANDIDATES. MODIJI DO YOU WANT TO MAKE AGNIVEER OR JAATVEER?"  
—RAJYA SABHA MP  
SANJAY SINGH



THE RECRUITMENTS IN THE ARMY ARE NOT DONE ON THE BASIS OF CASTE AND RELIGION. THE OPPOSITION IS DELIBERATELY SPREADING CONFUSION AND MALIGNING THE ARMY.  
—BJP SPOKESPERSON  
SAMBIT PATRA



## Nuclear Iran is a disappointment but not a disaster

Possible Iranian nuclear weapons at some point in the future are less threatening than real North Korean nukes in the present

About six weeks ago Rafael Grossi, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), warned that the attempt to revive the 2015 deal that restricted Iran's ability to enrich uranium was on the brink of collapse. Three or four weeks more without an agreement, he said, would deal the talks a "fatal blow".

The problem was that since ex-president Donald Trump unilaterally trashed the deal in 2018, imposing 'maximum pressure' US sanctions against Iran in the hope of extracting further concessions, the Iranians have been gradually discarding the controls they agreed to in the original deal.

The three European countries that guaranteed the deal, Britain, France and Germany, backed the IAEA chief up, warn-



GWYNNE DYER

ing that "the more Iran is advancing and accumulating knowledge with irreversible consequences, the more difficult it is to come back to that deal."

In other words, once the Iranians have learned all they need to know to enrich uranium to weapons-grade, they cannot promise to forget it again. They will have that knowledge forever, which sort of defeats the whole purpose of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the ridiculous official name of the 2015 deal.

In fact, it's worse than that. On July 9, Tehran announced that it has installed new centrifuges that will let Iran enrich uranium up to 90 per cent purity-enough for nuclear warheads.

They are adjustable centrifuges that can easily be switched between different lev-



els of enrichment, and Iran says they are currently set for only 20 per cent purity. But the JCPOA set the maximum permitted enrichment at 3.67 per cent, so Iran is already way beyond the limit.

To make matters worse, enrichment gets easier as the purity levels increase. To go from

uranium ore to 3.67 per cent takes a lot of time and energy. To go from there to 20 per cent takes much less-and to go from 20 per cent to 90 per cent even less. The Iranians can cross the last hurdle whenever they want.

Moreover, the rest of the world will just have to take their word that they haven't gone to 90 per cent because 27 of the special cameras that the IAEA installed to verify that Iran is not exceeding the agreed enrichment level were turned off in June. The remaining 40 can be turned off whenever Tehran wants.

And what's the rest of the world going to do about this? Not much. In fact, it seems in retrospect that neither Washington nor Tehran really expected to resurrect the 2015 deal: too much time had passed,

and they were just going through the motions.

When Joe Biden entered the White House in January 2021, his previous statements about the JCPOA obliged him to try to repair the damage done by Donald Trump. However, he put more effort into placating anti-Iran hawks in Congress than into talks with the regime of reformist Iranian president Hassan Rouhani (the man who originally signed the deal).

Biden would have known that Rouhani's presidency had only six months left, and that he was likely to be followed in office by the hard-liner Ebrahim Raisi. (Rouhani could not run again, and the Supreme Leader's people were disqualifying rival candidates.) Yet Biden barely lifted a finger to restart serious negotiations.

Then, after Raisi replaced Hourani at the beginning of August last year, the US and Iran agreed on a five-month time-out, allegedly to give Raisi's new administration time to get up to speed on the issue. Why did Biden consent to that? Because he knew it was already a lost cause.

2021 was the year when Iran's enrichment levels rose to levels far above the JCPOA's limits. When negotiations finally restarted last December, everybody knew that the deal's original purpose had been overrun by events. Iran has become a 'nuclear threshold power, able to build actual bombs within six months of the word 'go' at any time in the future.

That is the reality, which is why subsequent talks have been rather lackadaisical. Iran

is clearly in no rush to build actual nuclear weapons, and nobody gains by abandoning the talks completely, but they aren't going anywhere and everybody knows it.

This is a disappointment, but not a disaster. Possible Iranian nuclear weapons at some point in the future are less threatening than real North Korean nukes in the present, and the Far East has learned to live with that. The Middle East is a tougher neighbourhood, and there were few signs of panic during President Bidens recent tour of the region.

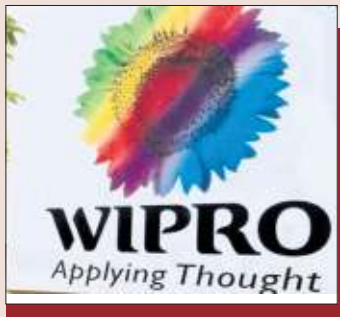
He didn't even have to promise that American nuclear weapons would be available to deter a potential nuclear-armed Iran. Israel's several hundred unadmitted nuclear weapons are quite sufficient for that.



MONEY MATTERS

Wipro Q1 net profit falls nearly 21% to Rs 2,563.6 cr

IT services company Wipro Ltd on Wednesday reported about a 21 per cent year-on-year fall in its consolidated net profit to Rs 2,563.6 crore for the first quarter ended June 2022. The profit for the period (attributable to the equity holders of the company) stood at Rs 3,242.6 crore in the year-ago period. The net profit was down 20.6 per cent on a year-on-year basis, according to a filing. The Bengaluru-headquartered company's revenue from operations rose nearly 18 per cent year-on-year to Rs 21,528.6 crore during the just-ended quarter. For the September quarter, the company expects revenue from the IT services business to be in the range of USD 2,817 million to USD 2,872 million. This reflects a sequential growth of 3-5 per cent. Its CEO and Managing Director Thierry Delaporte said: "We have made significant investments in Wipro's growth engine and are very pleased with the outcomes." Our order bookings grew 32 per cent YoY in Total Contract Value terms, powered by large transformational deals, and our pipeline today is at an all-time high.



Higher customs duty to hit gold jewellery demand this fiscal: Report.

India's gold jewellery demand is likely to fall by 5 per cent to 550 tonnes this fiscal, mainly due to the hike in customs duty, according to a report. Rating agency Crisil on Wednesday said the hike in customs duty on gold by 5 per cent to 12.5 per cent on June 30 is likely to result in flat revenue growth for gold jewellery retailers in the current financial year compared to the exceptional demand witnessed in the year-ago period. Retailers will have to pass on the hike to customers, which will curtail demand and wean away discretionary buyers, it added. According to the report, the customs duty hike is likely to lead to higher gold prices for end consumers and may curtail demand in terms of volume, which is likely to fall by 5 per cent this fiscal to 550 tonnes. In the year-ago period, the same stood at 580 tonnes. After the pandemic-led disruptions abated in the first quarter of last fiscal, pent-up demand and an import duty cut of 5 per cent in February 2021, had triggered a sharp rebound in sales, which continued into the first quarter of this fiscal.



Exotel aims to boost revenues through automation, other measures

Customer engagement platform Exotel, which recently raised USD 100 million, is aiming to boost its revenues and optimise sales through automation and efficient processes. As part of the focus on higher growth, the company has also roped in Manpreet Madaan, who has worked with Airtel, Microsoft and Oracle, as its Vice-President for Revenue Operations. According to a statement, Madaan's role would be significant as the company is eyeing to achieve sales excellence through establishing solid revenue operation processes. "Having demonstrated goal-oriented working aptitude in global technology companies including Airtel, Microsoft, and Oracle, Manpreet Madaan joined end-to-end customer engagement platform & virtual telecom operator Exotel as VP Revenue Operations," the statement said. The company also said that Madaan's mandate is to work towards boosting revenues and day-to-day efficiencies by optimising end-to-end sales operations through automation, tools, and efficient processes.



Phased implementation of digital currency for wholesale, retail

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

About 13 lakh electric vehicles registered in country: Gadkari

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday said more than 13 lakh electric vehicles are registered in the country excluding those in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Lakshadweep.

In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Gadkari said under Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) Phase-II scheme, 2,877 public EV charging stations have been sanctioned in 68 cities and 1,576 EV charging stations across 9 expressways and 16 highways.

The Reserve Bank of India is in the process of implementing the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) in a phased manner for the wholesale and retail segments, an official said on Wednesday.

The introduction of CBDC was announced in the Union Budget 2022-23, by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and necessary amendments to the relevant section of the RBI Act, 1934 has been made with the passage of the Finance Bill 2022, Ajay Kumar Choudhary, Executive Director (Fintech), Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said.

The passage of the bill has enabled the RBI to conduct a pilot and subsequent issuance of CBDC, he said.

"RBI is also working on phased implementation of a central bank digital currency (CBDC) in both wholesale



and retail segment," Choudhary said while delivering a keynote address at the 'PICUP Fintech Conference & Awards' by FICCI.

CBDC is a digital or virtual currency but it is not comparable to the private virtual currencies or cryptocurrency that have mushroomed over the last decade. Private virtual currencies do not represent any person's debt or liabilities

as there is no issuer. India's official digital currency is likely to debut by early 2023, which will mirror any of the currently available private company-operated electronic wallets. The CBDC will be a sovereign-backed digital currency. Touching upon the role of fintechs in the fast evolving digital payments space, the official said that the RBI has fostered innovation and it is

keeping a close eye on the benefits and risks associated with innovative products and services offered by fintechs.

As fintech adoption picked up in the country, the Reserve Bank issued guidelines regulations for emerging areas such as payment banks in 2014, account aggregator in 2016, pre-paid instruments in 2017, peer-to-peer lending in 2017, invoice discounting 2018 to facilitate the industry in digital and for facilitating onboarding of consumers, individuals as well as KYC documentation, the official said.

He said fintech has already made a mark in the digital payment space with the invention of UPI (Unified Payments Interface) in the country.

Citing data, he said so far this year, India's UPI transaction has seen participation of 323 banks and has recorded 5.9 billion monthly transactions worth over USD 130 billion.

Govt looks to promote ease of doing business for online gaming

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



The government is looking to evolve regulation to promote ease of doing business for the online gaming segment and provide a suitable ecosystem for indigenous platforms, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

Minister of state for electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekar in a written reply to the Lok Sabha said that according to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comic (AVGC) sector in India has the potential to become the torch bearer of "Create in India" and "Brand India".

"Online gaming as an industry is evolving and has expanded across horizons. This Ministry has been interacting with the online gaming platforms and other

stakeholders to evolve possible roadmap of regulation so as to promote ease of doing business and to provide suitable eco-system for the indigenous platforms," Chandrasekar said.

He said that in pursuance of the announcement made in the Union Budget 2022-23 and to further unleash the scope of the AVGC sector, an Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming and Comics (AVGC) Promotion Task Force has been constituted

on April 8 to promote the segment. AVGC promotion task force has been entrusted with the task to facilitate skilling initiatives, promotion and market development activities to extend the global reach of the Indian AVGC industry, boosting employment opportunities and incentives to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) in the AVGC sector to make India a favourite destination for ease of doing business.

Green clearances to 83 projects of Coal India: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Green clearances have been accorded to 83 mining projects of state-owned Coal India Ltd in the last two years, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

To ensure adequate supply of coal to various sectors, including power, the government has set a target of 1 billion tonnes coal production for Coal India Ltd (CIL).

"To achieve 1 BT (billion tonne) coal production by FY 2024-25, the progress made so far by Coal India Ltd. (CIL) from April 2020 to June 2022, (includes)... environmental clearance granted for 60 proposals with an incremental capacity of 104.86 Mty (million tonnes per year). Stage-I forest clear-



ance granted for nine proposals involving 934.96 Ha of forest land.

"Stage-II forest clearance granted for 14 proposals involving 2580.68 Ha of forest land," Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said in a reply

to the Lok Sabha. The minister further said that 53 project reports, including expansion projects, have been approved by Coal India and its arm for building additional production capacity of dry fuel.

India's steel exports grow 25 pc to 13.49 MT

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The exports of finished steel from India jumped over 25 per cent to 13.49 million tonne (MT) in 2021-22, Union Minister Fagga Singh Kulaste said Wednesday. During the preceding 2020-21 fiscal, the exports stood at 10.78 MT, the Minister of State for Steel said in a reply to the Lok Sabha. The imports fell to 4.67 MT in 2021-22 from 4.75 MT a year ago, a fall of 1.68 per cent, according to Kulaste. "Government has taken various steps to increase the availability of iron ore and make them available at reasonable prices, which, inter alia, including Mining and Mineral Policy reforms to enhance production/availability of iron ore," he said.

Sentiments in realty sector dip in June qtr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The sentiment index for the real estate sector dropped in April-June period due to increase in interest rate on home loans but remained positive, according to Knight Frank India and NAREDCO. The outlook for next six months is optimistic although not as buoyant as it was during the March quarter.

As per the Knight Frank-NAREDCO Real Estate Sentiment Index Q2 (April-June 2022), the current sentiment score has moderated to 62 from record 68 reported in January-March.

The sentiment index is based on the survey of supply-side stakeholders like developers, investors and financial institutions. The score of above 50 indicates 'optimism' in sentiments, a score of 50 means the sentiment is 'same' or 'neu-



tral'. The score below 50 indicates 'pessimism'. The current sentiment index score has dropped mainly due to the perceived impact of the two consecutive repo rate hikes in May and June 2022 by the RBI.

The future sentiment score, which captures the stakeholder sentiments for the next six months for the real estate sector, also shrunk to 62 in Q2 2022 from its historic high of

75 in Q1 2022, as pressures of a rise in inflation and depreciating rupee against the dollar cast a shadow on the sector, the consultant said.

"Despite the decline, both the current and future sentiment scores remained optimistic," it added. In Q2 2022, the Current Sentiment Index score and Future Sentiment Score are equal as stakeholders are con-founded in the current eco-

nomical climate where the impact of global economic headwinds on the Indian economy is yet to play out. "The real estate supply-side stakeholders remain watchful of the tripartite global risks - economic turmoil in the United States, Russia - Ukraine standoff, and economic slowdown in Europe," Knight Frank said. Interestingly, the study revealed while the developers' future sentiment score increased during the quarter, non-developers' score declined. Knight Frank India CMD Shishir Bajjal said: "Over the last 8-10 quarters, it has been firmly established that there is a strong latent demand in the residential sector which, when supported by right prices and sops, will convert to sales. In the last few quarters, this has given the once beleaguered sector a strong come back."

Sensex, Nifty spurt over 1 pc as windfall tax cut, FII inflows

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex rallied over 1 per cent while Nifty closed above the 16,500 mark on Wednesday after sharp gains in IT, oil & gas and metal shares amid positive global market trends.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 629.91 points or 1.15 per cent to settle at 55,397.53 as 22 of its stocks ended with gains. During the day, it jumped 862.64 points or 1.57 per cent to a high of 55,630.26.

The broader NSE Nifty climbed 180.30 points or 1.10

per cent to 16,520.85 with 34 of its constituents ending in the green.

Buying in index majors Reliance Industries, Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services and FII inflows bolstered the sentiment.

Reliance Industries rallied 2.47 per cent and ONGC spurted 4 per cent as the government slashed windfall tax on petrol, diesel, jet fuel and crude oil.

The government on Wednesday curbed the windfall tax on petrol, diesel, jet fuel and crude oil following a decline in international rates.

"The move is definitely positive for companies like RIL, ONGC and Oil India as the decline in windfall tax would mean better and more sustainable margins.

These companies were clear beneficiaries of high oil prices, but the recent correction in oil prices coupled with one of the highest windfall taxes globally could have dented profitability," Rohit Khatri, AVP-Fundamental Research, Religare Broking Ltd. Among the Sensex constituents, Tech Mahindra rose the most by 3.84 per cent. HCL Tech rose by 3.08

per cent, Tata Consultancy Services by 2.89 per cent, and Infosys by 2 per cent. Reliance Industries jumped 2.47 per cent, SBI by 2.13 per cent and HUL by 1.55 per cent.

Wipro rose by 1.63 per cent ahead of its financial results which were announced after market hours. Its consolidated profit dropped 21 per cent to Rs 2,563.6 crore in April-June 2022-23.

Mahindra & Mahindra fell the most by 1.81 per cent, while Sun Pharma, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Asian Paints also declined.

ITC will continue to deliver robust growth: Puri

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Diversified conglomerate ITC Limited on Wednesday said that the company will continue to deliver robust growth despite key concerns such as inflation. Speaking at the company's AGM virtually, CMD of ITC Sanjiv Puri said that in the FMCG space, the firm has nurtured 25 brands and the newer ones will garner an annual consumer spend of Rs 24,000 crore. The company will also fortify and scale up

new mega brands while investing in categories of the future, he said.

"Today, it is immensely encouraging that your company's newer FMCG Businesses have garnered an annual consumer spend of Rs 24,000 crore. The carefully selected portfolio, with substantial headroom to grow, is estimated to have a total addressable market potential of Rs 5,00,000 crore by 2030, which is amongst the highest in the Indian FMCG space," he said.

Rupee closes below 80 mark for first time against dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee declined 13 paise to close below the 80 mark for the first time against the US currency on Wednesday due to strong dollar demand from importers amid high crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 79.91 and later slid to a low of 80.05 to a dollar.

The rupee traded in a range of 79.89 to 80.05 in the day trade. It finally settled at the day's low level of 80.05, showing a loss of 13 paise over the previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee recovered from its all-time low of 80.05 to close 6 paise higher at 79.92 against the US dollar following forex inflows and suspected RBI intervention. Forex traders said significant dollar demand from oil importers, firm crude oil prices as well as concerns about swelling trade deficit weighed on investor senti-

ments. "Overall gains in crude in the last few days where Brent has risen again above USD 105 and lack of intervention from RBI has kept the rupee hovering around 80.00. Going ahead rupee will be seen in the range of 79.75-80.25," said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst at LKP Securities.

The rupee is broadly in downtrend even after measures from the RBI on international payment gateways or import duty hikes on commodity products, Trivedi said. India's forex reserves stood at USD 580.252 billion, down by USD 27.05 billion from March-end 2022.

"As the dollar index has shown a correction from 109 to 106.50 in a span of week which will hold the rupee's drop in majority," he said.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, fell 0.11 per cent to 106.56.

EPFO adds 16.82 lakh net subscribers in May

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Retirement fund body EPFO added 16.82 lakh new subscribers in May 2022, nearly 83 per cent more than 9.2 lakh enrolled in the year-ago month, according to official data.

The provisional payroll data of EPFO released on Wednesday showed an increase of 7.62 lakh net subscribers in May 2022 as compared to the net subscription in the month of May 2021 last year, the labour ministry said in a statement.

The EPFO had added 9.2 lakh net new subscribers in May 2021, it said.

Out of the total 16.82 lakh subscribers added during May 2022, around 9.60 lakh new members have been covered under the ambit of EPF & MP Act, 1952 for the first time.

Approximately 7.21 lakh net subscribers exited but rejoined EPFO by changing their jobs within the establishments covered by EPFO and opted to continue their membership under the EPF Scheme, by transferring their funds instead of applying for final PF withdrawal, it stated.

The new enrolment during the month is higher than the monthly average recorded during the last fiscal.

Age-wise comparison of



payroll data indicates that the age-group of 22-25 years has registered the highest number of net enrolments with 4.33 lakh additions during May 2022. This shows that many first-time job seekers are joining organised sector workforce in large numbers, the

ministry explained.

State-wise comparison of payroll figures highlights that the establishments covered in the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, Gujarat and Delhi to remain in lead by adding approximately 11.34 lakh net

subscribers during the month, which is 67.42 per cent of total net payroll addition across all age groups.

Gender-wise analysis indicates that net female payroll addition is approximately 3.42 lakh during the month and share of female enrolment is 20.39 per cent of the net subscriber addition during the month of May 2022.

The classification of industry-wise payroll data indicates that mainly two categories i.e. expert services (consisting of manpower agencies, private security agencies and small contractors etc.) and Trading-Commercial establishments constitute 50.51 per cent of

total subscriber addition during the month.

Apart from this, a growing trend has been noted in other industries like Building & Construction industry, Garments Making, Financing Establishment, Hotel and ron and Steel during the month.

The payroll data is provisional since the data generation is a continuous exercise, as updation of employee record is a continuous process. The previous data hence gets updated every month.

From the month of April-2018, EPFO has been releasing payroll data covering the period September 2017 onwards, it stated.









## SAFE, SECURE WORKPLACE FOR THE LGBTQ+

While people claim that they are LGBTQ+ friendly workplaces, does that really happen? This week for Community Wise, *The Pioneer* brings to you one such community that aims at providing LGBTQ+ rights by making public gestures of support.

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Despite visible corporate support, today's workplace is falling short of full inclusion. But, [24] 7.ai is playing an important role in the progress of LGBTQ+ rights by making public gestures of support.

They want to protect LGBTQ+ individuals from workplace discrimination. But how? They are increasingly making business-critical decisions about recruitment practices, employee resource groups, and marketing that embrace LGBTQ+ rights.

Want to know how? Well, let's have a look at what the senior vice president of the company, Nina Nair, has to say about this. "An inclusive workplace is about creating an environment in which an employee feels welcome, needed, cared for, and valued. Inclusiveness is

about creating a safe workplace where every employee, no matter their colour, caste, race, gender, or orientation, feels that they belong and are secure. The way to create this environment is to walk the talk at all levels of leadership, to demonstrate total acceptance of the diversity of thought, belief, behaviour, gender and orientation. This needs to go hand in hand with sensitising all employees to the fact that people are not the same. Each person is unique and different and worthy of respect and care. While hiring, the most critical characteristics we must seek in prospective employees are humanness, integrity, ownership, the ability to focus on and commit to results, the willingness to adapt, and the willingness to work in a collaborative manner. These also happen to be embedded in the values of the organization," she explained.

Despite these outwardly visible signs of progress, many challenges persist. Likewise, a growing business case for inclusion

sometimes does not translate into solid gains for the LGBTQ+ community within the workplace itself.

According to an ongoing research project, women in the workplace, for example, are more underrepresented than men generally in the largest corporations.

So, how are they more open to the community? She further takes us on this journey, "We are focused on creating a space that is 35%-40% women in the workplace, which is included as a mandatory KRA for managers. We also have women-only hiring drives, partnerships with several channel partners specialising in diversity space, campus drives at women's colleges, diversity drives in Tier 2/3 towns, and a bouquet of facilities making it easier for women to join us, pursue their careers, and overcome any initial challenges.

Facilitating connections with PG accommodations for women, transportation facilities with mandatory security, crèche tie-up, special leaves for women, adoption leaves, and maternity/paternity leave for both sex partners, and so on. We have dedicated hiring drives, believing in

providing opportunities for all, irrespective of a candidate's gender, sexuality, or identity. The company has rolled out dedicated hiring drives through partnerships with several channel partners specialising in hiring from the community. To be more equitable, we have introduced gender-neutral policies to ensure that the work environment is inclusive of the LGBTQ+ community. The company believes in 'Equal pay for equal work' irrespective of gender. Leaders and teams ensure that compensation, promotions, and growth are decided purely based on meritocracy. This year, we also plan on launching our DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) policy that will cover various benefits for the members of the LGBTQIA+ community. We have various forums where we encourage employees who are members of the community to speak about themselves, their journeys, and their interests. We also invite influencers from the community to spread awareness and educate other employees."

According to a few researches that were done earlier, LGBTQ+ women face increased rates of sexual harassment and discrimination based on gender and orientation. Moreover, trans employees face a distinct set of obstacles to performance and career progression. So, to engage a new generation of workers and consumers, this company's community initiative is moving beyond public gestures of support for LGBTQ+ issues to create a more positive work experience. She says, "We are trying to understand the needs of members of each of the communities. We are ensuring their comfort in the form of gender-neutral washrooms, safety from any sexual or disrespectful overtures and discrimination and bias of any kind, we try and provide a comfortable and non-threatening environment for all our employees to voice their concerns and grievances."



## Brain Health for All

The past two years have been very harsh because of the COVID pandemic. The pandemic is almost over, but the impact the virus has had on the mental health of people is going to take a while to recover. World Brain Day 2022 marked on July 22, has been dedicated to each and everyone on this planet. On this eve, we wish everyone the pinkest of brain health.

A healthy brain is an indispensable and inseparable part of our lives. Brain diseases behave in a unique way, diagnosis is challenging and therapy usually is needed on a long-term basis along with physical therapy and rehabilitation. Thus, Neurologists, Neurosurgeons and the team of doctors dealing with neurological disorders usually need to be patient and sensitive in their approach.

Dr Abhinav M Huchche, Consultant Neurologist, SLG Hospitals, Hyderabad said, "Rehabilitation was a neglected field in Neurology which is now picking up pace off late, this is quite evident in the increasing numbers of rehabilitation centres across Hyderabad. Rehabilitation centres provide a homely environment wherein the caretakers can actively participate with the rehabilitation team hastening recovery. This is usually not possible during the acute critical phase of the hospital stay. The sad part is that Insurance companies do not cover the expenses incurred during rehabilitation and are usually heavy on the pockets. This is one of the reasons why people from poor socio-economic backgrounds usually do not have access to rehabilitation."

The brain can be kept healthy with proper sleep, a healthy diet, regular exercise and leading a stress-free life.

"One should ensure 7-8 hours of uninterrupted sleep at night. Good sleep energizes the brain and body. Adequate sleep elevates mood and reduces stress. Sleep plays an important role in memory consolidation and growth. Certain foods are considered good for brain health. These include fatty fish such as salmon, tuna and sardines, which are rich in omega-3 fatty acids.

Indian spices, especially turmeric (which contains curcumin) improve memory, reduce depression symptoms and help grow brain cells. Other foods that improve brain health include pumpkin and chia seeds, oranges, nuts (especially walnuts), broccoli, eggs & meat (a rich source of vitamin B12)," says Dr Sudhir Kumar, Professor and HOD, Apollo Institute of Neurosciences, Apollo Hospitals, Hyderabad. This World Brain Day is an attempt to raise awareness regarding brain health and simultaneously strive at a global level to make brain health and rehabilitation affordable and accessible to all strata.

Also, efforts need to be taken to understand the mental health issues in COVID survivors and help them cope up with them. This needs a team effort with Neurologists, Neuropsychologists, Psychiatrists and Rehabilitation specialists playing equally important roles.

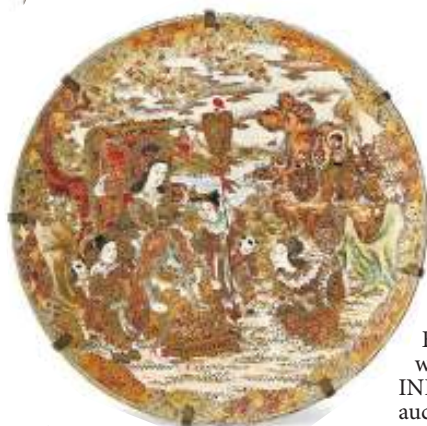


## Bringing out the Antique and Vintage beauty

lectibles, predominantly belonging to the 19th and 20th centuries. The collection includes Chinese and Japanese ceramics, Anglo-Indian

light on the legacy of Anglo-Indian furniture, which is a hallmark of a rich artistic fusion between Indian craftsmanship with European aesthetics. It includes a fine Edwardian four-door oak wood wardrobe.

The two central doors feature enclosing oval mirrors, and the two doors on either side are finely carved with rosewood



panels inset with oval

Wedgwood plaques.

Furniture of this genre was often made in Bombay by a famous award-winning firm - E. Wimbridge & Company, which estimates costs around INR 9,00,000 to 10,00,000. The auction will also showcase several more prized collectibles including a wide range of post-war Lalique glass pieces, among others.

furniture, fine crystal pieces, Persian carpets, vintage clocks, silver items, and other collectibles.

Synonymous with creating the purest quality crystal decorative items, F & C Osler was highly patronised by the royalties across the world owing to its reputation as the finest crystal-making firm globally. The offered chaise lounge, executed in Circa 1880, is a hallmark of their deftly created masterpieces with four original emerald green crystal Osler legs (signed) on casters, Osler armrest, and Osler backrest. The crystal lining on the base frame has been replaced, which estimates costs around INR 50,00,000 to 60,00,000.

The auction shines a spot-



## Treating deficiencies

With growing age comes various deficiencies that may lead to severe sickness or diseases in the future. However, there is a solution to it that may help you counterattack any future illnesses. First, let's get to know the most common deficiencies, as Suditi Sharma, Co-Founder, Himalayan Organics, informs us.

### Calcium Deficiency

Individuals who have poor dietary habits over the years develop a calcium deficiency later in life. It is one of the most common deficiency risks that people worldwide experience. The elderly are particularly at risk due to several factors, including poor bone density, age-related calcium depletion over time, drug interactions that may reduce dietary calcium absorption, and overall poor calcium intake. Not just the elderly, postmenopausal women might also face a calcium deficiency. Studies suggest that it is primarily due to hormonal changes that may affect the bone mineralization process.

### Iron Deficiency

Iron deficiency, anaemia is one of the most prevalent types of anaemia. Due to a lack of iron, your body struggles to make haemoglobin, resulting in unfulfillment of the required oxygen levels. This deficiency is most commonly found in women of young age. Poor dietary intake and heavy blood loss during menstruation are frequently associated with iron deficiency. Even during pregnancy, a woman may face an iron deficiency as the body works hard to create oxygen for the baby. Anaemia is also quite common in people above the age of 50 years, ageing being one of the possible reasons and can be visible as signs of weakness and fatigue.

### Magnesium Deficiency

According to reports, 70 to 80

per cent of those over 70 years do not get the recommended daily magnesium intake. It is because they typically eat fewer foods high in magnesium than younger individuals. So, older folks are more likely to suffer from a magnesium deficiency. Additionally, elders may absorb magnesium less readily, and their kidneys may eliminate more of it through urine. Moreover, the current diet pattern fails to provide enough magnesium essential for the smooth functioning of nerves, muscles and the immune system. It also plays a significant role in keeping the heart and bones strong. A magnesium deficiency can result in loss of appetite, fatigue and weakness over time. But a higher lack can lead to seizures and an abnormal heart rate.

### Vitamin D Deficiency

Vitamin D deficiency is one of the hardest to trace in the body. However, it is a vital vitamin as it plays a significant role

in the body's metabolic function. But it is very different from all the other vitamins as it gets produced when your skin is exposed to UVB rays from the sunlight. At the same time, it is said that diet changes may help, but they may not be enough. Vitamin D deficiency often leads to muscle and bone weakness, which is especially hazardous for adults as their chances of failing and getting fractured bones are comparatively higher.

### Vitamin C Deficiency

Vitamin C is one of the essential vitamins for your body as it aids in bone strength, skin and connective tissue repair. It boosts blood flow and wound healing. Vitamin C also plays a vital role in preventing cardiovascular disease by protecting low-density lipoproteins against oxidation by free radicals. Also known as ascorbic acid, this vitamin is not made in your body. Hence, you have to rely on a diet that is rich in Vitamin C.

Over time, the lack of Vitamin C also slows down collagen production.

### Treating these deficiencies

A balanced diet is definitely one of the important ways to counter the above deficiencies, but it is not all. Consuming supplements is another apt solution that has worked for many people as supplements act as a defence for many deficiencies.

Consuming supplements has been an apt solution for many people. They have been known to act as a defence for many deficiencies. The regular food intake fails to fulfil your body with the required nutrients; hence making supplements a part of your daily routine has become all the more essential. However, supplements are not the only factor for a healthy lifestyle. That is why it is always advised to watch out for your eating habits, exercise and add the necessary supplements to your diet.





# INDIA NEED TO HELP KOHLI: PONTING

PTI ■ DUBAI

Australia legend Ricky Ponting believes frequent changes in his batting order was responsible for Virat Kohli's prolonged lean patch and fears if omitted from the T20 World Cup squad, the star batter might find it difficult to regain his place.

Kohli has struggled for runs during this year's IPL and hasn't scored a century for India in any format for almost three years.

Ponting said instead of changing Kohli's position in the playing XI frequently, the Indian team management needs to give him confidence to get his touch back.

"They probably should be trying to find new ways to get him back into the form and help him out," the former skipper told 'The ICC Review'.

"That (moving him up the order) quite often comes at the expense of someone else as well, you are moving someone else around trying to find a spot for Virat. He has opened the batting, he's batted at No.3 in the IPL in the last couple of years and done the same for India.

"Moving him around will make him feel that people are worried about him, and he will be more unsettled."

Ponting feels Kohli should be given a set position in the batting order.

"I will be going the other way. I'll be telling him, 'This is your



spot, this is where you're batting, it's not going to change.

"Keep believing in yourself, keep putting in the hard work, keep believing what made you the best player in the world for a

number of years - get back to those thoughts and the runs will come."

Ponting said the Indian team management will have a huge role to play in Kohli's resurgence.

"If you leave Virat out of the

eve of the World Cup, and someone comes in and has a reasonable tournament, it will be hard for Virat to get back in it," he said.

"If I was India, I will keep pushing with him, because I know the upside. If they actually get him back confident and playing as well as he can, that upside is better than most.

"So I think if I was a captain or a coach around the Indian set up, I will be making life as easy as possible for him to feel as comfortable as possible, and just wait for him to flick the switch and start scoring runs again."

Ponting, who captained Australia to two World Cup triumphs in 2003 and 2007, believes the 33-year-old Indian is worth persisting with at international level as he is still a fearsome player for any opposition.

"I think if I was an opposition captain or an opposition player, I will be fearing playing an Indian team that has Virat Kohli in it, more than I would be one that doesn't have him in it.

"I know there have been some challenges for him, it's been a difficult time. But every great player that I have seen in this game has been through it at some stage, whether that's a batsman or a bowler, they have all been through it," he said.

"And somehow, the best (players) find a way to rebound and respond, and it's only a matter of time before Virat does that."

## Bumrah drops to 2nd in ICC ODI rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah dropped to second among bowlers while Hardik Pandya rose a whopping 13 places to eighth in the all-rounders' list after his strong show against England in the latest ICC ODI rankings issued on Wednesday.

While India clinched a narrow 2-1 triumph in what was a thrilling ODI series, star pacer Bumrah was forced to miss the final match owing to back spasms, which cost him his top spot.

New Zealand quick Trent Boult reclaimed the top spot with 704 rating points as against Bumrah's 703.

Among other Indians, Yuzvendra Chahal, who picked



seven wickets during the ODI series against England, jumped four spots to 16th.

Pandya was rewarded with for his impressive show with bat and ball against England. He took six scalps and made a total of 100 runs.

He also jumped eight spots to 42nd in the batting rankings, following his excellent series.

Star India wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, who scored a brilliant unbeaten 125 during the final, was rewarded for his strong form with a rise of 25 spots to 52nd.

Pakistan skipper Babar Azam remains on top in the list for batsmen, with the Indian duo of Virat Kohli (fourth) and Rohit Sharma (fifth) and South Africa opener Quinton de Kock (sixth) all dropping a spot.

Ponting suggested Indian selectors to find a spot for Kohli in the top-order and commit to leaving the champion batter there for the entirety of the T20 World Cup, hoping that he finds his form during the knockout stages of the tournament.

"Early in the tournament, for a first-round game, (it's important to) get him in nice and early, among the runs, and then hope-

fully by the end of the tournament you'll have Virat Kohli back at his best," he said.

"That's the way I would look at it. I wouldn't think about holding him back at the start of the tournament, with the thought that you might be able to bring him back towards the back end and have him peak. Tournament play isn't like that.

"You need to work your way

into the tournament, get some runs under your belt, and get some confidence and then be playing your best cricket at the back end."

Ponting believes Kohli's best performances for India have come when he looked settled both on the field and off the field.

"You still got to find the best balance for the team. You can't just make the team all about one person," he noted.

## PUJARA HITS TON ON HIS SUSSEX CAPTAINCY DEBUT

PTI ■ LONDON

Cheteshwar Pujara continued his fine form and hit a century on captaincy debut for Sussex to put his side in a commanding position against Middlesex here on Wednesday.

Pujara, who was overnight 115, was batting on 143 from 263 balls, studded with 13 fours and one six to help Sussex post 412 for six against Middlesex at lunch on day two at the Lord's.

Pujara was made interim captain of Sussex following Tom Haines' injury. The India Test mainstay slammed his fifth century from seven county games this season.

Pujara shared a 219-run third wicket partnership with Tom Alsop (135; 277 balls; 15x4) after Sussex were reduced to 99 for 2 inside 35 overs.

Alsop got out near the close of play on day one. Sussex lost another quick wicket Archie Lenham (0) in space of three deliveries but Pujara held fort for his team.

Representing Middlesex, India pacer Umesh Yadav was wicketless and conceded 58 runs from 23 overs.



## India to tour Zimbabwe for three-match ODI series in August

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian cricket team will travel to Zimbabwe for the first time in six years for a three-match ODI series, next month.

The three ODIs will be played on August 18, 20 and 22 in Harare, the Zimbabwe Cricket announced.

KL Rahul is expected to lead the Indian side.

The series is part of the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League, a 13-team competition serving as the main route for direct qualification for the 50-over World Cup to be staged in India next year.

Zimbabwe are currently placed 12th in the 13-team pool, with just three wins in 15 matches.

The last time the 'Men in



Blue' were in Zimbabwe when a Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led side played three ODIs and as many T20Is in June-July 2016.

India recently finished their tour of England with series victories in T20Is and ODIs.

A young Indian team, under the leadership of Shikhar

Dhawan, will next play a three-match ODI series against West Indies followed by five T20Is that finish on August 7.

Before the series against India, Zimbabwe will host Bangladesh for three T20s from July 30.

They will tour Australia

ahead of the marquee-event for three ODIs from August 28.

### MANAGER FROM DDCA

DDCA's former director Vikas Katyal has been appointed as the manager for the Indian Cricket Team for its tour to the West Indies.



## Shastri calls for reduction of bilateral T20I matches

PTI ■ LONDON

As cricket grapples with a massive scheduling problem, former India coach Ravi Shastri has called for reduction in T20 bilateral series, saying franchise cricket can be encouraged instead.

As per ICC's next Futures Tours & Programme's (FTP) draft, there is set to be a massive increase in T20s and the IPL is also set to have a two-and-a-half-month exclusive window.

With the increasing number of matches, multi-format players are feeling the load. England's premier all-rounder Ben Stokes shocked everyone by announcing retirement from ODIs on Monday.

The 31-year-old said playing three formats had become "unsustainable" for him.

Earlier this month, Cricket South Africa had decided to pull-out of their ODI series against Australia to ensure their players would be available for their new domestic T20 competition.

"I would be a little careful of the number of bilateral

splits, especially in T20 cricket. There's a lot of franchise cricket which can be encouraged, whichever country it's in - India, West Indies, or Pakistan," Shastri said on a Telegraph's Sport's podcast.

"You play less bilaterals and then you get together for the World Cups. So the emphasis on ICC World Cup events becomes paramount. Then people look forward to them," he added.

Former England skipper Nasser Hussain has also slammed the crammed cricket calendar.

Shastri also suggested a two-tier Test set up to save the longest format from extinction.

"I think two tiers are needed, otherwise Test cricket will die in 10 years time.

"You need six teams at the top, and then six teams in the second and then you qualify. And those top six play against each other more often because of the corridor you open up by having less bilateral T20 cricket and just franchise cricket. That's the way all formats of the game can survive," he explained.

## Not in a position to host Asia Cup T20, Sri Lanka Cricket tells Asian Cricket Council

PTI ■ KARACHI

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) on Wednesday informed the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) that the board will not be in a position to host the upcoming edition of the Asia Cup T20 because of the economic and political crisis in the country. The development comes after the SLC recently postponed the third edition of the Lanka Premier League (LPL) due to the ongoing crisis.

"Sri Lankan cricket has conveyed that due to the existing political and economic situation

in their country specially where foreign exchange is concerned it is not an ideal situation for them to host such a mega-event of six teams in the island," an ACC source said.

The official stated that the SLC officials conveyed that they would like to host the tournament in the UAE or some other country.

The official also added that the ACC is likely to make an announcement in the next few days, given the Asia Cup is slated to be held in August and September this year before the T20 World Cup in Australia.

## Proteas deny Stokes a farewell ODI win

AP ■ CHESTER-LE-STREET

Rassie van der Dussen's century helped South Africa spoil Ben Stokes's farewell to one-day international cricket as the Proteas won by 62 runs on the England star's Durham home ground to go 1-0 up in a three-match series.

Van der Dussen's career-best 134 was the cornerstone of South Africa's 335-5, their highest ODI total in England.

He also shared stands of 109 with opener Janneman Malan (57) and 151 with Aiden Markram, who made a stylish 77.

Test captain Stokes did not have a fairytale finish to a 50-over international cricket career that peaked with a player of the match display in England's 2019 World Cup final triumph.

The struggling 31-year-old pacer took an expensive 0-44 in five overs amid searing heat, after being cheered by



his loyal home fans as he led England onto the field.

Stokes then made just five with the bat before he was lbw to off-spinner

Markram, having missed a reverse sweep. Stokes had announced on Monday that this game would be his 105th and last match at this level, with the dynamic all-rounder saying a congested England fixture schedule meant he had to jettison ODIs in order to still give of his best in Tests and Twenty20s.

### 'WE WILL MISS STOKES'

Fellow World Cup-winner Jos Buttler, now England's white-ball captain, thanked Stokes for his ODI efforts.

"Three years ago (the 2019 World Cup final) will live long in the memory but every day he turns up, whether that be for training or in a match, he puts in 100 percent.

"He has been a fantastic ambassador for us in ODI cricket. We will miss him."

The series continues at Old Trafford on Friday.

## Fencer Bhavani Devi loses in Cairo World Championship

PTI ■ CAIRO

India's first Olympian fencer Bhavani Devi bowed out of the World Championships after losing in the second round of senior women's individual sabre event here on Wednesday.

Bhavani gave a tough fight to her German opponent Larissa Eifler, seeded 8th, before going down 12-15 in the round of 32.

The 28-year-old from Chennai made history at the Tokyo Olympics by becoming the first Indian to compete in the sport at the Games.

Bhavani, currently ranked 39th in the world, had recovered from 4-11 to beat Gabriella Page of Canada 15-14 in her opening round match.

## FIH appoints Egypt's Seif Ahmed as acting president

PTI ■ LAUSANNE

The International Hockey Federation (FIH) on Wednesday appointed Egypt's Seif Ahmed as its acting president following Indian administrator Narinder Dhruv Batra's resignation from the post.

Batra on Monday resigned as FIH president and also quit as Indian Olympic Association (IOA) chief. He also gave up his International Olympic Committee (IOC) membership which was directly linked with his IOA position.

In a statement, the FIH said its Executive Board has officially accepted Batra's resignation and unanimously appointed Ahmed as its interim chief till fresh elections are held on November 5 during its two-day virtual Congress.

"...The Members of the Executive Board (EB) of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) have officially accepted the resignation of Dr Narinder Dhruv Batra," the world body said.

Batra became president of FIH in 2016 and reclaimed the position last year for a second term till 2024.

"Unanimously appointed FIH EB Member and President of the African Hockey Federation Seif Ahmed (Egypt) as Acting President until the next Presidential elections.

"...The upcoming FIH Congress will be held virtually, as planned, on 4-5 November 2022, with the Presidential election taking place on 5 November," it added.

## Pakistan break Galle record to beat SL

AP ■ GALLE

Abdullah Shafique hit an epic 160 to anchor Pakistan's record chase of 342 at Galle as the tourists won a thrilling opening Test against Sri Lanka on Wednesday.

The opener capped his marathon display with the winning runs in the final session on day five, jumping for joy and pumping his fist as Pakistan triumphed by four wickets for a 1-0 lead in the two-match series.

Left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya took a match haul of nine wickets but his efforts were in vain as the visitors battled past the previous best chase in Galle of 268 by Sri Lanka against New Zealand in 2019.

The 22-year-old Shafique excelled with his second Test ton. He built crucial partnerships including a 101-run third-wicket stand with skipper Babar Azam, who made 55 after his 119 in the first innings on a tricky pitch to bat on.

"We know how to play spin so we



believed," Azam said after the tense win. "When I was batting with Abdullah Shafique we were just trying to build a partnership. He has shown his class."

Shafique, who was named man of the match, said: "It was difficult but with time it was easier. Babar is one of the best in the world. We have learnt so much from him. I enjoyed batting with him in the middle."

The unbeaten Shafique finally combined with Mohammad Nawaz, 19 not out, to take the visitors home after a brief rain interruption halted their charge. The teams had taken early tea before returning for the third session of play.

The second Test starts Sunday, also in Galle, after it was moved from Colombo due to the political unrest in Sri Lanka.

## Reliance to acquire franchise in SA's T20 league

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Expanding its international footprint in cricket, Reliance Industries Ltd on Wednesday said it will acquire a franchise in Cricket South Africa's upcoming T20 league.

"Based in Cape Town the new franchise will take forward the Mumbai Indians brand and comes close on the heels of acquiring the UAE-based International League T-20 team," the firm said in a statement.

Reliance, the owner of the Mumbai Indians IPL franchise, had previously announced that it will own one of the teams in the UAE T20 League.

The firm has played a crucial role in evolving the sports ecosystem through ownership of cricket franchises, football league in India, sports sponsorship, consultancy, and athlete talent management, and bringing in industry best practices.



# 'I have got a lot of appreciation, but not enough recognition'

K. RAMYA SREE

**A**ctress Komalee Prasad, who has recently appeared in the Finding Your Penguin episode of *Modern Love Hyderabad*, seems to be very confident about her future prospects in the movie business, and why shouldn't she be? She delivered an impressive performance in *Modern Love Hyderabad* that the audience thoroughly enjoyed.

What makes her even more special is that she is the Telugu Ammai, rewriting her stars in Tollywood with her work.

Over a cup of cappuccino, the actress revealed to us that she is recovering from a spine injury. "My doctor says I have ignored certain symptoms and have been working round the clock, because of which I have gotten bedridden. I'm glad we diagnosed it at an early stage and I can cure myself now," she says.

Komalee says she felt devastated the last two months because of the bed rest she had to take for her spine injury. "The last two months were very tough, but because of *Modern Love Hyderabad*'s promotions, I started to come out and I feel much better."

Speaking of *Modern Love*, Komalee says, it is only because of Venkatesh Maha that she came on board the project. "I was in Vizag shooting for the *HIT 2* schedule when my manager called me to inform me about *Modern Love Hyderabad*. I was jumping with joy as Venkatesh Maha was one of my checklist directors to work with. I have been his big fan since *C/o Kancharapalem* days. Venkatesh is technically brilliant. As an actor, it would be once in a lifetime experience to work with such a brilliant craft manoeuvre."

Apparently, none of them knew who the other cast is in other episodes of *Modern* until the last date of the shoot and the series was as new to them as it was to a few audiences when it was previewed.

Komalee is someone who is grateful for whatever opportunity that came her way. "I have got a lot of appreciation

Komalee Prasad has delivered a phenomenal performance in *Modern Love Hyderabad*. She exclusively shares with *The Pioneer* about her spine injury, being grateful for the opportunity that came her way and much more.

for every project that I have done, but I did not get enough recognition yet and I believe every project has played a role in whatever I am today and wherever I will go next. If I have to pick one project, it would definitely be *Modern Love* and *HIT 2*. By the time these two projects have come to me, I haven't done any big things. Venkatesh Maha cast me blindly and said 'you are a performer and you are my Indu'. After doing *Modern Love*, I know what I am capable of and I don't want to settle for any less anymore."

She also opined her views on being a 'Telugu girl in Tollywood'. "Honestly, I wouldn't say it is easy, but I wouldn't also say it is as tough as people portray it. For me, I want to perform. As long as I am performing, I am happy. I even wanted to go to the Tamil industry because I felt they write raw scripts, especially for women. But now, the scene is changing in Tollywood too. On the contrary, I have been offered a lot of roles by Telugu people, and I am 100 per cent sure that those characters will prove me as the best actor. As an actor, I don't want to set any boundaries. I am actually waiting for a very good Tamil debut. I want to be an inspiration to all those Telugu girls who have a lot of talent but are scared to come out because they think acting is a bad place to be and it is not."

Komalee says she heard a lot of compliments for her versatility and she wants to be as versatile as possible in her upcoming projects.

Giving some insights about her next projects,

she informs us, "I am playing a full-length character alongside Sesh. Another film is halfway through. We finished half of it in Amalapuram. You will see me playing a very Telugu homely small town girl. In another film, I will play a go-to urban girl."



I am not a big fan of love stories: Suhasini Maniratnam

based in New York and was very regional. Unless you have lived in New York, one might not under-

**A** franchise that has been time and again tasting success with interesting stories revolving around the theme of love is *Modern Love*. The recent Telugu chapter of the international Amazon Original too has found a special place in audiences' hearts. *Modern Love Hyderabad* features 6 episodes studded with a stellar star cast.

One of the stories that is being loved by viewers is 'Why did she leave me there...?', directed by Nagesh Kukunoor and stars Suhasini Maniratnam and Naresh Agastya.

Reacting to the apprecia-

tion being showered on the series, Suhasini Maniratnam who essays the role of a grandmother in an episode, said, "*Modern Love Hyderabad* is getting a lot of appreciation and is receiving compliments from people around all over India. Even people living abroad have seen it. I think it has got a universal connection with people. It is endearing to listen to people and unanimously people are calling me and they are being so emotional with the story that I have done. Most of my age group friends have liked 'Why did she leave me there...?' and *My Unlikely Dream* *Pandemic Partner* story featuring Revathy and Nithya Menon. It's wonderful. I have only had this kind of reaction with superhit films that have had theatrical releases. I am seeing this amazing reaction and a positive reaction for something that is an Amazon Original on an OTT platform."

While adding her own perception of the series, the actress said, "I have three kinds of reaction to *Modern Love*. I have watched both seasons of *Modern Love*. It was

stand the reactions. So, when I was approached for the Telugu version, I was taken aback thinking how will those essays which are published in the USA will suit our tradition, ethnic background, that was a question as an audience."

It is a profound vision of the director to see Suhasini in the role of a Grandmother, which indeed came as a surprise to the actress too.

"I had never thought that I will be part of *Modern Love*. When Nagesh called me, I was surprised that he wanted me to act. I had met him once before as a jury member in film festivals. I never thought he would look at me as an actor at all. We conversed more as writers and filmmakers only. It was going to be a breezy perky romantic story because that was my original idea. Even though I am not a big fan of love stories, I like something deep. I was expecting a light romantic story but when you told me that story, I was taken aback. I accepted the role. I was doing that role. I was preparing for the role. Not really looking at how people will receive the role. Now post release I am taken aback by the reaction. When you do good work, you don't expect anything good out of it. I wanted to be honest and sincere about the story that was given. It was an honest attempt to fulfill the duty. It's a phenomenal reaction that we are getting. Things like these happen rarely in life. We need to enjoy this moment. That's what I feel," She added.

## Manoj Bajpayee approached for police officer's part in *Pushpa: The Rule*

**B**ollywood actor Manoj Bajpayee, who is known for his work in films like *Gangs of Wasseypur*, *Satya*, *Aligarh*, had recently praised the pan-India Allu Arjun-starrer film *Pushpa*, calling it immaculate.

According to several media reports, the actor now has been approached for a role in the film's second part. Manoj had earlier said that every frame in *Pushpa: The Rise* has been shot as if it's a matter of life and death.

The film, written and directed by Sukumar and produced by Mythri Movie Makers and Muttamsetty Media, told the story of its titular character Pushparaj of



his rise to become a sandalwood smuggler and his personal trauma.

The Telugu action drama marked the debut of the noted Malayalam and Tamil actor, Fahadh Fasil in Telugu cinema. He played the character of a cor-

rupt cop, who will lock horns with Allu's lead character in the film's second part *Pushpa: The Rule*. Fahadh also spilled beans recently when he told 'The Cue' that the film might see a potential third part as the makers have enough material.

Fahadh had told 'The Cue' that director Sukumar initially planned the film as an OTT series with both first and second part narrated to him as one project. But now that it has been turned into a film, the makers might actually explore the possibility of a third part.

An official confirmation with regards to Manoj's casting is awaited from the makers of *Pushpa* and Manoj Bajpayee.

## I am not any angel but I try to be a good person, says Raashii

**T**he queen that rules hearts and is very warm as a person; Raashii Khanna is recently gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Thank You* along with Chay Akkineni. The actress is in full swing of promotions for the movie.

Just as the name suggests, *Thank you* the movie has given several people an opportunity to be grateful for what they have. Taking a moment and this opportunity, Raashii Khanna too took it to her Instagram account and expressed what she feels she is grateful for.

The actress says, "I am so thankful for the heart that God has blessed me with because I know there is kindness in it and I know that I am not capable of hurting someone on purpose. So I think I am very grateful that God has blessed me with this heart for making me the kind of person that I'm today. Of-course I am not any angel but I at least

try to be a good person and that strength or wanting to be a good person comes from above. It's not my doing. Thank you."

Now we know why the actress rules hearts everywhere she goes. Raashii Khanna who has an extremely kind soul has been getting immense love from her fans. Recently one of her fans even got her autograph tattooed on his hand.

Gathering love and appreciative response from everywhere, Raashii Khanna is now going to step on a strong foot in B-town too. Fans are already excited for her big release *Yodha* alongside Siddharth Malhotra and web series with Shahid Kapoor.



## Kavya Kalyanram to star in *Ustaad*

**F**ans of Telugu actress Kavya Kalyanram, have got an amazing surprise, on the occasion of the actress' birthday.

The makers of the Telugu film *Ustaad*, written and directed by Phanideep, had announced on Wednesday that the actress will be a part of

the film. The makers said, "Welcoming kavya kalyanram into the world of *Ustaad* and the team wishes you a very happy birthday." The makers had shared a poster that has an image of the actress, with a text that reads, "Welcome Onboard Kavya Kalyanram."

