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**WINDOWS**



Dozens of skaters took to the frozen surface of Amsterdam's historic Prinsengracht canal at Amsterdam in Netherlands as the deep freeze gripping Europe briefly made it possible to skate on a small section of the canal for the first time since 2018. People skated and walked on a small stretch of ice between two bridges close to the landmark Westerkerk before growing cracks in the ice forced all but the most daring off the ice

**19 more Covid vaccines in pipeline**

NEW DELHI: Nearly 19 coronavirus vaccine candidates are in different clinical trial stages and may be available in the coming months, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said on Monday. Addressing the media, Vardhan said that in the next 2-3 weeks, vaccination against Covid-19 will be started for people above 50 years of age. "About 18-19 vaccine candidates against Covid-19 are in the pipeline and are in preclinical, clinical and advanced stages. We are hopeful that we will be able to offer newer vaccines to India in the coming months," Vardhan said.

**NTPC to pay ₹20 lakh to kin of Tapovan victims**

JOSHIMATH: State-run power giant NTPC on Monday said it would pay a compensation of Rs 20 lakh each to the families of labourers who died in the recent flash flood at its Tapovan-Vishnugad hydel project in Uttarakhand. A workforce has been set up at the plant to coordinate with the administration and gather all required information about every missing worker, NTPC's spokesman RP Jayada said. He said rescue work is underway on a war-footing at Tapovan-Vishnugad project site by multiple agencies to reach people believed to be trapped inside the tunnel. Real-time information is being shared with the agencies involved in the exercise to expedite it, Jayada said.

**BUSINESS**



**Centre may put 4 banks on sale**

**P11**

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



**SC slaps notice on WhatsApp, FB**

WhatsApp may be worth \$2-3 tn, people value privacy more, says the apex court

NEW DELHI

THE Supreme Court issued notices to popular social media platforms WhatsApp and Facebook on a plea against its new privacy policy here on Monday. The apex court said people had grave apprehensions on loss of privacy, making it clear that it was the court's duty to protect this right as it heard an application against WhatsApp's new privacy policy.

The observation came as senior advocate Shyam Divan, representing petitioner Karmanya Singh Sareen, sought direction to restrain WhatsApp from implementing its new privacy policy in



India. "They have come up with new differentiating privacy policy for the Europeans and different set of rules applicable to Indians," Divan argued. He added that till the time new data protection law came into force in India, WhatsApp should not bring its new privacy policy. At this, Chief Justice SA Bobde replied, "We will issue notice in the matter." A bench, headed by the Chief Justice and comprising Justices AS Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, told the counsel for WhatsApp, "People have grave apprehensions about loss of privacy."

You may be 2 or 3 trillion-dollar company, but people value their privacy more than your money. We have to protect people's privacy." Senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Arvind Datar, appearing for WhatsApp, strongly contested Divan's argument, saying that the Delhi High Court is already seized of the matter. Sibal said that Europe had a different set of data privacy laws, and WhatsApp's new privacy policy for India is similar to policy applicable in the US, Australia and other countries. "The fact is that this policy was applicable to the rest of the world except Europe."

Continued on Page 7

**Centre releases GST compensation of ₹2,167 cr to AP**



HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Finance Ministry on Monday released 16th weekly instalment of Rs 5,000 crore to the States to meet the GST compensation shortfall, taking the total amount released so far to Rs 95,000 crore.

Till now, 86 per cent of the total estimated GST compensation shortfall has been released to the States and Union Territories (UTs) with legislative assembly.

Further, additional borrowing permission of over

Rs 1.06 lakh crore was granted to the States. As part of that amount raised through special window passed on to Andhra Pradesh is Rs 2,167.20 crore and Rs 1,703.56 for Telangana.

The Centre set up a special borrowing window in October 2020 to meet the estimated shortfall of Rs1.10-lakh crore in revenue due to GST implementation. The borrowings are being done through this window by the Centre on behalf of the States and Union Territories.

**RACHABANDA LIKELY FROM UGADI**

HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

WITH the positive response from people towards YSRCP government during the present panchayat polls and successful implementation of welfare schemes announced under Navaratala programme of YSRCP election manifesto, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is likely to organise Rachabanda programmes in the State soon.

Though there is no official confirmation, speculations are rife that the programme would be launched from Ugadi. Chief Minister is said to be keen to start the programme which is aimed at getting direct feedback from people about the implementation of welfare programmes. Sources say that by Ugadi, the local body elections will also be over and hence Ugadi could be the best and auspicious date to launch the programme.

**India to test 160-km strike range Astra missile soon**

AJIT K DUBEY NEW DELHI

IN a step that would establish its superiority in air combat over China and Pakistan, India would start testing the Astra Mark 2 beyond visual range air-to-air missile, which would be capable of taking down enemy aircraft from a range of 160 kilometres.

The extended range Astra Mark 2 would give India an edge over its adversaries and



would add more lethality to its fighter jets in aerial combat, like the one which happened a day after the Balakot airstrikes on February 26, 2019.

"The trial for the Astra Mark would be starting in

the second half of this year and we are hoping to see the missile fully developed by 2022," government officials said.

The next-generation missile is expected to be operational by the next year-end,

former Central Air Commander Air Marshal SBP Sinha (Retd) said.

The retired officer has been associated with the Astra missile programme for a long time now.

The Astra is a beyond visual range air-to-air missile (BVRAAM), which flies over four times the speed of sound at Mach 4.5. Efforts are now on to integrate the over 100-km strike range missile on the indigenous fighter aircraft LCA Tejas.

The all-weather day and night capable Astra, which currently has a strike range of around 100 km, will eventually replace the expensive Russian, French and Israeli BVRAAMs that are currently imported to arm IAF fighters.

The Indian Air Force and Indian navy have already given orders for 288 Astra Mark-1 Missiles which are already "proven" on the Russian-origin Sukhoi-30MKI fighters. (ANI)

**PM to address experts for effective implementation of budget**

NEW DELHI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi will address a webinar on Tuesday for consultation on the roadmap for effective implementation of the Union Budget 2021-22 in the infrastructure sector. The webinar will see

the participation of more than 200 panelists, including representatives of major financial institutions and funds, concessionaires and contractors, consultants and subject matter experts, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement.

Continued on Page 7

**Govt eases curbs on geospatial data for map-making**

NEW DELHI

IN sweeping changes in the country's mapping policy, the government on Monday announced liberalisation of norms governing the acquisition and production of geospatial data, a move that will help in boosting innovation in the sector and create a level-playing field for public and private entities.

Under the new guidelines, the sector will be deregulated and aspects such as prior approvals for surveying, mapping and for building applications based on that have been done away with, Department of Science and Technology Secretary Ashutosh Sharma said. For Indian entities, there will be complete deregulation with no prior approvals, security clearances, licenses, for acquisition and production of geospatial data and geospatial data services, including

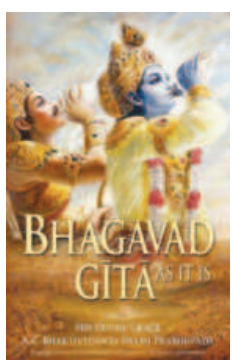
maps, he said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the liberalisation of policies governing the acquisition and production of geospatial data is a "massive step in government's vision for an Aatmanirbhar Bharat". The reform will benefit the country's farmers, start-ups, private sector, public sector and research institutions to drive innovations and build scalable solutions, he said.

Continued on Page 7

**Nanosatellite to carry Bhagavad Gita, PM Modi's photograph into space**

NEW DELHI

A nanosatellite is all set to take a photograph of PM Narendra Modi and a copy of religious book, the Bhagavad Gita to space. In addition to these, names of 25,000 individuals were also carried by the Satish Dhawan Satellite (SD SAT) that is due of be launched by the end of this month from the space centre at Sriharikota. The nanosatellite has been developed by a private firm



SpaceKidz, reported a national daily. "We have also added the



name and photograph of the prime minister on the top panel with the words

Atmanirbhar mission. This satellite has been completely developed and fabricated in India, including the electronics and circuitry," Dr Srimathy Kesan, founder and CEO of SpaceKidz India revealed to the daily Hindustan Times. The names of Dr K Sivan, Chairperson ISRO and Dr R Umamaheswaran, ISRO's Scientific Secretary have also been etched at the bottom panel of the nanosatellite.

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## VMC ELECTIONS

# MP, Minister trade barbs as campaign begins

- TDP MP Kesineni alleges Velampalli failed on all fronts to develop Vijayawada West Assembly constituency and was busy in robbing the temples.
- Minister Velampalli Srinivas on other hand says that Kesineni Nani have not paid salaries to hundreds of transport workers

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

MP and senior TDP leader Kesineni Srinivas (Nani) and the Endowments Minister and West MLA Velampalli Srinivas engaged in war of words in the campaign for election to be held for the municipal corporation on March 10. Kesineni alleged that Velampalli failed on all fronts to develop the Vijayawada West Assembly constituency and was busy in robbing the temples. While Minister Velampalli Srinivas alleged that Kesineni Nani had not paid salaries to hundreds of transport workers. As part of the election



MP Kesineni Nani participating in the election campaign in 41st division in Vijayawada on Monday

campaign for the VMC polls, Kesineni made door-to-door campaign in 41st division on Monday. He spoke to the local people and enquired about their problems.

Later, speaking to the media, Kesineni alleged that the Minister did nothing for the development of the West constituency

and not even the roads were repaired during the 20 months of YSRCP rule. He further alleged the YSRCP cheated Muslims of Andhra Pradesh. MP's daughter Kesineni Swetha said during the TDP rule, Rs13 crore was sanctioned for construction of Musafir Khana near the railway station and 90 per cent works were completed in

TDP rule. She alleged that the YSRCP government did not complete the remaining 10 per cent works in 20 months rule. She participated in the election campaign in 54th division in One Town. She said many schemes were implemented for the welfare of Muslims in the TDP rule but now the YSRCP government has ignored these schemes and welfare of Muslims.

On the other hand, Endowments Minister Velampalli Srinivas alleged that MP Kesineni comes out and meet public during the elections only. He alleged the MP had not paid salaries to the Kesineni Transport workers and has history of cheating the workers.

Velampalli Srinivas visited some colonies in Chitti Nagar area in 48th division and enquired about the local problems. He assured that the local problems will be solved, if the YSRCP is voted to power in VMC elections slated to be held on March 10. He visited Vagu centre, Tunnel hill area, KNR Peta, Prizerpet and other colonies and spoke to the voters. He said the MP has no right to comment about the Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and the YSRCP.



Endowments Minister Velampalli Srinivas during the election campaign in 48th division in Vijayawada on Monday

# Municipal workers stage protest over demands

- Protesters say the government is not paying the EPF and ESI regularly resulting in the workers fail to utilise the ESI medical services
- Demands to remove the municipal workers from the purview of the APCOS, regularise the municipal contract and outsourcing staff

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE

THE Prakasam district unit of the Andhra Pradesh Municipal Workers and Employees Federation, affiliated with CITU, con-

ducted a protest at the district Collectorate in Ongole on Monday and demanded the resolution of their issues pending for a long time with the government.

The federation leaders Itta Nagaiyah, K Samrajyam and CITU district general secretary Ch Srinivasa Rao explained that the municipal workers are facing a lot of troubles with the Andhra Pradesh Corporation for Outsourced Services, newly launched by the government. They explained that the government is executing the contract for only one year and is not paying any retirement benefits to the workers after attaining the age of 60 years, even they have decades of experience. They said that the government is not paying the EPF and ESI regularly resulting in the workers fail to utilise the

ESI medical services. They said that workers expected the YSRCP government to regularise them, but they are being treated as slaves now.

The workers' leaders demanded to remove the municipal workers from the purview of the APCOS, regularise the municipal contract and outsourcing staff, pay the pending health allowances to the municipal and engineering staff, stop removing the workers appointed in the coronavirus pandemic and reappoint the already removed workers, increase the staff and their salaries depending on the population increase in the towns, pay retirement benefits, Amma Vodi and other welfare scheme benefits to the municipal workers also along with the housing plots and houses.



CITU district secretary Ch Srinivasa Rao addressing at the protest by the municipal workers in Ongole on Monday

# Bullock cart owners request permission to transport sand



Chirala MLA Karanam Balarama Krishnamurthy interacting with the owners of bullock carts while holding the plough presented by Oruganti Reddy Yuvajana Sangham at Chirala on Monday

- They say the local officials are not allowing them to transport sand

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
CHIRALA

THE Oruganti Reddy Yuvajana Sangham members along with the owners of the bullock carts in the Vetapalem mandal met the Chirala MLA Karanam Balarama Krishnamurthy and complained that the local officials are not allowing them to transport sand. They re-

quested the MLA to see the officials accord the permission as per the State government policy.

YSRCP State general secretary Varikuti Amruthapani, Oruganti Reddy Yuvajana Sangham leaders Dodla Rajesh Reddy, Nayudu China Mastan Reddy, and others along with the bullock cart owners Akkala Krishnareddy, Battu Mastan and others explained to the MLA that the Chief Minister has already given permission for the transport of sand from the quarries for locals, but the officials are cooperating with the illegal transporters of sand but not allowing

the bullock cart owners. They complained that the sand mafia members are transporting the sand to other States, but the locals are not able to get any sand. They requested Balaram to talk to the officials and see they implement the orders of the Chief Minister and provide a livelihood to nearly 30,000 construction workers and sand transporters in the Constituency. Balarama Krishnamurthy said that he will take the issue to the district administration and see that the necessary permissions if any, are granted to them soon.

# TDP team to visit damaged houses in Narasaraopet

- Atchannaidu condemns attacks on TDP sympathisers houses
- Says party has formed a high-level committee to investigate the matter

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

TDP State president K Atchannaidu on Monday accused the ruling YSRCP leaders of resorting to mindless attacks on the houses of the TDP sympathisers in the Narasaraopet assembly segment in the Guntur district just because they did not vote for the ruling party in the panchayat elections.

Atchannaidu said that their party has formed a high-level committee at the instructions of the party national president and former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu to look into the matter. The committee will visit Gogulapadu and Issapalem villages in

Narasaraopet area on Tuesday to call on the families whose houses were damaged. The TDP committee consists of the party national general secretary Varla Ramaiah, deputy Leader in Assembly Nimmala Ramanaidu, former minister Nakka Anand Babu, Narasaraopet parliamentary president GVS Anjaneyulu and Narasaraopet in-charge Chadalawada Aravind Babu.

In a statement here, Atchannaidu said that the Chief Minister was running a hateful and vengeful regime to which the people would teach a bitter lesson soon. YSRCP leaders would not be able to win the people with their atrocities, destruction and demolitions. As a responsible Opposition party, the TDP would continue its fight till justice would be done to the aggrieved sections in the State.

Meanwhile, TDP official spokespersons Pilli Manikya Rao and Syed Rafi accused the YSRCP of destroying the compound wall of TDP supported candidate Radhama's house out of

frustration over her victory in 5th ward in Gogulapadu village in Picherla mandal in the Narasaraopet segment. Local MLA Gopireddy Srinivasa Reddy got the entire street damaged by an earthmover after Radhama won the post.

TDP leaders said that village sarpanch Narayana and panchayat secretaries crossed all limits in the confidence that they had full support of the MLA. The village, which saw a lot of development under the TDP rule, looked like a beautiful garden but was not badly damaged. Out of personal and political differences, YSRCP leaders were destroying the public property in the village.

TDP leaders demanded the State Election Commissioner to explain why he was not taking action with respect to the coerced and forced unanimous elections in Macherla, Thamballapalle, Punganur and other assembly segments. The TDP has made several representations to the SEC but there has been no action till now, he said.

# Raising Day of 'Corps of Signals' celebrated

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE



Ex-Servicemen celebrating the 111th Raising Day of Corps of Signals in Ongole on Monday

THE Prakasam district Ex-Servicemen Welfare Association celebrated the 111th Raising Day of the Corps of Signals in Ongole on Monday. Colonel Ganjam Srinivasacharyulu and AP Ex-Servicemen JAC chairman Neppalli Nageswara Rao, association president ChundururSrirama Murthy participated in the programme as the guests and explained about the role and importance of the Corps of Signals in the Indian army. The members felicitated them with shawls and mementoes.

Canteen manager G Venkatarao, Pasam Venkateswarlu, Alapati Venkateswarlu, MandaliVenkateswarlu and other ex-servicemen from the Corps of Signals also participated in the programme.

# New dairy opens at Namavaram

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

LAKSHMI Srinivasa Dairy managing director B Srinivas said that the dairy started supplying milk and milk products to the people.

Speaking at its inaugural function held at Namavaram here on Monday, he said 20,000 litres of milk will be procured daily, though it is having 30,000 litres capacity per day.

Milk producers from 70 villages will supply milk to the dairy. The dairy will pay one rupee extra to milk suppliers on the existing rates and supply milk to the people for Rs 4 less than other milk suppliers, he said. Inaugurating the dairy, K Prabhakar, J Ganesh and AK Jain asked the managing director to supply milk products with quality which is important for the development of any business. Quality and trust are the two eyes to any company, they averred.

They underlined the need to maintain quality in the products which is inevitable to face competition from other dairies.



EAR Education Group chairman K Prabhakar inaugurating Srinivasa dairy in Rajamahendravaram on Monday



## Lella plays Naidu's remarks on panchayat polls

**YSRCP GENERAL SECRETARY SAYS TDP SUPREMO CHANGING STANCE TO HIDE DRUBBING IN GP POLLS**

AMARAVATI

YSRCP general secretary Lella Appireddy played TDP for distorting the panchayat poll results and said that Chandrababu Naidu has been changing his stance to conceal his poll debacle.

Addressing a press conference

here on Monday, Appireddy said that people have lost faith in TDP and have shifted to YSRCP as can be seen by the GP poll results.

He said that Chandrababu Naidu who backed SEC N Ramesh Kumar until elections has now changed his stance and is going against the SEC

by alleging irregularities in the ballot form, though it was Naidu who demanded to conduct panchayat polls by ballot.

On TDP agitations regarding the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP), he said that the process was initially started during the TDP rule way

back in 2017, where former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had released papers regarding the privatisation of VSP and TDP had maintained silence despite being part of the Union government. He stated that TDP leaders have no moral right to call for protests on VSP issue.

He further added that people were laughing at the remarks of Lokesh in Vizag and suggested him to start an indefinite fast to save VSP. He assured that the State government shall protect the steel plant and YSRCP leaders are ready to make sacrifices as and when needed.



## Vijayawada, Bandar set to witness political buzz

- Vijayawada and Machilipatnam Municipal Corporations, two municipalities and three Nagara Panchayats will go to polls on March 10
- The municipal elections were scheduled in March 2020, but were postponed due to Covid 19 pandemic

HANS NEWS SERVICE VIJAYAWADA

THE State Election Commission on Monday released notification for conducting the polls to the municipal corporations, municipalities and Nagara Panchayats in Krishna district.

As per the notification, the elections will be held on March 10 for Vijayawada and Machilipatnam Municipal Corporations, two municipalities Nuzvid and Pedana and three Nagara panchayats ie, Vuyyuru, Tiruvuru and Nandigama. The elections to these municipalities, corporations and Nagara panchayats were scheduled to be held in



March 2020 but were postponed due to the Corona pandemic.

Now, the SEC issued orders for the polls to be held next month. The candidates filed nominations in March 2020 for the elections. As per the revised schedule, the date for the commencement of withdrawal of candidates is on March 2 and the last date for withdrawal of nominations is March 3, 2021. Date of publication of list of contesting candidates is March 3 after 3 pm and the date of polling is March 10. Date of repoll, if any, is March 13 (7 am to 5 pm). Date of counting

is March 14, 2021.

In Vijayawada Municipal corporation, the number of divisions increased from 59 to 63. The contestants have already filed the nomination papers. Machilipatnam Municipal Corporation will go to the polls first time after it was upgraded from municipality to the corporation. The voters of the two municipalities Pedana and Nuzvid will elect the ward members and the chairman. Three Nagara panchayats Vuyyuru, Nandigama and Tiruvuru will elect new representatives. Political activities in these

towns, corporations and nagara panchayats will pick up in the coming days as the candidates will start the campaign to win the poll battle.

Tough political fight is expected in Vijayawada among the TDP, YSRCP and Left parties and direct fight between the TDP and YSRCP in other places in Krishna district.

Elections to Jaggaiahpet Municipality will not be held on March 10 because issue related to merger of some panchayats with municipality is still not solved.

## Graduate constituency MLC elections on March 14

- Notification for the East and West Godavari districts Teachers Constituency MLC elections will be released on February 16
- The last date of filing of nominations is February 23
- The counting of votes would begin from March 17

HANS NEWS SERVICE KAKINADA

DISTRICT Collector and Returning Officer D Muralidhar Reddy said that polling will be held on March 14 for the East and West Godavari districts Teachers Constituency of Legislative Council.

Along with Joint Collectors Dr G Lakshmiha, G Raja Kumari and SPs Adnan Nayeem Asmi, She-mushi Bajpayee, he convened a meeting with Standing Committee officials and representatives of recognised political parties regarding the MLC elections at Collectorate on Monday.

The Collector said that the notification for the Teachers' MLC constituency elections will be released on February 16. He said that the nominations from the candidates would be accepted from February 16 and the last date of filing of nominations is February 23. The scrutiny of the nominations will be done on February 24. The



District Collector D Muralidhar Reddy addressing a meeting with Standing Committee officials and representatives of recognised political parties regarding East and West Godavari Teachers MLC constituency elections in Kakinada on Monday

last date for withdrawal of nominations is February 26. The polling would be held on March 14 from 8 am to 4 pm. The counting of votes would begin from March 17. He said that the model code of conduct concerning these elections will come into force with immediate effect in the East and West Godavari district constituencies. He said that as per the guidelines of the Election Commission, every person should follow the Covid-19 norms like wearing the face mask during the election related activity.

According to the final list published on February 6, there are 9,560 voters in East Godavari and 7,725 in West Godavari district. He said eligible voters, who are still unregistered, can register as vot-

ers by February 23. He said 67 polling stations would be set up in East Godavari district and 49 in West Godavari district for the conduct of MLC constituency elections. He said that the Code of Conduct for elections came into force across the East and West Godavari districts from February 11. It was revealed that check-posts were set up with flying and static surveillance teams.

He appealed to the recognised political parties to cooperate for the successful completion of the election process for the Teachers' MLC constituency of both the Godavari districts. The helpdesk will be functioning at Kakinada Collectorate from Monday to supply nomination forms, other information and materials.

## Poll staff leaves for tribal areas

HANS NEWS SERVICE RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

SUB-COLLECTOR Anupama Anjali said that as many as 5,768 election staff was sent to Rampachodavaram and Etapakadivision from here on Monday in 106 buses, for the panchayat election scheduled to be held on February 17.

The election staff was sent to the two divisions one day before polling as the elections held in agency area. Boarding and lodging were arranged to the election staff in tribal residential school at Rampacho-

davaram and on Tuesday at 9 am they will be shifted to election material distributing centres.

After polling and counting, the election staff will be brought to Rajamahendravaram and from there they will go to their places, she added. Lunch was provided to the election staff in government

college and water bottles also given to them. Divisional panchayat officer J Satyanarayana, administrative officer Devi and other officials were present.



Sub-Collector Anupama Anjali giving send off to election staff in Rajamahendravaram on Monday

## YSRCP leader donates ₹1.8 lakh for temple development

HANS NEWS SERVICE RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

FORMER APIC chairman and YSRCP leader Srighakollapu SivaramaSubramanyam donated Rs 1.80 lakh to Swamy Ayyappa temple here on Sunday.

He handed over the cheque to temple trust board members Polasanipalli Hanmantha Rao and Thota Subba Rao. He do-

nated the amount to cover the 18 steps with bronze sheet in the temple.

Later, Sivarama Subramanyam said that the God gave him an opportunity to be a part in the temple work.

He assured to extend his help for the development of the temple. The temple was located on the banks of River Godavari attracting thousands of devotees, he said.



## MP calls upon cadre to work with unity

HANS NEWS SERVICE RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

MP Margani Bharat Ram has asked the YSRCP activists to work in coordination to strengthen the party.

Addressing the party cadres at Kadiyam on Monday, he said the people gave clear verdict to the party in two phases of panchayat elections.

He further added that the party will recognise the true and loyal cadres in right time and warned that stern action will be taken on the back-stabbers in the party.

Because of the welfare schemes and development works, the people supported the party and reposed confidence in Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, he said.

Steps will be taken to develop Kadiyam on all fronts, he assured.

The MP said YSRCP is like a family and all the members in the family work together, and added that it is the duty of everyone to work for the party and express solidarity to Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, who is striving for the welfare of the people and development of the State. Party rural coordinator Chandana Nageswar, G Babu, D Seshagiri and others were present.



MP Margani Bharat addressing YSRCP cadres at Kadiyam on Monday

**THE HANS CLASSIFIEDS**

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, PANCHAKSHARI SIVAPRASAD (Ex-Service) Men, S/o. P.NARASIMHULLU, R/o. D.No:10/703, Bellam Mandi Street, Kadapa A.P., hereby State that I have changed my Son's name from P.ARJUN to PANCHAKSHARI ARJUN henceforth for all purposes.

(TH\_24374)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, YARAM SANKARAIHA S/o YARAM GARATAIAH, R/o. 19-8-115/2, Hathiramji Colony, Near Annamaiah Circle, Tirupati, Chittoor Dist., A.P. have changed my name as YARAM RAVI SANKAR.

(TH\_81398)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, SHAIK KARIM BASHA S/o SHAIK ABOUL SALAM (Old Name) R/O D.No. 1-183, Settippalli, Sambepalli, YSR, Kadapa Dt., A.P., India. I have Changed My Name SHAIK KAREEM BASHA (New Name).

(TH\_3006)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, GANGICHETTY KIRTHI KALYAN (old name), R/o. H.No.46-1-M-208-2A, Chanikayapuri Colony, Kurmool Dist., A.P. have changed my name as GANGISSETTY KIRTHI KALYAN (New Name).

(TH\_3016)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, SHAIK JAFFER SAB (old name), R/o. D.No.35/24-27, Mahaboob Basha Street, Rayachoty, Y.S.R. Dist., A.P. have changed my name as SHAIK JAFAR SAB S/o SHAIK SYED SAB (New Name) for all purpose in future.

(TH\_Gr\_1781)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, GUTHULA REKHA VENKATSWAR RAO (old name) W/o GUTHULA VENKATESWARARAO, R/o. Lakshmi Enclave, Flat No. b2, 70-1b-13, Near Boat Club, Ramanayyapeta, Kakinada (Urban), East Godavari, A.P.- 533005, Henceforth will be known as GUTHULA REKHA (New Name). This is for all records.

(TH\_3002)

**LOST**

I, SYED IRFANULLA ZUBAIR S/o SYED HIDAYATHULLAH, R/o. D.No. 9/185-1-3-1, Agadi Street, Kadapa Town, YSR Kadapa Dist., A.P., I have lost my M.Sc. (I.T) Convocation, Bearing No. 1061/07 and Roll No.2606, While I was going to take Xerox copies at Almaspet Circle, Kadapa. If anybody found please contact above address.

(TH\_24479)

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, KONDURU VENKATESWARLU S/o Konduru Seshiah (old name as per SSC Certificate), resident of D.No. 5-1-46B/2, Jonnayagunta Street, KAVALI Town, SPSR Nellore Dist., is hereby declared that I have changed my name as

**KONDURU VENKATESWARLU REDDY S/o KONDURU SETHA REDDY** (New Name)

hereinafter call all purpose in future.

(TH\_3016)

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## People aged above 50 reluctant to take vaccine: Collector



Krishna District Collector Md Imtiaz and other officials attending the videoconference on Covid vaccination in Vijayawada on Monday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

DISTRICT Collector Md Imtiaz on Monday said that about 10,000 Covid frontline workers are ready to take the vaccination shots in Krishna district and so far, vaccination was given to 31,000 frontline workers.

He participated in the video-conference conducted by chief secretary Adityanath Das on Covid vaccination programme in the State. The Collector said people over 50 years of age are not coming forward to take the vaccination and the district administration is trying to convince them to take the shots.

He said the vaccination programme is monitored through the control room in the district and one nodal officer was appointed to monitor the vaccination in the district. He said that at the age of 55 he had taken vaccination and been trying to explain the people on the importance of taking Covid vaccine.

## Corporator Ramesh murder case accused arrested

The special police teams searched for the duo in various places and finally arrested them in Pithapuram

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KAKINADA

THE police unravelled the murder case YSRCP Corporator Kampara Ramesh (47) and arrested the accused, G Veera Venkata Satyanarayana alias Chinna and his brother (minor) at Pithapuram on Monday. DSP V Bhima Rao told the media here on Monday that the murder created tension in the city and SP Adnan Nayeem Asmi deputed armed special teams to nab the accused.

Under the directions of the SP Asmi, the special teams searched for the duo in various places and



DSP V Bhima Rao disclosing details of arrest to media on Monday

finally arrested them in Pithapuram. He said that there are certain differences between Chinna and Ramesh. He stated that the accused had quarrelled with the deceased person deliberately two or

three times. He confessed to have killed Ramesh.

Sarpam CI Nunna Raju arrested them and sent them to remand. He said that the minor was sent to the juvenile court.

The police seized the Honda City car (AP 39 AJ 0345) belonging to the accused.

SP Asmi complimented the police personnel for their swift action and arrest of the accused.

## KDCA U-19 team announced

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

KRISHNA District Cricket Association (KDCA) on Monday announced the district Under-19 boys' team. The team was selected after open net trials and conduct of probables team matches.

Following are the members of the team. V Vishal (Captain),

P Anatha Karthikeya (V-C) (WK), B Pavan, Sk Kazamoidhin (WK), M Krishna Sai, G Prudvi, B Vishal Yadav, MD Kasim, M Susanth Naidu, M Maanas, Ch Nithik, M Pradeep, Ch Hemanth Vignesh, M Chirudeep, G Chanti, K Prudvi Prasanth and PK Sri Chakri. M Ravindra Chowdary, Secretary, KDCA announced the team.



KDCA Under-19 team

## Govt urged to intervene for conducting polls to Kabaddi Association

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

ANDHRA Kabaddi Association former secretary KP Rao on Monday has sought intervention of Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy on conducting the elections for the association under the supervision of an administrator, preferably a retired High Court judge or a district judge.

Releasing an open letter to the Chief Minister, Rao said that the Andhra Kabaddi Association headed two warring groups and were not eligible to conduct kabaddi State championships as they are not recognized by Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh. Rao said the players were the biggest sufferers as tournaments conducted by both groups were illegal and unauthorised.

He said the concerned sports authority officials failed to take any action against them as per the Government of AP rules. "Both groups are not eligible as per sports codes of AP and India and it results in creating problems to the Kabaddi players," he said. He reminded that owing to group politics, players approached the High Court of AP



Andhra Kabaddi Association former secretary KP Rao addressing the press conference in Vijayawada on Monday

and requested the latter to select and send the teams to participate in national championships. The High Court of AP gave orders to SAAP to send the teams, he added.

He felt the need of the hour is elections for Andhra Kabaddi Association as per the sports code and rules and regulations of the Government of Andhra Pradesh, KP Rao said in a letter to the CM.

"We requested both the groups to settle their disputes amicably as conducting World Cup will not be possible without the support

of all the district associations. This is a prestigious project (YSR World Cup Kabaddi) conceived with the budget of Rs 25 crore in which nearly 30 countries will take part," he said.

Rao requested the Chief Minister to give necessary directions to authorities concerned to conduct elections for Andhra Kabaddi Association and nominate an administrator to conduct elections to the association, thus paving the way for the smooth conduct of the YSR World Cup Kabaddi in Visakhapatnam.

## Puducherry Minister Malladi Krishna Rao resigns

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
KAKINADA

PUDUCHERRY Minister and Yanam Congress MLA Malladi Krishna Rao tendered his resignation on Monday. In the resignation letter addressed to Speaker he did not mention the reasons for the same.

Recently he was felicitated for his distinguished service to the people for 25 years as MLA and rendering significant services to the Yanam region. He also handed over his car to the government given to him as Minister.

Earlier, in a chat with 'The Hans India' he shared his plans to resign to the post. He was elected from Yanam for six times and served as Minister three times. He strived for the development of Yanam in many aspects.

For the last few months, he has been toying with the idea and expressing his intention to resign and accordingly he re-



Malladi Krishna Rao

signed on Monday. For the sake of Yanam people, he worked for 25 long years and brought great changes in his region.

It is learnt that he submitted his resignation in a Speaker format and handed it over to Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayana Swamy on January 6, 2021. Chief Minister V Narayana Swamy had requested him to continue his services to the people of Union Territory. Despite the CM's insistence for his continuation as Minister, Krishna Rao now resigned for his post.

## Collector inspects AKTPU



Collector Dr Pola Bhaskara interacting with the AKTPU and ANU PG campus staff in Ongole on Monday

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE

THE Prakasam district Collector Dr Pola Bhaskara paid a surprise visit to the Andhra Kesari Tanguturi Prakasam University and assured the staff that he would take the issues on the campus to the higher authorities and see the necessary arrangements are made.

The Collector inspected the AKTPU and Acharya Nagarjuna University PG campus and advised the staff to learn about their responsibilities and con-

duct the classes dedicatedly and regularly for the students. He interacted with the staff learning about the classes and the conditions in the university.

He said that he will discuss with the principal secretary Satish Chandra over the modifications required in the universities act for the Andhra Kesari Tanguturi Prakasam University, and recommend getting the bill passed in the next assembly session.

He said that they need to discuss with the government

about the funds for the development of the university.

He enquired about the nine courses in the university and advised the staff to conduct the classes regularly with the motto that the students should not lose the academic year.

The PG campus special officer Dr B Krishna, professors N Sanjeev Rao, N Nirmala Mani, Somasekhara, M Harsha Preetham Kumar Dev, Padmaja, Sivaji, Bharathi and other teaching and non-teaching staff also participated in the program.

## UN Assistant Secretary General calls on CM, lauds welfare schemes

CM tells the world body official that the State govt is promoting organic farming

AMARAVATI

UNITED Nations Assistant Secretary General Satya S Tripathi called on Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at camp office here on Monday.

During the interaction, the Chief Minister said the state government has been working to promote nature farming and organic farming and also to provide marketing facilities to them. He said steps were taken to provide training to farmers through Rythu Bharosa Kendras.

Tripathi said regarding waste to wealth concept, the latest technology is available to segregate electronic waste from plastic waste through e-clusters.

The Chief Minister explained the necessity for recycling food processing waste. Later, he said the officials of the concerned government departments should take move forward in this regard.

They also discussed on the necessity to achieve carbon



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy at his camp office in Tadepalli on Monday felicitating United Nations Assistant Secretary General Satya S Tripathi

neutrality through nature farming. The Chief Minister said the state government was ready to provide full support to the United Nations and also to work with it. He said that partnership agreements with global organisations would benefit the state and change the lives of the

people and providing international marketing facilities for organic products would also benefit small and marginal farmers.

Tripathi told the Chief Minister that he was confident that the welfare schemes being implemented by Andhra Pradesh

government such as YSR Rythu Bharosa, Cheyuta and Asara, would bring change in the lives of the people and bring about sustainable development.

AP community managed natural farming executive vice-chairman T Vijay Kumar is also present at the meeting.



## SRI LAKSHMI NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE

# Plea to increase darshan hours resonates with priests

There is no objection to provide darshan of the Lord to the devotees from morning to night, says temple priest V Satyanarayana

- Darshan of the deity is confined to morning, from 8.30 am to 12 noon
- Devotees express unhappiness as they must wait till the next day for darshan if they fail to reach before 12 noon
- Temple priest requests basic facilities such as drinking water, rest rooms and toilets etc on the temple premises for the priests who have to discharge duties from morning to night



Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy

SS CHARY  
KORUKONDA

IN many famous temples, darshan of the presiding deities available from the early hours tonight with two times Naivedyam (Aaragimpu) and in Tirumala temple continues till midnight.

But in the ancient Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple at Korukonda, darshan of Sri Lakshmi-Narasimha Swamy is confined to

morning from 8.30 am to 12 noon only and there after no darshan of the Lord. In the name of Eka Kalarchana, one time darshan and one time Naivedyam has been continuing from many decades in the temple.

Thousands of devotees thronging to the ancient shrine have been expressing unhappiness over morning darshan only. The devotees coming from across the State are facing problems as the temple is closed by 12noon, after

Naivedyam. Many devotees alight from trains in Rajamahendravaram and some others directly reaches the pilgrim centre by buses. If they fail to reach in time for the darshan, they must wait for the next day.

Many devotees are demanding the government to arrange darshan from morning to night on par with other temples, for the convenience of the devotees.

Sri Veera Venkata Satyanarayana Swamy temple Annavaram Trust Board adopted

the temple and so far, not initiated any steps to provide fulltime darshan and other facilities.

Meanwhile, Rajanagaram MLA and Kapu Corporation chairman Jakkampudi Raja revived head tonsuring practice recently by tonsuring his head.

When contacted, temple priest V Satyanarayana said that Eka Kalarchana has been in practice from many centuries. Earlier, Eka Kalarchana was in practice in Tirumala and Srisaialam temples and later the practice was changed. Meanwhile, everyone should climb 615 steep steps to reach the top of the hill for the darshan of the Lord.

"There is no objection to provide darshan of the Lord to the devotees from morning to night. Basic facilities such as drinking water, rest rooms and toilets etc needed on the sacred shrine for the priests who have to discharge duties from morning to night," he averred.

Moreover, security, fencing and lighting all along the stairs is inevitable. The priests are ready to stay on the hill, if the facilities are provided and the facilities will help to increase the number of devotees.

## AP Chambers to conduct potato buyer-seller meet tomorrow

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
VIJAYAWADA

ANDHRA Pradesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry Federation is organising a potato seller-buyer meet and exhibition in the city on Wednesday for promoting the trade and food processing opportunities of commercial varieties of potatoes which are presently produced in Uttar Pradesh.

President of AP Chambers KVS Prakasa Rao and secretary Potluri Bhaskara Rao said in a statement here on Monday that the Chambers in collaboration of UP State Horticulture Cooperative Marketing Federation (HOFED) is organising the meet and exhibition for the benefit of traders and exporters. They appealed to the interested persons to attend the programme to understand the trade and food processing opportunities.

The interested may contact SK Suman at 9451327477 or 0866-2482888.

## Prakasam players win inter-district tennis tournament



Kotaiah Goud and Balaramaiah receiving the trophy in Narasarao Pet

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
ONGOLE

THE tennis players from Giddalur in Prakasam district, Kancharla Kotaiah Goud and Balaramaiah won 60+ event of the inter-district tournament held in Narasarao Pet and bagged the trophy.

The duo Kotaiah Goud and Balaramaiah won the tournament with a streak of victories and received the trophy from the AR additional SP T Sivareddy, managing director of GBR Super Specialty Hospital Gajjala Brahmananda Reddy, tournament in-charge Narsareddy.

The Giddalur Recreation Club president Dr Rangareddy, treasurer Trimurthi Reddy, and other Giddalur Tennis Club members congratulated the winners.

## Collector inspects arrangements for 3<sup>rd</sup> phase panchayat polls

Vivek Yadav asks officials to take steps to conduct polls peacefully in Guzazala revenue division

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

DISTRICT Collector Vivek Yadav directed the officials to take steps to conduct gram panchayat elections in third phase in Guzazala revenue division peacefully.

He stressed on coordination among revenue, police and gram panchayat officials and employees for conducting the polling peacefully. He held a meeting with the Guntur rural SP Vishal Gunni, Joint Collector P Prasanti and officials of various departments at Guzazala revenue divisional officer's office on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, he enquired about arrangements made for third phase polling and counting of votes in Guzazala division. The revenue and police officials explained arrangements made to conduct counting and polling in the panchayat elections.

The Collector said that the first phase and second phase of grama



District Collector Vivek Yadav and Joint Collector P Prasanti visiting the polling centre at Pandivivaripalem in Guzazala revenue division of Guntur district on Monday

panchayat elections were conducted peacefully and directed the officials to conduct third phase of gram panchayat elections in similar fashion. He instructed the polling officers to provide security to the statutory material to be used in the polling. He said that the district administration has already given training to the polling and counting officials and clarified their doubts. He said that following the instructions of the State Election Commission, they have set up closed circuit cameras at polling centres and MPDOs and EORD were appointed to extend cooperation for counting.

He directed the officials to arrange more tables in the counting halls to complete counting of votes at the earliest. He directed the officials to set up generators at the problematic villages and see that polling is conducted peacefully. Guntur rural SP Vishal Gunni said that they have set up quick response force in the problematic villages and directed to set up barricades at the polling centres. Earlier, Joint Collector P Prasanti, Vivek Yadav visited polling centres at ZPHS at Pandivivaripalem, Srinagar in Dachepalli mandal. Guzazala RDO Pardha Saradhi, divisional forest officer Vijaya Kumar, Dwama Project Director Srinivasa Reddy were present.

## Political parties gear up to hit campaign trail

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

STATE Election Commission released a notification to conduct elections to the Guntur Municipal Corporation, Tenali, Chikaluripet, Repalle, Macherla, Satenapalli, Vinukonda and Pidiguralla municipalities. Polling will be held on March 10. It may be said that the election process was completed up to stage of scrutiny of nominations on March 14, 2020 and the commission stopped the election process midway due to Covid-19 pandemic. The SEC now will continue the election process from the stage of withdrawal of candidates.

Candidates of YSRCP, TDP, BJP, Jana Sena, Congress and Left parties have already filed their nominations to contest in the GMC and municipal elections in the district. They have already started election campaign. As soon as the SEC issued notification for conducting municipal polls, the candidates who have filed nominations to contest in the municipal elections conducted meeting with their followers and chalked-out plans to conduct election campaign.

## Tension as TDP sarpanch aspirant arrested

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

TDP activists staged protest at Avularipalem village under Krossu mandal for arresting TDP sarpanch aspirant on Monday. They demanded release of sarpanch aspirant supported by TDP immediately.

Tension prevailed when the TDP activists protested. Police swung into action and brought the situation under control. According to sources, as soon as sarpanch candidate supported by TDP filed his nomination, officials put his nomination on hold. The candidate asked the officials why his nomination was put on hold. TDP activists alleged that the officials lodged a complaint against sarpanch candidate in the police station. They alleged that the police arrested 10 TDP activists along with sarpanch candidate. The TDP leaders alleged they are getting pressure to withdraw his nomination. Police officials informed that TDP activists quarrelled with the officials and based on that the officials lodged complaint against the sarpanch candidate and others.

## AC College turns counting centre for MLC election

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
GUNTUR

DISTRICT Collector Vivek Yadav visited AC Bed College in Guntur city and examined rooms to keep election material and to set up material distribution point for the upcoming Krishna-Guntur district teachers constituency MLC election on Monday.

He enquired about conference hall, room meant for the strong room, Assembly hall in the AC College and arrangements for the strong room. The official said that rooms in the AC College are



District Collector Vivek Yadav and Guntur Urban SP RN Ammi Reddy at AC College in Guntur on Monday

suitable for the strong room, counting room and reception.

Vivek Yadav directed officials to set up strong room, reception and counting centre for the MLC election in the AC College. He was accompanied by Guntur urban SP RN Ammi Reddy, district revenue officer C Chandrasekhara Reddy, Guntur Revenue Divisional officer Bhaskara Reddy and tahsildar Mohana Rao.

## SRM faculty develops innovative jumbo catalyst

IT WILL ADDRESS THE DEMANDING CHALLENGES IN HETEROGENEOUS CATALYSIS

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

DR Anil K Suresh, Associate Professor in the department of Biology at SRM University-AP developed an innovative jumbo catalyst to address the demanding challenges in heterogeneous catalysis.

This mega catalyst can overcome the existing limitations such as cost, time, labour, sustainability, mechanical stability, diverse-reactions, large-volumes, aggregation, recycla-



bility and precursor recovery. Dr Anil owns the copyrights for this path breaking invention through a published patent. Catalysis is widely used in various industrial processes to produce desired end products. Research in this area substantially has evolved from using organic reagents and metals to the adaptation of metal-based nanoparticles.

The mega catalyst, generated by Dr Anil and his team using eggshell food-waste in the process, is autogenic, facile, cost-efficient and entirely biodegradable. Applicability of this mega catalyst is so simple that

even a layman can use it with ease. The team is currently investigating to design and fabricate other species of mega catalyst using other significant metal precursors and earth-abundant metals to expand the applicability.

Dr Anil thanked his PhD students Chandra Bhatt, Divya Parimi, Tharun Bollu and Madhura. Dr Anil especially thanked Professor D Narayana Rao, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, SRM University-AP for his extensive support in all his scientific endeavours since his association with the university.

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GLN1858191	Pathakumari Nares Naidu	AP	VIJAYWADA	ANANTAPUR	54.50	24-Feb-21
GLN1708290	Datta Siva Ramaraju	AP	VIJAYWADA	BHIMAVARAM	24.50	24-Feb-21
GLN1756755	Datta Siva Ramaraju	AP	VIJAYWADA	BHIMAVARAM	82.10	24-Feb-21
GLN1872530	Datta Siva Ramaraju	AP	VIJAYWADA	BHIMAVARAM	14.60	24-Feb-21
GLN1862763	M S Ghouse Basha	AP	VIJAYWADA	CHITTOOR	11.00	25-Feb-21
GLN1589979	Aditya Annadevara	AP	VIJAYWADA	DANAVAIPEET	16.80	26-Feb-21
GLN1867082	Eluri Subrahmanyam	AP	VIJAYWADA	DANAVAIPEET	45.90	26-Feb-21
GLN1844885	Sai Krishna Durga Prasad Penumatsha	AP	VIJAYWADA	DWARAKANAG	15.80	26-Feb-21
GLN1855556	Vemula Venkat	AP	VIJAYWADA	DWARAKANAG	140.10	26-Feb-21
GLN1859081	Vemula Venkat	AP	VIJAYWADA	DWARAKANAG	10.40	26-Feb-21
GLN1642532	Surendrasingh Rajpurohit	AP	VIJAYWADA	GAJJIWAKA	49.20	26-Feb-21
GLN1632544	Vucha Vasu	AP	VIJAYWADA	GAYATHRIN	13.80	26-Feb-21
GLN1240180	Ch Sureshkumar	AP	VIJAYWADA	KAKINADA	45.50	26-Feb-21
GLN1859700	Darga Mohammed Shafi	AP	VIJAYWADA	KURNOOL	100.60	26-Feb-21
GLN1847275	Manjula Rifinjayudu	AP	VIJAYWADA	KURNOOL	43.50	26-Feb-21
GLN1865969	S Jakeer Hussain	AP	VIJAYWADA	KURNOOL	80.80	26-Feb-21
GLN1864409	Shaik Sharuk	AP	VIJAYWADA	KURNOOL	78.60	26-Feb-21
GLN1870484	Shaik Sharuk	AP	VIJAYWADA	KURNOOL	38.60	26-Feb-21
GLN1778656	Bangaru Pranavi	AP	VIJAYWADA	NARASARAOP	21.50	26-Feb-21
GLN1747550	Gorantla Lathadhara Rao	AP	VIJAYWADA	NARASARAOP	19.40	26-Feb-21
GLN1835922	Sambasiva Rao Anjaneyulu Nandipati	AP	VIJAYWADA	NARASARAOP	66.10	26-Feb-21
GLN1733627	Shaik Basha	AP	VIJAYWADA	NARASARAOP	10.60	26-Feb-21
GLN1837870	Surendrachari Gundemeda	AP	VIJAYWADA	NARASARAOP	32.40	26-Feb-21
GLN1664621	Gounjapalli Vishnuvardhan Reddy	AP	VIJAYWADA	RAMCHANDRA	20.00	25-Feb-21
GLN1827319	Chennamsetti Venkatarao	AP	VIJAYWADA	TADEPALLIG	54.10	25-Feb-21
GLN1698619	Manne Ayyappa Kumar	AP	VIJAYWADA	TADEPALLIG	17.20	25-Feb-21
GLN1865100	Y Madhu Sudhan Reddy	AP	VIJAYWADA	TIRUPATHY	241.20	25-Feb-21
GLN1813867	Bangari Kristy Kumar	AP	VIJAYWADA	VENKOJIPAL	82.10	25-Feb-21
GLN1814612	Darsi Nares	AP	VIJAYWADA	VIDYANAGAR	12.00	25-Feb-21
GLN1716137	Jaada Sai Kumar	AP	VIJAYWADA	VIDYANAGAR	14.70	25-Feb-21
GLN1844398	Sirisha Vallam Setty	AP	VIJAYWADA	VIDYANAGAR	27.90	25-Feb-21

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## Need to spread equitable distribution of vaccinations

WHO and partners have learnt from the mis-steps in response to the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic and established the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator to promote equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. Most low-income and middle-income countries (LMICs) face difficulties in accessing and delivering vaccines and therapeutics for COVID-19 to their populations. Multinational agencies, financial institutions, and wealthier countries should consider measures that could provide relief to indebted LMICs.

The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and others need to lead an international initiative to mobilise support for LMICs in need. Many LMICs do not have an established platform for vaccinating their adult populations. Although it is feasible to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to health-care and other front-line essential workers, in some LMICs it will be difficult to effectively reach and vaccinate with two doses all elderly populations and individuals with co-morbidities, given insufficient mechanisms to identify such groups.

The ultracold chain requirements of mRNA

COVID-19 vaccines are likely to be an insurmountable hurdle. The infrastructure for vaccination in many LMICs is already inadequate, as shown by the 19-7 million under-vaccinated infants globally. Strengthening the capacity of LMICs to do clinical trials and promoting LMIC participation in research are crucial. Tracking the safety and effectiveness of different COVID-19 vaccines over time in various populations and settings will necessitate improvements in pharmacovigilance.

Regulatory authorities in many LMICs need to be strengthened and could benefit from a programme of national and international support, as well as regional cooperation and reliance mechanisms. As part of internationally coordinated actions, COVID-19 technologies should be transferred to LMIC-based manufacturers, accompanied by regulatory guidance. Efforts to boost local manufacturing capacity in LMICs will contribute to equity, global solidarity and global health security. India and South Africa have called for the suspension of intellectual property rights related to COVID-19 vaccines to improve access for LMICs, a move now supported by many other countries, but

opposed by the pharmaceutical industry, which cites the disincentive to innovation.

There are further challenges. Governments in LMICs with strong private health sectors, as those in high-income countries, will need to manage the inherent potential for inequity, whereby the rich could access COVID-19 vaccines before individuals with less access to private care who may be at increased risk of severe disease and death, such as older people and those with comorbidities. LMICs affected by war, civil conflict, economic crises, or natural disasters, or with large refugee populations or populations with special needs or vulnerabilities need additional support for vaccines and vaccination under extremely difficult operational conditions.

Re-examining global governance structures, including the UN and its Security Council, is much needed so that the voices and interests of billions of people in LMICs are better represented and recognised. Global support to multilateral institutions is essential to sustain their support to LMICs to facilitate vaccinations globally. The COVID-19 pandemic shows that no nation can stand alone. We are all part of a common humanity that requires us to respect our diverse experiences, cultures, and countries and forge partnerships that better serve the interests of all, as the health experts world over aver.

## Upholding 'secrecy' in Lok Pal selection



Madabhushi Sridhar Acharyulu

THE RTI Act and general ethics of administration demands the transparency about any selection or recruitment for public office. The Department of Personnel and Training rules and Office Memoranda also guide the CPIOs to place entire record of recruitments and promotions and transfers in the public domain on their own.

Lok Pal is an anti-corruption institution which is supposed to decide the legal action on complaints of abuse of authority for gain in a transparent manner. Though law was passed in 2013, the NDA Government could not appoint the Lok Pal and Lok Ayuktas since 2014 till recently. The high-level committee headed by the Prime Minister will appoint Lok Pal and others, which is expected to maintain the minutes of meetings that has to be in public domain as per law and rules.

But, according to CIC order dated January 28, the CPIO of DoPT has denied the minutes of the selection process of Lok Pal. Though CPIO did not invoke any 'exception', but his denial was upheld by CIC as valid. The CIC wrongly quotes the two Supreme Court judgements and gives order exactly opposite to SC orders.

The CIC cited SC order 15th Feb 2019 in Anjali Bharadwaj v Union of India which directed disclosure of all details of appointment of Information Commissioners which was complied with by DoPT. But it denied sharing the minutes of Lok Pal appointment which was made by almost similar Selection Committee.

Another case cited is: Common Cause A Registered Society vs. Ajay Mittal (Contempt PET.(C) No. 714/2018 in W.P.(C) No. 245/2014) relating to the constitution of the Lok pal, wherein the SC said: "...So far as the prayer for putting the names recommended by the Search Committee in the public domain is concerned, we have considered the provisions of Section 4(4) of the Act and it is our considered view that no direction from the Court should be issued in this regard. Rather the matter should be left for a just determination by the Selection Committee as and when the meeting of the Committee is convened."

A simple reading of Section 8(I)(b) would have been sufficient to know that disclosure of minutes was not prohibited by SC. Section 8(I)(b) says: information which has been expressly forbidden to be published by any court of law or tribunal or the disclosure of which may constitute contempt of court". This decision shows that Selection Committee if believes in

transparency should decide to disclose. There is no prohibition imposed by SC.

Appellant Anjali said the contempt petition was filed when despite the court's 2017 ruling, the Centre failed to appoint a chairperson and members of the Lok-pal. She pointed out that Section 4(4) of the Lok pal Act which states that the Selection Committee shall regulate its own procedure in a transparent manner for selecting the Chairperson and Members of the Lok pal.

The Central Information Commission has affixed its seal to non-disclosure of minutes of the anti-corruption body allowing secrecy in appointment process much against the letter and spirit of Right to Information Act and good governance rules.

Thus, selection process of Lok Pal is the 'secret' according to latest order of the CIC, most unfortunate. Secrecy breeds corruption. There are two tragedies: Lok Pal, which is expected to introduce transparency in all governance wings fights against transparency, the DoPT and CIC Saroj Punhani supports the secrecy.

Nowhere the order of CIC does support its conclusion that information sought 'confidential' 'secret' and 'fiduciary' in nature. One can find collegium conclusions in Supreme Court but not details of appointment of Lok Pal either from Lok Pal or DoPT. The CIC has simply listed the CPIO's illegal and illogical contentions and approved at the end, without giving any justification.

Anjali Bharadwaj has filed RTI application in November 2018 with the Department of Personnel and Training, seeking records related to the process of selection of the chairperson and members of the Lok pal.

### Authorship: A new concept

The DoPT refused to provide a copy of the minutes of the meetings of the Selection Committee claiming the authorship of such documents which include 3-5 high level dignitaries does not vest in the Department of Personnel and Training and same have been shared as secret document. This raises fundamental question - who is the author of file of selection committee? It is neither poetry nor a story for someone to author it. Posts are advertised, applications are submitted, and selection committee conducts the process. None is author or owner of a file. Any file is built on application and ends with decision. Everyone who adds a comment is a contributor and each owns it. RTI recognizes holding the file not owning. And the DoPT which is nodal agency to implement RTI does not know it. Civil servants feel they are subordinate to DoPT and do not displease the boss.

The CIC has no jurisdiction or legal



When Cabinet decisions are disclosable along with entire material after decision was taken, how can any other body be considered as 'high level authority'? Is that committee higher in level than the Cabinet? How the 'level' of authority prevents the disclosability? The CIC should have answered these questions

provision to examine the authorship of 'file' and deny it without referring to any clause of exception. The CIC's judgment is a shock to RTI activists as it laid down a new precedent of rejecting the appeal though no exception is attracted.

### Sealed cover: Sealing transparency

The CPIO thought that confidentiality of the said record can be gauged by the fact that the averted minutes of the Selection Committee were received in a sealed cover by the DoPT and that it had been presented before the Supreme Court too in a sealed cover. The CIC did not explain who and why the minutes was categorised as 'secret' and on what grounds? Is it CIC's new concept that sealing the cover itself is 'secrecy' and every post and courier that goes in sealed cover, should never be opened?

The Commissioner understood that the information belonged to Lok Pal and thus it was 'third' party information with DoPT, which was given in sealed cover. Perhaps CIC assumes that anything given in sealed cover is 'top secret'. It is a clear misuse of third-party provision as 'exception' though there are several judicial pronouncements that information could be denied only under Sections 8 and 9 of RTI Act.

It also exposed the CPIO's knowledge

of RTI, who thinks that consent of third party is needed. If that is so, why did he not consult Lok Pal, who might have consented for disclosure. It is pathetic that CPIO and first appellate authority of DoPT thinks that because third party is 'higher level' committee, the information should be totally 'secret'. The CIC did not bother to ask CPIO why he did not pursue the process of consulting third party. From CPIO of DoPT to CIC, an independent authority, they go by their own sense of transparency ignoring the RTI Act completely.

When cabinet decisions are disclosable along with entire material after decision was taken, how can any other body be considered as 'high level authority'? Is that committee higher in level than the cabinet? How the 'level' of authority prevents the disclosability? The CIC should have answered these questions.

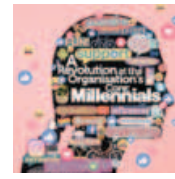
Another wonderful idea of CPIO of DoPT floated was that minutes of a decision-making committee 'is holding it in fiduciary in nature' and hence should be denied. The CIC did not find it unreasonable and did not give any reasons.

The Government was never ready to constitute the Lok pal, though Act was passed in 2013. Even after the SC direction, the process did not begin. Only after contempt petition was pressed, the Selection Committee met. The Committee consists of the Prime Minister (Chairperson), Speaker of the House of the People, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, the Chief Justice of India, or a Judge of the Supreme Court nominated by CJI and an eminent jurist, as recommended by the Chairperson and other members. As none was recognised as the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha after the 2014 elections, Committee met without the LoP and selected the Chair and other members of Lok Pal in 2019. The CIC, sadly, agreed with DoPT and Lok Pal in denying the information without reasoned application of any exception.

(The writer is Professor of Law, Bennett University and former Central Information Commissioner)

## Design education for new millennials

PROF A BALASUBRAMANIAM



"DESIGN education is changing," says the Design Guru Don Norman, Professor Emeritus, UC San Diego, and author of the famous book, 'Design of everyday things'. He further calls for a new paradigm in design education: "Design education has to move away from schools of art and architecture and move into the schools of science and engineering. We need new kinds of designers, people who can work across disciplines, who understand human beings, business, and technology and the appropriate means of validating claims."

The reason for this simple. Design itself is changing and evolving: from a predominantly form-giving activity to a strategic problem-solving one. Design thinking is the new mantra for innovation. Technology institutes and Management firms are seen to invest more and more in Design. Millennials are advised to understand the changing scenario of the profession, as they embark on the journey for a career in Design.

### Design education is responsible

Students of Design must understand that the profession needs to be responsible. From a merely form giving activity that was creating aesthetically interesting products, the profession of Product Design is now contributing to sustainable living by innovating with materials, technology and processes. Products that end up in landfills are frowned upon. There is also this growing concern for planet-friendly products as opposed to user-friendly products that pollute the earth. Curriculums are therefore being transformed to include sustainable production processes, eco-friendly materials and design projects focus more on helping humankind than create wasteful products.

### Design education gets generic

There was a time when specialisations were the norm. Industrial Designers went on to specialise in Product Design, which progressed into Interior Product Design, and further into Bathroom Designers! Such specialisations are not working any more. Customers are happy to deal with Interdisciplinary designers who are generalists who can tackle a plethora of problems straddling different specialisations. Progressive Universities like JKLU have included Interdisciplinary Design programmes to cater to this requirement.

### Design education is getting digital

The pen has been sacrificed for the stylus. The paper for screens. Designers have gone completely digital. There is therefore, this need for an urgent revamping of the course contents to make digital learning, online classes and bite-sized inputs. Take for instance, a discipline like Communication Design. All new programmes have extensive emphasis on the digital way of learning.

### Design education is about co-creation

Designers used to work in silos, developing new products and patenting their innovations. There is, however, a new breed of designers who are open and develop products that include all the stake holders of the project. Co-creation is gaining ground and copy-left is the new normal. Design schools are now getting the millennials to collaborate on digital platforms, working across time-zones and developing solutions collectively for the problems of the world.

### Design education is multi-disciplinary

Designers who learn in special institutes dedicated to design, miss out a multi-disciplinary approach to problem solving. Inputs in sociology, psychology, finance and management make design professionals more ready for solving real-life problems. Critical thinking and systemic thinking processes are taught in new institutes of Design for making them develop into a well-rounded professional.

### JKLU for future-ready education

The future of design is all pervading. It has to cater to all sectors of the economy. The divisions and specialisations are blurring. The world is shrinking and one can no more afford to work in silos.

Designers will be expected to take on leadership roles and have to become more disruptive and innovative, responsible and inclusive. They should learn to cultivate empathy to cater to the last individual. Sustainability will become the mantra for the future of design. Imagination will become paramount and creativity will be the key to solving world's problems.

The Institute of Design JKLU is ready for the challenge. New curriculums are embedded with Communication and Critical thinking classes. Interdisciplinary Design is an option for the generalist designer. Communication Design programme is predominantly digital. Co-creation is the norm, as students from Technology, Management and Design get together for classes and projects. We are poised to bring about a new paradigm in design education. One that is contemporary and relevant for the new millennials.

(The author is with JK Lakshmiptat University, Jaipur)

## Drains in Indore being turned into playgrounds for residents

SUNDEEP POURANIK



THIS Madhya Pradesh city, which has been awarded the title of the country's cleanest city four times, is now converting open drains filled with garbage into playgrounds where cricket and football matches are being played.

The process from waste collection to its disposal has been given a new dimension in Indore by creating a new drainage model.

The form of the drains flowing in Indore is being transformed through the Sirpur Dhar Road to the Aam wali Pulia and the meeting of drains at Chandan Nagar.

Residents and large outfalls have been identified by the municipal corporation under the river-drain outfall tapping work and after trapping these by laying down a sewerage line, the sewerage falling into the primary sewerage line of the city was stopped, causing the sewage flowing in the drains to now be transferred directly to the Sewage Treatment Plant. The corporation is doing plantation work on a large scale to beautify and protect the environment on both sides of the drain as well as tapping it. Due to these efforts made by the Corporation for the Kanh-Saraswati river and purification of drains, the drain at Chandan Nagar has completely dried up.

A similar process has been followed from Shiv Nagar to Kailash Chaudhary Park Nagar, Virat Nagar, Udyog Nagar, Khatipura and Azad Nagar which meets the drain in the Kanh river. This drain has also dried up and at a particular place a football match was played after which a cricket match was also played there.

Municipal Commissioner Pratibha Pal said Indore is the first city where drain and sewerage water used to flow once, but now the entire drain has dried up as a result of sewer tapping done under the 'River-Drainage Sanitation Campaign'. Where it was not possible to stand near these drains due to the stench and filth, a 'Nullah cricket match' was organized in the past few days.

Superintendent Engineer Mahesh Sharma and Gopal Jagtap of Institution 'Basics' said 'Hamara Nullah, Hamara Abhiyan' was started under which the drains are drying up and the residents are playing football and cricket there. Residents of Chandan Nagar also took an oath of maintaining cleanliness as well as not throwing any garbage and litter into the drains.

## LETTERS

### Wanted a new law for exports



NEW agricultural-law for exports is required (not for corporates or brokers eating into farmers' profits). Everyone wants raise in salary / income. Why not farmers? Exports will avoid the main problem of accumulation of unsold / stationary stocks. This way it is possible for the government to buy food grains from farmers for maximum support price / reasonable price and export the accumulated stocks. Also with profits from exports at hand, it is easy for government and farmers TEAM (with sharing of investment burden) to set up long-term warehouses / godowns to store the harvest, buy the vehicles to speedily transport the harvest to godowns to save it from sudden rains, possible are: crop rotation, latest technology introduction etc.

Many suggest that private investment arrangement in production of crops will nullify loan taking by small farmers via mortgaging assets. In case of spoilt-crop, loss burden is reduced for farmer (as part of loss is shared by the private investor). Money-Amount burden for agricultural loans write off to farmers too gets reduced to government of India.

Madhav P, Secunderabad

### Civilised behaviour missing

YOUR editorial 'Cuss words the new normal' (15th Feb) aptly sums up the decadent state of ever-falling standards of public decorum among large number of our politicians. Not only in politics, even in our ordinary lives, cuss words seem to have become quite common, as frequently evidenced in street brawls, road rage cases, informal meetings and discussions. There is a general tendency to browbeat a person with a differing viewpoint with loud-mouthed rhetoric, provocative gestures and even casting unwarranted aspersions.

Cutting across all sections of society, people generally have no qualms about calling each other names. Unfortunately, this malaise has even afflicted the average household, where arrogant behaviour seems to hold sway. It is high time that due primacy is accorded to polite and courteous behaviour in our day-to-day lives. These values need to be inculcated in children in right earnest in their infancy and both educational institutions and parents can play a highly pro-active role in this regard. In the state legislatures and Parliament, the speakers and leaders of different parties should keep a hawk's eye on the general behaviour of the elected representatives and take appropriate deterrent steps for curbing any deviant mannerism.

Amit Banerjee, New Delhi

### India should maintain vigil in Ladakh

THE India-China agreement on disengagement at Pangong Tso in Ladakh is certainly a promising start towards peace. However, stabilising the borders could take a long time. The Indian and Chinese troops are expected

to stop their forward positions on either side of Pangong in a phased manner. The troops will have to return to the pre-April 2020 position.

However, the surprisingly hasty decision of China to withdraw its troops raises doubts about its intentions. What could have prompted China to take such a hasty decision? It is reasonable to assume that Beijing's strategic move is linked to the US factor of interfering in the Ladakh standoff. In spite of the attempts by both countries to end the row peacefully through dialogue, talks between the two sides remained in a state of complete deadlock.

The takeaways are clear here: China has been moving cautiously since the Biden administration took a decision on the China-centric Quad and Indo-Pacific strategy. In the recent telephonic conversation between US President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, both of them had reiterated their commitment to a strong India-US relationship. China's disengagement could be linked to deterring India from joining the US-led alliance. China wants to lessen the prospect of India partnering with the new administration to form an anti-China coalition.

It is a fact that earning US support is essential for India's standing up to China. China believes that if India-US relationship is further strengthened under Biden administration, it will reinforce the US-led alliance. Notwithstanding the fact that the disengagement is unquestionably positive, India must monitor the progress closely and press for the resolution of all remaining issues including the Depsang plateau.

Venu G S, Kollam

thehansreader@gmail.com

# Grads must reject corrupt regimes of TRS, BJP: Uttam

- Reddy expresses confidence in Congress winning the upcoming MLC elections for two graduate constituencies
- Criticises CM KCR for failing to fulfill his 2014 electoral promise of one lakh jobs till now
- Says TRS government lured jobless youth in 2018 Assembly elections by promising them Rs 3,016 dole per month
- Ridicules the BJP government at the Centre for neglecting Telangana in the Budget
- Questions why BJP leaders not affectionate towards Ram Mandir in Bhadrachalam

## HYDERABAD

TELANGANA Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) President N Uttam Kumar Reddy has expressed confidence that the Congress party would win the elections for the Mahabubnagar-Rangareddy-Hyderabad and Khammam-Warangal-Nalgonda graduates' constituencies of Telangana Legislative Council.

He was addressing a press conference at Gandhi Bhavan on Monday after officially handing over B-forms to the Congress can-



TPCC president N Uttam Kumar Reddy along with G Chinna Reddy and Ramulu Naik addressing a press conference in Hyderabad on Monday

didates - former minister G Chinna Reddy (Mahabubnagar-Rangareddy-Hyderabad) and ex-MLC Ramulu Naik (Khammam-Warangal-Nalgonda). He said that the party has picked highly efficient, able and committed leaders as its candidates for MLC polls. "Chinna Reddy holds a PhD degree in Agriculture and is known for his honesty and simplicity. He has been serving the people selflessly without having expectations. Ramulu Naik was born into a poor family and came up in his life after hard struggle. He played a key role during the Telangana movement. Chinna Reddy and Ramulu Naik are highly capable of serving the people, especially in addressing the needs of gradu-

ates, including employees and jobless youth," he added.

The TPCC Chief said that the educated youth must unitedly defeat the corrupt and unethical regimes of TRS and BJP. Criticising Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu, he said that the promise, made in 2014 elections, of filling one lakh vacant posts in government department remained unfulfilled. "The Pay Revision Commission, in its recent report, has disclosed that over 1.91 lakh posts were lying vacant in various departments. He said the delay in the recruitment process has deprived thousands of students, who participated in the Telangana movement, from getting a government job. TRS

government lured jobless youth in 2018 Assembly elections by promising them Rs 3,016 dole every month. However, this promise was not fulfilled even now. KCR has been openly cheating the jobless youth ever since he came to power in June 2014. Revision of pay scales was long overdue. Further, the new PRC has disappointed the employees by recommending a fitment of mere 7.3 per cent. Employees be given a fitment of not less than 43 per cent," he added.

Uttam Kumar Reddy said that the BJP Govt at the Centre has been doing injustice to Telangana since the beginning. He said Telangana remained neglected in the Union Budgets since 2014. Further, he said that the promises which were made under Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act were yet to be fulfilled. He ridiculed Telangana BJP President Bandi Sanjay's attempts to incite communal hatred in the state. "BJP leaders often talk about Ram Mandir. We are also Hindus and we are not against the construction of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya. But why BJP leaders are not showing similar affection with Ram Mandir in Bhadrachalam? Why is the BJP government trying to give away temple lands to private parties?" he asked.

Uttam Kumar Reddy appealed to the people to elect Congress candidates to restore morality in politics and democracy in Telangana.

## PM to address experts for effective implementation of budget

Continued from P1

During the webinar, the panelists will share their ideas on improving pace and quality of infrastructure development, with focus on advanced technology, and attracting more investments in the sector. This will be followed by two parallel breakout sessions involving discussions between senior officials of groups of ministries and cross-sectional experts to compile a list of implementable projects to fast-track implementation of the budget vision and draft an implementation roadmap. Ongoing consultations have also been planned with stakeholders on implementation of the finalised strategy, the statement said.

## SC slaps notice on WhatsApp, Fb

Continued from P1

In Europe, it is different because they have a special law," he argued. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the Centre, said the right to privacy was a fundamental right and they cannot compromise with the privacy of people.

Divan cited that WhatsApp had already delayed the implementation of its new privacy policy till May 15 this year and sought a notice which is returnable before this date. The bench said it is impressed with Divan's submission that while the Data Protection Bill is about to be brought into force, WhatsApp is framing a policy to share data. Datar also said that the messages were encrypted end to end. The top court directed WhatsApp and Facebook to file their statement contesting the contentions in the present application. The Chief Justice told the WhatsApp counsel that people thought if a message was sent from a person to another and then to a third person, the whole thing was disclosed to Facebook. As counsel contended that this is not happening, Chief Justice Bobde disagreed, saying that they are telling information heard and read through news reports, and if WhatsApp disagrees, it should clarify this on oath.

## Nanosatellite to carry Bhagavad Gita, PM Modi's photograph into space

Continued from P1

SpaceKidz reportedly asked the individuals who are interested to send their names to the space and received 25,000 entries, from which 1,000 names are of people from outside India. "We decided to do this because it will spark interest of the people in the mission and space science," Dr Kesan

said. The people who have send in their names will be given boarding passes, she added. Satish Dhawan Satellite, that is scheduled to be launched on February 28 by the polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV-C51), will also carry three scientific payloads, including one to study space radiation, another for studying the magnetosphere, and one that will demonstrate a low-power wide-area communication network. A Brazil's earth observation satellite Amazonia-1, 20 co-passenger satellite and a demonstration satellite by Pixxel will also be carried in the same mission.



Chief Secretary Aditya Nath Das reviewing arrangements for Southern Zone Council meet to be held at Tirupati on March 4, with officials on Monday

## CS REVIEWS SOUTHERN ZONAL COUNCIL MEET ARRANGEMENTS

### HANS NEWS SERVICE AMARAVATI

CHIEF secretary Aditya Nath Das on Monday conducted a review meeting on arrangements for Southern Zonal Council meeting scheduled to be held in Tirupati on March 4.

Union home minister Amit Shah will chair the 29th Southern Zonal Council meet in which over 100 representatives from Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andaman Nicobar and Lakshadweep islands will participate.

The chief secretary directed the Chittoor district collector, superintendent of police and protocol officials to finalise the

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah to chair the meet on March 4, to be attended by representatives from Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andaman Nicobar and Lakshadweep
- District Collector and SP told to finalise the venue and inform the guests

venue for the meeting at Tirupati and inform the guests. He asked the officials to make necessary arrangements for Tirumala darshan for the guests. The chief secretary said the

officials should take necessary Covid precautions and make arrangements to supply masks and safety kits to the participants of the meeting. He said necessary arrangements should be made including Wi-Fi and internet facility for the media persons covering the programme. He said a liaison officer should be appointed to coordinate with various departments for the success of the programme.

State reorganisation committee secretary L Premachandra Reddy, Addl DGP Ravisankar Ayyannar, principal secretaries T Krishnababu, Kumar Viswajit, Assembly secretary Balakrishnamacharyulu and IT officials were present.

## Govt eases curbs on geospatial data for map-making

Continued from P1

Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan in a press conference said the easing of norms will greatly help in several sectors that were suffering because of non-availability of high-quality maps. "Availability of comprehensive, highly accurate, granular and constantly updated representation of geospatial data will significantly benefit diverse sectors of the economy, significantly boost innovation in the country and greatly enhance its preparedness for emergency response," Vardhan said.

He said earlier even the Survey of India, the organisation entrusted with making maps, had to seek permission for mapping from different agencies, thus delaying its work by at least three-to-six months. In a series of tweets, Modi

said, "Our government has taken a decision that will provide a huge impetus to Digital India. Liberalising policies governing the acquisition and production of geospatial data is a massive step in our vision for an Aatmanirbhar Bharat," he said.

The move will unlock tremendous opportunities for the country's start-ups, private sector, public sector and research institutions to drive innovations and build scalable solutions. This will also generate employment and accelerate economic growth, he stressed. "India's farmers will also be benefited by leveraging the potential of geospatial and remote sensing data. Democratising data will enable the rise of new technologies and platforms that will drive efficiencies in agriculture and allied sectors.

# Nine kids from two Telugu States selected for Arithmetic Genius -2020

### HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

NINE kids from the two Telugu States got qualified for SIP Arithmetic Genius, All India Online Contest 2020 to be held on February 21. These kids between the age groups seven and nine will represent Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

These nine kids competed with as many as 5,000 kids at Regional Level and then got qualified after a rigorous four-month selection process. Out of the 5,000 participants 1,000 students were short-listed. From these 1,000 students, the above nine got selected to represent both the Telugu States at National Level informed Uma Swaminathan, Regional Head of SIP Academy in an official release.

These 9 kids include Karri Kranthi Manaswi of Niraj Public School, Begumpet; T. Aashritha of Dev Public School, Safilguda and Sarayu Erukulla of Phoenix Greens International School, Kokapet, Chirag Mohanty - St Michaels School, Marredpally; Anvitha Chapa - Johnson Grammar School Mallapur; D. Saurav - Johnson Grammar School, LB Nagar; G. Satya Hasini - Bharathi Vidya Bhavan, Tirupati; Mandala Nutan Bhargav - Amrita Vidyalayam, Mahendra Hills, Secunderabad; K. Akshitha - The Secunderabad Public School, Malkajigiri.



Karri Kranthi Manaswi, T. Aashritha, Sarayu Erukulla, Anvitha, Chirag, Saurav, Akshitha, Bhargav, Satya Hasini

School, Begumpet; T. Aashritha of Dev Public School, Safilguda and Sarayu Erukulla of Phoenix Greens International School had emerged as Telugu States' Champions.

## FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE

# TS Agri Minister buoyed by potato yield in own farm

### HANS NEWS SERVICE

#### HYDERABAD

HOW about practising before preaching? Exactly this is what the Agriculture Minister, S Niranjan Reddy, seems to be following. The Minister who was irked with the hike in potato prices in recent times had decided to encourage farmers in State cultivate potatoes. But before approaching the farmers, the Minister first wanted to cultivate potatoes in his own farm in Wanaparthy on experimental basis. Soon, he planted potato crop in one-fourth of an acre and ended up gaining reasonably good harvest.

The jubilant Minister is now planning to approach farmers and share his experience backed with agriculture department's feedback, which had said that the land and climate in Telangana were as good as other States where potatoes are being cultivated.

As the potatoes have consistently demand all-round the year, the fluctuation in prices would be minimal and help farmers gain profits, the Minister said,

- Niranjan Reddy gets satisfying yield from one-fourth of acre
- Wants to encourage Telangana farmers take up cultivation of potatoes which has demand all-round the year



adding that on an average a farmer can get a maximum yield of 100 to 120 quintals per acre. "When it comes to prices, the rate per quintal in the market would be around Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,200. Sometimes, it might even touch Rs 2,000. The farmers will gain revenues of Rs 1 lakh per acre after deducting the investment," he said.

Niranjan Reddy said that potatoes were one of the vegetables with the highest consumption rate. But, the cultivation of the crop is not preferred in southern States for reasons un-

known. Along with Telangana, all the southern States have to heavily depend on potato supplies from north and this demand can be addressed if farmers here take up potato cultivation, he opined.

Investment to cultivate potatoes in an acre comes to about Rs 45,000 and the crop comes to harvest in 85 to 90 days after the plantation. But, if the time frame goes beyond 90 days, then the yields would be more, the Agriculture Minister said, hoping that farmers in the State take up potato cultivation.

## Sharmila to launch party in May or July

### HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

FORMER AP Chief Minister Y S Rajashekar Reddy's daughter Sharmila is making fast political moves aiming to launch her political party in Telangana. Soon after returning from Bengaluru on Monday, she held a meeting with a select group of leaders and intellectuals here. Sharmila is likely to announce the launch of her political outfit on May 14--the day YSR assumed CM's office in 2004--or on July 8--her father's birthday. She is likely to announce some major decisions on those days.

Earlier, she planned to float the party in April. But the AP CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy's sister deferred the plan as she wanted to hold a series of meetings with YSR supporters to ascertain the political situation in Telangana.

Leaders said that Sharmila will take more time to launch the party. After the by-poll to the Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency and elections to two graduate constituencies and seven municipalities, including Warangal and Khammam corporations, she would plunge into action.

## BJP to fly in party bigwigs for Nagarjunasagar bypoll

### HANS NEWS SERVICE HYDERABAD

THE Bharatiya Janata Party, which had shocked the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi with its performance in Dubbaka bypoll and in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation elections, has shifted its focus to Nagarjunasagar and planning to hold huge public meeting by February end by inviting its national leaders.

The party, which had gone aggressive after Dubbaka bypoll, is now targeting the Sagar constituency where it has little presence. However, the party leaders are hopeful of repeating Dubbaka and GHMC victory in the forthcoming bypoll to Sagar constituency.

While the party had already initiated the exercise to gain foothold in the district, it had also recently taken up protest on tribal issues, including tribal lands in Gurrampodu, which had led to a tense situation with police even lathi-charging the protestors. The tribals here make up 40 per cent of the electorate and are crucial in deciding the fate of candidates.

According to State BJP president Bandi Sanjay, the party would soon have a huge

- Plans to hold huge public meeting by February end
- Despite dismal presence, party hopeful of winning the seat

public meeting, possibly by February end, in Nagarjunasagar Assembly constituency. The party would be bringing in senior leaders, including Union Ministers from New Delhi to campaign, as it did for Dubbaka and GHMC polls.

Sanjay said that the party would win the Sagar bypoll along with two council seats going for polls in March, adding that all key leaders would campaign for the party candidates. Meanwhile, the party has decided to appoint one in-charge for every 50 voters who would be in constant touch with them and ensure they vote for the saffron party.



SIP Arithmetic Genius, All India Online Contest 2020 was organised by SIP Academy across the country. A total of 27,000 students competed in this competition from across India. Out of which 9 winners from each State will compete at the Nationals. More than 100 students will vie for the national honours at the 5th Season of SIP Arithmetic Genius, All India Online Contest 2020.

Amid the pandemic, this edition was organised online competition for the first time in the past four years. The objective of this year's online contest is to engage home struck students more meaningfully and help them improve arithmetic skills, Arithmetic skills, Uma Swaminathan, Regional Head of SIP Academy said.

# BJP seeks NMDC lifeline for VSP

- State party chief and other leaders submit a petition to Union Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan with suggestions to better the financial condition of steel plant
- It is suggested that the Centre can work out an MoU between NMDC and RINL for supply of iron ore on cost-to-cost or with marginal profit basis
- In the letter to the Union Minister, State leaders explain the historical, socio-economic significance of the project



AP BJP president Somu Veerajulu, BJP AP co-in-charge Sunil Deodhar and party leaders meet Union Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan at Udyog Bhavan in New Delhi on Monday

Meanwhile, in his three-page letter to Dharmendra Pradhan, Veerajulu said the government should instead work out an agreement between NMDC (National Mineral Development Corporation) and Vizag Steel for supply of iron ore from NMDC at cost-to-cost basis or cost-plus marginal profit basis for next five years. Capital should be infused through IPO (public issue) which would give real valuation of RINL and the Union government should provide sovereign guarantees to raise unsecured loans, he urged.

All options to pursue the revival of RINL should be undertaken instead of condemning the plant to privatisation on the basis of its losses now, he added.

Recalling the long fight Visakha Utku-Andhrula Hakku in the past

and the sacrifices made by the people of Andhra, the state BJP president said the plant was the biggest public sector unit in entire south India. It had brought a metamorphic development in the entire three backward districts of north Andhra Pradesh.

The plant had witnessed an investment of Rs 4,950 crore in three decades but the Centre had secured Rs 43,099 crore in return and the AP state government got Rs 8,565 crore till 2020 in the form of various taxes and duties. That apart, the Vizag Steel had immensely helped in uplifting the living conditions and dignity of thousands of families from socially deprived communities. The overall development of the backward districts became possible in Andhra Pradesh abutting Odisha borders.

He said Visakhapatnam Steel Plant was initially envisaged with an installed capacity of 3 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) in 1992 and subsequently expanded to 7.3 MTPA without any budgetary support from the Centre. All this was despite the fact that the RINL was disadvantageously positioned compared to its rivals vis a vis access to captive iron ore mines thus incurring an additional expenditure of Rs 5,000 per tonne production.

The plant had a land bank of 20,000 acre and losing such a treasure was ill-advised, he argued. More than 60 villages had to be evacuated to acquire land in the past, he said to buttress his point.

Other office bearers of the AP Unit of the party too are signatories to the letter.

# HC suspends SEC order on delivery vehicles



AMARAVATI

IN a major relief to the state government, the Andhra Pradesh High Court on Monday suspended the State Election Commissioner (SEC) Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar's orders restricting rice door delivery service during the ongoing elections.

The court said the State Election Commission (SEC) cannot stop the government from using mobile delivery vehicles to supply food to the people.

Earlier, the SEC ordered that the government cannot use these mobile vehicles for a period of four weeks, in view of the ongoing rural local bodies' elections.

The SEC personally examined a delivery vehicle to see if these vehicles will allegedly exert any influence on the polls as they would fan out across the nooks and corners of the villages, carrying ration rice for beneficiaries.

Many decisions of Ramesh Kumar are being challenged in the court by the state government and there seems to be no end to the bickering between the state and the SEC.

Earlier, he issued a gag and home confinement order on pan-chayat raj minister Peddireddi Ramachandra Reddy which was also suspended by the court but

- Says the State Election Commission can't stop vehicles supplying food to the people
- The SEC earlier suspended ration door delivery vehicles for 4 weeks in rural areas in view of Model Code

## Kodali Nani's house motion plea posted to tomorrow

- HC seeks video clippings of Minister's comments
- To appoint a senior advocate as amicus curiae to assist in this case

AMARAVATI

THE AP High Court posted the hearing on house motion petition filed by civil supplies minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao (Nani) to Wednesday, February 17.

It may be noted that the State Election Commission (SEC) issued show-cause notice and a gag order on him for his remarks on the commission as well as State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar last week. The SEC also directed the Krishna district SP to register a case on the minister.

In this regard, the minister

filed House motion petition. When the advocates of the both the parties explained their stand to the court, the court observed that the case should be examined in detail and posted the next hearing to Wednesday. The court said that it would appoint a senior advocate as amicus curiae to assist in this case. It ordered the petitioner to submit necessary video clippings. The court also directed the advocate of SEC to submit video tapes of the minister's comments by Wednesday.

The SEC advocate appealed the court to take action after examining the video clippings of the minister's press meet. He said that the minister used objectionable language towards the SEC.

The court observed that it cannot decide on the case without examining the video clippings of the minister's press meet.

case to be registered.

The commission has already successfully completed two phases of rural local bodies elections, even as two more are due.

## 56,448 pilgrims have darshan at Tirumala

TIRUPATI

THE highest number of 56,448 pilgrims had darshan of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala on Sunday while the common pilgrims availing the free darshan off line SSD tokens have to wait 3 days for darshan with

the rush remaining unabated.

TTD is issuing 22,000 offline SSD tokens for free darshan against 25,000 special entry tickets of Rs 300 daily for darshan. This apart, ticket holders of various Arjitha sevas (virtual), donors including Srivani Trust donors and also Supatham and VIP break.

With the pilgrim rush steadily picking up, the SSD tokens for darshan on Tuesday and Wednesday were already exhausted while tokens for darshan on February 18 up to evening 6 pm slot were also over when reports last came in on Monday.

According to TTD sources the de-

- Common pilgrims availing offline free darshan token have to wait for days for darshan

tails of the pilgrims who had darshan of Lord in the last three days are 48,846 on February 12 which jumped to 54,134 on February 13 and further increased to 56448 on February 14.

## IS STEEL PLANT SALE JUSTIFIED?

“The proposal of Union government to privatise over Rs 20,000 crore turnover company - Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP), the biggest eco-friendly industry in the entire Southern India, is unfair and unacceptable to the people of Andhra Pradesh. Instead of helping the modern temple to survive, it appears that the Centre has kept an eye on its huge land bank that extends around 22,000 acres. Time has come for Andhra people to show their fighting spirit and save the company from privatisation. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy should play a vital role in protecting the plant from privatisation. The CM should demonstrate fighting spirit and courage in saving the plant as was done by his father Dr YS Rajasekhara Reddy in case of Hindustan Shipyard and BHPV, the oldest industries in Vizag. If the CM succeeds in saving the plant from privatisation, he will remain in the hearts of Andhra people forever.



K Bangar Raju,  
Rtd PR and Communications Senior Executive of RINL

“The Forum of Legal Professionals strongly opposes the proposed privatisation of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant by the Union government. Instead of handing over the steel plant to private parties, the focus should be on seeking solutions to help the unit tide over the financial crisis. Government-controlled units like SAIL, NMDC and other mining firms should come together to make do for the shortcomings. The loans taken by the steel plant have to be rescheduled and there must be capital infusion by both the Central and State governments in order to return to normalcy. A holistic approach is the need of the hour. The forum of legal professionals will render all the support to see that the Centre's proposal of privatisation is dropped.



Kuppili Muralidhar,  
president of Forum of Legal Professionals

“There is no need to privatise the Vizag Steel Plant as it has been doing well in recent months. The plant was set up with an objective of strengthening public sector in the country. But now the situation is different with the Modi government gradually stepping aside from the responsibility of developing the public sector.

G Lalith Bhargav,  
contract employee, Tirupati



“That the Central government deciding to privatise Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, one of the Navaratna public enterprises, is unfair. It is not a white elephant to get rid of, but a golden goose which is starved and deserves to be taken care of. It has no own captive mines for uninterrupted supply of raw material. It has been on the path of expansion. So the ongoing losses cannot be shown as a cause to prove it a losing enterprise. It can be turned around into a profit-making entity with a little help and political resolve. Of course, to strengthen the public sector would be the right step in the direction of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

D D V G Sankara Rao,  
Prof of Anaesthesiology, MIMS, Vizianagaram



## CM stresses on affordable plots to middle class

- Officials propose construction of ring roads around towns
- Smart township layouts will come up around ring roads
- Govt to start Clean Andhra Pradesh programme with a 100-day action plan to keep the state clean

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy suggested changes in the proposals made for providing infrastructure facilities in smart townships.

In a review on solid waste management and urban housing at his camp office in Tadepalli on Monday, the Chief Minister said the goal was to provide high living standards to middle class people and directed the officials to provide undisputed and clear-titled plots with all the required permissions at affordable prices on non-profit basis to them.

The officials discussed with the Chief Minister several town plans already being implemented in various states and also how to create land bank for the scheme and develop infrastructure.

The Chief Minister said providing plots at affordable prices to middle



Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy making suggestions on the proposals on smart townships submitted by officials during review on waste management and urban housing at Tadepalli on Monday

class people is a continuous process and plans should be made to provide plots to eligible beneficiaries as and when they apply.

The officials laid proposals for building ring roads around the towns. The designs of roads should be such that both the government and people who give land for the construction should be benefitted and smart towns' layouts should come up around the ring roads. It was decided initially to develop 18 layouts in 12 towns. The proposals are made for designing smart towns of at least 25 acre to 200 acre, depending on the population of cities and towns. The plan is to prepare the layout within 18 months after works start.

The government will start Clean Andhra Pradesh (CLAP) programme with a 100-day action plan to keep the

state clean. Plans are afoot for NGOs and public participation in the programme which will have 3,825 garbage collection vehicles, more auto tipper, and over 6,000 bins and waste management systems in municipalities. The Chief Minister said to start bio-mining and there should be change in cleanliness in the state with these programmes.

Municipal and urban development minister Botcha Satyanarayana, Solid and Liquid Waste Management Task Force chairman Alla Ayodhya Ramireddy, municipal and urban development principal secretary Y Sri-lakshmi, municipal administration commissioner M M Nayak, CCLA special commissioner Narayana Bharat Gupta, finance secretary Gulzar, TIDCO MD Ch Sridhar and other senior officials were present.

## SEC urged to banish anti-social elements from Kuppam

- TDP chief in a letter to the poll panel points to attempt on life of Congress leader Suresh Babu in Pacharlapalli village
- Demands release of TDP sarpanch candidate and other leaders in Avularipalem village in Krosuru mandal of Guntur district

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALAGIRI

TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu on Monday demanded the State Election Commission (SEC) to take step to banish trouble-makers and outside miscreants from the villages in Kuppam Assembly constituency in order to ensure a free and fair panchayat election.

Naidu said that on February 14, an attempt was made on the life of District Congress Committee (DCC) president Suresh Babu at Pacharlapalli village in Gudupalle mandal by a miscreant with knife. The attacker has attacked four other people also when they were trying to protect Suresh Babu. The Opposition leaders were being attacked with an ulterior plan to demoralise them in the panchayat elections, he alleged.

Naidu said that the State Election Commission (SEC) should act swiftly and ensure that the gram panchayat elections being held on February 17 would be conducted peacefully in a free and fair manner. For this, additional protection forces shall be deployed and all the non-bona fide outsiders should be sent out of villages in Kuppam Assembly segment. Simultaneously, inquiry shall be conducted into the presence of anti-social elements and miscreants in villages and action be taken against the culprits.

In a separate statement, Naidu condemned the arrest of the TDP sarpanch candidate along with some others in Avularipalem village in Krosuru mandal in the Guntur district on false charges and demanded their immediate release.

## TDP TO STAGE STATE-WIDE STIR FOR VSP ON FEB 18

HANS NEWS SERVICE  
MANGALAGIRI

TDP national president N Chandrababu Naidu on Monday called upon his party leaders and cadres to take part in massive protests all over the state on February 18 to denounce the privatisation of the Visakha Steel Plant (VSP).

Naidu stressed the need for waging a relentless agitation against the ruling YSRCP secret plans in the deal with the South Korean company, POSCO. It was only to save himself from his illegal investments cases that Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy was bent on handing over the steel plant to private hands, he alleged. In a statement here, the former

- Party national president accuses Jagan of privatising VSP to save himself from cases
- Alleges that the CM has set his sights on steel plant surplus lands

chief minister asserted that their party would do everything possible to prevent the state government from carrying out its nefarious designs any further. Protest rallies would be organised from village to state level.

He alleged that the Chief Minister had apparently struck a secret deal with POSCO only to grab the surplus lands of the VSP which have got a

very high value in the market. "Out of his unquenchable thirst for personal gains only, the Chief Minister was prostrating before the Centre with respect to the steel plant issue," he said.

Naidu deplored that in the name of privatisation, the steel plant has been weakened without trying for mines exclusively meant for it.

The people of the state achieved the industry after fighting a prolonged struggle in the past. Once again, it was for the whole people of AP to agitate and save the steel plant from all future threats. It was high time to teach a strong lesson to the ruling YSRCP, he said. Naidu said that the VSP was protecting the livelihoods of over 40,000 people directly and another 50,000 workers indirectly.



# Womensia

TWEET PATROL



**MINI MATHUR**  
**@MINIMATHUR**

If young people are not always right, the society which ignores and knocks them is always wrong"



## Does fashion ignore the 40-plus woman?

SUJATA ASSOMULL

I am 47-years-old and have worked in fashion for over 25 years; earning every smile line on my face and those extra few kilos around my mid area. Unfortunately, the industry I work in writes off every woman over the age of 45. Of course, we all know the reason, it's because fashion sees the youth as the future of the industry, it is where the growth is. But what about the now?

A recent study by the International Longevity Centre (ILC) found that those over the age of 50-years account for over 50 per cent of the spending in fashion — the fact is mature women have more purchasing power and today are also in better shape than ever — they become an easy target for fashion. Yet they are ignored. Brands are so occupied with pleasing millennials and Gen Z-ers, they forget to make styles that work for today's 40 plus woman.

It is only in your 40s when you really understand what your personal style is. You definitely make less fashion faux pas than you did in your 20's, but you still want some style inspiration. I keep reading articles on how "Fifty is the new Thirty" in fashion glossies — yet when it comes cover girls, women over 40 only tend to be chosen for the "Ageless" or "Fab at Every Age" cover. This at a time when inclusivity is one of hottest fashion talking points.

Luckily, there are a handful of real women in this age group who have great taste, I suggest you follow them on Instagram — they have style, substance and just the right amount of sass.

**Anaita Shroff Adajania**

The 40-something fashion powerhouse is the name behind some of Bollywood's red carpet most glamorous moments and fashion magazine's glossiest covers (Anaita has styled everyone from Aishwarya Rai to Alia Bhatt); though her own sense of style is comfortable, carefree yet always chic; she can go from a handloom sari, a Dior gown to a Savio Jon kurta while always injecting her special blend of boho-chic into the look. The launch fashion director of Vogue India, this celebrity stylist still rocks a bikini better than most swimsuit cover girls. Anaita was recently part of a Gucci social media campaign for its iconic Jackie 1961 bag and added her own unique cool girl vibe to her Instagram video for the Italian fashion house.

**Trinny Woodall**

I grew up watching "What Not to Wear" the BBC make-over show featuring Trinny Woodall and Susannah Constantine—women who

always said it as it is. Today Trinny runs her own successful make-up company, Trinny London, (and I suggest every woman over 30 use her Miracle Blur — it smooths the face and blurs those lines in an instant). Trinny's personal Instagram handle is the one to follow though, a digital closet confidential. From shopping to styling tips this 50-something likes to have fun with her fashion. Honest about the aging process, she enjoys dressing up and her flamboyant (yet mainly high street) outfit of the day choices will always surprise you.

Roohi Oomerbhoy Jaikishan: The executive director of an Indian FMCG company, RR Oomerbhoy has a maximalist take on fashion. A true style maven— she is an art collector, a clotheshorse and a host-ess with the

mostess. While food has become the mainstay of her Instagram account, she shares recipes from some of her fashionable friends around the world, it is served with a side of fantastical fashion. From timeless saris by her mother-in-law, veteran fashion designer, Pallavi Jaikishan to Erdem floral dresses Roohi adds her own sense of eclectic charm to her ensembles. A permanent fixture on best dressed lists, her fashion super-power is the way she plays with fun and statement making accessories. It is never about fashion diktats for Roohi but about her own personal take on style.



Anaita Shroff Adajania in La Fourti

### Better that breakfast

**NEWS ROUNDUP** Begin your morning with a nice bowl of fruit, porridge or granola and yogurt, and you can feel brilliant in no time! Not only are these foods tasty, satisfying for your hunger and a valuable source of energy, but you'll be pleased to know that they are great flat-belly foods. Combined they are supposed to help burn abdominal fat, improve digestion and help you keep away from the cupboard for longer. Breakfast is the

most important meal of the day; kick starting your metabolism and fueling your day ahead, so providing your body with a healthy and nutritious meal will do wonders for your body. Plus there are so many alternatives and additions you can make to this simple meal that provide that little bit extra; adding a spoon of peanut or almond butter, pouring on some honey or making a tasty smoothie, can make your breakfast just that little bit more delicious.



## It's always the way forward: JJ Valaya

PUJA GUPTA

The year 2020 was a period of silence for the Indian fashion industry as everything came to a halt. Then, 2021 started with a big announcement -- designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee sold 51 percent of his fashion brand to Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited.

First Anita Dongre, then Raghavendra Rathore and now Sabyasachi, why are Indian fashion houses opting to take the corporate route? Are strategic collaborations the way forward in order to establish Indian brands as global entities?

"This was always the way forward" replies industry veteran JJ Valaya who took to Instagram to unveil his latest SS21 collection today. Titled 'BURSA', the line is the second chapter of his collection which was launched at the FDCI India Couture Week in September 2021.

"What is now happening in India, was happening in the West several decades ago and popular designer brands like Coco Chanel, Burberry, Versace are the leading example of it," Valaya tells.

"It's only when the corporate comes in, that there's stability of the business and the brand goes to another dimension. So, I think this is a fantastic move forward and it's only going to go better."

Earlier designer Anita Dongre's company had received a sizable investment from a large US Private Equity Fund in 2013 and was the only Indian designer with a retail presence in New York. Now Sabyasachi has announced he is set to open a 6,000 square foot retail space in the city in early 2022.

Asked if he has similar plans, Valaya answers: "Well, if it happens, we will surely consider it. I feel for us it's a couple of years to go before we can take this route. At the moment, we are doing a significant amount of experimentation and expansion within. If we find a suitable partner, of whom we are convinced can take the brand to another level, we will certainly be open for it."

Talking about his collection, Valaya believes: "I always believe when you are truly inspired to do a collection then seeing all the interpretations in six months is never enough, you must give it at least 12 months to kind of try and interpret it in as many ways and forms as possible."

He adds, "And fortunately for us, in India we have two very clear themes between winter and summer that allows a significant change in the weather and that gives us room to experiment. And yet having said that, at the same time we are essentially a couture design house and we focus on wedding clothes and occasion wear. So the challenge is always how will you make the bride, the groom and the guests look spectacular still wearing the silks and organza but making them relevant to the season. This second chapter of Bursa -- is essentially a whole new interpretation of inspiration we initiated six months ago."

As the pandemic has changed how Indian couture is seen and interpreted, has it also brought on a change in design philosophy?

Valaya replies: "I have always been very clear that come hail or storm, the signature of the brand should never change. So, of course things will lead us to all kinds of circumstances... but the DNA of a brand should persistently continue. So, if you ask me that if the pandemic changed the way I think, No, it didn't."



## Artist Michelle Poonawalla exhibits series on companionship

**Titled 'Kagaz', the show featuring her works runs till February 26, 2021**

Celebrating friendship and companionship during these challenging times, five portraits taken by artist Michelle Poonawalla in her home city of Pune, are part of an ongoing exhibition in an Ahmedabad gallery.

Poonawalla, an artist who lives and works between London and Pune, is showing this new series of drawings as part of 'Kagaz', a group exhibition of works on paper which runs until February 26 at 079 Stories.

For Poonawalla, drawings and works on paper represent a very personal and emotive medium, allowing her to delicately portray the emotion of the subjects. As with Poonawalla's larger body of work the drawings are intended to create a moment of reflection for the viewer and ask them to think about their surroundings and the wider world.

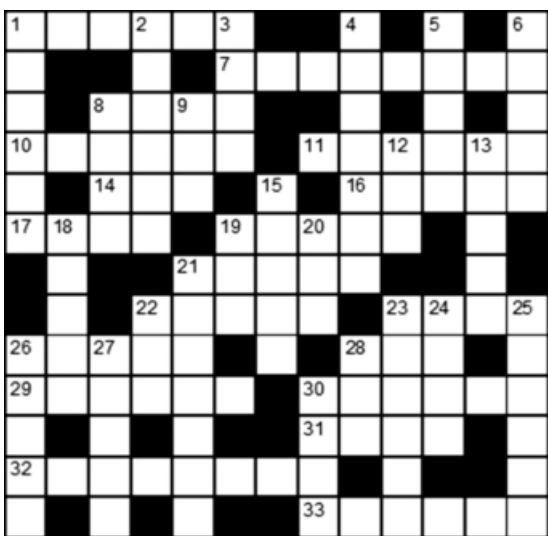
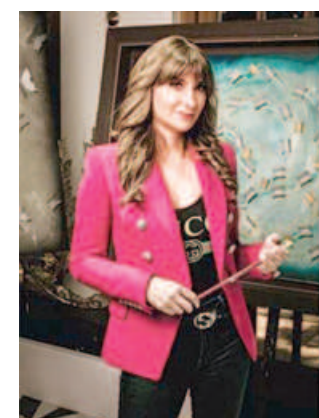
Talking about the exhibition, Poonawalla says: "For me drawing is a very important medium. Whilst audiences may be more familiar with my larger installations and digital work, drawing forms the base of everything I do and I was delighted when 079 Stories asked me to present a series of works on paper."

Poonawalla's works explore universal, socially engaged topics that resonate with a diverse range of audiences, creating powerful memories and moving experiences.

Her practice combines cutting-edge technology and traditional artistic mediums in an emotionally charged and poetic form; often utilizing sound, video mapping, projection, motion sensors and other techniques to bring her innovative paintings and installations to life.

Paper is the strongest and the most versatile medium of expressing oneself may it be in the form of words, crafts, or art.

'Kagaz' is a celebration of this and alongside Poonawalla the exhibition presents 21 artists from across the country displaying works on paper including Anuj Ambalal, Al Qawi Nanawati, Ashish Kushwaha, Claire Iono, Ghanshyam Rathod, Hindol Brahmabhatt, Krishnendu Roy, Malabika Burman, Milburn Cheria, Pradeep Ahirwar, Rachnan Badrakia, Ronak Sopariwala, Satish Gupta, Shahanshah Mittal, Shefali Nayan, Shrikant Kadam, Vikesh Ghosh and Viraj Mithani.



**SOLUTION TO FEBRUARY 15**

WHISKY R COMM A  
E THOUGHT A  
CADIZ I EOSIN  
V G INANE T  
DEEMING N TAO  
ENYA C I ATRIC  
N R MUFTI I T  
EDITOR C ANTE  
BEE N CHAR IOT  
R USURY C Y  
CAIRO U WAGON  
I GOT E VENT  
ALIEN L TEXAS

### CROSSWORD

- Across**
- Term of play in polo (6)
  - To some extent (8)
  - Assist or aid (4)
  - Small two-door cars (6)
  - Abrasive (6)
  - Panaji is its capital (3)
  - Sensational (5)
  - Computer screen symbol (4)
  - Dairy product (5)
  - Monetary unit of Ecuador (5)
  - Neck of mutton (5)
  - Playful sprite (4)
  - Sleeper's woe (5)
  - Vessel or duct (3)
  - Governess (6)
  - Active (6)
  - Snakelike fish (4)
  - By which people are familiarly called - not only cats and dogs? (3,5)
  - Cuts off (6)

- Down**
- Ostentatious (6)
  - Persist in (4,2)
  - Serpents (4)
  - Interstellar clouds (7)
  - Professorship (5)
  - Horse (5)
  - Quasimodo's creator (4)
  - Meadow (3)
  - Not speaking (3)
  - Relating to or of a city (5)
  - Killer whales (5)
  - S. American "beaver" (5)
  - Mongrel dog (3)
  - Work unit (3)
  - Public disgrace (7)
  - Monetary unit of Japan (3)
  - Russian physiologist who experimented with dogs (6)
  - Functions (4)
  - Canoes used by Eskimos (6)
  - Take as one's own (5)
  - Efts (5)
  - Contend (3)
  - Not so much (4)

### SUDOKU

4			5	1				3
	3			8				9
	1	7		2				6
	9	2					6	5
	7	5					4	8
	5	8		3				4
	6			7				2
7			9	4				8

**SOLUTION TO FEBRUARY 15**

8	7	3	2	5	4	6	9	1
5	4	9	3	1	6	7	8	2
6	2	1	9	7	8	3	4	5
1	8	7	6	2	3	4	5	9
2	5	6	4	9	1	8	7	3
3	9	4	5	8	7	1	2	6
9	3	8	1	4	5	2	6	7
7	1	5	8	6	2	9	3	4
4	6	2	7	3	9	5	1	8



# BJP to expand base in Nepal, Lanka: Oppn slams Tripura CM's statement

'When Home Minister was the BJP's national president, he during a meeting with us in Agartala had said that we have extended our base across India. Party's philosophy enlarged to many Asian and African countries'

AGARTALA

OPPOSITION Left parties and Congress on Monday criticised the BJP leadership after Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb's reported comments to extend the base of the saffron party in Nepal and Sri Lanka.

The opposition parties said that the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's plan and target to expand its base in Nepal and Sri Lanka are against India's foreign policies and these cannot be done as the two countries are sovereign nations.

Deb while addressing a party meeting here on Saturday reportedly quoted Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and said: "When Home Minister was the BJP's National President he during a meeting with us in Agartala had said that we have extended our base

across India. Now we have to go to Sri Lanka and Nepal." The Chief Minister said that the BJP would form government in West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and the party would remain in power in Tripura for 30 years as the CPI-M would be finished in the next assembly elections in 2023. "The BJP is the largest party in India now. It has maximum numbers of MPs, MLAs and other elected members," Deb said. The BJP, however, also supported the Chief Minister's views. Party spokesman Nabendu Bhattacharjee said that not only Sri Lanka and Nepal, the BJP's philosophy is being extended in many Asian and African countries. "Our targets and plans are not to form governments in those states. Our "Pracharaks" (functionaries)



Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb with Home Minister Amit Shah

are broadening BJP's philosophy and belief in those states. If the people of those countries accept our principles and viewpoints then the future course of action would be shaped," Bhattacharjee told the media on Monday.

Sharply criticising the Chief Minister's announcement, Communist Party of India-Marxist central committee member Jitendra Chowdhury said that Deb's speech is a combination of arrogance and ignorance.

Chowdhury, a former Tripura Minister, said that Deb's speech in a public forum portrayed the approach and method of governance that was prevailing in Tripura after the BJP-IPFT (Indigenous People's Front of Tripura) alliance came to power three years ago. "The BJP-led

governments both at the Center and the states have forcefully muted all kinds of civil liberties, freedom of speech and all pillars of democracy while a total lawlessness has been prevailing in Tripura.

"It has been revealed further from Deb's speech that the top brass in BJP is engaged in the internal affairs of our neighbouring countries, which is contrary to our long cherished foreign policy since independence," the veteran tribal leader and former Lok Sabha member said. He alleged that it is extremely unfortunate that this same BJP and their governments have brought sedition charges against the innocent citizens to silence the dissent voices, and octogenarian Varavara Rao, Gautam Navlakha and teen ager Disha Ravi like people are not spared.

## 96% Covid warriors skip 2<sup>nd</sup> dose

'7,668 beneficiaries received the second jab, which is just 4 per cent of the over 1,91,000 healthcare workers who received their first dose on Jan 16'

NEW DELHI

IN what could eventually become worrisome, 96 per cent of Covid Warriors have not been turning up for the second dose of the Covid-19 vaccine.

On Saturday, 7,668 beneficiaries received the second jab, according to the provisional data released by the Union Health Ministry, which is just 4 per cent of the over 1,91,000 healthcare workers who received their first dose on January 16, according to News18 report.

The two vaccines that have been cleared for use in India - Covishield and Covaxin - require that two doses be given 28 days apart. However, as per the recommendation of the apex drug regulator, the doses can be taken within a window of four to six weeks.

The government has set a deadline of March 1 to complete the vaccination of the frontline workers across the country, with a five-day period for "mop up" activity to vaccinate those who might have been missed out, said joint secretary of the Union health ministry, Mandep Bhandari. For healthcare workers, the deadline is February 20.

India has been recording a steady decline in the number of daily new deaths since October 1, 2020, while the national recovery rates amongst the highest in the



### 'Vaccination for above 50 in 3 weeks'

NEW DELHI The Union government will begin vaccination drive for around 27 crore Indians above the age of 50 three weeks from now, Union Health Minister Harsh vardhan said on Monday.

"Three weeks from now, the government will start giving doses of coronavirus vaccines to 27 crore persons above the age of 50," he said at a press briefing here. An expert group on vaccination will discuss how to pay for the doses for those above 50, he added.

### Maha Minister bats for 3T formula

Aurangabad: The "3T formula" of tracing, testing and treatment will have to be implemented strictly to tackle a rise in COVID-19 cases in some parts of Maharashtra, state health minister Rajesh Tope said. Talking to reporters, Tope said the state government had managed to flatten the curve in the last one month as far as daily addition of cases was concerned, but a recent rise in numbers in Mumbai, Wardha and some other pockets was "alarming".

world, the Union Health Ministry said on Sunday. "Since 1st October 2020, the nation has seen an unabated decline in Case Fatality Rate. The Case Fatality Rate today stands below 1.5 (1.43 percent). India's Case Fatality Rate is one of the lowest in the world," it said. The recoveries have surged to 1,06,11,731 with 11,016 patients getting discharged in a span of 24 hours. "India's Covid-19 recovery rate of 97.31 per cent is amongst the highest in the world. The difference between the recovered and active cases has grown to 1,04,74,164 as on date," the ministry highlighted.

Meanwhile, the night curfew, currently in force in four major Gujarat cities, including Ahmedabad, to stem the COVID-19 spread, was on Monday extended till February 28, officials said. However, in a concession to people, the curfew from now on in Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot will be in force between midnight and 6 am instead of the earlier 11pm to 6am, they added.

The Centre on Monday approved the proposal of the Press Information Bureau's journalist welfare committee to provide a financial relief Rs 5 lakh each to families of 39 journalists who died due to the coronavirus, a panel member said. The government has earmarked an additional fund for this purpose for the Journalist Welfare Committee (JWC), and journalists from across India will be covered under the scheme.



## Rupani collapses, tests Covid +ive

AHMEDABAD

GUJARAT Chief Minister Vijay Rupani has tested positive for coronavirus, said a hospital where the CM is admitted after he fainted at a rally. He has mild symptoms and his condition is stable, the Ahmedabad-based medical facility said on Monday. On Sunday, Rupani, 64, fainted on stage while addressing a rally in Vadodara for the upcoming civic polls in the state, following which he was flown to Ahmedabad and admitted to the U N Mehta Heart Hospital here. Rupani's sample was collected on Sunday night and sent for RT-PCR test which has come out positive for coronavirus, said a health bulletin issued by the hospital on Monday. "His symptoms are mild and his condition is stable," it said. The hospital also said the chief minister fainted on Sunday due to "tiredness and physical weakness". His ECG, blood test and other examinations were conducted and their results are normal, it said. State Deputy Chief Minister Nitin Patel told reporters that on Sunday night it was decided to keep Rupani under observation for 24 hours. "After his test report came out positive for coronavirus, he is being treated for the infection as per the course and protocol," said Patel.

## 15 killed after truck overturns in Jalgaon

JALGAON

Fifteen people were killed and five others injured after a truck carrying labourers overturned and fell into a roadside pit in Maharashtra's Jalgaon district in the wee hours of Monday, police said.

The accident took place near a temple in Kingaon village around 1 am when the papaya-laden truck was on its way to Yawal tehsil in Jalgaon from Dhule, an official from Yawal police station said.

The deceased included two children, aged 3 and 5 years, and a 15-year-old girl. A 14-year-old boy, who was sleeping on top of the truck, escaped unhurt, the official said. The labourers belonged to Abhoda, Vivra, Kerhala villages and Raver tehsil in the district, he said.

PM Narendra Modi expressed grief at the loss of lives. The Maharashtra government announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh to the kin of each of the deceased. After the accident, police and some locals rushed to the spot and the truck was brought out of the pit with the help of a JCB machine, the police official said.

## Two more activists on police radar Toolkit makers on the run

NEW DELHI

NON-BAILABLE warrants have been issued against a Mumbai lawyer and a Pune engineer for allegedly creating a protest toolkit backing the farmers' agitation along with arrested climate activist Disha Ravi and collaborating with pro-Khalistani elements, Delhi Police officials said on Monday.

Lawyer Nikita Jacob and engineer Shantanu, who are absconding, also attended a Zoom meeting organised by "pro-Khalistani" group Poetic Justice Foundation, Joint Commissioner of Police (Cyber) Prem Nath said.

The three had created the toolkit and sent it to others, officials said as a fierce political debate broke out between the opposition and the ruling BJP over the action against 21-year-old Ravi in the case related to the "toolkit Google doc" that came to light when it was shared by global climate campaigner Greta Thunberg. "Disha, Shantanu and Nikita created and edited the toolkit. Disha sent the toolkit to Greta Thunberg through Telegram. Disha deleted a Whatsapp group which she created to spread the toolkit. Due procedure was followed when Disha was arrested," Nath said.

Ravi was arrested from Bengaluru on Saturday and sent to police ream for five days by a Delhi court on Sunday with officials claiming she was an editor of the "toolkit Google doc" and "key conspirator" in its formulation and dissemination.



Historian Ramchandra Guha (right) along with other activists holds placards during a protest against the arrest of climate activist Disha Ravi, in Bengaluru on Monday

### Nikita moves HC for bail

Mumbai Mumbai-based lawyer-activist Nikita Jacob moved the Bombay High Court for anticipatory bail after a Delhi court issued a non-bailable arrest warrant against her.

Jacob's plea for an urgent hearing was mentioned by her lawyer Abhishek Yende before Justice P.D. Naik on Monday who has posted the matter for Tuesday.

A practicing lawyer since the past six years, Jacob is a resident of Goregaon and has been active in public causes.

Terming the Delhi Police FIR as "false and baseless", she sought transit anticipatory bail for a period of four weeks to enable approach the court in Delhi concerned and apply for a pre-arrest bail.

### Is State so weak? Sibal

New Delhi: The Congress termed the arrest of climate activist Disha Ravi as 'shocking' and 'unfortunate' and asked if the 'state was so weak that a tweet threatened its security'.

"Is the State so weak that a tweet threatens its security? Is the state so paranoid that a 22 year is a national security threat? Is the state so intolerant that it cannot tolerate youth standing with farmers? Is this the "badlav" Modiji wanted?": Congress leader Kapil Sibal tweeted. The party's Deputy leader in Rajya Sabha, Anand Sharma tweeted: "Police should recognise her right to liberty and courts must respect the Supreme Court Judgement which says bail is the rule and Jail an exception."

## What is a toolkit?

A toolkit, simply put, is a document created to explain any issue. It also provides information on what one needs to do to address the issue. This might include information about petitions, details about protests and mass movements and so on. The toolkit that Thunberg shared, tries to "explain the farmers' protests" in the national capital.

"This is a document meant to enable anyone unfamiliar with the ongoing farmers protests in India to better understand the situation and make decisions on how to support the farmers based on their own analysis," the toolkit states.

The toolkit then goes on to apparently summarise the situation of farmers in India and talks about the Centre's recent agriculture legislations.

"Instead of being supported to become self-reliant and prosperous, a majority of farmers are increasingly being subjected to the control of large corporations and international institutions whose sole focus is profits, and necessarily involves increased exploitation of nature," the toolkit states.

It further lists out what actions one can take to support the farmers' protests and the Delhi Police is currently trying to ascertain who created it.

## War of words between BJP, Oppn

NEW DELHI

Accusing the government of "murdering democracy" by using force against a 21-year-old, the Opposition said the voice of India cannot be silenced even as the BJP defended the action, saying a crime is a crime no matter at what age. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi led the opposition offensive following the arrest of 21-year-old Disha Ravi in the case and said the country will not be silenced.

"Your lips are free to speak. Say that the truth is still alive. They are scared, not the country," he said in a tweet in Hindi. "India will not be silenced," he added. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "Arrest of 21 year old Disha Ravi is an unprecedented attack on Democracy. Supporting our farmers is not a crime."

RJD leader Manoj Jha said democracy is under threat. "I am worried about democracy, as it is passing through the most difficult times," he said. Union Minister and BJP leader Gajendra Singh Shekhawat tweeted: "If age is the criteria then Param Veer Chakra Second Lt Arun Khetarpal, martyred at 21 is who I am proud of. Not some toolkit propagandists." BJP general secretary B L Santosh tweeted: "21 year old...environment activist...student...Are these credentials for becoming a part of breaking India forces? How does she get the access for editing tool kit...? Why she is part of anti-national WhatsApp groups...? Many questions...But only one answer...21 year old." Bengaluru, Greta Thun-

### Disha argued her own case

Disha Ravi did not have her own lawyer when she was produced in court with charges of sedition and conspiracy. According to Disha Ravi's legal team, she argued her own case before the magistrate.

In a post, lawyer Rebecca John has alleged "shocking abdication of judicial duties". According to her, the magistrate failed to ensure that Disha had legal representation in court. "Deeply disappointed by the conduct of the duty magistrate... who remanded a young woman to five days in police custody, without first ensuring that she was being represented by counsel," Ms John wrote.

berg, Vegan, sole bread winner, student, 21 year old, passionate activist...so many attempts to white wash a sin...!! Not one anarchist ready to answer the question...How 21 year old student got access to edit Toolkit," he asked. Former Union ministers P Chidambaram and Jairam Ramesh have also come out strongly against the police action in the case, accusing the government of running an authoritarian regime as it was threatened by a student. "I strongly condemn the arrest of Disha Ravi and urge all students and youth to raise their voices to protest against the authoritarian regime," Chidambaram said.

## Forging and fabricating medical prescription of Sushant Singh Rajput

# Mumbai HC refuses to quash FIR against sister Priyanka Singh

MUMBAI

THE Bombay High Court on Monday refused to quash an FIR lodged against late actor Sushant Singh Rajput's sister Priyanka Singh for allegedly forging and fabricating a medical prescription for her brother. A division bench of Justices S S Shinde and M S Karnik, however, quashed the FIR against Meetu Singh, another sister of Rajput.

The court said while there was prima facie evidence against Priyanka Singh, the case against Meetu Singh does not stand. "We are of the considered opinion that the FIR against petitioner Meetu Singh does not survive,"

the bench said. "However, the FIR against petitioner Priyanka Singh is not quashed as we prima facie find that a case is made out," the court said.

The bench said its judgment shall not cause an impediment for the investigating agency to probe the FIR and submit whatever report it deems fit. The sisters had approached the HC seeking to quash the First Information Report (FIR) lodged for alleged forgery and fabrication of a medical prescription for their brother for anxiety issues. The FIR was lodged against Priyanka Singh, Meetu Singh and doctor Tarun Kumar of Delhi's Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital by the Bandra police in Mumbai on September 7 last year, based on a complaint filed by Rajput's



girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty. As per the complaint, Rajput's sisters and the doctor prepared a forged and fabricated prescription for anti-depressants for the actor a

few days before his death.

Rajput, 34, was found dead at his home in suburban Bandra on June 14 last year. His father K K Singh later lodged a case of abetment of suicide and cheating against Chakraborty and her family members. The CBI is conducting a probe into the case.

After registration of the FIR against Rajput's sisters, the Bandra police forwarded the case papers to the Central Bureau of Investigation, as per directions of the Supreme Court which had said all cases pertaining to the death of Rajput shall be probed by the CBI. Senior counsel Vikas Singh, appearing for Rajput's sisters, had argued that telemedicine practice guidelines permitted a

doctor to prescribe medicines after online consultation. He had claimed that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Rajput could not go for physical consultation.

Even assuming that such a prescription was procured, there was no evidence to show Rajput consumed any medicines, Singh told the court. Senior counsel Devdutt Kamat, appearing for the Mumbai police, had opposed the plea and said there was no online consultation done. Rhea Chakraborty's advocate Satish Maneshinde had also opposed the plea of Rajput's sisters, and said one of the circumstances that may have led to the actor's death was the "dangerous cocktail of drugs, narcotic substances and medicines"

**TODAY'S QUOTE**

**Will send Covishield to Canada soon**

Dear honourable PM Justin Trudeau, I thank you for your warm words towards India and its vaccine industry. As we await regulatory approvals from Canada, I assure you, Serum Institute of India will fly out Covishield to Canada in less than a month; I'm on it!

— Adar Poonawalla, CEO, Serum Institute of India



**PROFIT**

**Sidbi Q3 profit rises by 9%**

Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi) on Monday reported 9 per cent growth in net profit at Rs 630 crore for December quarter 2020-21. In the year-ago period, its profit stood at Rs 578 crore. During the first nine months of 2020-21, Sidbi's net profit rose 38.4 per cent to Rs 2,165 crore.

**FOREX (buy rates in ₹)**

US Dollar	77.05	South	
Euro	92.61	African Rand	5.79
UAE Dirham	21.77	Hong Kong Dollar	10.78
Thai Baht	2.8	Japanese Yen	0.79
British Pound	105.12	New Zealand Dollar	55.24
Australian Dollar	59.36	Saudi Riyal	21.3
Canadian Dollar	60.27	Swedish Krona	10.1
Swiss Franc	84.87	Singapore Dollar	57.69

AMARAVATI TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2021

**BIZ BRIEFS**

**Navi General's health plan**

NAVI General Insurance has launched a two-minute online retail health insurance product. Customers can buy health insurance via the Navi health insurance app through a quick and completely paperless process and the policy issued to them instantly on the app. The product offers customizable health insurance cover ranging from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 1 cr for individuals and families. The policy offers comprehensive health insurance that covers more than 20 health benefits including in-patient hospitalisation, pre and post hospitalisation expenses, Covid-19 hospitalisation, domiciliary hospitalization etc. Ramchandra Pandit, MD & CEO, Navi General Insurance, said: "With our health insurance offering, our objective is to radically simplify health insurance for individuals and families."

**Udaan expands supply chain**

UDAAN announced that its supply chain and logistics capability to serve small businesses across the country, through UdaanExpress, has been strengthened to over 10 mn sq. ft. of warehousing space. This warehousing capacity is 230 acres. The achievement of this milestone has been made possible through capacity expansion and addition of new warehouses, taking the total number of warehouses to 200, spread across the country. Sujeet Kumar, co-founder, Udaan said: "We are committed to offering world class, tech-enabled and cost-effective supply chain & logistics solutions, in addition to the benefits of eCommerce scale, to small businesses of Bharat. The latest capacity expansion to 10 million sq. ft. allows our customers a better and hassle-free inventory management."

**Bada Business hires more**

WITH a post Covid surge in digital learning, EdTech startup Bada Business expanded its workforce by almost 300 per cent this financial year, adding over 300 employees to its workforce across the country. The platform offers a series of online business training and skilling programmes for small entrepreneurs and wantrepreneurs. Founded by business trainer Dr Vivek Bindra in 2019, Bada Business is a rare case of a bootstrapped startup crossing Rs 100 crore in revenue within two years of starting up. "In a post Covid environment, not only has digital learning witnessed a boost, there has also been a surge in requirement for up-skilling and business training for entrepreneurs looking to adapt their businesses to the new normal. We have witnessed a soaring demand," said Dr Bindra, CEO, Bada Business.

**Eupheus raises \$4.1mn**

Eupheus Learning a Delhi-based leading B2B EdTech company has raised \$4.1 million in series B funding round. The round is led by United Education Company, Kuwait's leading company in the education sector and Al Rayan Holding Company in which UEC holds a majority stake, offering different curriculum to cater to the Kuwaiti markets diverse demographic composition. The company is the largest outreach platform for schools with an ecosystem of 13,000 schools, driving partnerships with 5,000 schools covering 4 million students. Shaikha Dana Nasser Al-Sabah, chairperson, UEC, said: "We are excited to partner with Eupheus Team as they continue their journey in fast-growing EdTech market with their innovative and differentiated offerings".

**Centre may put 4 banks on sale**

NEW DELHI

THE central government has short-listed four mid-sized state-run banks for privatisation, under a new push to sell state assets and shore up government revenues. Reuters news agency reported quoting three government sources.

Privatisation of the banking sector, which is dominated by public sector banks (PSBs) with hundreds of thousands of employees, is politically risky because it could put jobs at risk, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration aims to make a start with second-tier banks, the report said. The four banks on the shortlist are Bank of Maharashtra, Bank of India, Indian Overseas Bank and the Central Bank of India, two officials told Reuters on condition of anonymity as the matter is not yet public. Two of those banks will be selected for sale in the next financial year which begins in April, the officials said. The shortlist has not previously been reported.

The government is considering mid-sized to small banks for its first round of privatisation to test the waters. In the coming years it could also look at some of the country's bigger banks, the officials said.

The government, however, will continue to hold a majority stake in

India's largest lender State Bank of India, which is seen as a 'strategic bank' for implementing initiatives such as expanding rural credit. A finance ministry spokesman declined to comment on the matter.

India's deepest economic contraction on record caused by the pandemic is driving the push for bolder reforms, economists say. Government also wants to over-

haul a banking sector reeling under a heavy load of non-performing assets, which are likely to rise further once banks are allowed to categorise loans that soured during the pandemic as bad. PM Modi's office initially wanted four banks to be put up for sale in the coming fiscal year, but officials have advised caution fearing resistance from unions representing the employees, the report added.

**Demand for completed flats rise in 2020: Survey**

NEW DELHI

DEMAND for completed residential properties is rising compared to that for under-construction flats, as the share of ready-to-move-in homes in the total housing sales in 2020 rose to 21 per cent from 18 per cent in the previous year, according to News Corp-backed realty brokerage firm PropTiger.

A total of 1,82,640 units were sold in the 2020 calendar year, of which 21 per cent were in the RTMI (ready-to-move-in) category and 79 per cent were under-construction, PropTiger said quoting its Real Insight report for 2020. In 2019, a total of 3,47,590 units were sold of which 18 per cent were RTMI, it said in a statement. PropTiger research found that the share of RTMI in the total sales has been on the rise since 2016.

The share of RTMI in total sales during 2015 was 7 per cent, which increased to 10 per cent in 2016, 12 per cent in 2017, 15 per cent in 2018 and 18 per cent in 2019, the statement said. "Risk-averse home buyers are increasingly opting for ready-to-move-in flats. Even in under-construction properties, the preference is towards branded developers or those with an impeccable track record of execution," said Dhruv Agarwala, Group CEO, Housing.com, Makaan.com and PropTiger.com.

**Sensex hits 52,000 mark on global cues**

**Rallies 610 points as investors pile into banking, finance stocks**

MUMBAI

THE Sensex rallied 610 points to finish above the 52,000-mark for the first time while the Nifty soared past 15,300 on Monday as investors piled into banking and finance stocks amid a bullish trend overseas.

Supportive macroeconomic data and unabated foreign fund inflows added to the momentum, traders said. After touching a record high of 52,235.97 during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 609.83 points or 1.18 per cent up at its new closing peak of 52,154.13. Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty soared 151.40 points or 1 per cent to finish at a record 15,314.70. It touched an intra-day peak of 15,340.15. Axis Bank led the Sensex gainers' chart, climbing 5.88 per cent, followed by ICICI Bank, Bajaj Finance, SBI, IndusInd Bank, HDFC, Bajaj Finserv and HDFC Bank. On the other hand, Dr Reddy's, TCS, Tech Mahindra, HUL, Asian Paints and Titan were among the laggards, sliding up to 1.77 per cent.

"Indian market opened on a positive following upbeat peers in Asia as Nikkei 225 crossed

30,000 for first time in more than three decades with Japan's economy growing 12.7 per cent on an annualised basis in October to December last year," said Narendra Solanki, Head - Equity Research (Fundamental), Anand Rathi. Meanwhile, the wholesale price-based inflation rose sharply to 2.03 per cent in January on costlier non-food manufactured items. Indicating some signs of recovery, industrial production recorded a positive growth of 1 per cent in December while retail inflation cooled to a 16-month low of 4.06 per cent in January, as per data released post market hours on Friday. Sector-wise, BSE bankex, finance, realty, industrials, telecom and healthcare indices rallied up to 3.31 per cent, while IT, consumer durables, metal and tech ended in the red.

Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices surged up to 1.40 per cent. Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in China and Hong Kong were closed for the Lunar New Year holidays, while Tokyo and Seoul ended with strong gains.

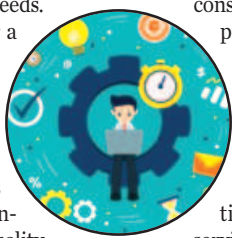


**OpenTeQ rolls out new integrated tech solutions**

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

OPENTEQ, a global digital solutions and IT services company, has announced its new integrated technology solutions for customers. The IT solutions will help businesses modernise their operations by integrating software and systems to meet their technological needs. OpenTeQ, with over a decade of experience, offers a wide spectrum of services and solutions like development and integration, business processes services, engineering services, quality assurance and testing, digital engagement, data and analytics and Cloud-enabled IT operations. With these services, all enterprises can streamline their business processes and create business models to meet changing market needs, the company said in a statement.

"As businesses today continue to migrate critical workloads, enter-



prises need to focus on digital transformation and smart use of IT services. With our new integrated solutions, we can confidently help enterprises modernise workloads and enable digital acceleration, thereby increasing productivity and reducing IT costs. We want to be the trusted technology partner, delivering the best-suited technology consulting and services to empower our clients," said Narendra Anumolu, Director, OpenTeQ Technologies.

OpenTeQ's services include application, development and integration, business processes services, engineering services, quality assurance and testing, digital engagement, data and analytics, and Cloud-enabled IT operations. The objective is to also enable clients to draw deep insights and predictive analysis in real-time to uncover new business opportunities, increase operational efficiencies, empower employees, and offer a better experience to their customers.

A RAJU MAHABUBNAGAR

PALAMURU region of erstwhile Mahabubnagar district is unfortunately known for its backwardness, and large migrating labor population since past many decades, however, ever since the beginning of open economy and industrial liberalization in 1990s onwards, the industrial sector in the district has been moving on a fast track, where in hundreds of large, medium and small scale industries have set up their manufacturing bases across various parts of the district and have been providing employment to the local population since past over 3 decades now.

However, the industrial growth in Mahabubnagar had further accelerated ever since the establishment of the green field Industrial Park Special Economic Zone (SEZ), an exclusive pharmaceutical and allied industrial hub at Jachcherla, in the year 2008. To begin with, the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district's industrial sector which was initially given the push 3 decades ago has established various small, medium and large scale industries in various parts of the district. The most prominent among all these industrial zones is the Kottur Industrial Development Area (IDA), which was established during 1990s on wards. This industrial area had grown at a rapid pace in the district and it is spread over

**NCDEX set to launch Hi-pro soybean meal futures tomorrow**

NEW DELHI

LEADING agri-commodity bourse NCDEX on Monday said it will launch futures trading in animal feed 'Hi-pro soybean meal' on February 17. The futures contracts in Hi-pro soybean meal, expiring in the months of March to September will be available for trading at the time of the launch. The contract will have a trading and delivery unit of 10 tonne. The basis centre and additional delivery centre for the contract would be Indore in Madhya Pradesh and Latur in Maharashtra, respectively, the exchange said in a statement. Hi-pro soybean meal is an animal feed with the high protein content of 50 per cent or more as compared with around 46 per cent in normal soy meal.

With the launch of Hi-Pro soybean meal contract, NCDEX Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Vijay Kumar said the exchange has achieved a key milestone of having all the major tradable products in soybean complex on the derivatives platform.

**Sreemukhi promotes Luvih cosmetic retailer**

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

NEW retailing brand Luvih has on Sunday forayed into beauty products retailing business. Luvih means beauty in Sanskrit. Promoted by noted anchor and actress Sreemukhi, Rasgau International, which owns Luvih brand, will initially sell perfumes in the outlets. Soon the company will introduce beauty, grooming, haircare products. Sreemukhi is also the brand ambassador for the product.

Perfumes from 80 brands including 40 international brands will be available. They are priced from Rs 299 to Rs 7,500. During the first year of its operations, Luvih will introduce 10 global perfume brands for the first time in India. A total of 300 products will be on sale. Products of 110 brands will be available online as well.

"I have been thinking of setting up a business for quite some time. I have now got partners who understand my thoughts. The experience they have in retail business will help Luvih brand. Demand for perfumes



(From left) Rasgau International Directors Tirupati Rao Vojja, Srikanth Avirneni, Sreemukhi and Vijay Adusumilli, launching the brand

and other cosmetics is on the rise in villages too. My objective is to provide self-employment opportunities for the youth through franchise, with small investment," said Sreemukhi, Director, Rasgau International. V Tirupati Rao, Srikanth Avirneni and Vijay Adusumilli are the other company directors.

Luvih has signed an agreement with Linen House, which sells linen garments, for setting up shop-in-shop outlets. These outlets will be opened in 23 outlets of Linen House located in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. The brand is also talking to other retail chains for shop-in-shop outlets.

**Israeli firm signs deal to transfer crop breeding programme**

HANS BUSINESS HYDERABAD

NRGENE, an Israeli genomics artificial intelligence (AI) company, on Monday signed an agreement with Indian seed genetics startup Foragen Seeds to transfer its India-based, eight-year-old crop breeding programme of maize, rice and chilli-pepper to the latter.

This agreement is to advance the field breeding programme of elite seed development and product commercialisation in India. NRGENE has carried out broad molecular breeding projects for the Indian market. The germplasm and breeding materials will significantly help in developing a robust commercial product pipeline suited to the various climate zones in India and other tropical and sub-tropical countries. "We look forward to see our elite germplasm cultivated across India, providing Indian farmers with extra yield and quality," said Dr Gil Ronen, NR-GENE CEO.

**Palamuru fast picking up industrially**

**District offers upmpteen opportunities for investors**

more than 180 acres in the Kottur Mandal of erstwhile Mahabubnagar district. Apart from Kottur IDA, there are 5 other important industrial zones that came up subsequently which include one Industrial Estate in the district located at Mahabubnagar and 4 Industrial Development Areas at Kottur, Jachcherla, Palem, and Gadwal. Almost all plots, sheds and shops that have been developed are allotted to the entrepreneurs except in Gadwal.

All these industrial areas have brought in a sea change in the overall outlook of the erstwhile Mahabubnagar district, where in, lakhs of people who used to migrate for livelihood could now earn their living due to the employment opportunities available for the local people in these industries.

As per the latest statistics available from the district industries department there are at present 60 Large and Medium Industries in the sectors of basic metals, fibre glass, pharmaceutical formulations, particle board manufacturing, poultry, and textiles. In addition to this, there are over 3,308 registered small scale / tiny industries with an overall in-



vestment of Rs 154.10 crore. It is estimated that all these industries provide employment to more than 50,000 people in the district.

The main reason for the fast pickup of industrial sector in the erstwhile Mahabubnagar is its proximity to Hyderabad city and the international airport located at Shamshabad in Ranga Reddy district, adjoin erstwhile the district.

With the establishment of the airport, it has enhanced the establishment of export oriented units in the district. "Erstwhile Mahabubnagar had attracted a large scale, national and international companies to its industrial areas. Particularly, the Pharma SEZ at Jachcherla and up-

coming small and medium scale industries elsewhere in the district has really changed the face of the Pala-

mururu region. From being negatively labeled as a labor migration district, today we are witnessing reverse migration to the district, where in hundreds and thousands of people from other states are coming to Mahabubnagar in search of livelihood.

However, apart from the existing industries, the district has ample opportunities to attract investors in various sectors like agro based industries, food processing industries, fiber and cement manufacturing industries, steel manufacturing industries and others," said Sdistrict collector S Venkat Rao.

**Mega projects**

ITC Limited had proposed to established a 2 lakh ton ECF Pulp Mill and 92 lakh ton coated wood free paper machine in area of about of 1,000

**On various investment opportunities in districts TELANGANA**

hectares. The proposed cost of entire project is Rs 2500 crore. The Plant requires 21 cusecs of water for day throughout the year. Land has been identified in Gadwal, Pebbair, Makthal and Maganoor mandals of Mahabubnagar district. The suitability of the land for the project has to be finalized by M/s ITC Limited.

Grasim Industries Limited, an Aditya Birla Group company, which is a leader in the field of textiles, having a turnover of Rs.25000 crore per annum has proposed to establish a polyfibre unit in Mahabubnagar district. The project is proposed to be implemented in three phases with a total outlay of Rs 2100 crore. The project requires an area of around 1,000 acres. The land identification for the project is under process.

The following are the large and medium scale industries that are coming up newly in Mahabubnagar and they have already filed for single window clearances system for obtaining various clearances/approvals from different department. These industries are under active implementation and are likely to go into operation shortly. Some of these industries include, Promuk Hoffmann International Limited located at IDA, Kottur, high security vehicle registration plates making, Abhedya Industries Ltd located at Kottur, makers of all types of BOPP filters, Dayakar Sugar (P) Ltd., at Balakistapur village, Binjursaria Sponge and Power (P) Ltd at Shadnagar, Sponge Iron, pig iron makers, Bilasraika Sponge Iron India Pvt. Ltd., at Gundla Potkapally in Balanagar mandal, Indo American Paper Products Limited, at Nandigaon in Kothur mandal, Surya Jyothi Spinning Mills Ltd., at Makthal, M.S. Ingot, Steel Toling Sponge Iron, Kedia Alloys Ltd, at Thimmapur, GVK Novopon Inds. (P) Ltd and various other industries have established bases in Mahabubnagar district.

Apart from the above industries, one more mega industry is coming up in State - Jai Raj Ispat Limited. Announcing its decision to set up a steel plant in Dharur mandal of Gadwal in the district. The proposed steel plant will come up in 250 acre land in the southern region of the district.

# INDIA ON CUSP OF BIG WIN

CHENNAI

RAVICHANDRAN Ashwin on Monday scored his fifth Test century as India tightened the noose around England in the second Test as they set England a target of 482 runs and then reduced them to 52 for three at stumps on the third day.

Ashwin scored 106 runs off 148 balls with the help of 14 fours and a six as India's second innings came to an end at 286 in the post-tea session. Mohammad Siraj remained unbeaten on 16, and added 49 runs for the final wicket with Ashwin who was the last wicket to fall.

India then knocked out openers Dom Sibley (3) and Rory Burns (25) as well as night-watchman Jack Leach (0) to set England back in chase of 482. England are still 430 runs adrift.

Ashwin's century followed a five-wicket haul in England's first innings, making him only the second cricketer to achieve the feat of a century and a fiver in the same game on three different occasions. Ian Botham of England had done it five times.

Earlier, resuming at 54/1 on the third day, India lost five wickets but added 102 runs to get their lead past 350 in the morning session. The hosts lost the wickets of Cheteshwar Pujara (7), Rohit Sharma (26), Rishabh Pant (8), Ajinkya Rahane (10) and debutant Axar Patel (7) in quick succession to give a glimmer of

hope to England.

However, skipper Virat Kohli and Ashwin then shared a 96-run stand for the seventh wicket to put India in a commanding position.

Kohli, who showed his class on a Chepauk wicket that aided turn, was the first wicket to fall in the post-lunch session as he was dismissed by Moeen Ali at his individual score of 62. This was the fifth time that Ali had dismissed the India skipper in Test cricket.

Kuldeep Yadav (3) and Ishant Sharma (7) also shared eight and 27-run partnerships respectively with Ashwin to frustrate the England bowlers.

India had posted 329 runs in their first innings. The hosts then bowled out England for 134, securing a 195-run lead in first innings.

England wicket-keeper Ben Foakes, who turned 28 on Monday, drew all-round praise from renowned former players from around the world for his brilliant work against India, with Kiran More calling him one of the best overseas players to have

India's Ravichandran Ashwin plays a shot during the 3rd day of second Test match against England at M.A. Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Monday



## LEFT-HANDERS' BOGEYMEN

OFF-SPINNER RAVICHANDRAN ASHWIN HAS BECOME THE FIRST PLAYER IN THE 143-YEAR HISTORY OF TEST CRICKET TO TAKE 200 WICKETS AGAINST LEFT-HANDED BATSMEN. IN 76 TESTS, HE HAS PICKED 391 WICKETS AND 51.27 PER CENT OF HIS VICTIMS ARE LEFT-HANDERS.

R Ashwin (India) 201 of 392 wickets (51.27 per cent)	Muttiah Muralitharan (Sri Lanka) 191 of 800 (23.9 per cent)	James Anderson (England) 190 of 611 (31.1 per cent)	Gleeson McGrath (Australia) 172 of 563 (30.6 per cent)	Shane Warne (Australia) 172 of 708 (24.3 per cent)
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Vinoo Mankad (vs England at Lord's, London, in 1952) and Polly Umrigar (vs West Indies in Port of Spain in 1961-62) are the other Indians to score a century and take five wickets in an innings

## SCOREBOARD DAY 3

India 1st Innings: 329	England 1st Innings: 134
India 2nd Innings: (Overnight 54/1)	
Rohit Sharma st Foakes b Leach	26
Shubman Gill lbw b Leach	14
C Pujara run out (Ollie Pope/Foakes)	7
Virat Kohli lbw b Moeen	62
Rishabh Pant st Foakes b Leach	8
Ajinkya Rahane c Ollie Pope b Moeen	10
Axar Patel lbw b Moeen	7
Ravichandran Ashwin b Ollie Stone	106
Kuldeep Yadav lbw b Moeen	3
Ishant Sharma c Ollie Stone b Jack Leach	7
Mohammed Siraj not out	16
Extras: (8-5, LB-15)	20
Total: (All out in 85.5 overs)	286
Fall of Wickets: 1-42, 2-55, 3-55, 4-65, 5-86, 6-106, 7-202, 8-210, 9-237, 10-286	
Bowling: Ollie Stone 65-1-21-1, Jack Leach 33-6-100-4, Moeen Ali 32-7-98-4, Joe Root 4-0-15-0, Stuart Broad 9-3-25-0, Daniel Lawrence 1-0-7-0.	
England 2nd Innings:	
Rory Burns c Kohli b Ashwin	25
Dom Sibley lbw b Pate	3
Dan Lawrence not out	19
Jack Leach c Rohit Sharma b Patel Joe	0
Root not out	2
Extras: (8-4)	4
Total: (For 3 wickets in 19 overs)	53
Fall of wickets: 1-17, 2-49, 3-50	
Bowling: Ishant Sharma 2-1-6-0, Axar Patel 9-3-15-2, Ravichandran Ashwin 8-1-28-	

## Brought out the sweep shot after 13-14 years: Ashwin

CHENNAI

INDIA off-spinner R Ashwin, who scored his fifth Test century after a five-wicket haul to help India take the stranglehold of the second Test, said he brought out his sweep shot for the first time after well over a decade.

"After the last Test, we were thinking on how to counter [Jack] Leach and start bringing sweep to the game. The last time I was sweeping was probably when I was 19 years old; hit a couple of sweep shots, got dropped from the side, and maybe never played a sweep for the last 11, maybe 13-14 years. I've been practicing that shot for the last week to 10 days. Very, very thankful that the plan has really paid off," Ashwin, who scored 106 to help India make 286 in the second innings and set a target of 482 runs for England, said after the third day's play.

Ashwin credited India's batting coach Vikram Rathour, a former India opener, for improvement in his batting.

"We have been practicing along with Vikram Rathour. Rathour has been very, very helpful trying to explore new options. He is someone who is facilitating me to go out there and be able to express myself, explore various options. I would love to credit him for how my batting has gone through the last four-five Test matches. He has kept me in the loop, said I have been batting very well. He asked me not to overthink but just look at the gameplan," he disclosed.

Ashwin added that the big target has helped them be able to attack the batsmen with fielders around the bat. "The wicket is such that you have to get runs square of the wicket. Sort of had a very, very good day. We posted a very good score. Now we can really attack with men around the bat," said Ashwin.

"I think in the past when I have made my hundreds in India, Ishi [Ishant Sharma] has been a sort of cog in the wheel. He has been with me twice when I made my hundred. He sort of understands how I go about it. Ishi was defending well. So, I thought I need to take calculated risks as long as he was there. But once Siraj came, I knew I had to get it done in a few overs. But I was super thrilled how he batted and hit the ball out of the ground," he said smilingly.

On Siraj's celebration after his hundred, Ashwin said: "Quite a funny thing [to see him] excited when I got to my hundred. That says a thing or two how the dressing room has been. Lived a dream over the past three-four months."

Earlier, on Sunday, Ashwin became the first player in the 143-year history of Test cricket to take 200 wickets against left-handed batsmen. Fast bowler Stuart Broad was the 200th left-hander he dismissed. (HANS)

## ALL-ROUND SHOW



## Play-off spot in sight, Hyderabad FC hope to return to winning ways

VASCO

A play-off spot in sight, Hyderabad FC can ill-afford any slip-up when they take on a struggling Kerala Blasters in an Indian Super League match at the Tilak Maidan Stadium here on Tuesday.

For most part of the ISL season, Hyderabad had maintained their place in the top four. But now, with three games to go, they find themselves at fifth, level on points with fourth-placed FC Goa and two points below NorthEast United.

From here on, Hyderabad can't afford more slip-ups. They have played out six draws in their last seven matches. And when t h e

Nizams face Kerala Blasters on Tuesday, they will know that any more dropped points will hugely dent their play-off ambitions.

On paper, Hyderabad face one of the most vulnerable sides in the league, who are playing for pride. Kerala Blasters have conceded 29 goals, which is the second-worst tally. Their defence has been so fragile that Kibu Vicuna's side has now dropped 18 points after scoring the first goal. But for Hyderabad coach Manuel Marquez, that doesn't mean Kerala are to be taken lightly.

"All the other teams, from Kerala who are second from the bottom, till the top positions, can climb positions in the table," he said.

"We will play with Kerala with our style. We are nine games unbeaten but six of them are draws. We have to continue in the same vein and try to win the game because our season has been fantastic. We want to be in the top four."



Aridane Santana looks to add on to his goal tally against KBFC

TODAY'S MATCH		RESULTS						
Hyderabad FC vs Kerala Blasters FC	Tilak Maidan Stadium 7.30pm	Mumbai City FC lose to Bengaluru FC	2-4					
ISL STANDINGS								
CLUB	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	PTS
ATK Mohun Bagan	17	11	3	3	23	10	13	36
Mumbai City FC	17	10	4	3	27	15	12	34
NorthEast United FC	17	6	8	3	24	21	3	26
FC Goa	17	5	9	3	26	21	5	24
Hyderabad FC	17	5	9	3	21	17	4	24
Bengaluru FC	18	5	7	6	23	23	0	22
Jamshedpur FC	18	5	6	7	16	20	-4	21
Chennaiyin FC	18	3	9	6	13	19	-6	18
SC East Bengal	17	3	8	6	15	22	-7	17
Kerala Blasters FC	17	3	7	7	22	29	-7	16
Odisha FC	17	1	6	10	17	30	-13	9

## Racing Team India makes ALMS debut

DUBAI: Racing Team India won its bid to become the first all-Indian squad to compete at the 24 Hours of Le Mans with a solid debut over the opening two rounds of the Asian Le Mans Series in Dubai this weekend. The JK Tyres-backed team's ORECA 07 LMP2 car, driven by Narain Karthikeyan, Arjun Maini and Naveen Rao, with technical support from reigning ALMS champions Algarve Pro Racing, finished fifth and fourth in the two four-hour races held at the Dubai Autodrome on Saturday and Sunday respectively. The team's car showed promising pace throughout the weekend. But its challenge was hampered by racing incidents and to be taken lightly.

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"We will play with Kerala with our style. We are nine games unbeaten but six of them are draws. We have to continue in the same vein and try to win the game because our season has been fantastic. We want to be in the top four."

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## Ojha retires from all forms of cricket, says keen to play in global T20 leagues

BHOPAL

AN emotional Naman Ojha struggled to hold back tears on Monday as he bade adieu to all forms of cricket, bringing down curtains on a two-decade long illustrious domestic career.

The 37-year-old from Madhya Pradesh, who holds the record for the most dismissals by a wicketkeeper in the Ranji Trophy, featured in one Test, one ODI and two T20 Internationals. "I would like to announce my retirement from international and BCCI/MPCA domestic first-class cricket," a teary-eyed Ojha said in a virtual press conference.

"After 20 years in first-class cricket and many more during the junior competitions, I feel it's time for me to move on. It was a long journey and wonderful phase of my life.

"I am grateful to all who supported me in achieving dream of playing for my country and state - my coaches, trainers, physios and selectors, my captains and teammates, my family and well



wishers, and MPCA & BCCI," he added.

Ojha said he is eager to ply his trade in global T20 leagues. As per the BCCI rules, he is now eligible for such leagues, having announced his retirement from all forms of cricket.

"While I leave the competitive format of game for my state and country with best of memories, I shall be keen to wear the gloves and face the ball in global competitions," he said.

Ojha made his international debut in 2010 in his only ODI against Sri Lanka, followed by his first T20I match in Zimbabwe a week later. His lone Test came in 2015 against Sri Lanka in Colombo and the top-order batsman rued not being able to play for his country more. (HANS)

## Nadal beats Fognini to enter Aus Open quarters

MELBOURNE

WORLD number two Rafael Nadal on Monday entered the Australian Open quarter-finals for the 13th time after getting past Fabio Fognini in their fourth round contest.

Nadal, the 2009 champion, registered a 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 win over the Italian No. 16 seed in two hours and 16 minutes at the Rod Laver Arena.

"When you go on court against Fabio, you worry," said Nadal after the match as per the ATP Tour website. "There can always be problems. I was just lucky that when he broke me (in the second set) I responded immediately and held the score. Today was very humid and quicker during the day, which I like, but I have to adapt to every condition," he added. The 34-year-old is looking to

become the first man in the Open Era to clinch each of the four major championships on two

or more occasions. He will next face fifth-seeded Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas, who received a walkover after No. 9 seed Matteo Berrettini of Italy withdrew due to an ab-

Earlier in the day, fourth seed Daniil Medvedev also booked his place in the quarter-finals after a commanding straight-sets win over Mackenzie McDonald.

Medvedev beat the 25-year-old American 6-4, 6-2, 6-3 in his fourth-round match that lasted an hour and 29 minutes at the Margaret Court Arena. "It's an exciting moment (to

dominate the quarter-finals in Australia for the first time, that's a great achievement for me," Medvedev was quoted as saying in his post-match interview by the ATP Tour website. "I want more all the time, but step by step. So this is amazing."

Medvedev can now face Andrey Rublev -- who takes on Casper Ruud in the fourth round -- in what can be a blockbuster quarter-final clash.

"Of course I'm going to be (cheering) for Andrey, because if he goes through it's going to be at least one Russian in the semis, maybe two with Aslan (Karatev) in the other half of the draw," said Medvedev. With the win, Medvedev had moved into his third Grand Slam quarter-final, and his first away from the US Open. He is looking to become Russia's first male Grand Slam champion since Marat Safin won the Australian Open in 2005. (HANS)

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## Rahul at 2, Kohli at 7 in ICC T20I rankings

DUBAI: Indian batsmen KL Rahul and Virat Kohli have maintained their respective second and seventh spots in the ICC T20I rankings for batsmen which got updated on Monday.

India are slated to take on England in five T20Is, following the culmination of the ongoing four-Test series, part of the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) and the duo will get a chance to gain some points.

The rankings got updated following the culmination of the three-match series between Pakistan and South Africa which the Babar Azam led-side won 2-1.

South Africa spinner Brazaiz Shamsi has grabbed a career-best second position among bowlers while Pakistan wicketkeeper-batsman Mohammad Rizwan has raced to 42nd place in the rankings.

Shamsi's series-topping six wickets, which included a haul of four for 25 in the final match, helped the left-arm wrist-spinner overtake Australia's Adam Zampa, England's Adil Rashid and Afghanistan's Mujeeb Ur Rahman to within three points of top-ranked Rashid Khan of Afghanistan. Rizwan too benefited from heading the run-aggregate in the series with 197 runs, which comprised knocks of 104 not out, 51 and 42. The string of impressive scores won him the player of the series award and lifted him a whopping 116 slots to a career-best 42nd position.

Haider Ali is another Pakistan batsman to advance, moving up 13 places to 137th position while fast bowlers Shaheen Afridi (up five places to 11th) and Hasan Ali (up 14 places to 82nd), and spinners Mohammad Nawaz (re-entered at 64th) and Usman Qadir (up 129 places to 92nd) are the bowlers to progress.

For South Africa, Reeza Hendricks' 98 runs in the series have lifted him seven places to 17th and David Miller's 116 runs, which included a 45-ball 85 not out in the second match, sees him gain seven places to 22nd position in the list led by Dawid Malan of England. There is no change of positions in the ICC team rankings after the series.