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HYDERABAD, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹3



# the pioneer



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## India has over 6L rogue drones

NEW DELHI: India has an estimated over 6 lakh rogue or unregulated unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and security agencies are analysing modern anti-drone weapons like 'sky fence' and 'drone gun' to counter terror or similar sabotage bids by these aerial platforms, official sources said on Sunday.

An official blueprint prepared by central agencies has been accessed by PTI that states unregulated drones, UAVs and remotely-piloted aircraft system are a "potential threat" to vital installations, sensitive locations and specific events and a "compatible solution" is required to counter them. A data estimation study conducted by these agencies state that over 6 lakh unregulated drones, of various sizes and capacities, are present in the country and anyone of them can be used for launching a nefarious act by disruptive elements.

## GAUGING OPEN DEFECATION CPI leader asks PM to travel by train

NEW DELHI: CPI MP Binoy Viswam has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to travel by train through any north Indian state to gauge the extent of open defecation taking place in the country, days after two Dalit children were allegedly beaten to death in Madhya Pradesh for defecating in the open. In a letter to Modi, Viswam has said the deaths of the two Dalit children days before October 2, Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary, should be investigated and that the prime minister should mention them in his speech. "On October 2nd this year, you will declare India an open-defecation-free country.... I urge you to undertake a morning train journey through any of the north Indian states. What good is a declaration when our reality is this?"

## RTC bus falls into gorge in HP's Mandi

SHIMLA: A Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC) bus fell into a gorge in Himachal Pradesh's Mandi district on Sunday, officials said. The accident took place near Gokhla village in Kotli tehsil, and many casualties were feared, Mandi Deputy Commissioner Rughdev Thakur told PTI. Police and civil officials are reaching the spot for rescue operation, Mandi SP Gurdev Sharma said. Further details are awaited.

**TODAY**

**ALMANAC**  
 Month & Paksham: Ashwini & Sukla Paksha  
 Panchangam  
 Tithi: Dwitithya: 04:49 pm  
 Nakshatram: Chitra: 04:29 pm  
 Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)  
 Rahukalam: 07:38 am - 09:07 pm  
 Yamagandam: 10:36 pm - 12:06 pm  
 Varjyam: 09:35 pm - 11:03 pm  
 Gulika: 01:35 am - 03:04 pm  
 Good Time: (to start any important work)  
 Amritkalam: 10:47 am - 12:13 pm  
 Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:43 am - 12:29 pm

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**

Forecast: Isolated Thunderstorms  
 Temp: 28/22  
 Humidity: 92%  
 Sunrise: 06:06  
 Sunset: 06:06  
 Current Weather Conditions  
 Updated September 29, 2019 5:00 PM

## No curbs in J&K: Shah 'OPPOSITION SPREADING MISINFORMATION'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union minister Amit Shah today claimed there is no restriction in Jammu and Kashmir any longer and the opposition was just spreading "misinformation" about the situation. The minister also said that the government's move to end Jammu and Kashmir's special status under the Article 370 and bifurcate the state into two Union Territories has been accepted by the international community as an internal matter of India.

Accusing the opposition of spreading false information, Mr Shah said prohibitory orders have been lifted from 196 police stations in Kashmir. Only in nine police station areas, prohibitory orders, under which large gatherings are banned, are still in place.

"Where are the restrictions? It is only in your mind. There are no restrictions. Only misinformation about restrictions is being spread," he said, addressing a seminar on national security in Delhi this afternoon.

"People are free to move around anywhere in Kashmir. Many journalists from rest of India are also visiting Kashmir regularly," he said.

Citing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to the United Nations General



Union Minister Amit Shah addressing a seminar on national security in Delhi on Sunday afternoon

Accusing the opposition of spreading false information, Shah said prohibitory orders have been lifted from 196 police stations in Kashmir. Only in nine police station areas, prohibitory orders, under which large gatherings are banned, are still in place

Assembly, Mr Shah said all the world leaders have supported India's move on Article 370. "All world leaders had gathered for seven days (in New York). Not a single leader has raised the issue (of Jammu and Kashmir). This is a big diplomatic victory of the Prime Minister," he was quoted as saying by news agency Press Trust of India.

"The decision on Article 370 will strengthen the unity and integrity of India," he

said, adding the situation in Jammu and Kashmir will be completely normal soon.

After announcing its move in August, the government had taken a series of measures - including posting an unprecedented number of security forces, switching off phone and internet connections and keeping the state's political leaders under arrest.

Pakistan has been repeatedly flagging the issue at international forums, without much success.

## Monsoon officially ends, rainfall active

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The four-month monsoon season is officially ending on Monday, but it is unlikely that it will withdraw in the coming week, IMD Director General Mritunjay Mohapatra said on Sunday.

The monsoon season officially begins on June 1 and ends on September 30. It reaches Ganganagar in west Rajasthan, the last post for the monsoon in the country, on July 15 and starts retreating from September 1. However, the monsoon has not shown signs of withdrawal. Instead, active monsoon still prevails over parts of Rajasthan, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Parts of Gujarat and Rajasthan are getting rainfall due to a low pressure area and this could continue until October 5, Mohapatra said.

The IMD in its forecast until October 3 sees "large excess rainfall" likely over Bihar and adjoining areas of east Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Gangetic West Bengal and "above normal" rains over Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, interior Maharashtra, north Odisha, Gujarat, Mizoram, Tripura, Kerala and Lakshadweep. Mohapatra said this could also, perhaps, be the longest recorded delayed withdrawal of monsoon. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has monsoon records from 1960.

## PINK PARTY DEIGNS FOR ALLIANCE

# Huzurnagar bypoll throws up new political equations in TS

L VENKAT RAM REDDY  
 ■ HYDERABAD

The October 21 Huzurnagar by-election has thrown up new political equations in Telangana, with the highlight being the pink party deigning to strike an alliance with another party.

The ruling Telangana Rashttra Samiti, which by choice never entered into any tie-up with a political party and contested all elections on its own since 2014, has, for the first time, sought the support of at least one party so far for the Huzurnagar by-poll.

This being so, the opposition Congress, TDP, CPM, CPI and TJS, which had banded together to form "People's Front" for the 2018 Assembly polls as well as the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, have parted ways. These parties have now decided to contest the bypoll individually.

The Congress, TDP and CPM have already declared their candidates, while CPI and TJS are yet to clarify their stance on contesting the polls.

TRS chief and Chief Minister K Chandrababoo Naidu has directed senior party leaders to meet Communist Party of India leaders and seek their support for TRS candidate in the Huzurnagar bypoll.

Following this, TRS senior leaders K Keshava Rao, B Vinod Kumar and Nama



TRS leaders with CPI top brass at Makhdhoom Bhavan in Hyderabad on Sunday

- TRS seeks poll tie-up with another party for the first time
- Congress-led People's Front disbanded
- Pink Party leaders confer with CPI top brass
- Congress, TDP and CPM contesting on their own

Nageshwar Rao rushed to CPI office at Makhdhoom Bhavan in Hyderabad on Sunday and held talks for nearly two hours.

The CPI leaders told TRS leaders that they would discuss the TRS' proposal at their state committee meeting on Monday and take a decision.

However, TRS leaders claimed that their talks were "successful" and CPI was willing to support TRS, if their condition on the new Revenue Act was met.

Keshava Rao said, "For extending support to TRS, CPI leaders wanted KCR to take their views on the proposed new Revenue Act. We agreed for it. We hope CPI will make an official announcement of support-

ing TRS in the Huzurnagar bypoll on Monday." Keshava Rao said that both the parties had consensus over opposition to uranium mining, resolving issues faced by tribals on forest lands etc.

CPI leader Chada Venkat Reddy said, "We have referred the proposal to support TRS to our central leadership. They will take a call on this issue. We will clarify our stand by October 1."

That TRS, which prides on going solo, has sought the support of another party is a reflection of the significance attached by KCR to the task of wresting the seat from Congress in the bypoll.

Continued on Page 2

## Union Govt bans export of onion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Concerned over rising onion prices, the Centre on Sunday banned the export of the key kitchen staple and imposed a stock limit on traders to improve the domestic availability of the commodity and provide a relief to consumers.

Retailers can stock onion only up to 100 quintals and wholesale traders are allowed to keep up to 500 quintals, the Consumer Affairs Ministry said adding that the state governments have been directed to take stringent steps to prevent hoarding.

The reported export below minimum export price (MEP) to Bangladesh and Sri Lanka will be stopped immediately and strict action will be taken against violators, it added.

The move comes amid sharp increase in retail prices of onion since August despite the government's several measures to boost the supply and contain price rise. Currently, retail onion prices are ruling at around Rs 60-80 per kg in the national capital and some other parts of the country due to supply disruption from flood-affected growing states



The reported export below minimum export price to Bangladesh and Sri Lanka will be stopped immediately and strict action will be taken against violators

like Maharashtra and Karnataka.

"In view of sustained high price of onion in the market, the central government today took several steps to contain its prices, namely imposition of stock limit on traders, ban on exports, and state governments will take strict measures to prevent hoarding," the Consumer Affairs Ministry said in a statement.

## Dasara dhamki: TSRTC strike from October 5

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Instead of stepping up RTC services to meet the peak demand occasioned by Dasara and Bathukamma festivals as well as the vacation for educational institutions, employees of TSRTC seem to be on a collision course with the State government. They have declared their firm intention to go on "indefinite strike" from October 5 to press for their long-pending demands, including merger of RTC with the Government.

The strike will prove to be a major jolt to the public as RTC bus services are much sought-after, with private players keen on raking in the moolah during the peak season. At a time when even the railways are mulling the introduction of additional trains with all tickets for festival travel already exhausted, the least people expect from RTC is to chip in at least in respect of routes where rail travel has become impossible due to the rush. Still, the Joint Action Committee of RTC employees of Telangana has decided to observe strike from October 5 if their main demand of merg-



Considering that the government is now in by-election mode, they seem to be ready to 'strike' while the iron is hot. Pvt bus operators are known to make a killing during peak times by doubling or even tripling fares

er of RTC with the State government is not implemented.

Although RTC workers had served strike notice a month ago, there has been no response from the management till date.

Considering that the government is now in by-election mode, they seem to be ready to 'strike' while the iron is hot.

Private bus operators are known to make a killing during such times by doubling or even tripling fares.

All RTC trade unions had served strike notice on the management, with a 25-point list of demands. They sought support from people and peo-

ple's organisations for the public transport organization to thrive. Barring security and paramedical departments, all RTC wings would observe bandh, the leaders of RTC unions said.

The unions are citing the example of Andhra Pradesh, where the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government has announced merger of APSRTC with the State government in line with the promise he had made during his pada yatra. He has constituted an expert committee which is working out the modalities.

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## Police seek co-op of kin for DNA tests

Identification of boat mishap victims' bodies

PNS ■ KAKINADA

The East Godavari police have sought the cooperation of kin of the deceased in the September 15th tourism boat mishap to ensure proper identification of some of the bodies recovered lately.

According to East Godavari SP, Adanan Nayeem Asmi, in the last two days five more bodies surfaced in river Godavari at different places, nearer the spot where the boat went down, but they were all beyond recognition. The boat capsized at Kuchhuluru

in Devipatnam mandal of East Godavari.

Of the total five bodies, one was that of a female, found at Kotturu village in Polavaram Mandal of West Godavari; the second one was that of male at Vadaapli in river Godavari; the third one was that of a male at Chigurilanka in Kovvur in West Godavari; the fourth one was that of a male body at Pottilanka in Kadiyam mandal of East Godavari, and the fifth one was that of a male found at Yedurlanka in Polavaram in East Godavari district.

Continued on Page 3

## 150<sup>TH</sup> BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF MAHATMA GANDHI ON OCTOBER 2

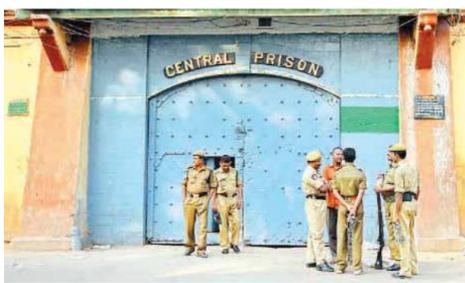
# Several hundred prisoners to be released

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Several hundred prisoners, who have not been convicted for murder, rape and corruption, will be released from jails across India on October 2 to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, officials said on Sunday.

The number of prisoners to be released on Gandhi Jayanti could be around 600 and the final list is being prepared by the Union Home Ministry in close coordination with state governments and the union territory administrations.

According to a Home Ministry official, under the scheme for special remission to prisoners to commemorate 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, so far 1,424 prisoners have been released by



states and Union territories in two phases -- on October 2, 2018 and April 6, 2019.

The third phase of release is due on October 2 and the action is underway by states and UTs, the official said.

Prisoners, including politicians, who have been convicted in cases of murder, rape or corruption, will not be released

as part of the amnesty scheme announced by the government last year for the year-long celebrations to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

Women convicts aged 55 years and above and male convicts of 60 years or more, who have completed half of their sentence, and a few other cat-

egories of prisoners in jails across the country will be released under the amnesty scheme, the official said.

Transgender convicts of 55 years of age and above, who have completed half of their actual sentence period, without counting the period of general remission earned by them, physically challenged or disabled convicts with 70 per cent disability and more, duly certified by a medical board, who have completed half of their actual sentence period will be eligible for release.

However, the special remission is not to be granted to persons convicted for an offence for which the sentence is death penalty or where death sentence has been commuted to life imprisonment.

The other categories of prisoners who will not be consid-

ered for amnesty are: persons convicted for an offence for which punishment of death has been specified as one of the punishments, persons convicted for an offence for which punishment of life imprisonment has been specified as one of the punishments.

Those convicted under the Prevention of Corruption Act, The TADA, The Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002 (POTA), Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO), Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA), Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Act, 2015 will not be released.

## Centre may seek Rs 30K cr interim dividend from RBI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government may seek an interim dividend of about Rs 30,000 crore from the RBI towards the end of the financial year to meet its fiscal deficit target of 3.3 per cent of GDP for 2019-20, sources said.

Government finances have come under pressure due to moderation in revenue collection and a slew of measures taken to lift growth from a six-year low of 5 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal.

"If required, the government may request the Reserve Bank of India for interim dividend of Rs 25,000-30,000 crore during the current fiscal," an official said.



The assessment in this regard would be made in early January, the official added.

Apart from the RBI dividend, there are other means of bridging any shortfall, including mop up from disinvestment and higher utilisation of National Small Saving Fund (NSSF), sources added.

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A born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine.

— MAHATMA GANDHI

Granted that dark glasses make a style statement. You occasionally also need to wear it for medical reasons i.e. out of necessity and not by choice. And ingenious people like Congress senior leader V Hanumantha Rao make a virtue out of necessity and wear it with aplomb. VH, who recently underwent an eye surgery and has been sporting shades ever since, doesn't bat an eyelid before allowing anyone to draw comparisons with some very big political giants of the recent past. Late MG Ramchandran was the likeness that immediately came to reporters' mind. "Telangana Ramchandran," said one scribe. That compliment sounded like poetry to VH, donning dark glasses. "Plan a film on me 'cause I look like a hero," said VH, who by now was also wearing a grin on his face. "A biopic would be best," the reporter chuckled.

# Light moments with VH in dark glasses

## Drive for campaigns

Cleanliness programmes carried out earnestly have been winning over voters and impacting election results. Politicos have begun to understand this. So while the TRS government is conducting drives like 30-day action plan in rural Telangana, politicians in the urban regions are also noticing the accruing benefits and want CM KCR to come over to their segments and launch a drive or two - municipal elections in the state are looming large, mind you. One of the first to be out of the blocks is minister and local legislator Gangula Kamalakara of Karimnagar, who is yearning for an oh-so-popular cleanliness campaign in his

district. He has gone ahead and launched a mass-contact campaign, and given it a name too -- Nenu-Naanagam Kosam cleanliness drive. Names too carry some heft, like 'Swachh' that we can vouch for!

## Pharma, medicines come with a warning

Pharma City slated to come up in Hyderabad will be provided subsidised electricity, water supply and such other sops. A major pharma hub like that in the Capital is likely to provide employment to the teeming skilled and semi-skilled workers as also our daily wage earners. Even otherwise, Hyderabad is perhaps better off than other places for jobs are still



available here despite the economic slowdown. However, there is this little thing about environmental damage that we also need to look at while inviting large business to invest in the state. The upcoming Pharma City will be spread over a massive 19,000 acres in Rangareddy district, which are likely to house scores of chemical and drug-making units. These, by their very nature, happen to cause large-scale land and water pollution. It'd

be good if the necessary preventions like efficient disposal of air and water pollutants and effluent treatment plants are also coming up on a commensurate scale.

## Cong-BJP pow-wow

Talking of pollution and STPs (solid waste treatment plants), politicians in the Opposition scrub the surface hard to dig up dirt on ruling regimes. And sometimes also end up rubbing each other the wrong way. The other day, Congress and BJP leaders together visited dysfunctional STPs to highlight their sorry state of affairs. Former MP from Congress CK Vishweshwar Reddy and BJP leader G Vivek were part of the joint delegation. To put together a strong

case, Vishweshwar Reddy did a lot of homework and research, and led the delegation to highlight how the dysfunctional STPs have become a breeding-place for mosquitoes and causing an epidemic of viral fevers in Hyderabad. "No matter how hard you Congress people work to take on KCR, it's BJP that will get the credit for fighting against TRS," said G Vivek, trying to get under the Congress man's skin. "You (BJP) may get all the credit in Delhi and even Houston, but not here in Telangana," Reddy shot back.

## Tweet twists the tale

A tweet posted recently by TDP young gun and former AP Minister Nara Lokesh has created a flutter and spiraled into quite a debate -

a far-removed and far-fetched one, though. What's happening now is a tangy sling match between a bunch of Andhra Pradesh voters and TRS youth wing leaders from Huzurnagar. The topic is polls but the debate is centered around whether a voter from a neighbouring state can contest Assembly elections in polls across the state borders without being on its voter list. A pretty tough proposition that has no easy answers? Some village level leaders have it all sorted it out: How else did a certain well-known leader get into fray from the Gram Panchayath level to become the President of India? they ask in rhetoric. Go figure.

(Contributed by Kolihetty Venkateshwarlu, PV Kondal Rao, Mayank Tiwari, Deepthi Nandan, Bakka Temnyson)

# 30-day action plan yielding results

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As part of the 30-day action plan for village development, burial grounds and dumping yards have been identified in many villages.

District Collectors RV Karnan (Khammam) and Rajat Kumar Saini (Bhadradi-Kothagudem) have been undertaking field visits and motivating official machinery to implement the action plan, which will come to an end by October 5.

The people are jubilant as their demands for dump yards and burial grounds are being fulfilled as part of the action plan. Earlier, their requests fell on deaf years. Thanks to the action plan.

In both the districts, the people have gathered plastic at a place in the village. The plastic gathered from households was sent to six processing centers in Bhadradi-Kothagudem district-Bhadrachalam, Aswaraopeta, Kothagudem, Paloncha, Illendu and Manuguru. The plastic is likely to be routed to either a cement unit or a paper unit for processing.



■ The people are jubilant as their demands for dump yards and burial grounds are being fulfilled as part of the action plan

■ In towns and villages, old and dilapidated buildings are being pulled down

In towns and villages, old and dilapidated buildings are being pulled down. Earlier,

the people used to live in constant fear when these structures will come down. Compared to Khammam district, old and dilapidated buildings are many in Bhadradi-Kothagudem district.

Moreover, several disused bore wells are being closed to rule out any untoward incidents. Officials have pulled down 2,000 old buildings and 2,409 other structures respectively. Of the 440 and 436 bore wells in the two districts, 250 have been closed in Bhadradi district and 210 in Khammam district. Of the 1,236 disused agricultural wells, 534 have been closed in Khammam district.



Collector M Rammohan Rao

## People littering streets will be penalised

PNS ■ NIZAMABAD

District Collector M Rammohan Rao said people littering village streets will be penalised as that is the only way to prevent them from turning villages into open garbage dumpyards. The Collector was inspecting 30-day Action Plan in Jankampet, Yedapalli, Minarpally, Bodhan mandal headquarters and other mandals in the district.

In Bodhan Municipality, the Collector expressed dissatisfaction after seeing garbage heaps, piles of plastic items in drains and sought an explanation from sanitary inspector Ramakrishna. He ordered an immediate clean-up of the drainages and sought photographic evidence of the work done.

# WHO IS A MAHATMA?

self and come out into the world of spiritual freedom.

Since men have always felt dimly that the material world is not final, therefore, they have sought all kinds of discipline in order to rid themselves of its thralldom and bondage. All the different religions of the world have this one meaning. They express this one aspiration. They point the way to be born again, even through the portals of death into the world of spirit,



utter, must be supported by the life of self-sacrifice. You are in this Ashram, going through that discipline of sacrifice. You are striving through tapasya to reach that Amrita Loka that kingdom of immortality.

I am sure, you all feel that the spirit of Mahatma is working among you. What is the true meaning of the great word Mahatma? It implies the emancipated soul that realizes itself in all souls. It means the life that is no longer confined with-

Only those human beings, who can get rid of the sheath of self, can reach that immortality. They must lose their separate self in order to realise the infinite

— RABINDRANATH TAGORE

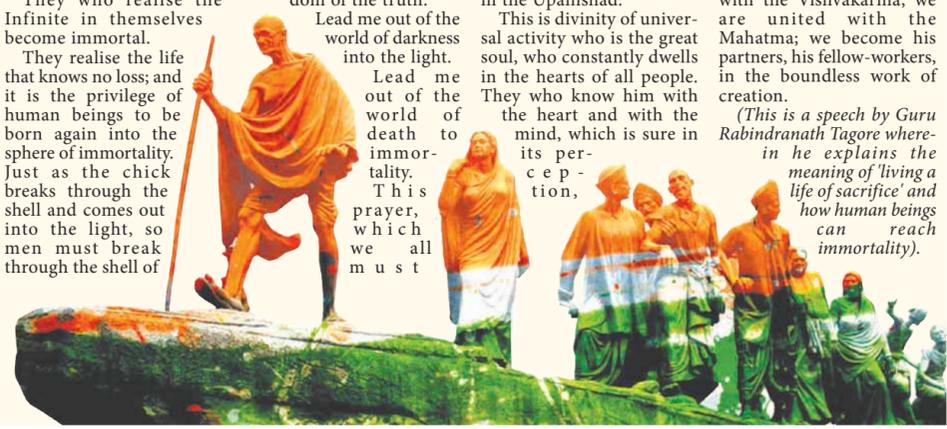
the sphere of immortality. All forms of self-sacrifice, if they are true, must have this ultimate goal, the goal of freedom from the self into the realm of the unselfish. We must all of us have our tapasya, if we would truly get rid of self. That is the meaning of the prayer of our sages:

Lead me out of the world of unreality into the kingdom of the truth. Lead me out of the world of darkness into the light. Lead me out of the world of death to immortality. This prayer, which we all must

in itself, but finds its larger soul of Atman, of Spirit. Then in such realization it becomes Mahatma. For it includes all spirits in itself. That spirit is working among you, that Great spirit. You have to realize that it is not merely deprivation of comfort that has any value. There is no true value in sacrifice, in tapasya except the spiritual value. For it is said in the Upanishad:

This is divinity of universal activity who is the great soul, who constantly dwells in the hearts of all people. They who know him with the heart and with the mind, which is sure in its perception,

(This is a speech by Guru Rabindranath Tagore wherein he explains the meaning of 'living a life of sacrifice' and how human beings can reach immortality).



# Ornamental gold moves up, silver declines

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Following reconciliatory postures by Chinese authorities towards the US on trade issues, hopes for normalisation of trade links between these super powers have brightened. Consequently, US dollar gained more strength, which impacted the price of the yellow metal considered as the all-time safe investment.

Although gold remained upbeat; no newer peaks were scaled by it. Silver followed suit and closed at \$ 1,496.84 (per ounce), while silver followed suit and closed at \$ 17.53 (per ounce).

Platinum and Palladium also marched forward and closed at \$ 933.05 (per 10 gms) and \$ 1,685.25 (per 10 gms) respectively. Other economic parameters remained firm. Brent closed at US\$ 61.77 (per barrel), while Crude oil was quoted at Rs.3,934 (per barrel). Gold MCX stood at Rs.37,750 (per 10 gms) and Silver MCX at Rs.45,517 (per kg). Sensex closed at 38,822.57 and Nifty 50 closed at 11,512.40 points respectively.

Leading foreign currencies' exchange rates were: US: Rs.70.56, British Pound: Rs.

86.86, Euro: Rs. 77.33, Singapore \$: Rs.51.16, Canadian \$: Rs.53.35, Swiss Franc: Rs.71.33, Australian \$: Rs.47.81, Saudi Rial: Rs. 18.84, Kuwaiti Dinar: Rs.232.28, Omani Rial: Rs. 183.55 and UAE Dinar: Rs.19.24.

At home, traders have decked up their shops for the Dassera and Diwali sales. The festivities start from the beginning of Navaratri i.e. September 29 and would continue up to well over a month. As a positive signal for the upcoming bonanza, gold recorded an increase of Rs. 360, while silver declined by Rs.1,100. Standard gold (24 carats) closed at Rs.38,060 (per 10 gms). Ornamental gold too, moved up in tandem and was quoted in the range of

Rs.36,130 - 36,230 on the closing day. Silver (0.999), on the other hand, declined and closed at Rs.45,400 (per kg). The sentiment in gold and silver is expected to remain strong during the festive season.

## COMMODITIES

The sentiment in principal wholesale commodity markets in the twin cities was moderate. The business in Rythu Bazar and the various commodity markets located in Begum Bazar, Kishangunj, Mukthyargunj, Risala Abdullah, Mir Alam Mandi, Dilsukhnagar, Kukatpally, Bowenpally, General Bazar was adversely affected due to the heavy rains which marked the retreat of monsoon season.

# Huzurnagar bypoll throws up new political ...

Continued from Page 1

Although the Telangana Rashtra Samiti won the 2018 Assembly polls and the 2019 Lok Sabha polls with huge majorities, Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao does not want to take any chances on the Huzurnagar bypoll, considering that it has been the bastion of the Congress and this time the grand old party has fielded Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee chief N Uttam Kumar Reddy's wife Padmavathi.

Telugu Desam Party has announced Chava Kiranmai as its candidate, while Bharatiya Janata Party has fielded Kota Rama Rao. CPM has fielded Arepally Shekhar Rao.

# Accord priority to defence and internal security

HC UPADHYAY ■ HYDERABAD

Although the Constitution of India ordains responsibility for protecting sovereignty of India, the internal security too, is equally important. For the latter, unstinted support of people is necessary.

In this context, outbursts of Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan at the recent meeting of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) cannot be ignored, though, for diplomatic reasons, our Prime Minister must have chosen to keep the 50 minutes' monologue of his Pakistani counterpart on the fringe. However, subsequent rejoinder by our side has appropriately dealt a solid blow to the baseless allegations and hollow threats by Pakistan.

Notwithstanding the trash irresponsibly thrown over India by Pakistan, one thing becomes quite clear that it derives maximum support from the Indian

National Congress party, the original edition of which contains glorious chapters of patriotism and national integration. The Pakistani prime minister freely used the name of Congress in a vain bid to buttress his irresponsible diatribe.

Indeed, this does not augur well for the country as its mention by the head of the enemy country in support of its false allegations before the global audience, lends some sort of credibility. It is true that the Congress at home is not the real Congress of pre-Independence era just as the BJP of today is not the same as the erstwhile Bharatiya Jana Sangh. People at home only know that these impersonating parties of the present day are just cashing in on the past glory of genuine parties.

After losing badly at the recent hustings, Congress has been making last-ditch attempts to survive. In its frantic moves, it has lost a sense of proportion.

In order to protect India from within and outside aggression, immediate effective measures should be taken

While nobody disputes its right to dissent, any words or action detrimental to national integration cannot be tolerated. Sadly, such irresponsible behaviour of the Congress gets cajoled by other smaller parties and splinter groups, whose only agenda is to weaken the country.

Therefore, in order to protect India from within and outside aggression, immediate effective measures should be taken. This is the Constitutional obligation of the government and the need of the hour.

## Karimnagar CP, others sentenced

Justice Sanjay Kumar of Telangana High Court has sen-

tenced the Karimnagar Police Commissioner VB Kamalasa Reddy, Assistant Commissioner Tirupati and SHO Shashidhar Reddy to six months' jail for repeatedly raiding Pushpanjali Country Resort, despite a restraint order. The court also imposed costs of Rs. 10,000 and penalty of Rs.2,000 each for civil contempt.

Unfortunately, for people in power, flouting court orders has become a routine affair. In a country whose prime minister describes himself as the 'Pradhan Sevak', the menials in

the administration feel a false air of superiority in their minds. Considering the blatant misuse of statutory powers by people in authority and increasing contempt of court orders, there is urgent need to amend the present law of the Contempt of Courts Act so as to make it more stringent and effective.

## Advocates Strike Illegal

Chief Justice Ramesh Ranganathan and Justice Alok Kumar Varma of the Uttarakhand High Court have ruled that strikes and boycotts of court by advocates are illegal and such actions amount to misconduct.

The court further held that the Bar Associations passing resolutions for going on strike are also liable for stringent action. The Bar Councils of the state concerned should initiate disciplinary action against those

lawyers who resort to strike, boycott, gherao etc. Observing that the advocates owe an obligation to the court and the clients, the court said that it is the duty of an advocate to protect the rights of the client guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

This is not the first time that a higher court has declared the agitations, including strike and boycott by the advocates, as illegal. Time and again different high courts and even the apex court have vehemently expressed their displeasure for such activities by advocates and the Bar Associations, but there seems to be no end to such unconditional activities.

Some time back, the Law Commission of India had proposed statutory framework to end this menace, but the same was met with stiff resistance from Bar Associations. Ultimately, the government had to put the proposal on the back-burner, if not in the cold storage.

# Jagadish bats for protecting mother tongue

PNS ■ SURYAPET

Minister G Jagadish Reddy has called upon people to tighten their belts as it is time to safeguard mother tongue Telugu. Participating as chief guest in the alumni association of government high school at Gottiparti in Tungaturti constituency in connection with centenary celebrations of the school, he said that the priority to Telugu is decreasing because of the fad for learning English. It is everyone's duty to safeguard mother tongue from encroachment of other languages. He asked students to learn English only to suit immediate needs. He sanctioned three additional class rooms to the 100-year old school when local MLA Gadhari Kishore brought to the minister's notice the conditions of the school.



“When people come into possession of political powers, the interference with the freedom of the people is reduced to a minimum. In other words, a nation that runs its affairs smoothly and effectively without such state interference is truly democratic. Where such a condition is absent, the form of Government is democratic in name.”

—MAHATMA GANDHI

**CRIME CORNER**

**Body of newborn found abandoned**

The body of a two-week old baby boy was found abandoned in Banjara Hills area by two men who noticed dogs sniffing around it on Saturday night. According to inspector of Banjara Hills, N Kalinga Rao, the infant on the roadside by unidentified persons. "We got a call from two men who noticed street dogs sniffing at the infant's body on the road here in Banjara Hills. A patrol team was sent to the spot," he said. The body was shifted for postmortem examination and a case was booked under section 317 (Exposure and abandonment of a child under 12 years, by parent or person having care of it) of the IPC and an investigation was taken up.

**236 booked for drunk driving**

As many as 236 drunk drivers, including 30 techies, two GHMC employees and eight students, were booked by the Cyberabad Traffic Police over the last weekend of September. The drunken driving checks were conducted across the Commissionerate on Friday and Saturday nights by the Traffic police officials of Cyberabad and an analysis of the data shows that mostly individuals between the ages 21-30, with a head count of 105, are resorting to this dangerous activity. Apart from the bikers, educated and employed persons including IT professionals were found driving vehicles under the influence of alcohol, said the Police Commissioner of Cyberabad, V. C. Sajjanar. The 236 offenders included 137 bikers, 8 three wheelers, 86 four wheelers, five lorries/trucks. "Driving under the influence of alcohol is one of the major reasons for fatalities on roads and the Cyberabad police urges public to be more responsible towards road safety," said the official. The violators included 17 private employees, two pharma employees, 29 drivers, 23 labors, 11 businessmen, three gym/yoga coaches, three food delivery boys and 95 others. Most of the offenders were booked by the Madhapur traffic police (37) and Shamshabad (37), followed by Kukatpally (30), Rajendranagar (29), and Alwal (25), said the police.

**Inspectors transferred in Cyberabad**

Cyberabad Police Commissioner VC Sajjanar issued orders transferring three inspectors in the Commissionerate. The transfers were on administrative grounds, the statement said. Detective Inspector P Vijay Kumar was transferred and posted as Inspector of Rajiv Gandhi International Airport police station, while Y Rama Krishna, the current RGAIA inspector, was attached to the Commissioner's office. Likewise, Kukatpally Detective Inspector V Sudheer Kumar was transferred and posted as Inspector, Special Operations Team, Balanagar. Following the transfer, there were reports doing rounds that Y Rama Krishna was transferred as part of disciplinary action for allegedly demanding money from the suspects arrested while illegally transporting 200 bags of ammonium nitrate in Kishanbagh last month.

**14 ARRESTED IN TRIBAL WOMAN GANG-RAPE CASE**

Five men accused of rape, nine others for trying to hush up matter

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Rachakonda police on Sunday arrested five men for assaulting and raping a tribal woman in Pahadi Shareef a week ago, and nine others who tried to hush up the issue by forcibly taking signatures from the victims.

Police said the accused claimed that the woman and her husband used to pilfer chicken feed from the poultry farm of their employer - prime accused Prasad Reddy -- and supply it to the owner of a rival farm. This incensed Prasad, who committed the atrocity on the couple out of vengeance.

The first-five accused were identified as Mucha Prasanth Reddy alias Prasad Reddy, 30, Mucha Anil Reddy, 26, R Bharath, 26, Devarshetty Pavan Kumar, 29, and Cikkimpuri Hanmanthu, 25, who had raped the woman and physically assaulted her. The other nine men, who attempted to bury the matter by getting the victim and her husband sign on papers, were Varthya Ravinder, 37, Bhavani Venkat Reddy, 51, Jatavath Ravinder alias Ravi Naik, 32, Charalappally Yadaiah, 41, Jarpula Raju, 32, Baygari Suresh, 35, Anugu Lokesh, 33, Megavath Vijay Kumar alias Vijay Naik, 43, and Mucha Janardhan Reddy, 43. Another accused in the case, Chandrashekar Reddy, is



The accused used filthy language and abused her by her caste name, and also beat the husband with belts and pipes. They were allowed to go with several warnings and threats after the couple gave them Suresh's name

—MAHESH BHAGWAT, Rachakonda Police Commissioner

absconding.

The victim, a Nagar Kurnool resident, and her husband Chandu, had migrated to Maheshwaram recently. The couple took up work at a poultry farm belonging to prime accused Prasad Reddy, said Rachakonda Police Commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat. Reddy incurred loss in the business because the couple was supplying bags of chicken feed to Suresh, who is from another poultry farm.

The woman was sexually assaulted for three days from

September 18 night to September 21. The woman and her husband Chandu later managed to escape, and eventually contacted the Rachakonda police a week later on Friday. Reddy had hired the couple in May to work at the poultry farm for a combined salary of Rs 15,000.

Police said Prasad Reddy first took them to a building and confined the woman and her husband in separate rooms. "She was beaten up with sticks, pipes, rods and belts before being raped repeatedly. The

accused used filthy language and abused her by her caste name, and also beat the husband with belts and pipes. They were allowed to go with several warnings and threats after the couple gave them Suresh's name," the Commissioner said.

Soon after, the gang of five picked up Suresh and beat him up brutally. On realising the extent of their crime, Prasad Reddy later offered Rs 2.50 lakh to the three persons - the victim, her husband and Suresh, and asked them to stay away from police.

Rachakonda Commissioner said, "The amount was first handed to the panchayat heads, Ravinder, Venkat Reddy, Ravi Naik, Yadaiah, Raju, Suresh, Lokesh, Vijay Kumar and Janardhan Reddy, who asked the couple and Suresh to accept it and sign a document stating that they would not go to the police." However, they declined to accept the cash and stated they wanted to report the matter to the police and got to court. They were then threatened and made to sign papers against their will. Of the blood money, Rs 1.02 lakh was given to the victim and Chandu, and Rs 1.30 lakh to Suresh's father Raju, police said.

The accused were arrested, and charged for sexual assault, rape, battery, kidnapping and other crimes under relevant sections of the IPC.

**Bajrang Dal back as moral police at garba**

Asks event organisers to check Aadhaar cards of revellers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bajrang Dal on Saturday asked Garba and Dandiya event organisers in the city to make Aadhaar cards mandatory for those taking part in Navratri celebrations to check entry of those belonging to "non-Hindu communities". The outfit asked organisers to make Aadhaar cards mandatory at the entry spot "to detect non-Hindus entering venues".

According to the outfit, this is to prevent "Love Jihad". They have also warned that their 'karyakartas' will remain present at Navratri events in the city to "take action" against non-Hindus entering the venues.

In a letter to organisers of Dandiya and Garba events - traditional Gujarati dances that people participate in during Navratri - Bajrang Dal claimed that non-Hindu men who did not have an "devotion" during Navratri used the occasion to harass women, and to "trap" them in "Love Jihad". The outfit told event organisers and venue owners to take measures to prevent "unwanted situations" during Navratri.

The letter said: "Since a couple of years, it has been observed that groups of youth of non-Hindu communities are entering these events, and since they have no concern and respect towards the divinity of the event they often misbehave with women



Bajrang Dal leaders making the announcement in the city

**According to the outfit, this is to prevent 'Love Jihad'. They have also warned that their 'karyakartas' will remain present at Navratri events in the city to "take action" against non-Hindus entering the venues**

participating garba/dandiya."

The outfit said they have also sent a letter to the city's three commissionerates. Rubbishing the claims of harassment by non-Hindu men, Hyderabad Police Commissioner Anjani Kumar said, "Anyone can claim anything, but I have collected information from all the inspectors... inspection is going on, and there is no disturbance anywhere. We

are collecting information every two hours, everything is normal."

The letter asked event managers to also to avoid employing non-Hindu bouncers for these events. Bajrang Dal media convener Kailash Sajjan said, "Dandiya and Garba are devotional performances through which Hindus express their devotion. Why should people who do not believe in Hindu idol worship come? They come and disrespect the goddess."

**Fitness events mark World Heart Day**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A half-marathon run, a cycle rally and other events were organised in Hyderabad on Sunday to mark World Heart Day.

Cardiological Society of Telangana organised a cycle rally around KBR park to create awareness about heart diseases and its preventive measures, emphasising on the importance of exercise and good heart-healthy habits.

Telangana Health Minister Etela Rajendar, and Cyberabad Police Commissioner V.C. Sajjanar, and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Shoba participated in the celebrations, among others The World Heart Federation, in association with World Health

Organisation (WHO), has been celebrating World Heart Day on September 29 every year since 2000, to raise awareness about heart diseases and stroke, its impact on shortening of life span, disease burden and premature deaths.

The Save the Young Heart Foundation with association with its partners organized a 5 km run at Gachibowli stadium in which more than 2,500 people took part.

Labour Minister Malla Reddy, well-known film producer Dil Raju, MP G. Ranjith Reddy and MLA Arekapudi Gandhi participated in the run. A 'Save The Young Heart' app was also launched on the occasion, where, by filling up the self-assessment questionnaire the user can get updates on his risk of developing heart disease.



**British Council brings 'Reading Challenge' to city**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

British Council in Hyderabad has been a knowledge centre and learning space for Hyderabad's students, professionals and families for the last two decades. Keeping up the expectation, British Council - in association with the Reading Agency, UK - has brought the 'Reading Challenge' to India.

Celebrating '50 years of humans landing on the moon' as this year's theme of Space Chase, this global challenge is based on the principle of encouragement and motivation and inspires children to read for pleasure, thus improving their English, developing their reading skills, and building their confidence. The six-week challenge, open to children from the age of 5 to 11, will start on October 1.

**Practise ethics, ASCI graduates told**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In an oblique reference to ESI medicine scam that rocked Telangana, the speakers at the convocation of Administrative Staff College of India's Post Graduate Diploma in Hospital Management of Batch-12 (2017-19) underlined the importance of practicing ethics in hospital administration.

Delivering the Convocation Address before giving away certificates at a glittering function at ASCI's College Park Campus here on Sunday, the Chief Guest Richard B Saldanha, a corporate management expert, said: "Life is a spiritual journey. We are not here to make money but we are here to serve society. Create value by holding on to values."

Richard called upon to-be managers of hospitals to dedicate their lives to serve the patients with utmost care and dedication. "Build your reputation around the nobility of the profession and don't play zero sum game. Focus on adding and multiplying but not subtraction



and division," he said.

Dr KS Ratnakar, Director, Global Medical Education and Research Foundation, in his Key Note address said that healthcare managers are the custodians of ethics in hospitals. "Please don't resort to ESI kind of scams because it is utter disgrace to the noble profession."

The founder Director of NIMS Prof. Kakarla Subba Rao observed that healthcare revolution "is in the offing in the country and asked youngsters to make use of the opportunities

created by it. Narmada won the gold medal, instituted by Prof.Kakarla Subba Rao, by topping the batch while Dr.Paru Srivastava won silver for scoring second highest marks. The dignitaries gave away awards and certificates to the students. ASCI Director General Prof.Nirmala Apasingkar, Dean of Training Programmes Prof.Valli Manickam, Programme Director, Dr Subodh Kandamuthan and faculty member Dr Saswat Kishore Mishra also spoke.

**Dasara dhamki: TSRTC strike from Oct 5**

Continued from Page 1

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao, the unions claim, also promised to do so in TS, but is not bothering to implement his promise.

TMU secretary Aswathama Reddy said that their strike was inevitable. Although the government had 18 months to decide on the matter, it had not come forward to implement their demands to "save the public transport organization". The workers are demanding the implementation of assurances given by the Cabinet Sub-Committee, headed by then Deputy CM Kadiam Srihari, to RTC workers last year.

From Monday, protests would be organised in all districts, he said. The workers' demands include job security for, payment of arrears, absorption of RTC losses in urban areas by government, merger of RTC with the government, filling vacancies in transport undertakings, doing away with Motor Vehicles Tax and provision of medical amenities to RTC workers in the RTC hospital at Tarnaka.

**Police seek co-op of kin for DNA tests**

Continued from Page 1

The SP said that cases had been filed in the police stations concerned as unnatural death.

As these bodies are beyond recognition, the police, in order to preserve some DNA profiles, are sending samples of these bodies to the AP State Forensic Laboratory.

The SP, therefore, requested at least two of the kin of the deceased, be it mother, brother, sister, son or daughter, to give their blood samples for matching DNA profiles and identifying the deceased.

In addition, they will have to provide two colour passport size photographs and address proof to Rajamahendravaram urban police Officer Rajani Kumar with mobile number 9440796395.

**IIT-H to raise M.Tech fees 10-fold**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Until now, the fee for Master of Engineering (M.Tech) in Indian Institutes of Technology - Hyderabad (IIT-H) was around Rs 20,000 and Rs 50,000 per year has now been raised to Rs 2.0 lakh a year.

New measures introduced will change the landscape of postgraduate education in India and align it with global trends, said Professor BS Murty,

Director, IIT Hyderabad, at a press conference on the campus on Sunday.

"Until now, the percentage of M.Tech placement after campus recruitment is low and so many seats go unfilled. Moreover, M.Tech is not the minimum requirement anymore for joining PhD, and most of the IITs take B.Tech graduates directly into PhD programmes. Earlier, people with M.Tech qualification were



able to get into academic jobs, which no more the case because a PhD is essential

now," said professor Murty.

"We made four recommendations. The first one is to increase M.Tech fee and bring it at least to the level of B.Tech fee, that is Rs 2.0 lakh per year over the next three years. Simultaneously, needy students should be supported directly by the government through direct benefit transfers (DBT) or arranging educational loans," he added.

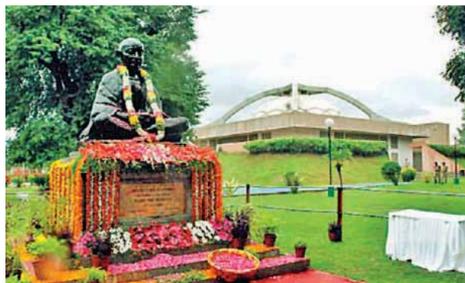
**Bapu Ghat cleaned up ahead of Jayanti**

Residents complain the Ghat will be forgotten till Bapu's next anniversary

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bapu Ghat located at the bank of River Musi at Langer Houz is all set for a decorated look on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti on October 2. A stage will be set up for the Chief Minister to pay floral tributes to the Mahatma.

What hide behind the stage are large patches of hyacinth, encroachments a polluted section of River Musi. "Every year we wait for this occasion of Gandhi Jayanti. The GHMC starts cleaning up the surroundings of Bapu Ghat only because chief minister visits it. The rest of the time, the surroundings remain unattended



and unhygienic," said Shruvan, a resident of Bapu Ghat. "If you come here during any other times of the year, the riverbank is filled with human

feces, piles of garbage and plastic everywhere. The river too is filled with hyacinth," he added.

**At other times of the year, the riverbank is filled with piles of garbage and plastic, says a resident**

another resident of Bapu Ghat, "This year, a concrete ramp has been laid into the river which has changed its natural course. A lot of people dump garbage into the river, and truckloads of construction and demolition waste are emptied on the

river bank."

The meditation hall located right next to the Gandhi statue, which houses a lot of Bapu's photographs from the pre-Independence era, remains closed throughout the year.

As per revenue records, Bapu Ghat is spread over 68 acres. A portion of it has been encroached and the government has yet to verify its extent.

Till 2002, Bapu Ghat premises was maintained by the Roads and Buildings department. Later, the Tourism Development Corporation started taking care of it. But it is spruced up only twice a year, on Gandhi's birth and death anniversaries.

HUZURNAGAR BY-POLL

# TRS FACES MULTI-CORNERED CONTEST

■ PARTIES GOING ALL OUT TO WIN ELECTION TO RETAIN, REVIVE THEIR POLITICAL FORTUNES

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The by-election to Huzurnagar Assembly seat next month is likely to be a multi-cornered contest as the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) announced its candidate for the October 21 poll. Hoping to revive his party's fortunes in Telangana, party president N Chandrababu Naidu decided to field the party candidate in the by-election.

TDP's Telangana unit president L Ramna on Sunday announced that Chava Kiranmai will be the party candidate in Huzurnagar. She is party's Organisation Secretary in the state. The TDP's decision is surprising since it had stayed away from Lok Sabha elections earlier this year.

The Huzurnagar by-poll will be the first election to be contested by the TDP in Telangana on its own since December 2018 Assembly elections which it contested in alliance with the Congress.

The four-party alliance, led by the Congress, faced humiliation as it could win just 21 seats in the 119-member Assembly. The TDP had bagged two seats and one of the legislators subsequently defected to the ruling Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS).

After the failed experience, the Congress and the TDP snapped the alliance, though officially they did not make any announcement. Naidu took the decision to field party candidate for the Huzurnagar by-election after consultation with the party leaders from Nalgonda district.

The leaders impressed upon Naidu the need to contest the election to make the party's presence felt in the state. They said contesting the polls was



KEY CONTEST

■ The by-poll will be the first election to be contested by the TDP in Telangana on its own since 2018 Assembly elections which it contested in alliance with the Congress

■ Left parties had good support base in the undivided Nalgonda



■ TRS seek CPI's support in by-poll

The TRS, which won 88 seats to retain power in December last year, increased its tally to over 100 with 15 MLAs switching sides

necessary to send a message to the party cadre at the grassroots level that the party is still alive and kicking.

"We will give answer to those who ask where is the TDP in Telangana," senior TDP leader R. Chandrashekhara Reddy said. He is confident that the TDP's revival in the state will start

from Huzurnagar.

The TDP, which had left Huzurnagar for Congress in 2018, had bagged over 25,000 votes and finished fourth in the 2014 elections. The bypoll in Huzurnagar is necessitated by the resignation of sitting Congress member Uttam Kumar Reddy from the Assembly, following his elec-

tion to Lok Sabha from Nalgonda constituency in the recent polls. The Congress has fielded Uttam Kumar Reddy's wife Padmavathi Reddy. She had lost the Assembly election from Kodad constituency in the same district. The TRS has named S Saidi Reddy as its candidate. He lost to Uttam Kumar Reddy in December 2018.

Congress candidate Padmavathi Reddy would file her nomination papers on Monday in a huge rally and a meeting of Congress workers would be held in the evening at Public Club in Huzurnagar.

## TRS approached CPI fearing defeat: Uttam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president and Nalgonda MP N Uttam Kumar Reddy said that the fear of imminent defeat in Huzurnagar Assembly by-elections forced TRS leaders to visit Makhdoom Bhavan, the headquarters of CPI, seeking its support.

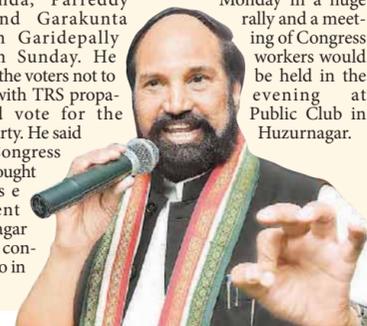
However, he exuded confidence that Congress will win the by-election with a majority of not less than 30,000 votes. Uttam Kumar Reddy, in a statement, appealed the CPI leaders not to support the TRS

in by-elections. Instead, he said that the CPI should support Congress candidate Padmavathi Reddy to teach a fitting lesson to anti-people KCR Government.

He said that the CPI leaders should not forget how KCR humiliated the Left Parties in the last six years and also questioned their very existence. He advised the CPI leaders not to fall in TRS party's trap of fake assurances and support the Congress party in bye-elections.

Meanwhile, Uttam Kumar Reddy campaigned in Mellachervu, Revooru,

Chinthalapalem, Appannapeta, Laxmipuram, Sarvaram, Kondaigudem, Ganugabanda, Parreddy Gudem and Garakunta Thanda in Garidepally Mandal on Sunday. He appealed to the voters not to get misled with TRS propaganda and vote for the Congress party. He said that the Congress party has brought immense development in Huzurnagar and would continue to do so in future.



## All schemes mired in corruption in TRS rule, says Laxman

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP president K Laxman alleged that every scheme in Telangana is mired in corruption and 80 per cent of the corruption complaints received by Chief Minister Office (CMO) are against TRS leaders.

"Corruption is rearing its ugly head in Telangana but Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao is turning a blind eye to it. Though the CM makes tall statements about fighting against corruption when it comes to action, he himself is encouraging it. Around 80 per cent of the complaints received by the CMO on corruption are against TRS leaders, but KCR



is not taking any action. In fact, we have seen a municipal chairman saying KTR himself has asked to take two per cent commission. Such is the pathetic situation in Telangana. TRS leadership itself is encouraging corruption unabashedly," fired K Laxman speaking in

Hyderabad on Sunday. "TRS top leaders are involved even in ESI scam but government is shielding them. If KCR is committed in his fight against corruption, then he should first take action on his family members and TRS senior leaders," demanded K Laxman. Laxman also fired on Health Minister Etema Rajendar questioning, "Will clinical trials be conducted on children without the knowledge of Health Minister?"

Expressing confidence over victory in Huzurnagar by-polls, K Laxman said, "TPCC chief Uttam Kumar Reddy and CM KCR attack each other in the morning and get together in the evening.

## Awareness drive on drunken driving

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

The Mahabubnagar police have launched a unique drive on drunken drive in the rural areas here on Sunday. As part of the drive, the officials took up the task in about fifteen villages, went to each village, and guided the people about the consequences of drunken driving.

The drive was initiated in Annasagar village and the people were called to the village square where the police personnel imparted training and orientation to the youths and villagers. Drunken driving is leading to accidents and this is causing agony to the families, police officials said.

## Making learning traffic rules with fun

■ Minister Ajay inaugurates children traffic training park in Karimnagar

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Ministers Puvvada Ajay and Gangula Kamalakar have inaugurated the children traffic-training park here in Karimnagar on Sunday. The District transport officials established the traffic training park to educate children about traffic rules and reduce road accidents.

Speaking on the occasion, Transport Minister Puvvada Ajay Kumar said the vehicular traffic in the state is increasing rapidly. He said that over 1.2 crore vehicles, including two-wheelers are plying on the road. "Road safety is the prime objective of the government and hence the government has initiated an awareness drive," the Minister said and added that the government was creating awareness among the public with an expenditure of Rs 14 crore.

On the children's traffic park, the Minister Gangula Kamalakar said that children in the city would be taught about the traffic symbols and traffic rules comprehensively. He suggested the school managements in the city to guide their wards in the park about the traffic rules.

It may be recalled that, in the wake increasing road accidents each year, Telangana government had constituted a sub-committee to study the issue in 2016. The then Municipal Administration Minister KT Rama Rao proposed to establish children



Ministers G Kamalakar and Ajay Kumar inaugurating the traffic park in Karimnagar on Sunday

Road safety is the prime objective of the state government and hence the government has initiated an awareness drive

AJAY KUMAR Transport Minister

traffic awareness parks. Following this, the Telangana Motor Vehicle Inspectors Association came forward to establish children traffic training park with its own expenses and finalized Karimnagar DTO office.

Though there are similar parks in the country, the one here is the biggest spread over two acres land along with all modern facilities to educate children about traffic rules. Besides 20 feet wide roads, traffic signals, a market, a hos-

pital zone, a school zone, petrol bunk, foot over bridge, parking zone, bus shelters, unmanned railway crossing, zebra crossing and others are part of the park.

A three-staged training curriculum has been designed and initially, children below 15 years will be allowed to enter into park through a footpath and occupy seats in 100 seated capacity auditorium where they will get theoretical knowledge about traffic rules. The one hour-length theory class

comprises of power point presentation and short films on road accidents and safety norms.

In the second phase, children will get practical knowledge. They will be allowed to enter into real time road track along with bicycles.

They will be explained how to observe traffic, take turns by following traffic sign boards, park cycles at parking lots, measures to be taken at petrol bunks, school zones and hospitals. They also explained about fines if they violate traffic rules. On the other hand, children below seven years will be trained about traffic rules in enclosed road track on which they can ride tricycles.



## Saidi a non-local, says Komatireddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Upping the ante against the ruling TRS, Congress MP from Bhongir, Komatireddy Venkat Reddy has leveled serious allegations against the pink party's nominee S Saidi Reddy alleging that the latter is a 'non-local'.

He described the by-election as the battle between 'dictator' and 'Telangana woman'. He exuded confidence that the people would stand by the side of Congress ensuring its victory in this war. He hoped that the people would teach a lesson to the 'dictator' Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao.

On Sunday in a statement, Komatireddy said that he and Congress activists from Bhongir would participate in huge numbers on the occasion of filing nominations by Uttam Padmavathi Reddy. "Later, I will convene party activists meeting at Huzurnagar to discuss on the strategy to be adopted in Huzurnagar by-elections", he informed.

He exuded confidence that Uttam Padmavathi Reddy will win with huge majority. He said that he would participate in by-elections campaign to expose the KCR's dictatorial attitude. Komatireddy alleged that Chief Minister insulted former Deputy Speaker and Medak MLA Padma Devender Reddy by not allowing inside Pragathi Bhavan. He asked the people of Huzurnagar to teach a lesson to KCR by ensuring the victory of KCR.

People need Congress' victory: Ponnampati

Former MP and TPCC working president Ponnampati Prabhakar and senior leader Medipally Sathyam have opined that the people needed the victory of Congress in Huzurnagar. Arrogance of TRS will increase if it wins in Huzurnagar con-

The Huzurnagar by-election is a battle between 'dictator' and 'Telangana woman'. Uttam Padmavathi Reddy will win with over 30,000 vote margin

KOMATIREDDY VENKAT REDDY Bhongir MP

stituency. The people have to bring down the TRS from sky by defeating its candidate in the elections, they said alleging the ruling party is afraid of Huzurnagar by-election.

Ponnampati said that Power Minister G Jagdish Reddy would have committed suicide immediately after assigning MLC Palla Rajeshwar Reddy as in-charge of Huzurnagar by-elections. Wondering at Home Minister Mahamood Ali's statement that he doesn't know the arrest of Sapranches, union president Bhumia, Ponnampati said that the Sapranches are implementing 30-days plan by selling their ornaments.

Both the leaders from Karimnagar have demanded the state government to order an inquiry into the corruption took place in Mid-Manair project with High Court sitting judge. They said that the people of Choppadandi and Karimnagar constituencies were in doubts that Mid-Manair leakage will submerge their areas.



## KCR neglecting Hyd, says Kishan Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Minister of State for Home Affairs G Kishan Reddy came down heavily on Chief Minister K Chandrashekhara Rao saying latter has not fulfilled at least one promise made to people of Hyderabad and the city has been completely neglected in TRS rule. To address the problems faced by people in GHMC, Kishan Reddy, who is also MP of Secunderabad, launched Constituency Development Office at Old MLA Quarters, Hyderguda on Sunday. "A woman has died as a slab from Metro Pillar fell down.

People are unable to get out of their homes, even after a small rain. Roads are being flooded and traffic jams are occurring for hours even after slight drizzle. Water is entering into houses in low lying areas. Such is the pathetic situation in Hyderabad. Both CM KCR and Municipal Administration Minister KTR have failed miserably in addressing the problems of Hyderabad. TRS government has failed miserably in maintaining the livability and quality of life in Hyderabad," said Kishan Reddy, after launching the Secunderabad constituency development office.





All true art is an expression of the soul. The outward forms have value only in so far as they are expression of the inward spirit of man.

— MAHATMA GANDHI

SHORT READS

Cong announces candidates for bypolls in Bihar, UP, Rajasthan

**NEW DELHI:** The Congress released a list of its candidates on Sunday for bypolls to a Lok Sabha seat and various Assembly constituencies in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. "Congress president Sonia Gandhi has approved proposals for the candidature of Ashok Kumar for Samastipur-SC Lok Sabha constituency," a party statement said. She has also approved the candidatures of Sayeeda Banu from the Kishanganj Assembly seat in Bihar, Rita Chaudhary from Mandawa in Rajasthan, Harendra Miridha from the Kinwars Assembly constituency in Rajasthan and Mannu Devi for the Balha-SC Assembly constituency in Uttar Pradesh, it added.

SP declares candidates for five assembly seats

**LUCKNOW:** With barely a day left for filing nominations for by-elections in Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party on Sunday declared candidates for five assembly seats going to bypolls, voting for which will be held on October 21. In a tweet, the SP said, "Sudhakar Singh will be party's candidate from Ghosi, while Nirbhay Singh Patel will be SP candidate from Manikpur. The party has given ticket to Gaurav Kumar Rawat from Zaidpur. Subhash Rai will be SP candidate from Jalalpur, while Brijesh Verma Patel will be party candidate from Pratapgarh." Last week, the Election Commission had announced that polling for 11 Assembly seats in UP mostly belonging to MLAs who had won the Lok Sabha polls and resigned as members of state assembly will be held on October 21. Assembly constituencies going to bypolls are Gangoh, Rampur, Iglas (SC), Lucknow Cantonment, Govindnagar, Manikpur, Pratapgarh, Zaidpur (SC), Jalalpur, Balha (SC) and Ghosi. The Ghosi seat became vacant following the resignation of sitting MLA Phagu Chauhan after he was appointed as the Governor of Bihar.

3 of family jump into river with pet dog

**MANGALURU:** In what appears to be a suicide pact, a woman and her two adult children, along with their dog, jumped off the new bridge across Nethravati river in Dakshina Kannada district, police said. Local people on Saturday saw the three taking the plunge and tried to rescue them, but could only pull the elderly woman out of the waters, the police said. She, however, died while being taken to hospital, they said. Search is still on for the two others, they said. The deceased have been identified as Kavita Mandanna (55), her son Kaushik (22) and daughter Kalpitha (20), they said. The family belonged to Virajpet in Kodagu district, the police said. The trio, travelling in a car, stopped the vehicle on the bridge on the Mangaluru-Bengaluru national highway and jumped into the river, along with the dog, they said, quoting eye-witnesses. The reason behind the extreme step was not immediately known, the police added.

HARYANA POLLS

2 women figure in BSP's list of 41 candidates

**PNS ■ CHANDIGARH**

Two women candidates figure in the Bahujan Samaj Party's list of 41 candidates released on Sunday for the October 21 Haryana Assembly polls.

Out of the first list of 41 candidates for the polls, 12 candidates have been named from the reserved constituencies.

The two women -- Shakuntala Bhatti and Sunita Dhull -- have been fielded from Shabbad (SC) and Pundri segments, respectively, according to the list released by BSP's state unit president Prakash Bharti.

The list has been cleared by BSP supremo and former Uttar Pradesh chief minister Mayawati, he said.

The BSP had called off its alliance with the fledgling

HDK rules out involvement in phone tapping of seer

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Amid reports that the phone of Nirmalananda Swamiji, an influential seer of the dominant Vokkaliga community was also tapped during the coalition government led by him, former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy Sunday ruled out any involvement in it.

He also said the allegation has caused him "unbearable pain."

The JD(S) leader said unnecessarily his name was being linked to the case, and the seer was a moral support and guide for him.

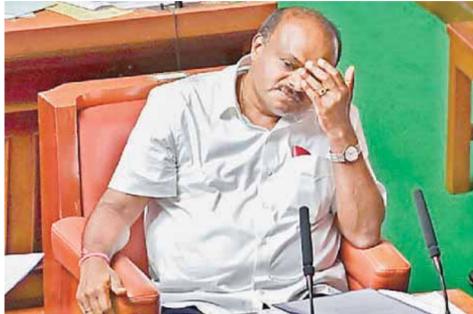
"The reports about tapping of Nirmalananda Swamiji's phone during my administration and statements by political leaders regarding it has caused unbearable pain to my heart.

Above all this might have upset Swamiji as he increased my pain," Kumaraswamy said in a tweet.

In multiple tweets in Kannada, he said, Nirmalananda Swamiji was a moral support for him and guided him under the shelter of his social works.

Swamiji even prayed for him to lord Kalabhirava.

"Is it possible for me take



suspicious step regarding him? Absolutely not," he said.

"Unnecessarily my name is being linked to this case.

Asoka (Minister) has gone ahead of every one and has sought an apology for a mistake that has not happened. I don't know what he gained from this. I feel pity for his hurried move..." he added.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa had last month handed over the alleged phone tapping case to CBI probe, as the scandal gained political steam.

Several political leaders had accused Kumaraswamy of being behind the episode to save his government, which

was then rocked by dissidence within.

However, the JD(S) leader had strongly denied it, and said he was ready for any probe.

CBI sleuths had on Thursday had carried out searches at the residence of former Bengaluru Police Commissioner Alok Kumar in connection with alleged phone tapping of politicians and bureaucrats during the tenure of the Congress-JD(S) government headed by Kumaraswamy.

Deputy Chief Minister C N Ashwath Narayan and Revenue Minister R Ashoka, who hail from Vokkaliga community had sought to corner the for-

**In multiple tweets in Kannada, he said, Nirmalananda Swamiji was a moral support for him and guided him under the shelter of his social works.**

mer Chief Minister and his administration by raking up the alleged phone-tapping of Nirmalananda Swamiji of the Adichunchanagiri Mutt.

Ashoka had gone a step further and apologised to the seer, whose phone was tapped, on behalf of the system, and said, "it is a mistake, no government should do it... whoever did it, must face punishment, our government will take all necessary action."

Kumaraswamy too belongs to Vokkaliga community, which is considered as his party- the JD(S) strong vote bank.

Vokkaligas are dominant in the old Mysuru or Southern Karnataka region, where BJP is trying to make further inroads.

SP may withdraw plea for Shivpal's disqualification if he agrees for merger

PNS ■ BALLIA

The Samajwadi Party will consider withdrawing its application for Shivpal Singh Yadav's disqualification as MLA if he agrees for a merger with the Akhilesh Yadav-led party, senior SP leader Ram Govind Chaudhary said on Sunday.

On September 13, the SP had moved the application seeking Shivpal Yadav's disqualification from the Uttar Pradesh assembly under the anti-defection law.

Shivpal Yadav was elected from the Jaswantnagar assembly constituency on an SP ticket in the 2017 state elections. In 2018, he floated a new party -- Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia) -- after falling out with SP chief and his nephew Akhilesh Yadav.

"If Shivpal Singh Yadav dissolves his party and merges it with the Samajwadi Party, then the party will consider withdrawing the application seeking his disqualification as MLA



Shivpal Singh Yadav

of UP Legislative Assembly," Chaudhary told reporters here. The Leader of Opposition in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly said the SP has shown utmost patience in dealing with Shivpal Yadav.

"Despite giving statements against party president Akhilesh Yadav and the feud in the party, he was given a ticket in the 2017 UP Assembly elections. In 2019 Lok Sabha elections, he contested against his nephew Akshay Yadav

**The Leader of Opposition in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly said the SP has shown utmost patience in dealing with Shivpal Yadav**

from Firozabad on a Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia) ticket," Chaudhary said.

On September 20, Akhilesh Yadav had hinted that the SP may withdraw the application seeking the disqualification of his estranged uncle.

"Whoever wants to come, we will include them in the party," the SP chief had said.

Shivpal Yadav had then said, "There is full scope of unity in the family and there is full scope from my side as well. But some people are hatching conspiracies to not let the family unite."

MAHA POLLS

Cong may contest more than 125 seats, says Thorat

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Congress is likely to have an "upper hand" in alliance with the NCP for next month's Maharashtra Assembly polls and may contest more seats than the '125 each' formula earlier agreed upon, state Congress chief Balasaheb Thorat hinted on Sunday.

It will take some more time to work out an "acceptable formula," he said.

"The NCP admits that the Congress will have an upper hand. Going by the number of candidates and capacity to put up a challenge, the Congress is of the opinion of contesting more seats than the earlier formula of 125 seats each," Thorat told reporters here.

He was speaking after a meeting held at the residence of NCP leader Dhananjay Munde.

"It will take some more time to work out an acceptable formula. The first list of around 50 candidates can come out by



Balasaheb Thorat

October 2," Thorat said.

He said another meeting between the two parties is scheduled on October 2 which is expected to bring more clarity on the seat-sharing scenario.

The state goes to polls on October 21 and counting of votes will be held on October 24.

Speaking on other issues, Thorat lashed out at the Centre for banning onion exports and termed it as a

decision "not in favour of farmers".

"It is double standard on part of the Centre. When the onion prices crash, it doesn't do anything, but imposes a ban when prices rise and there is scope for farmers to earn money. The Centre is more interested in keeping the onion prices low than helping farmers," he alleged.

On speculation that former state chief minister Narayan Rane may join the BJP, Thorat said the ruling party was probably delaying it with the intention of inducting him on an auspicious day like the Gandhi Jayanti (October 2).

HP bypoll: BJP fields new faces

PNS ■ SHIMLA

The ruling BJP on Sunday declared candidates for the bypolls to two assembly segments of Himachal Pradesh, a party spokesperson said.

The party fielded former Sirmour Zila Parishad member Reena Kashyap from Pachhad constituency (SC) and Vishal Nehriya from Dharamshala seat, the leader said. The two seats fell vacant after sitting BJP MLAs Suresh Kashyap (Pachhad) and Kishan Kapoor (Dharamshala) were elected to the Lok Sabha. Reena Kashyap and Nehriya are contesting the Vidhan Sabha elections for the first time. While Reena Kashyap is the co-convenor of the IT cell of the state Bharatiya Janata Mahila Morcha (BJMM), Nehriya is state secretary of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM).

Reena Kashyap has been pitted against veteran Congress leader Gangu Ram Musafir, whose candidature was declared by the Congress on Saturday.

Stalin claims graft in gadgets tender, CM refutes allegation

PNS ■ CHENNAI/SALEM

DMK president M K Stalin on Sunday alleged Rs 350 crore corruption in the tender for procurement of communication equipment for the police force in Tamil Nadu, a charge dismissed by Chief Minister K Palaniswami as 'a lie'.

Stalin, the Leader of opposition in the Assembly, alleged "corruption in the Rs 350 crore tender for buying communication equipment including camera, CCTV, and digital mobile radio for the Tamil Nadu police" and demanded a fair probe by the Vigilance and Anti-Corruption wing.

It was "angushing that the spectre of AIADMK regime's corruption," has not even spared the police department, the DMK leader alleged in a statement.

In Salem, Palaniswami rejected the allegation as 'a lie'. "When he (Stalin) has not made such allegations? He has been making such claims since I took over as Chief Minister, what have they proved?... it is a deliberate attempt and a lie," he told reporters when asked about Stalin's charge.

The corruption claims of the main opposition were "nothing



M K Stalin

new and are lies," and such charges were levelled against the government in respect of a road sector project too, he said.

While the DMK found fault with every scheme of the government, people knew the extent of "irregularities and corruption" during their previous regime, Palaniswami said.

Citing the Veeranam drinking water scheme during the DMK's rule in the past, he alleged the project was mired in corruption and network pipes were abandoned.

Through the New Veeranam Project, drinking water was brought to Chennai from the Veeranam lake, about 200 km from the state capital, only by late Chief Minister J Jayalalitha, he said.

CHITRAKOT BYPOLL

BJP's Kashyap to take on Cong's Benzam

PNS ■ RAIPUR

The BJP on Sunday announced the name of Lachhura Kashyap as its candidate for the Chittrakot Assembly bypoll to be held on October 21.

The bypoll was necessitated after Congress MLA Deepak Baij was elected to the Lok Sabha from Bastar constituency.

Kashyap, an MLA from 2003-08, lost to Baij in the 2018 Assembly polls from Chittrakot by a margin of 17,770 votes.

"Kashyap's name was finalised for Chittrakot bypoll by the BJP's Central Election Committee on Sunday in New Delhi," a Chattisgarh BJP spokesperson said here.

He is pitted against the Congress's Rajman Benzam, a new face, and both candidates are expected to file their nominations on Monday.

Congress spokesperson RP Singh said his party was confident of retaining Chittrakot as people are happy with the work of the Bhupesh Baghel government, and cited the victory in Dantewada Assembly bypoll, the result of which was declared on September 27, to back his assertion.

Pro-tribal outfit to contest Maha polls

PNS ■ THANE

The Shramjeevi Sanghatana, an outfit working for tribal welfare, which supported the BJP in past elections, has decided to contest some seats on its own in the next month's Maharashtra Assembly polls.

Despite the Sanghatana, led by former MLA Vivek Pandit, supporting the BJP all along, the ruling party has "not done anything for tribals", the outfit's general secretary Balaram



**"We will surely contest all six Assembly seats in Palghar district and at least four seats in Thane," he said**

Bhoir told reporters on Sunday.

"We will surely contest all six Assembly seats in Palghar district and at least four seats in

Thane," he said.

At a meeting of the Sanghatana office-bearers from Thane, Palghar, Nashik, Raigadh and Mumbai held

here on Saturday, there was a unanimous demand that this time it should contest polls on its own, Bhoir said.

"The members were of the opinion that the Sanghatana should neither support anyone nor take support from anyone," he said.

They also pointed out that most of the demands of tribals were pending for years, with the ruling party only giving assurances and not going beyond that, he said.

"It was on account of our support that the BJP nominees could get elected in Parliament elections from Thane and Palghar, but this time we are sure to win at least a couple of seats and even ensure defeat of candidates put up by the ruling party in some constituencies," Bhoir said.

Pandit, who currently heads a committee on tribal welfare, has been accorded the status of a Minister of State by the Maharashtra government.

Sanat Gartia BJP's Bijepur candidate

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJP on Sunday announced the name of Sanat Gartia as its candidate for Bijepur Assembly by-election scheduled to be held on October 21.

The bypoll in Bijepur assembly seat in Bargarh district was necessitated after BJD president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik resigned from the seat and retained the Hinjili assembly segment in Ganjam district. Patnaik had won two seats in the last assembly elections.

Gartia's name has been finalised by the central election committee of the BJP, a party statement here said.

Gartia had unsuccessfully contested the Assembly polls held earlier this year as a BJP nominee from Bijepur but lost to BJD president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. He lost to Patnaik by a margin of 57,122 votes in the assembly polls held along with the Lok Sabha elections.

**Sanat Gartia's name has been finalised by the central election committee of the BJP, a party statement here said**

by-election, Congress has announced the name of Dillip Kumar Panda. With the three major political parties announcing the names of the candidates, Bijepur is all set to witness a triangular contest.

While Patnaik has said the assembly segment would be in the "focus for welfare and development", BJP and Congress leaders are of the view that local issues and farmers' problems will play a major role in the by-election.

Rita Sahu had contested a by-election in 2018 as the ruling BJD candidate and won the Bijepur seat after the death of her husband and then Congress MLA Subal Sahu.

EC cuts Sikkim CM's disqualification period, paves way for him to contest

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The EC on Sunday reduced Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang's disqualification period by almost five years under a provision of the electoral law, paving the way for him to contest the state assembly elections.

His disqualification period of six years, during which he was barred from contesting polls, began on August 10, 2018 -- the day he completed a year's jail term in a corruption case. It was to end on August 10, 2024.

But the Election Commission (EC) on Sunday reduced it to one year and one month.

Tamang, whose Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party won the state assembly elections held in April, took over as chief minister on May 27. However,



Prem Singh Tamang

he could not contest the elections due to his disqualification.

He has to contest assembly polls within six months of becoming the chief minister to hold the office.

Tamang was found guilty of misappropriation of government funds in a cow distribu-

**Tamang, whose Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party won the state assembly elections held in April, took over as chief minister on May 27. However, he could not contest the elections due to his disqualification**

tion scheme while he was the minister of animal husbandry in the 1990s.

A case was registered in 2003 under the Prevention of Corruption Act that was subsequently repealed. Tamang has served the full sentence.

The EC order said Tamang's disqualification stands reduced to one year and one month. In other words, his disqualification period ended on September 10 this year and he can contest polls to continue as chief minister.

In July, Tamang had request-

ed the poll panel to waive his disqualification period under Section 11 of the Representation of the People Act.

Under the provisions of the law, the EC can reduce or remove a person's disqualification.

Section 11 of the RP Act states, "The Election Commission may, for reasons to be recorded, remove any disqualification under this Chapter 1 (except under section 8A) or reduce the period of any such disqualification."



# Dropout in IIT's M.Tech over 50pc

FEE HIKE 'SURGICAL STRIKE' ON UNINTERESTED STUDENTS: IIT-D HEAD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

M.Tech programmes at IITs record a dropout rate of over 50 per cent as students treat the courses as a stopgap arrangement till they land a job or crack a competitive exam, IIT-Delhi Director V Ramgopal Rao said, and termed the recent hike in course fee a "surgical strike" on "uninterested" students.

He believes the IIT Council's decision to hike the fee for M.Tech programmes will fix the problem of wastage of much sought after seats at the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and save government funds.

"The freebies we have been doling out with taxpayers' money to students who are uninterested and into systems which have become unaccountable need to stop at some point," he said.

"Many students take admission into the M.Tech programmes and over 50 per cent of them quit as soon as they find a job," he said.

Among the remaining ones, many prepare for other competitive examinations and



**Among the remaining ones, many prepare for other competitive examinations and have no interest in what they are pursuing, said Rao, who is also a member of the IIT Council, the highest decision-making body on all the 23 IITs**

have no interest in what they are pursuing, said Rao, who is also a member of the IIT Council, the highest decision-making body on all the 23 IITs.

He said this leads to wastage of the Country's precious resources.

"Over 50 per cent dropouts in masters programmes today in IITs only means that students value the jobs they get after their B.Tech more than the career they can build with their M.Tech degrees. How can we spend taxpayers money to offer free education

to them, when they themselves see no value in such an education?

He said this was an "alarming" situation.

"And obviously, a surgical strike was needed. I am happy that the Ministry and the Council took such a bold decision," he added.

The IIT Council led by Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' had on Friday approved a proposal to hike the fee of the masters programme and bring it to the level of the B.Tech courses.

The decision was taken on recommendations of a three-member committee on reforms on M.Tech programme in IITs.

"The committee had recommended proactive increase in the M.Tech fee and bringing it at least to the level of B.Tech fee (Rs 2 lakh per year) over the next three years. Simultaneously the needy students will be supported directly by the government through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) or arranging educational loans," a senior HRD Ministry official had said.

# Modi 'stirred' by Russian player's speech after losing US Open final

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said he was "stirred" by the humility of Russian tennis player Daniil Medvedev who lost to Spanish ace Rafael Nadal in the US Open final.

Referring to Medvedev's speech after the match, the prime minister said the Russian player had won hearts with his "simplicity and maturity".

"The sheer simplicity and maturity displayed by 23-year-old Daniil Medvedev touched everyone. It surely stirred me. Moments before this speech, he had suffered defeat at the hands of Nadal, 19 times grand slam winner," Modi said in his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' radio address.

He said the defeat would have pushed anyone towards remorse and despair. "In the case of Medvedev, there was no sign of the slightest pallor on his countenance... when ability and humility amalgamate in a person, whose heart will he not be able to win over? As a matter of fact, this young player has won the hearts of people across the globe," Modi said citing scriptures.

Medvedev was defeated 5-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-4, 4-6 by Nadal in the US Open final earlier this month. The prime minister described the Russian player as the epitome of the spirit of sportsmanship in the truest sense.

"He also touched upon



Nadal being the inspiring force in Tennis for millions of young people, adding how difficult it was to face him in the game ... Of course, on the other hand Nadal too showered glowing praise on Daniil's game," Modi

said urging people to watch the speech. "The display of the indomitable ardour of the defeated and the sheer humility of the victorious in the same frame was a sight to behold," he added.

# PM hails plogging campaign

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday hailed the efforts of India's perhaps first 'plogger' Ripudaman Belvi who has launched a campaign to pick up litter while jogging.

Plogging is a combination of jogging and picking up litter. It started as an organised activity in Sweden around 2016, according to reference available on the internet.

In his 'Mann ki Baat' radio programme, the prime minister also referred to Sister Mariam Theresia who will be declared a saint by Pope Francis on October 13 at the

Vatican City. Modi further said the campaign to shun single use plastic is set to be launched on Gandhi Jayanti on October 2 as he lauded Belvi for being part of the unique initiative to protect the environment.

"...while we are celebrating 'Gandhi 150', 130 crore countrymen have pledged to get rid from of the menace of single use plastic. In view of the kind of lead that India has taken towards environmental protection, today the countries of the entire world are looking towards India as a model example," he said in his address.

# Law against abuse of elderly parents to have more teeth

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A strengthened law against abuse and abandoning of elderly parents may take more time to see the light of the day as the Prime Minister's Office has asked the Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry to get the effectiveness of the existing law on the issue reviewed by a third party, according to sources.

The ministry, as part of amending the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, has proposed to increase the jail term for those who abandon or abuse their elderly parents to six months from the existing three months, said a senior official.

Strengthening the existing legislation has been among the topmost priorities of the Ministry in the second tenure of the Modi government.

The Act in its current form makes it a legal obligation for children and heirs to provide maintenance to senior citizens and parents.

According to sources, the ministry had drafted an



amended legislation and sent it to the PMO.

"A meeting was held recently at the PMO which then asked the ministry to get the effectiveness of the implementation of the existing legislation assessed by a third party," a source said.

The ministry is in the process of tendering for the exercise, the sources said.

In the draft law, the ministry also proposed widening the definition of children to include adopted children or stepchildren, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, grandchildren and minors represented

by their legal guardians. Currently, the term includes only sons, daughters and grandchildren. The draft act also proposes doing away with an upper limit of Rs 10,000 per month as maintenance amount, thus making it variable. "Those children who have good jobs and earn well should pay a higher amount for the upkeep of their parents," an official had said.

Also new clauses have been included to make it mandatory for the government to set standards for senior citizens care centres and multi-service daycare centres.



# Pak army targets posts, village along LoC in J&K's Poonch

PNS ■ JAMMU

In the second ceasefire violation in as many days, the Pakistani Army on Sunday resorted to firing and shelling on forward posts and villages along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, a defence spokesman said.

"At about 3.15 pm, Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by intense firing of small arms and shelling with Mortars in Balakote in Mendhar sector," the spokesperson said.

He said the Indian Army is retaliating befittingly and there was no immediate report of any casualty in the cross-border shelling.



# Punjab Agri Dept suggests measures to help curb stubble burning by farmers

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The farmers who are cultivating panchayat land and indulging in stubble burning should be barred from taking panchayat land on lease in future, Punjab's Agriculture Department has suggested.

In this regard, the agriculture department has written to the state's Rural Development and Panchayats Department to curb the illegal practice which is harmful for the environment.

There are nearly 1.37 lakh acres of panchayat land under agriculture, where the practice of stubble burning could be stopped effectively through such measures, Agriculture Secretary Kahan Singh Pannu said.

The Agriculture Department has sent a communique to Panchayats Department for issuing requisite directions in this regard so that farmers cultivating panchayat lands can be apprised about the proposal, which may disqualify them from bidding process of these lands in next auction, in case they indulge in stubble burning

after harvesting paddy, he said in an official statement here on Sunday.

Referring to celebration of 550th birth anniversary of Sikhism's founder, Guru Nanak Dev, in the state, Pannu said that it was our bounden duty to keep Punjab's environment safe and healthy on this pious occasion as millions of devotees from across the globe will be visiting the religious places associated with first Sikh Guru in different parts of the state.

"In reverence to this historic event, besides upholding the ideology of Guru Nanak to protect natural resources, the farmers should refrain from burning of paddy straw which poses serious threat to the environment, soil texture as well as human health," he added. Emphasising the need to sensitise the farmers holding Panchayat lands against the ill-effects of crop residue burning, Pannu said that the Rural Development and Panchayats Department should launch a massive drive to persuade the farmers to abstain from this practice.

# Five members of gang held for duping man of Rs 14 lakh

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Five members of a gang have been arrested for allegedly duping a man of Rs 14.40 lakh on the pretext of promising him good returns through the sale of medicines for cancer treatment, police said on Sunday.

The accused were arrested on September 26, an official of Kurar police station said. They are identified as Shehzad alias Zuber Siddique (41), Iftakar Afat Ahmed Sheikh(30), Maskoor Ahmed Siddique (38), Babban Siptehasan Sheikh (30) and Kaushal Rajbhai Mandliya (23), he said.

As per the complaint lodged by Jagjeet Singh Garcha (75), in May this year, he had received a message on an online messenger service, in which a woman, who identified herself as Rose Mary Kristen, told him that she was a doctor by profession.

Soon, she started chatting with him on WhatsApp as well. In June, Garcha received an e-mail from her, in which Kristen claimed that she works for a company which manufactures medicines from cancer cure, police said.

# 3 women drown, 4 fishermen missing after rains

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

Three women drowned after their car was swept away at a flooded causeway in Gujarat's Rajkot district on Sunday following heavy rains in several parts of Saurashtra region, officials said. Besides, four fishermen were feared drowned after their boat capsized off the coast near Gir Somnath district on Saturday evening, they said.

In Rajkot, four relatives, including three women, were on way to Jamkandora to attend a function when their car was swept away in a strong water current at an inundated causeway over the Fofal river, a police official said.



While the three women drowned, the man was rescued by locals and admitted to a hospital where his condition was reported to be critical, he said.

Meanwhile, a team of the Coast Guard and marine police were trying to locate the four missing fishermen whose boat

capsized in the Arabian sea off Nava Bandar coast in Una taluka of Gir Somnath, another official said. "The fishing boat owner learnt on Sunday morning that the vessel capsized. While three fishermen on board managed to swim to safety, four others are missing," he said.

On Sunday, heavy rains lashed several parts of Saurashtra, including Rajkot, Junagadh, Morbi and Devbhoomi Dwarka districts, as per the State Emergency Operation Centre.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast widespread rainfall across the state till Monday and advised fishermen not to venture into the sea. It has also predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall in north Gujarat and Saurashtra region. "There is a well-marked low pressure area over the Gulf of Kutch and neighbourhood, and the cyclonic circulations associated with it are likely to move and turn into a depression over north Gujarat during next 24 hours," it said.

# Kolkata house that hosted Gandhi to open as museum on Oct 2

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Rare photographs capturing Mahatma Gandhi's 1947 stay at Beliaghata here and articles used by him during the over three-week period when he tried to douse the flames of communal violence will be on display from October 2 at the house that hosted him, and has now been developed as a full-fledged museum.

In August and September of 1947, away from the celebration of Independence, Gandhi chose to be in Kolkata with some of his followers to calm the rioters down. He stayed in the building during his stay.

"The city was in flames. Gandhi and his followers stayed in the building and sat on an indefinite fast on August 31. Gandhi called off the fast on September 4 after leaders of the two communities visited him and laid down arms at his feet and cried for forgiveness," said

an office-bearer of the Purba Kolkata Gandhi Smarak Samiti, that has been managing the building since late 1950s.

She said Gandhi and his followers moved to the building, earlier known as 'Hyderi Manjil', on August 13, 1947. They lived in two of its seven rooms as only these two were inhabitable.

But once Gandhi left on September 4, the building again went into decay.

On October 2, 1985, the state government's Public Works Department carried out some maintenance works there in consultation with the samiti and it was named 'Gandhi Bhavan'.

But it didn't draw wider public attention. In 2009, when the then state governor Gopal Krishna Gandhi visited the place, he asked the samiti to put on display some of the objects used by the Mahatma.

Since then, it has been run as



a small 'museum' by the samiti and objects like the spinning wheel, cap, 'kharam', pillow and mattress used by the Mahatma during his stay are on display in one of the rooms, an official of the samiti said.

However, with limited resources of the samiti, there was not much public knowledge about the building and some of its exhibits and hence the number of visitors was few.

In 2018, the state government fully took over the building and it has been massively upgraded. This renovated building will open as a full-fledged state-run museum on Wednesday, when the nation

**In 2018, the state government fully took over the building and it has been massively upgraded. This renovated building will open as a full-fledged state-run museum on Wednesday, when the nation celebrates the 150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation**

celebrates the 150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation.

After the restoration of the entire building, these items will be displayed in a better and more organised way, the official

said, expressing satisfaction the state government has taken the organisation on board in turning the building into a full-fledged museum. There will be some new additions in the museum too.

"Items used by Gandhiji in the ashram he set up at Sodpur, 10 km from Beliaghata, to help inmates weave clothes by Charka and his correspondence (letter) with people in Noakhali, in present day Bangladesh, during the period of the turmoil in Kolkata and Noakhali will also be added," she said.

Also newspaper clippings recording that turbulent phase in Bengal history will also be displayed in all the seven rooms of the museum, she added.

"There are photographs too. For example, one is of a pensive Gandhiji looking at a dimly-lit lantern. Another, taken on September 4, shows teary-eyed community leaders

## SHORT READS



### Gujarat: 2 farm labourers killed by leopard in Amreli

**AMRELI (GUJ):** Two persons were mauled to death by a leopard at a farm in Molvel village in Dhari forest range of Gujarat's Amreli district, an official said on Monday. The incident comes a day after a 5-year-old boy was killed by a leopard in Champathal village here. "Karshan Sagathia and Bhutabhai Vala, who are relatives, were sleeping in the farm where they work when a leopard attacked and killed them late Saturday night. Their bodies were found by kin on Sunday morning," the forest department official said. He said cages had been placed in the vicinity of the incident to trap the leopard.



### Fill vacant posts in hospitals, demands HP Nurses Assn

**SHIMLA:** The Himachal Pradesh Staff Nurses Association on Sunday asked the state government to fill the vacant posts of nursing superintendents, matrons and ward sisters in the state's medical colleges and hospitals. In a statement issued here, the association's president Aruna Luthra and its general secretary Sita Thakur said the posts must be filled immediately to ensure better health services to patients. They also demanded that the vacant posts of assistant nursing director should also be filled without any further delay. The representatives also thanked Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur and Health Minister Vipin Parmar for appointing batch-wise staff nurses recently.

### Vadodara's MS University to host textile congress

**VADODARA:** The renowned Maharaja Sayajirao University Baroda here will organise a textile and costume seminar to be attended by over 120 foreign delegates between October 3-5 to mark Gandhi Jayanti, an official said on Sunday. The 5th International Textiles and Costume Congress is being organised by the Department of Clothing and Textiles of the Faculty of Family and Community Sciences. Dean Dr Anjali Karolia said. Karolia said 123 delegates from the United States of America, United Kingdom, Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey and China are expected to take part in the seminar, the highlight of which would be a discussion on Khadi. Head of department Madhu Sharma said the ITCC aims to bring together the designer's concept, the artisan's capacity and consumer's preference to boost growth of indigenous textile crafts. Karolia said a garment presentation titled 'Neev-The Foundation' will pay tribute to Khadi and will get students to connect with the charkha.

# Intense Hong Kong clashes ahead of China's 70th anniversary

AFP ■ HONG KONG

Fierce clashes broke out between protesters and riot police in Hong Kong on Sunday as thousands marched through the strife-torn city, during a day of global protests aimed at casting a shadow over communist China's upcoming 70th birthday.

Beijing is preparing for huge, tightly-choreographed festivities from Tuesday to mark the founding of the People's Republic of China, including a huge military parade that will revel in the country's emergence as a global superpower.

But ongoing unrest in Hong Kong threatens to upstage those celebrations as the semi-autonomous city boils with public anger over the erosion of its special freedoms under Beijing's rule.

Democracy activists in the financial hub had vowed to ramp up their nearly four-month-long campaign ahead of Tuesday's National Day celebrations, which Hong Kong protesters have dubbed "Day of Grief".

Sunday witnessed the most intense clashes in weeks as police used tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannons at multiple locations during running battles with hardcore protesters hurling rocks and petrol bombs.

Using online forums and social media, protesters had called for "anti-totalitarian" rallies to be held around the globe.

Marches were held in Australia and Taiwan, with more planned in some 40 locations across Europe and North America later in the day.

Clashes broke out before Hong Kong's unsanctioned march had begun after angry crowds in the shopping district of Causeway Bay surrounded and heckled officers who were conducting stop and searches.

But the tear gas fired by police only emboldened the crowds who then began walking through the streets in their thousands.

Some hardcore activists vandalised subway stations, tore down banners proclaiming the upcoming 70th anniversary celebrations and set fire to



Police clash with protesters in Hong Kong on Sunday

AP

makeshift barricades.

Many marchers were holding so-called "Chinazi flags", a version of the Chinese flag with yellow stars arranged in the shape of a swastika.

Police spent hours firing tear gas and rubber bullets at different locations across the city centre and were seen making multiple arrests throughout the day.

An AFP reporter witnessed masked men repeatedly beating pro-democracy protesters in the district of Wanchai using long sticks.

It was not clear if the men

were police dressed as protesters, a tactic used by the force with increased frequency.

A member of the media was also attended to by volunteer medics after being hit in the face with a police projectile. Hong Kong's protesters have stepped up their international lobbying in recent weeks.

A 20-year-old student, who gave his first name as Tony, was waving a Ukrainian flag.

Many of Hong Kong's more hardcore protesters have taken inspiration from the 2014 Ukrainian Revolution which ousted a pro-Russian

president.

"We are hoping that if we connect to different parts of the world and fight against Chinese communism, we will win this movement," he told AFP.

A 62-year-old protester, who gave his surname as Man, said he felt people's livelihoods and freedoms had deteriorated since Hong Kong was handed back to China by Britain in 1997.

"I don't want to topple the regime, but it definitely needs to be changed," he told AFP. "It needs to seek a reconciliation with the people."

Over the last 17 weeks, Hong Kong has witnessed the worst political unrest since its handover to China in 1997 with huge pro-democracy rallies as well as increasingly intense clashes between police and a minority of violent protesters.

The city's summer of discontent was first triggered by an extradition bill to the mainland that has now been shelved. But the movement has since morphed into a call for free elections and less intervention from Beijing.

## Sydney & Taiwan kick off global protests for Hong Kong

AFP ■ SYDNEY

Thousands rallied in Sydney and Taipei to support Hong Kong democracy protesters on Sunday, kicking off a day of planned "anti-totalitarianism" demonstrations globally.

In one of the largest solidarity marches in Australia since Hong Kong's latest pro-democracy movement began in June, black-clad participants took to the streets chanting "Add oil", a protest slogan denoting encouragement.

Some Sydney protesters held signs that read "Save Hong Kong" and "Stop tyranny", while others carried yellow umbrellas or handed out paper cranes in scenes that played out in other major cities across the country Sunday.

Pro-China supporters

stayed away, avoiding a repeat of the tense scenes that flared last month when opposing rallies held on the same day led to confrontations between the two sides.

Bill Lam, 25, who attended demonstrations in Hong Kong before moving to Sydney for study two months ago, said protesters had become "very desperate" and simply wanted authorities to respect "their basic human rights".

"I came here but I want to support them from Australia," he told AFP. "I feel so sad every night because I watch the live video (from Hong Kong) on Facebook and some social media." Frankie Lo, 47, said he had lived in Australia for years, but continued to care deeply about the situation back home.

"We still believe in one country, two systems, but they just have to follow the Basic

Law," he said, referring to the legal code that underpins the financial hub's semi-autonomous status. "It's not about independence."

He added that besieged Hong Kong chief executive Carrie Lam should set up an independent committee to investigate allegations of police brutality.

"It's something that we don't want to see," 25-year-old Tony Chung said of the violence that has featured in many of the summer protests.

"It's Hong Kong people fighting against Hong Kong people, which doesn't make sense at all." In Taipei some two thousand people, many dressed in black, gathered under torrential downpours outside parliament, the largest Hong Kong solidarity protest so far this summer on the island.

## UK's Johnson rallies party with vow to 'get Brexit done'

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Embattled British Prime Minister Boris Johnson gathered his Conservative party on Sunday for what could be its final conference before an election, promising to "get Brexit done".

Despite a string of parliamentary setbacks and a defeat in the Supreme Court, Johnson insists he will take Britain out of the European Union next month, with or without a deal with Brussels.

"What we need to do is to move on. And the way to do that is to get Brexit done on October 31," he told BBC television in Manchester, northwest England, where the conference is taking place.

His tough stance has put him at odds with the House of Commons, which has passed a law blocking a "no deal" exit, and lost him a number of his own MPs.

But it resonates with the overwhelmingly pro-Brexit Conservative party members who elected him in July — and are expected to give him a hero's welcome.

The conference "will be a rally for Boris Johnson and a rally for Brexit",



predicted Tim Bale, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London.

Even as it started, however, Johnson faced new questions about his relationship with a US businesswoman who won public grants.

The four-day conference also risks being disrupted by parliamentary business in London.

Opposition MPs were furious at Johnson's decision to suspend parliament for five weeks in early September — a move the Supreme Court quashed on Tuesday — and refused to agree to the normal conference recess.

Opposition parties are threatening manoeuvres, perhaps even a confidence vote, that could force Ministers

to race back to parliament.

But in what will be seen as a snub to MPs, Johnson will deliver his closing speech as planned on Wednesday, when he should be answering questions in the Commons.

The PM has had a turbulent two months in office, having suffered seven successive defeats in the Commons — in the process losing his majority.

He expelled 21 Conservative MPs when they backed a law requiring him to ask EU leaders to delay Brexit if he cannot get a divorce deal by a Brussels summit on October 17-18.

After the Supreme Court ruled his suspension of parliament unlawful, Johnson challenged opposition parties to bring down his Government. But the Labour party said it will do nothing to bring about an election until a "no deal" Brexit is no longer possible.

Johnson has responded with defiance and focused his ire on MPs, accusing them of "surrendering" to the EU and trying to undermine the 2016 referendum vote to leave.

His rhetoric drew accusations of stoking division, but he insisted Sunday he had been a "model of restraint".

## One year on, Saudi struggles to turn page on Khashoggi murder

AFP ■ RIYADH

Saudi Arabia is attempting a comeback on the global stage one year after journalist Jamal Khashoggi's murder, but the crisis has weakened it and undermined its de facto leader's ambitious reforms, analysts say.

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, a self-styled moderniser shaking up the conservative petrostate, was feted by global leaders and business titans before the gruesome murder in Saudi Arabia's Istanbul consulate on October 2 last year.

But the global fallout over the killing rendered the heir to the Arab world's most powerful throne a pariah, casting a shadow on his reforms, putting the kingdom's human rights record under the microscope and testing old alliances with Western powers.

The prince has since sought to shore up his tarnished reputation, launching slick PR campaigns to



win back foreign investment while accelerating what analysts call the kingdom's "eastward tilt" towards less critical allies such as China and India. But that has only had limited success.

"The spectre of Jamal Khashoggi hangs over the kingdom of Saudi Arabia," said Bruce Riedel, a former Central Intelligence Agency officer and author of a book on Saudi Arabia entitled "Kings and Presidents".

"The murdered journalist and commentator has not been forgotten, as Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman hoped."

The crown prince tells PBS in a forthcoming documentary that he accepted responsibility for the

killings, because it happened "under my watch" — but he denied having prior knowledge.

The CIA has reportedly concluded that the prince, who controls all major levers of power in the Saudi Government, likely ordered the killing.

A report by United Nations Special Rapporteur Agnes Callamard also said there was "credible evidence" linking him to the murder and an attempted cover up.

Her revelations, including audio transcripts showing the Saudi agents involved referring to Khashoggi as a "sacrificial animal", have piled pressure on Western allies to suspend arms sales to the kingdom.

That has come as a blow to Saudi Arabia amid heightened tensions with arch-rival Iran following major September 14 attacks on the heart of the kingdom's oil infrastructure, which Washington has blamed on Iran.

## China to send its top trade negotiator to US for talks

AP ■ BEIJING

China says its top trade negotiator will lead an upcoming 13th round of talks aimed at resolving a trade war with the United States.

Vice Commerce Minister Wang Shouwen said Sunday that Vice Premier Liu He would travel to Washington for the talks sometime after China's National Day holiday, which ends October 7.

Wang repeated the Chinese position that the two sides should find a solution on the basis of mutual respect and benefit.

The Trump administration has imposed tariffs on Chinese imports in a bid to win concessions from China, which has responded with tit-for-tat tariffs.

## Attacks, fraud fears dampen turnout in Afghan election

AFP ■ KABUL

Voter participation in Afghanistan's presidential elections appeared on Sunday to have been lower than in previous years, with turnout hit by the threat of attacks, a muted campaign and concerns of fraud.

Afghans went to the polls on Saturday to vote in the first round of a presidential race that will decide whether President Ashraf Ghani will win a second five-year term.

About 9.6 million Afghans in the war-torn nation — with an estimated population of 35 million — had registered to vote in the election, which was held at some 4,900 polling stations.

An initial tally released early Sunday by Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission showed that with data from slightly more than half the stations, just under 1.1 million people had voted.

If that turnout trend holds, it would represent a participation level of less than 25 per cent — lower than any of Afghanistan's three previous presidential elections.

In 2014, for instance, turnout was a little under 50 per cent, although direct comparisons are tough because previous polls were tainted by allegations of systemic fraud.

Authorities heralded Saturday's election as a success



because the Taliban were unable to pull off a large-scale attack resulting in high casualty numbers, and there were fewer technical difficulties than some had feared.

But the insurgents nonetheless pushed their offensive on the democratic process, conducting a string of bombings at polling stations and engaging Afghan security

forces in clashes across the country.

According to the Afghanistan Analysts Network, which compiled incidents through various sources, more than 400 attacks had been reported over the course of the election day.

The Taliban claimed to have conducted 531 attacks, while the interior ministry said "the enemy" had carried out 68 assaults.

The official death toll is five security forces. But in years past, authorities have suppressed information on election day only to later give larger numbers.

Still, Shaharazad Akbar, who heads the Afghan

Government's Independent Human Rights Commission, said she breathed "a sigh of relief" that the election had gone smoothly compared to previous years.

"The Afghan security forces really showed a real capability in managing the security situation across Afghanistan in ensuring people have access to polling centres," she told AFP.

But turnout was also hampered by scepticism about the electoral process.

Previous polls, including the 2014 presidential election, were undermined by widespread allegations of vote-buying, ballot stuffing and fraud.

## 36 killed, many hurt in road accident in China

PTI ■ BEIJING

At least 36 people have been killed and as many injured in a road accident in east China's Jiangsu Province, local authorities said on Sunday.

The accident occurred at around 7 am on Saturday, when a packed coach with 69 passengers collided with a truck carrying three people on an expressway, according to the rescue team.

An initial investigation showed that the accident was caused by a flat tyre in the coach, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Further investigation is underway, it said.

Road accidents are common in China, where traffic regulations are often flouted or go unenforced. A majority of the accidents occur due to violations of traffic laws.

China's frequently overcrowded long-distance buses are particularly prone to fatalities. There were more than 180,000 traffic accidents and 58,000 deaths in 2015, according to the authorities.

Traffic law violations comprised almost 90 per cent of those road accidents where people died or were injured, with the total number of such infractions reaching an astonishing 442 million.

## Priti Patel rules out prospect of ISIS bride returning to UK

PTI ■ LONDON

Britain's senior-most Indian-origin Cabinet Minister, Priti Patel, on Sunday ruled out the prospect of British Islamic State (ISIS) recruit Shamima Begum returning to the UK under her watch as home secretary.

Begum, who was 15-years-old when she secretly fled her home in east London, in 2015 to join the terrorist group is now living in a camp run by Kurdish forces in Northern Syria. She has repeatedly begged British authorities to permit her to return, even if that meant imprisonment in a UK jail.

"Our job is to keep our country safe. We don't need people who have done harm and left our country to be part of a death cult and to perpetrate that ideology," Patel told The Sun on Sunday.

"We cannot have people who would do us harm allowed to enter our country — and that includes this woman," she said, in reference to Begum. Under British law a person can have their citizenship revoked but they cannot be made stateless.

Patel's predecessor, British Pakistani Sajid Javid, had withdrawn Begum's British citizenship due to her Bangladeshi roots, something she

has upheld this week.

Patel also recalled being threatened with a knife by an armed thug on her own doorstep and said the man pulled out his blade when she asked a group of young people smoking on her garden wall to move so she could enter her home.

The alleged incident happened 10 years ago before she became an MP in the Commons.

She managed to escape any injury by using her rucksack as a shield before fleeing into her home in Witham, Essex, where she called the police. The 47-year-old, who is now guarded around the clock due to her position, told the newspaper: "As in many other cases, the incident outside my house was a drug-related."

"It was a truly shocking experience but one which I know many other people have had to face, sometimes with a less fortunate outcome. Violent crime concerns us all. It invades communities and homes."

"It can break neighbourhoods and it has such a long-standing, chilling impact and effect." Her revelation came as she unveiled her plans to enforce tougher jail terms, give police officers greater powers and roll out an extra 10,000 Tasers to tackle violent crime on the country's streets.

## Protests in Lebanon's capital over worsening economic crisis

AP ■ BEIRUT

Hundreds of Lebanese protested on Sunday in the country's capital and other areas over an economic crisis that worsened over the past two weeks, with worries over dollar-reliant Lebanon's local currency losing value for the first time in more than two decades.

Lebanon is facing a deep-running fiscal crisis as it staggers under one of the highest debt ratios in the world, at USD 86 billion or more than 150 per cent of the country's gross domestic product.

Many of Sunday's protesters in downtown Beirut blamed Lebanese political leaders for the widespread mismanagement and corruption.

The protesters gathered shortly before noon in the central Martyrs Square, then marched toward the government headquarters where riot police were deployed.

"The people want to bring down the regime," some of the protesters chanted as riot police stopped them from marching toward the government headquarters. The slogan echoed that of the so-called Arab Spring uprisings of 2011.

Other protesters chanted "peaceful" and tried to stop the young men who clashed with security forces.

Despite tens of billions of dollars spent since the 15-year civil war ended in 1990, Lebanon still has crumbling infrastructure including daily hours-long electricity cuts, trash piles in the streets and



often sporadic, limited water supplies from the state-owned water company.

Last week, the local currency reached 1,650 Lebanese pounds to the dollar at exchange shops after it had been stable at 1,500 since 1997.

Although the official price is still pegged at 1,500 pounds to the dollar, people find it difficult to get hard currency at this rate from local banks.

The protest was called for by activists from the civil society as well as individuals.

Last week, amid fears that there will be an open-ended strike at gas stations, people waited for long hours to get vehicles filled.

Because of the shortage in hard currency, there have been complaints by importers of fuel, medicine and wheat, that they buy the products from abroad paying in US dollars and when they sell in Lebanon they do so in the local currency.

## Pope Francis decries world's indifference to migrants & refugees

AP ■ VATICAN CITY

Pope Francis on Sunday decried "the culture of comfort" that leads to indifference in the face of a global migration and refugee crisis.

The pope who has made caring for migrants a hallmark of his papacy spoke during a Mass for the World Day for Migrants and Refugees.

"We cannot be indifferent to the tragedy of old and new forms of poverty, to the bleak isolation, contempt and discrimination experienced by those who do not belong to 'our group,'" Francis said.

"We cannot remain insensitive, our hearts deadened, before the misery of so many innocent people. We must not fail to weep. We must not fail to respond."

The pontiff has often spoken of the need to be welcoming to migrants, travelling to the Italian island of Lampedusa in 2013 on his first trip as pope to comfort refugees.

His message found political resistance in Italy's previous



populist Government, during which the former hard-line interior Minister, Matteo Salvini, campaigned to prevent the arrival in Italy of migrants rescued at sea by humanitarian groups.

During his homily on Sunday, the pope also noted the weapons that fuel wars are often produced and sold in other regions "which are then unwilling to take in the refugees generated by these conflicts."

Many migrants and refugees from conflicts throughout the world attended the Mass in St. Peter's Square, which closed with the unveiling of a bronze statue by

Canadian artist Timothy Schmalz depicting migrants packed on a boat.

"This statue depicts a group of migrants from various cultures and over different historical periods. I wanted this artistic work here in St Peter's Square to remind everyone of the evangelical challenge of hospitality," Francis said.

During the Mass, a multi-ethnic chorus sang and the incense burned came from a refugee camp in southern Ethiopia, where refugees are rekindling a 600-year-old tradition of collecting incense. The Vatican said the incense "reminds us that refugees can also thrive, not just survive."

# Takeaways from UN

Modi has clearly won this round at UNGA but has to restore normalcy in J&K to ensure that the goodwill stays with us



Normally, speeches by heads of States at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) are really about taking notes for a global idea bank of the future. It is testimony to their leadership in meeting challenges unique to their own and presenting the lessons learnt to the world. On that count, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made full use of that brief in his speech and in the process recast India's story as that of an emergent world power. So he transcended the binaries surrounding Pakistan and Kashmir, that one issue that has been whipped

about as the only magnet of international attention, and talked about a multilateral world that ought to deal with shared concerns together. In this narrative, he shifted focus to India's attempts at meeting UN development goals and how these could become a template for other developing countries, be it in managing resources, the most precious being water, climate change, hygiene and healthcare for the poor. Invoking the spirit of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, or "the world is one family", he argued why we no longer "have the option to confine ourselves within our boundaries." In fact, he built up India's social experiments as political capital, emphasising how we were at the forefront of the battle against climate change although our past contribution to global warming was very low. In fact, his commitment to combat single-use plastic at a practical level was suitably applauded. One may argue that Modi converted only the flagship projects of his Government as global selling points but, of course, you cannot deny him smart diplomacy by executing issues in real time that were mostly in the realm of intent so far, and aligning them with millennial goals. In fact, he linked the need for a harmonious society with the absence of terrorism. Invoking both the compassionate spirit of Buddha and quoting Swami Vivekananda's vision of peace, he graduated India's fight against terrorism as a common cause with other member-states, arguing that they should unite simply because terrorism undermined the reason for the UN's existence. In the process, he reduced Kashmir to a subset of many conflicts around the world and seized the upper hand by not mentioning it at all. Besides, this stand is also consistent with the Indian position that the abrogation of Article 370 was within its Constitutional space and since it was its internal matter, it need not figure on the world stage. Modi also smartly referred to a democracy of 1.3 billion and how he won the biggest mandate, dispelling any apprehension of heavy-handedness and underpinning his worth as representative of the will of a nation. So yes, as far as optics is concerned, he did appear to display some statesmanship and maturity, claiming a space that Pakistan doesn't have, making its pitch look short-sighted, predictable and parochial.

The latter's Prime Minister Imran Khan actually was right in admitting that "for the world, India is a market." And from the Pakistani perspective, he had no option but to go blazing guns on Kashmir, pressing all the buttons—Islamophobia, nuclear threat and a potential conflict—all with a huge dose of self-pity of a smaller nation defenceless against a big neighbour and ignoring his nation's history of genocide. Coming after Modi's speech, this provocation clearly didn't have a context and fell flat. Except for China, which raised Kashmir as a "dispute from the past", there were no echoes. But, of course, China should remember that its very act of pushing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was in contravention of UN principles. Besides, as US diplomats pointed out, if Pakistan staked claim to the championship of the Islamic world, it should raise the persecution of the Uyghurs Muslims by China. Of course, Modi has won this round and staved off overt US interest by getting a historic energy deal signed between Tellurian and Petronet. However, there is the moral victory that is still elusive, one that he himself set the bar for by repeatedly emphasising diversity, harmony and democracy. If he doesn't want the tide of world opinion to swerve away, he has to address the lockdown in the Valley. While the world at large may have made peace with the legality of the changed situation in Kashmir, they are perturbed about a humanitarian crisis. It has been over 50 days and militant attacks have begun in spurts. The only way to counter this is by restoring a semblance of normalcy in civilian life there and allow voices to be heard. Even Kashmiris know that Article 370 had all but lost teeth and had remained a tokenism. But the muzzling of reactions fired them up and can erupt with volcanic fury.

# IIT's exit plan

No need to drop out, you can get a BSc degree after three years at the premier institution



With the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Council approving some major structural reforms relating to the performance of its students, it may well have saved itself the embarrassment of those dropping out midway. Of several measures, the most sought after decision was to ensure an "honourable" exit for weaker students, who had to abruptly discontinue the course because they could not cope with the progressive pressure it entailed. Now they can get a BSc after three years even if they sign

up for a four-year BTech degree and opt out. Although those who qualify for IITs have a certain standard, many are not able to peak as is expected with course challenges becoming tougher. This often leads to mental breakdowns, depression, a loss of self-worth among young hopefuls. Now engineering students will stand to benefit as they can use their IIT experience and sign up for job-ready courses. Besides, the new rules will address the colossal problem of college dropouts. Excellence is of worth only when there is commensurate rewards in the job sector and dropouts certainly don't make the cut either way. Now they have an option. This, coupled with a tenure-tracking system for faculty members, which calls for the institutes to hire teachers/professors directly for five to six years instead of the age-old practice of confirming their roles after year-long probation, may as well bring the institute at par with its global peers. The decision, however, has been completely left to individual IITs.

Figures pertaining to dropouts in engineering colleges are worrisome. Of the 9,00,000 students who appear for the JEE main exam, only 13,500 actually get into IITs in 16 cities. Despite the struggle in getting a coveted seat, according to data from the Ministry of Human Resource Development, as many as 2,461 students dropped out of their courses in the past two years. While the dream may have come intuitively to some, they fail to perceive its rigour. This, coupled with a rigid grading system, often throws them askew. It is time to drop the one-size-fits-all formula. We may have a skilled workforce but then it should have enough readiness and aptitude for new sunshine sectors and application-oriented pursuits. Micro entrepreneurs will need to be encouraged as will new service sectors. Till we figure out the end use of knowledge and map it ahead, we will never be able to encash our demographic dividend.

# opinion Wildfire syndrome

There is so much junk floating on the internet and social media that it is our civic duty to clean it up and follow the way citizens rescued Mumbai's Versova beach



KUSHAN MITRA

Over the past week, I must have received several forwarded messages on WhatsApp and other messaging services. Some of them were really silly memes making fun of our politicians, irrespective of one's political leanings. One must really appreciate the creative and sharp minds behind some of them. Of course, there are more "good morning" messages than I choose to recall. After two decades into the journalism profession and being spammed, I have become fairly adept at ignoring pointless messages after just reading the header. I have some 10,000 unread emails for a reason after all, possibly because I procrastinate deleting them. That, however, is not the point I want to make in this column.

The moot issue is that while the forwards received by me instantly activated my bullshit filters, a couple of them were particularly egregious. On a school group, where classmates keep cribbing about the current economic slowdown, one message in the form of an image popped up wherein it was claimed that after 72 years, the Indian Rupee had weakened against the Bangladeshi Taka.

Surprisingly, there were no facts to back up this assertion that can so easily be countered not just by a Google search—the search string would be "INR/BDT" in case one keeps wondering. Don't look at "INR/USD" though. But there is also the rather simple fact that Bangladesh didn't even exist as a sovereign nation until 1971, 48 years ago.

While I may doubt the general knowledge level of the public at large, every Indian schoolkid knows of 1971 as the finest hour of the Indian Army. We all also know that the Bangladesh war was fought to stop the genocide being perpetrated by the Pakistani Army and its allies. The 1971 war resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. Yet, I got this forward and while I have started to hold my tongue on most such groups, I had to pipe in and thankfully, so did several others, doubting the veracity of the information.

Now, the person who forwarded this message is not the smartest individual in the world. He was not in school and he isn't now, as this message proves. But it was his reaction to the angst that this message raised, which was truly shocking. While I did not expect him to be apologetic, his reaction was, and I quote, "Dude, I don't check messages, I just forward them." Can we wonder how what we describe as "fake news" spreads? Just because we see a meme or even read a forward that subscribes to our views, we cannot immediately take it to be the gospel truth. If indeed something sounds fishy, we owe it to the people to whom the message is being forwarded to at least do a



cursory check of the facts involved. We already have a smartphone for heaven's sake.

This forward was, however, badly thought up and easily disproven. The next message was a bit off not just because of the facts it espoused but also the rosy feel-good blanketing it came wrapped in. The worse still, this came on a group of professionals. We have all read those lovely feel-good stories, the ones where one should never lose hope or others where something unexpected led to an invention. Two decades of adulthood have taught me that life really isn't like that but these stories make for a nice read.

The problem is that most of them are made-up facts and pure fiction. This forward speaks of how a particular product was invented, mentions real companies and gives seemingly real dates. It all looked so believable until one just checked a single fact and it all fell apart. You might argue that if one assertion out of 10 in the forwarded message was wrong, it does not disprove it.

Let me assure you that one single mistake can ruin the most comprehensive inves-

“  
**IN A COUNTRY WHERE EXPECTATIONS OF JUSTICE ARE MINIMAL, MISINFORMATION CAN KILL. IT IS CONTINGENT ON THOSE OF US, WHO CONSIDER OURSELVES WELL-READ AND INFORMED, TO CORRECT MISTAKES OR AT LEAST CALL MISINFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS**  
 ”

tigative story and one misstep by the prosecutor can keep a murderer free. This urban legend had far too many errors and mistakes for it to have been true, no matter how good it sounded.

Every single fact could have been searched easily online. If it had come from the sort of person who sent the first forward, I would have, I regret to say, ignored it. But because this came from someone with more than a modicum of intelligence, it was possibly more dangerous than the first, although there was no immediate malice involved unlike the political nature of the first forward.

I am sure that over the years, I might have received thousands of such forwards and genuinely, I did not have the time or the energy to ignore them properly. But these two instances were shocking and it makes one realise how quickly misinformation can spread, thanks to the callous nature of people.

Sometimes it is the first person who sends the same forward to 50 different people and turns fiction into fact. The second case is where someone you trust not to send you misinformation does exactly that.

I called out both the cases and while the first individual was unapologetic, which is a bit scary, the second at least apologised and assured me that he had sent the message in "good faith." I did argue that "good faith" barely exists anymore.

While one should not draw inference from these two instances, we all know how much misinformation floats around WhatsApp. Sitting with journalists and technologists at discussions, it might look like a slippery slope into an idiocracy. But we should all start doing our bit.

The fact is that in a country where expectations of justice are minimal, misinformation can kill. It is contingent on those of us, who consider ourselves well-read and informed, to correct mistakes or call misinformation on social media platforms.

Just like Afroz Shah got tired of the apathy and began the successful movement to clear the Versova Beach in Mumbai, something that has paid massive dividends with thousands of turtles hatching on the once trashy beach, we have to do the same on social media.

(The writer is Managing Editor, The Pioneer)

## SOUNDBITE

While our progressive steps in J&K are receiving global support, Imran Khan has been running around door-to-door and creating content for cartoon makers.



Union Defence Minister —Rajnath Singh

I am living my dream of working with the people I want to work with. I am really secure with what I am doing and I am getting to do the work I want to do.



Actor —Kartik Aaryan

Will Pakistan acknowledge that it is the only Government in the world that provides pension to an individual listed by the UN in the Al Qaeda and Daesh sanctions list?



India's UN official —Vidisha Maitra

We also wanted that the world should see India and the RSS as one and the same, and not two separate entities. Our Imran sahab has done this job very well.



RSS functionary —Krishna Gopal

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Mind your business

Sir — Instead of criticising the Government's actions in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) can do a lot better by playing a crucial role in preventing and eradicating terrorism, which is spreading like dark clouds across geographies. After all, the OIC is the second largest inter-governmental organisation in the world after the United Nations. In fact, the OIC group's statement, calling on India to "rescind its actions revoking Article 370", was given on the basis of religion rather than human values and ethics. The organisation must take into consideration how miserably and mercilessly Kashmiri Pandits and other Hindus were compelled to leave the Valley a few decades ago.

Moreover, it has no business to give a communal colour to J&K when its own record of conflict resolution between member states is poor. India, too, must show it to the world that its Kashmir policy is in the interest of the Kashmiris.

J Akshobhya Mysuru

### Trump has the edge

This refers to the editorial, "Another Trumpcard" (September 28). The whistleblower complaint filed against US President Donald Trump by a national security official and the transcript of telecon between him and the Ukrainian President, where the former discussed about ex-Vice-President Joe Biden, allegedly to influence the latter to investigate the business dealings of Biden's son, Hunter, reveals much. This has led to an inquiry into impeachment proceedings against Trump. But whether all of this will lead to any meaningful progress is the moot question.

Proceedings in the committee ended up more as a preview to the presidential campaign with visible partisan grandstanding. The Democrats are hoping to dent Trump's image in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election. At least 140 House Democrats are in favour of an impeachment proceeding against Trump for leaning on a foreign power to meddle in domestic politics. The US President, on the other hand, is engaged in keeping his flock together in the House, the Senate

### Trump in soup

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Another Trumpcard" (September 28). Allegations levelled by the Democrats that US President Donald Trump had abused the power of his office to help with his re-election are very serious. Trump might seek to put



as also a highly loyal electorate. Trump is not a lame duck President. He has an upper hand, particularly as the line-up of hopefuls from the Democrats are neither famed for oratory or have a very high standing in competitive politics.

R Narayanan Navi Mumbai

a bold face on the Ukrainian issue and pretend that he is safe but he must be having sleepless nights for the prospect of an ignominious impeachment is too hard to be shrugged off.

The Democrats are determined to head him off at the pass. They have got something to beat him with and they are sure to make the best use of it to hurt

him. The impeachment drama presages a full-blown political war between President Trump and the House of Democrats in the times to come. How the present turmoil will impact America remains to be seen. A clash between the executive and the legislature plunges a country into chaos.

JS Acharya Hyderabad

### Laws that bring change

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Survivor's rights" (September 27). Earlier in March this year, a rape victim from Maharashtra threatened to kill herself after the Bombay High Court granted bail to the accused. Thankfully, due to police intervention, an untoward incident was averted.

Indeed, it is very traumatic for rape victims to hear the ordeal of their cases being recounted in court premises in the presence of the accused themselves. It is equally disheartening that the accused get the bail without any consent from the victim. The Delhi High Court's decision to ensure that rape survivors get a chance to have a say in providing bail to the accused is a significant move that will go a long way to empower them. Such a move, however, must be replicated in other courts as well. Slowly but surely, the laws are changing for the betterment of society.

Jhanvi Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

**FIRST COLUMN**

## Much ado, but not much done

The first-ever UN Youth Climate Summit is now over. Will the self-proclaimed masters of the world at least attempt a global climate plan?



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

September 24 has come and gone without the most ardent of climate activists recognising in any significant manner that they had no views on the Youth Climate Summit at the United Nations (UN). The three-day-long United Nations Climate Action Summit culminated on September 23 and thousands of young people also marched and rallied for urgent corrective action.

The Youth Climate Summit was the first time that the UN got involved with a generational issue. The debate was not just about development, equity or climate change, it was and remains about something much deeper. It continues to deal with paradigms of human welfare, development and one could add, happiness.

The global leaders of so-called significant economies meet ever so often in different exotic locations to discuss issues which they consider grim. What these dialogues achieve is a well-kept secret because the statements post these events are full of claptrap, self-approving, ambiguous and trite phrases. No country seems to be keen to reduce its own carbon emission. The stronger ones urge the weaker ones (who depend upon them for economic support) to behave themselves and help the globe. No significant breakthrough in industrial strategising, of say, even the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, is ever evident. The outcomes are there for all to see.

The newspapers report that the Santiago Climate Change Conference that will be held in Chile from December 2, 2019, will heed the recommendations of the Youth Climate Summit. From the day this writing appears in the columns, the Climate Change Conference will once again be charged to take bold and concrete steps.

In the meanwhile, an individual called Greta Thunberg has become a global sensation, surely, a heady experience for a teenage girl. The slogan is about future generations. In the meantime, the world rocks along and the rich and the powerful count the booty without recognising that even the identified paradises of recreation and indulgence may soon be needing not just bottled water but possibly bottled air.

The Youth Climate Summit had all the trappings of an extravaganza. Words like "unveiling" and even "act now platform" were thrown up. Interestingly, the UN Secretary General's envoy on youth is Jayathma Wickramanayake and she was, as would be expected, quite upbeat. No prizes for guessing how the rhetoric unfolded: rising temperatures were cited and impact of climate change on various facets of life was reported. The World Meteorological Organisation was quoted and heat waves and record-breaking fires were cited. The truth is the changing climate has not only affected ease of living but the food chain itself.

Ever since, Glacier 'OK' (Okjokull) disappeared in Iceland due to climate change, the talk of warming gained attention. Interestingly, even a monument was placed at the site, in memory of the glacier that disappeared. As of today, the rainforests of Amazon are on fire and nations are proclaiming their sovereignty on the Amazon regions in their territory. A political blame game is on, full throttled. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, the Brazilian President, even proclaimed in his address at the UN that the Amazon is no heritage of humanity and further, the rainforests were not the lungs of the world.

He called it all sensational reporting. In the meanwhile, air pollution from the Indonesian forest fires is currently putting nearly ten million children at risk. The blazes were reported to be releasing vast amounts of greenhouse gases. Could all this be mere sensationalism or is something really amiss? The media has it that about 10 million people under the age of 18 live in Sumatra and parts of Borneo, where this will have a major effect.

In Sri Lanka, dryness and rising temperature have caused serious erosion of potential soil moisture. This is going to affect irrigation requirements for field crops, including paddy.

Will the self-proclaimed masters of the world at least attempt a global climate plan? To do this, however, one need not come face to face with a genuine crisis in several parts of the world of nearly irreversible environment degradation.

One wonders how science has been used. It is no prudishness to point out what the 'Shanti Paathi' of *Yajurveda* — in a free translation — has to say on this: "Peace to all. Peace to the sky and the outer space, the Earth, water, medicinal plants, all other plants, the gods of the world, creation and rebirth. May peace come to me." In another reference, the *Rig Veda* wishes "The winds to bring sweetness for the truthful and rivers to bestow sweetness."

The plants were seen as having some consciousness and the animals were known to co-exist with the humans. That is India's heritage thought on climate, culture and nurturance.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant)

NO ACTIONS THAT UNILATERALLY CHANGE STATUS QUO SHOULD BE TAKEN. CHINA HOPES TO SEE THE (INDO-PAK) DISPUTE EFFECTIVELY MANAGED.

—CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTER

WANG YI



OTHERS MUST RESPECT INDIA'S SOVEREIGNTY AND DESIST FROM EFFORTS TO CHANGE STATUS QUO THROUGH THE ILLEGAL CPEC IN POK.

—SPOKESPERSON, MEA

RAVEESH KUMAR

# Lessons from Gandhi's home

The Mahatma's impact on social transformation has been indelible. Yet, his true legacy is in shreds. There's a lack of understanding of his beliefs today



MOÏN QAZI

Eighty kilometres to the east of Nagpur lies Bapu Kutī, a historic site in Sewagram, the "village of service", nestled in the serene rustic surroundings close to the Wardha district. This was the humble abode of Mahatma Gandhi from 1936 to 1948 and was the epicentre of the Indian freedom movement. During the 12 years Gandhi lived here, Wardha became the *de facto* nationalist capital of India. A motley array of foreign delegations — politicians, pacifists, religious leaders and do-gooders of all complexions — regularly found their way to Sewagram. In July 1942, the Quit India resolution was passed here and in 1946, Gandhi left the ashram, never to return.

By 1931, Gandhi was already famous. He had travelled to Europe, where he had drawn eager crowds and journalists and where he had met a roster of the famous and the powerful that included the British monarch, Benito Mussolini, Charlie Chaplin and Romain Rolland. Gandhi wrote to Jammalal Bajaj, an Indian industrialist, a philanthropist, and Indian independence fighter, that he wanted to live alone in a hut in a small village. However, his presence alone was enough to draw scores of votaries as well as visitors from across the country and around the world as Jawaharlal Nehru came several times. Soon, there was a road and one hut became a cluster. The British set up a telephone so that they could communicate with the Mahatma. However, Gandhi's attempt to disconnect from the world failed just like his attempt to change India from outside did. It, however, did quicken the course of the trajectory towards independence.

One does not have to be a Gandhi devotee to be able to appreciate the austere beauty of the ashram's premises. Gandhi shared these thoughts about who should consider residing in it: "He alone deserves to be called an inmate of the ashram who has ceased to have any worldly relation — one involving monetary interests — with his parents or other relatives; who has no other needs save those of food and clothing; and who is ever watchful in the observance of the 11 cardinal vows. Therefore, he who needs to make savings should never be regarded as an ashram inmate."

Bapu Kutī is nothing short of a museum. A quaint bath, an elderly, dignified telephone box and neat little alcoves shyly peeping from the walls, all serve to create an inexplicable nostalgia for a past that we were not even part of. There are some bare relics: Glasses, a spoon, a pocket watch and a pumice stone to scrub his body. The kitchen contains the flour grinder Gandhi put to use occasionally. His cot and massage table have also been retained. The sacredness of the place is preserved by the several sombre trees that have themselves withstood the passage of history and ravages of time. The practice of daily prayers in the open continues. The campus gushes with humility evoking memories of its master.

The structures were to be simple enough for a small group of ordinary people to build and maintain on their own. Indeed, the modest scale of the lodgings comes as a surprise to many visitors. The cottages are well-crafted with thick mud-brick walls, clay roof tiles and palm leaf thatching. The most important of these historic structures are Adi Niwas, Ba Kutī and Bapu Kutī.



SEWAGRAM, WHICH WAS GANDHI'S RESIDENCE FOR NEARLY 10 YEARS, IS NO LONGER A VIBRANT PLACE INHABITED BY THE INDEFATIGABLE LEADER AND HIS DEVOTED VOTARIES. IT IS A SHELL OF WHAT IT WAS, A TIME CAPSULE FONDLY AND PAINSTAKINGLY PRESERVED BUT DEVOID OF ITS LIVING INHABITANTS AND SHORN OF ITS ORIGINAL AURA



Adi Niwas was the first house built at Sewagram and was the place where the first ashram members lived together. Bapu Kutī and Ba Kutī are the cottages of Mahatma Gandhi and his wife, Kasturba Gandhi, respectively.

Originally determined to live in an isolated hut, Gandhi decided that his own house should be open from all sides in order to let natural elements and his visitors circulate freely. The building's design, though loosely inspired by traditional village houses, was an idealised design from Gandhi's imaginary village "in my mind" as he wrote in his famous exchange of letters with Nehru in 1945.

Bapu Kutī is a sparse and austere mud-walled cottage. The building remains as a symbol of the Mahatma's dedication to a mode of living that treads lightly on the land and is accessible in its material simplicity to even the poorest. Three of Gandhi's original possessions are highlighted in the building today: His iconic round-shaped spectacles, his pocket-watch and his two cross-strapped slippers. These three have taken on a symbolic value in the commemoration of the great leader. The first enabled him to see the world around him with clarity and the second helped him keep and respect time — that of others as much as his own — and the third symbolised his light but unmistakable footprint on the Indian landscape.

A number of Gandhi's other sparse possessions are exhibited at Bapu Kutī: A walking stick, a portable spinning wheel, a paperweight, an inkpot, a pencil stand, a bowl, prayer beads and a small statue of three monkeys among other things. The cottage is partitioned into separate rooms, which left some space for Gandhi to write, meet visitors and for guests to sleep. It also contains a latrine connected to a septic tank with a note informing visitors that Gandhi

cleaned it himself. Bamboo shelving hangs from the ceiling for storage. For aesthetic effect, Mirabehn herself drew simple ornamental designs on the walls of palm trees, an "Om" symbol and a spinning wheel.

The food was also prepared according to rule number four of Gandhi's (Sabarmati) ashram rules. According to Gandhi, the first step to control sexual appetite — that is essential for curbing one's selfish impulses — was to eliminate the pleasure of eating: "Food must, therefore, be taken like medicine under proper restraint." Fischer noted in his diary that he didn't like the mush that was served and after the third day, he declined to eat any more of it.

The peace of village life was bitter-sweet. Sewagram's calm was, in fact, due to the absence of any real, living activity. Today, the ashram is preserved in time in the manner of an old sepia photograph but the idealised life it documents is now dead. Sewagram is no longer a vibrant place inhabited by the indefatigable Gandhi and his devoted votaries. It is a shell of what it was, a time capsule fondly and painstakingly preserved but devoid of its living inhabitants and shorn of its original aura.

The site is at once stimulating and soothing, haunting yet peaceful. It is as if the aura of the man himself hovers above it. Part of the reason, of course, is that the ashram simply doesn't attract that many visitors as Gandhi's importance and pertinence to ordinary Indians fades.

Gandhi had warned in 1928 that if India took to industrialisation after the manner of the West, "it would strip the world bare like locusts." We disregarded him and adopted energy and resource-guzzling technologies rather than seeking more sustainable alternatives. The results are there for all to see. Many of our rivers are biologically dead.

The chemical contamination of the soil is immense and possibly irreversible. Sewagram continued to nurture Gandhi's vision of a sustainable world.

Gandhi infused India with a revolutionary blend of politics and spirituality. He called his action-based philosophy satyagraha or the truth force. For Jawaharlal Nehru, the defining image of Gandhi was: "Many pictures rise in my mind of this man (Gandhi) ...but the picture that is dominant... is as I saw him marching, staff in hand, to Dandi on the Salt March in 1930. Here was the pilgrim on his quest of truth, peaceful, determined and fearless, who would continue that quest and pilgrimage, regardless of consequences."

Gandhi's impact was indelible. He guided India to independence and forced his countrymen to question their deepest prejudices about caste, religion and violence. His ideas continue to resonate across the world and he has inspired generations of great leaders. As Einstein summed up in his tribute: "Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth."

Yet the true reality is that Gandhi's legacy is in shreds. It had already started waning immediately after his death. His vision of villages as the most fertile ground for India's progress now seems like a utopian dream. The Governor-General of independent India, C Rajagopalachari, gave a disenchanting verdict in the years that immediately followed Gandhi's death. It still rings true: "The glamour of modern technology, money and power is so seductive that no one — I mean no one — can resist it. The handiwork of Gandhians, who still believe in his philosophy of a simple life in a simple society, are mostly cranks."

(The writer is Member, NITI Aayog's National Committee on Financial Literacy and Inclusion for Women)

# The archaic elephant in the room

Decades after General Zia's demise and even after the revival of reforms in Saudi Arabia, certain segments in Pakistan are still forcing their ideas of morality upon others based on their ideas and laws that exist in the books



NADEEM PARACHA

On September 15, the Haripur district education officer issued a notification directing school principals to ensure that girl students don an abaya. Such instructions continue to be issued, even though on several occasions educational institutions have been forced to withdraw these directives after facing severe criticism on social media.

Dress codes for female students in most Pakistani educational institutions are already sufficiently modest. Yet, there have been cases in which women students have been asked to enhance their modesty with articles of clothing that are thought to be even more morally correct — as if the shalwar kameez

and dupatta were not good enough. The reason such moves now attract more debate is because they have become anachronisms. They seem out of place. Indeed, they found more traction back in the 1980s, but the forces that encouraged such enforced morality in Pakistan are now in the process of rolling back their previous ideas of morality. Therefore, such instructions and acts whenever they crop up now, look like relics of a different time.

Let me explain. Morality projects navigated by the State and certain political and social groups in Pakistan were largely influenced by two Muslim-majority countries: Saudi Arabia and Iran. In October 2017, Saudi crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, who has been spearheading an unprecedented campaign of social reform in the kingdom, told the UK newspaper *The Guardian* that the Saudi monarchy introduced "rigid doctrines" and laws in Saudi Arabia due to the fallout of the Islamic Revolution in Iran of 1979.

It is true that Saudi Arabia was not a bastion of liberalism before 1979 but Prince Salman is correct in pointing out that the country had followed a more "moderate" strand of Islam before the Iranian Revolution. So, today, when the Saudi regime is allowing women to drive cars, is reopening cinemas and gradually tolerating the presence of women without abayas in public, it is simply reverting to what was tolerated in the kingdom before 1979.

The Iranian Revolution was not the only reason why Saudi Arabia slapped numerous bans in this respect. King Faisal Abdulaziz, who ruled the oil-rich kingdom between 1964 and 1975, initiated many social reforms, mainly in response to the manner in which the secular Arab nationalist Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt had taunted Saudi Arabia of being "backward." Nasser, at the time, was one of the most popular leaders in the Muslim world. In her 2005 book on Saudi Arabia, Professor Sherifa Zuhur writes that in a bid to overtake Nasser's Egypt in this con-

text, Faisal rang in a series of social reforms in Saudi Arabia, which included the introduction of television and cinema. He also encouraged the entry of women in workplaces and ordered the construction of an opera house. Women were not required to wear the abaya and special areas were designated for foreigners to enjoy their alcohol.

However, parallel to this, Faisal also patronised members of the conservative Muslim Brotherhood (MB) who had been expelled by Nasser from Egypt. Faisal was assassinated in 1975. But despite the fact that his reforms had drawn criticism from the kingdom's religious establishment, Faisal's successor, King Khaled, continued the reforms.

The Middle East expert Dilip Hiro, in his 2018 book *Cold War in the Islamic World*, writes that both Faisal and Khaled ignored the growing influence of the Sahwa movement, which had opposed Faisal's reforms.

The MB members living in exile in Saudi Arabia radicalised this movement. In 1979, inspired by its rhetoric and also by the criticism of the religious establishment, a group of Saudi militants captured the Grand Mosque in Mecca. Hundreds were killed, and this happened just months after a radical Islamic regime established itself in Iran.

Hiro writes that, even though the leaders of the group were executed, the Saudi religious establishment lamented that the group's concerns were justified because the monarchy had "moved away from real Islam." This, coupled with similar criticism aimed at the Saudi monarchy by Iran's newly-formed Islamic Government, suddenly saw the kingdom rapidly rollback the reforms.

According to Hiro, this began a race between Iran and Saudi Arabia in which both tried to outdo each other and prove they were more "Islamic" than the other. Iran banned various activities in the country that it deemed "un-Islamic." It also introduced a dress code for women. A religious police force was formed whose job it was to enforce the dress

code and prevent the public mingling of unrelated men and women. Saudi Arabia responded by closing down cinemas, increasing religious programming on TV, banning music and entertainment outlets, and greatly reducing the number of women on TV, radio and offices. Women were required to wear abayas in public and husbands and wives were asked to carry their marriage certificates. A special force, the Mutawa, was formed to impose these rules.

Interestingly, it was also in 1979 that so-called "Islamic" laws were introduced in earnest in Pakistan. The General Zia dictatorship came to power in 1977, but it took two years to introduce the country's first major set of religious laws.

Happenings in Iran and Saudi Arabia in 1979 clearly encouraged the Zia regime to take this step. The fact that Pakistan eventually became a battlefield of proxy wars between Iran and Saudi Arabia also contributed, with the Zia regime trying to make Pakistan equally "Islamic" in this strange new race.

Zia did manage to introduce certain unprecedented laws (in the name of Islam), but when he tried to replicate ideas such as introducing dress codes and forming a moral police force, they failed to take root.

In his book *Social and Cultural Transformations in a Muslim Nation*, MA Qadeer writes that what began in Pakistan as a State-backed morality project from above was eventually adopted by various social groups below. These groups began to conduct moral policing by making use of certain laws introduced through ordinances by the Zia regime.

That's why, even decades after Zia's demise and the revival of reform in Saudi Arabia, one still sees certain segments in Pakistan decreasing instructions based on their ideas of morality. Such decrees now do not have direct Government backing. Yet, they still manage to create some awkward problems because the laws that these decrees base their justification on, are still present, like the elephant in the room.

(Courtesy: The Dawn)

CAPSULE



**Balmer Lawrie likely to miss revenue target this fiscal**

**KOLKATA:** Diversified PSU Balmer Lawrie & Co is likely to miss the corporate plan revenue target for the current fiscal as it is expecting a "flat growth" in turnover, a senior company official said. Although the business verticals of the Mini Ratna, under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, are "immune to the current slowdown" of the economy, some strategic business units such as logistics and industrial packaging (IP) have been marginally affected due to the downturn, Balmer Lawrie CMD Prabal Basu told PTI. "The company will miss the 2020 corporate plan revenue target for the current financial year," Basu said. The city-headquartered firm is expecting a "flat growth" this fiscal as the net turnover is likely to be in the range of last year's figure of Rs 1,857 crore, he said. The public sector enterprise had recorded Rs 1,796 crore of net turnover in 2017-18. It had hired consulting firm Strategy& to chart out its 2020 corporate plan. The logistics division has been "marginally hit" due to dip in export-import activities, while barrel sales of the IP division have fallen owing to decrease in mango pulp exports, Basu said.



**Grofers to add 700 kirana stores onto network**

**NEW DELHI:** Softbank-backed Grofers aims to cross the USD 1 billion revenue mark by the end of the year, helped by strong growth in both its online and offline businesses. The company had started operations as an online grocery platform. Earlier this year, it had said it is working with brick-and-mortar stores in Delhi-NCR to convert them into its own branded outlets. "In the first phase, we associated with 100 stores and currently we have 300 stores under the program and this will be scaled to 1,000 by year-end, all in Delhi NCR region," Grofers founder Saurabh Kumar told PTI. The plan is also to expand this programme to Mumbai and Bengaluru by the end of the year, he added. "We are aggressively growing our business and aiming to clock USD 1 billion in revenue by end of 2019 with a significant focus on our in-house brands in 2019. Our G-brands contribute 40 per cent to our current revenue, and we plan to increase it to 60 per cent in the coming years," Kumar said.

# 'RBI may go for another rate cut on Oct 4'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The RBI may cut the key policy rate again on Friday, the fifth in row, to complement the government's measures like reducing corporate tax and promoting credit offtake to spur economic activity during the festive season amid range-bound inflation.

The RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will announce the fourth bi-monthly monetary policy for 2019-20 on Friday, October 4, after its three-day meeting.

The central bank has already slashed the repo rate (short-term borrowing rate) four times aggregating to 1.10 per-

centage points since January. At its previous meeting in August, the MPC had reduced the benchmark lending rate by an unusual 35 basis points to 5.40 per cent.

The upcoming MPC meeting comes in the backdrop of the RBI's mandate to banks to link their loan products to an external benchmark, like repo rate, for faster transmission of reduction in policy rates to borrowers from October 1.

Ahead of the meeting, the Das-headed Financial Stability and Development Council

(FSDC) sub-committee took stock of the prevailing macro-economic situation.

Earlier, the RBI Governor had said the government has little fiscal space, giving hopes that the RBI may provide more monetary stimulus to prop up the economy.

The government's fiscal space has been squeezed on account of cut in rates of corporate tax as well as lowering of GST on various goods. Revenue collection too has been below the Budget estimates.

Experts opined that another rate cut is on the cards as the government's hands are tied and the onus of taking initia-

**The RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das headed Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will announce the fourth bi-monthly monetary policy for 2019-20 on Friday, October 4, after its three-day meeting**

tives now rests with the central bank.

Anshuman Magazine, Chairman and CEO, India, South East Asia, Middle East and Africa, CBRE, said the government has taken a series of measures in the last few weeks to drive structural changes in the Indian economy.

However, most of these are enabling provisions to ease supply side pressures while

the key challenge of reigniting demand remains.

"Thus, we are hoping that the central bank to cut the key signalling rate of repo by 25 bps to 5.15 per cent next week to complement the government's fiscal stimulus," he said.

S u y a s h

Choudhary, Head (Fixed Income), IDFC AMC was of the opinion that the global and local context is weak enough to argue yet for some (though not substantial) incremental role for monetary easing.

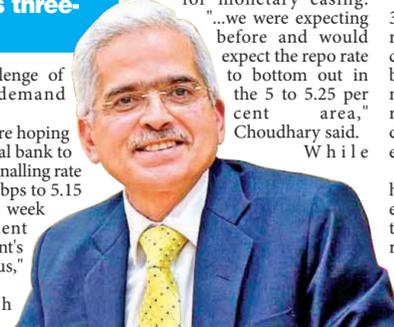
"...we were expecting before and would expect the repo rate to bottom out in the 5 to 5.25 per cent area," Choudhary said.

W h i l e

economic activities are showing signs of sluggishness, the policy makers are drawing solace from the fact that retail inflation remains in the comfort zone of the central bank.

Retail inflation inched up to 3.21 per cent in August but remained within the RBI's comfort level. The RBI has been mandated by the government to ensure that inflation remains at 4 per cent, with deviation of 2 per cent on either side.

Experts and industry are hoping low inflation provides enough headroom for the RBI to further lower the policy rate, especially when festive season has just started. People make huge purchases during Navratras and Diwali.



## Engineers body AIPEF demands discussion on proposed electricity bill

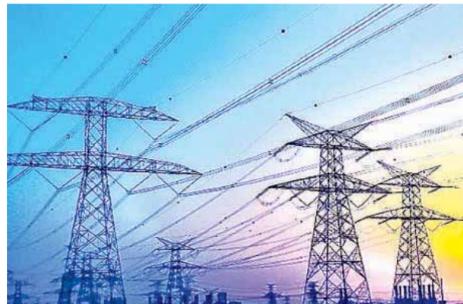
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPEF) has demanded detailed discussion on draft Electricity Amendment Bill saying the government intends to privatise the power sector in the name of giving more rights or facilities to consumers.

The government has been pitching separation of carriage and content businesses in the power distribution, which would eventually facilitate consumers to switch service providers as they do in case of mobile telephone service.

"AIPEF has noted with concern that the power ministry is drafting a new Electricity Act to replace the existing Electricity Act 2003 and demands that government of India should discuss the proposed amendments in detail with power engineers and employees before issuing the draft bill for comments of all stakeholders," an AIPEF statement said.

Shaliender Dubey Chairman AIPEF condemned the move of government to privatise the



**This concept was introduced in those countries which had huge surplus of generation capacity, and had developed the metering and IT systems for energy accounting**

power sector in one go. The bill is aimed to facilitate private houses in the name of consumers, he added.

Padamjit Singh Chief patron AIPEF said the proposal of separating carriage and content is too premature and impractical, and should not be introduced. This concept was introduced in those countries which had huge surplus of generation capacity, and had developed the metering and IT systems for energy accounting.

He further said that Ministry of Power must get compre-

hensive data and documents on franchise and privatisation experiments since 2003 and analyse them with engineers and employees and then only should finalise the draft proposals for electricity bill.

AIPEF is of the view that India's power sector is currently reeling under financial stress. The overall cost of electricity has increased in many parts of the country because of "must run" renewable energy projects and long-term power purchase agreements.

These must be renegotiated

for the survival of power sector. The financial stress in the power industry cannot be blamed on Discoms alone and this needs to be analysed in depth, it said.

There is widespread apprehension amongst power professionals that sweeping changes proposed by Ministry of power would cause further deterioration and collapse of State power utilities across the country. The proposed bill aims to dilute the role and responsibilities of the state governments, it added.

## Consumer durable firms bank on festive sales

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The consumer durable industry, hopes to have double-digit growth during the festive season sales, despite concerns of economic slowdown.

Although, the industry is struggling for growth in some segments like TV panels, manufacturers expect factors like good monsoon and recent stimulus measures by the government will have positive impact on sales. Pinning up their hopes, the makers have lined up new models and product ranges and are investing substantially on branding, besides providing buyers lucrative financial deals and cashback offers on premium high-end models.

## STPI to create 28 centres

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) will set up 28 centres of excellence (CoE) in the country at a cost of Rs 400 crore to boost software exports, its Director General Omkar Rai said.

The CoEs would act as unique platforms to provide appropriate eco-systems and opportunities to budding talents and entrepreneurs for launching innovative ventures, Rai said.

The objective of creating the centres would be to transform India into a product nation from an IT services country.

The STPI has also chalked out strategies to raise the volume of exports by STP units from around Rs 4.16 lakh crore in 2018-19, by 12 to 14 per cent during the current fiscal, Rai told PTI during a visit to Odisha.

"Concrete steps have been taken to open the 28 CoEs in emerging technologies in different parts of the country in the next 18 months. Some of these centres are already in the process of being operational," he said.

Four of the centres would be



**The objective of creating the centres would be to transform India into a product nation from an IT services country.**

established in Odisha. Noting that more than Rs 400 crore will have to be injected to start these state-of-the-art centres, Rai said, it is a collaborative venture as investments for the projects will flow from the concerned state Governments, Union Electronics and IT Ministry, industries and STPI's own funds.

The STPI DG said, the CoEs are being set up in places such as Chennai, Bengaluru, Lucknow, Bhubaneswar, Patna, Mohali, Hyderabad and Gurgaon.

Over half-a-dozen such centres will be opened in the north-eastern region, he said. While establishing these centres, the focus will be on emerging technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), medical electronics, legal technologies, Internet of Things (IoT), IoT in agriculture and automotive electronics, he said.

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## NTPC's Lara power unit to be operational from Oct 11

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-run power giant NTPC on Sunday said its 800 MW Unit-1 of Lara Super Thermal Power Station in Chhattisgarh will become commercially operational on Monday midnight.

Earlier last week, the company had said the unit would be commercially operational from Sunday midnight.

"In partial modification of our disclosure on September 27, 2019 regarding ...we hereby inform that, Unit-1 of 800 MW of Lara Super Thermal Power Station (2 x 800 MW) will now be declared on commercial operation w.e.f 00:00 Hrs of October 1, 2019 instead of 00:00 Hrs of September 30, 2019," a company statement said.

With the addition of this unit, the commercial capacity of Lara Super Thermal Power Station, NTPC and NTPC Group will become 800 MW, 47,325 MW and 55,786 MW, respectively, it added.

The second 800 MW unit of Lara power project is under construction and is expected to go on stream in the next financial year.

NTPC currently operates 53 power stations (22 coal, 7 combined cycle gas/liquid fuel, 2 hydro, 1 wind and 11 solar projects). Further, it has 9 coal and 1 gas station, owned by joint ventures or subsidiaries.

## DHFL lenders may complete debt resolution plan soon

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State Bank-led lenders of crisis-hit Dewan Housing Finance Ltd (DHFL) are expected to complete a debt resolution plan quickly so that fresh funds start flowing in, sources said on Sunday.

"The banks led by SBI, are expected to move quickly to complete the debt resolution proposal so that fresh lending starts to move into the company and turnaround of a systemically large retail financial enterprises is done smoothly," they said.

Earlier on Saturday, the company had announced the appointment of Vajinath MG, a former Chief General Manager of State Bank of India as its CEO, and also floated draft debt resolution plan according to which, it has assumed a price of Rs 54 per share for debt conversion into equity by lenders to acquire 51 per cent in the company.

The plan is subject to approval of investors and bankers.

After the appointment of the CEO, the firm is set to get a CFO and additional nominee directors on board, sources said.

The company wants to have a timely execution of the debt resolution plan, and especially the pro-



**The plan is subject to approval of investors and bankers**

motors have shown resolve and commitment over the last few months, they added.

The debt-laden housing finance company has sold its strategic investments, even in core retail financial services firms like Avanse, Aadhar, DHFL Pramerica AMC to bring liquidity.

DHFL said, the company, in the past 12 months has repaid obligations of nearly Rs 45,000 crore, which is nearly 40 per cent of its current balance sheet size.

The company is expecting consent of its shareholders by Monday for expanding the board capacity to induct additional nominee director/s.

Once these take place, the company will be run by the team of professionals including the chief experience officers (CXOs) already in place and the management will report to the board.



## Post iron ore mining ban, Goa miners struggle to make both ends meet

PTI ■ PANAJI

Little did 39-year-old Santosh M Thambi know that his destiny had this in store for him. After marrying off his three sisters, the plans for his wedlock were shattered as he lost his source of income with the halt of mining operations in Goa.

Now, not only he is unable to find a match for himself, he has been rendered penniless and is struggling to make his both ends meet.

Thambi -- a machine operator with Chowgule and Company Ltd -- is one among those unfortunate 1.1 lakh people who were rendered jobless after mining came to a standstill in Goa in March last year after the Supreme Court quashed 88 leases and banned extraction of fresh iron ore.

Another victim of the halt of mining operations is Yeshwant R Satgaonkar. He says that he is always haunted with the suicidal thoughts as in stark con-

trast to earlier days when he was withdrawing a salary of Rs 30,000 as a plant operator in a mining firm, he does not earn anything.

Sandeep M Nirlekar is the sole bread earner in his five-member family. The old age of his father and the default of the personal loan which he had taken during his marriage adds to his woes.

The body representing mining dependents Goa Mining People's Front (GMFP) said that it has been over a year now that the mining in Goa has stopped and the government should resolve the issue and commence the mining.



## Govt to set up working group on proposed new industrial policy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government will soon constitute a working group on the proposed new industrial policy which is aimed at promoting emerging sectors, reducing regulatory hurdles and making India a manufacturing hub, an official has said.

Earlier, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) had prepared the policy and sent it for the Union Cabinet approval, but certain new suggestions have been made with regard to the policy.

The working group will work on it and submit the same to the DPIIT, the official said.

The group will have members from different government departments of the Centre and states, as well as from industry chambers, including the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

This will be the third industrial policy after the first in 1956 and the second in 1991. It will replace the industrial policy of 1991 which was pre-



pared in the backdrop of the balance of payment crisis.

The DPIIT had initiated the process of formulation of a new industrial policy in May 2017. The new policy will subsume the National Manufacturing Policy (NMP).

A consultative approach had been taken for policy formulation wherein six thematic focus groups had been used to obtain inputs.

The six areas include manufacturing and MSME; technology and innovation; ease of doing business; infrastructure, investment, trade and fiscal policy; and skills and employability for the future.

It was proposed that the new policy would aim at making India a manufacturing hub by promoting Make in India.

## TELCOS WAR

# COAI hopes industry's IUC talks will be reasonable

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

With regulator's review on call connect charges polarising telcos, industry body COAI has conceded that the issue has always been a contentious one, even globally, and hoped that players will engage in reasonable and rational discussions by looking at the situation "objectively".

The Cellular Operators' Association of India (COAI) said different players may take varied position based on their operational, strategic and commercial interests and asserted that majority and minority views are part and parcel of working of any institution or industry body.

The comments assume significance as the industry has erupted into a war of words over the last few days, with the IUC issue



back on the regulator's radar.

COAI Director General Rajan Mathews told PTI that the association's governance structure dictates that the position taken by it is commensurate with the majority view of its membership (since it represents majority of telecom subscribers too) while ensuring

that "minority view does not get brushed under the carpet".

Mathews said historically the majority view on interconnect usage charges (IUC) has been that zero termination charge is not acceptable in a calling party pays regime.

"We are in the process of aggregating inputs from our

**The comments assume significance as the industry has erupted into a war of words over the last few days, with the IUC issue back on the regulator's rada**

members but until such time, I can only reiterate historical position taken by a majority of our members that in a calling party pays regime, interconnect cannot be free and globally too there has always been a cost attached to it," Mathews said.

At the last estimate, the majority operators believed that cost to be 14 paise for a voice call, Mathews said adding that minority view of one operator had been informed by the association to the telecom regulator last time the IUC discussions took place in the sector.

"We respect Trai's intention of looking at the issue and seeking feedback. Our members may look at things that have changed in terms of traffic, so membership will give it a due consideration. We are in the process of soliciting all of that, to provide inputs to Trai," Mathews said.

Asked how the association expected to balance the interest of its warring members, given the stark division in the industry on the issue, the COAI said different companies may

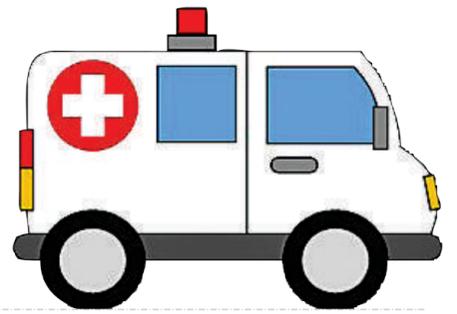
take different position based on their operational, strategic and commercial interest and that it should not come as a surprise.

"In any institution, we must agree to disagree courteously and with respect for one another position, we should not demonise anyone by virtue of the fact that they have taken a particular position," Mathews said.

With the regulator, last week, inviting public comments to review mobile call termination rate deadline, the old and new telcos have once again locked horns over the issue.



Sixteen-year-old Aarnav Ojha is spreading awareness about the importance of giving way to ambulance through his video game, finds  
**V SATEESH REDDY**



## GAMING TO SAVE LIVES

**W**hat would be the daily routine of a 16-year-old? Playing with gadgets and thinking about their studies, right? But the Hyderabad-based Aarnav Ojha, an intermediate student of Oakridge International School, has other plans. Aarnav has come up with an innovative way of inculcating civic sense in people by creating a game for mobiles called "Give way to ambulance".

"Everybody knows that many people loose battle to life inside an ambulance while being transported to the hospital as it gets stuck in the chaotic traffic. There have many recorded instances of women giving birth in ambulances due to

delay in reaching the hospital. If everybody is aware that they should immediately give way to an ambulance then many lives can be saved," says Aarnav.

He said that the Oakridge school is already running a campaign about giving way to ambulances. He added that while discussing the issue with Hema Madabushi, deputy Dean-Supplemental Education at Oakridge, the idea of a mobile game popped up. Aarnav came up with the game design and coded the game entirely. For the artwork, he relied on Hyderabad's leading game company, Gamitronics. The game is completely in 3D and offers two types of ambulances and the objective is to let ambulance reach the hospital in 90 seconds

through traffic. In simpler words, the game is like Subway Surfer but instead of controlling the character i.e. ambulance, you control the traffic which is quite a fresh take. The game teaches players to give way to the ambulance when it's approaching from behind keeping in mind not to get the ambulance stuck in traffic. The player-loses if a proper way out of the traffic is not made for the ambulance.

Aarnav shares, "I've been making games ever since I was seven years old. One of my first games was 'Captain Aarnie: Lost in The Hell', but as I grew up I understood the bigger impact video games can leave on people. When my school discussed this idea with me, I jumped into it knowing the social impact

the game can have and even if one person gets to learn something positive from my game, I'll be extremely happy."

The game is developed by Unity3D game engine for mobile gaming whose gaming market is the largest in India. Aarnav will be participating in the Serious Games Challenge being organised as a part of the leading simulation, training and education conference (I/ITSEC) in Orlando, Florida, where he hopes to showcase the game at a global stage. The 16-year-old is also planning to approach hospitals and government agencies to get sponsorship for his game.

Aarnav says that he wants to solve real world problems using AI and robotics, he finishes with a smile.



**“**I've been making games ever since I was seven years old. One of my first games was 'Captain Aarnie: Lost in The Hell', but as I grew up I understood the bigger impact video games leave on people. When my school discussed this idea with me, I jumped into it knowing the social impact the game can have and even if one person gets to learn something positive from my game, I'll be extremely happy

AARNAV OJHA



## A MASSIVE EFFORT TO GO GREEN

**M**any NGOs and other agencies have started programmes similar to the state government's flagship programme, Haritha Haram, in order to increase the green cover in the state. Many agencies have gone further by attempting to spread this awareness nationwide to get more people involved in the initiative. For this, thousands of practitioners of Heartfulness across 13 states in the country diligently went about planting trees and shrubs to mark the 64th birthday of the Heartfulness Guide, Kamlesh Patel. In all,

Ecological initiatives go beyond an individual exercise and have become a collective phenomenon. Heartfulness organised one such event by planting 64,000 trees in 64 cities in one day

64,000 saplings were planted across 64 cities in a single day. Ace badminton player P.V. Sindhu was among the dignitaries who participated in the event. The plantation drive happened in Hyderabad, Agra, Allahabad, Chennai, Coimbatore, Coorg, Delhi, Jabalpur, Jaipur, Jalandhar, Jodhpur, Kanpur, Kota, Lucknow, Madurai, Moradabad, Mysore,

Nagpur, Patiala, Roorkee, Satkhol, Sholapur, Siligiri, Trichy, Trivandrum, Ujjain, and Vizag amongst others. All the 6,400 saplings planted at Kanha Shanti Vanam are indigenous, and some are rare and critically endangered.

"Tree plantation is one of the several conservation efforts and one of the core activities of Heartfulness across all our ashrams.

This year we are inspired by the UN theme 'Climate Action for Peace' and the Indian government's Jalshakti initiative to conserve water, and we are concentrating our efforts in that direction to mark a very important day in our organisation's evolution as a social and ecological change maker," said Saravanan from Kanha's nursery and tree plantation

operations. This plantation drive was a milestone and adds to the ongoing Heartfulness Green initiative to enrich the natural environment and lessen the destruction caused by human activities.

The Heartfulness Green initiative emphasises the need to grow ecologically, economically and socio-culturally important native species. More than 2.5 lakh trees and shrubs have already been planted at Kanha Shanti Vanam and the vision is to reach 10 lakhs. The Heartfulness volunteers across India have also committed to cultivating 6,40,000 saplings by the end of this year.

## HYDERABAD ENTERS INDIAN SUPER LEAGUE

Hyderabad FC is all set to begin its journey in Indian Super League and unveiled its jersey while introducing the players

**A**ctor Daggubati Venkatesh unveiled the jersey of Hyderabad FC, the new entrant in the Indian Super League for 2019 that has mixed with classic black and yellow colours, on Sunday. Echoing the desire to revive the rich and illustrious soccer culture of the city, the jersey of Hyderabad FC is designed to reverberate the heritage and pride of the city.

The event was graced by the co-owners of Hyderabad FC, Varun Tripuneni and Vijay Madduri, former Indian cricketer Mohammad Azharuddin, head coach Phil Brown along with players of Hyderabad FC. The jersey sports a contemporary look and is inspired by the traditional Nizami Sherwani and city's architecture. The bold colours make it classy and represent the upbeat mood of Hyderabad's and their bright culture. During the event, the club also introduced the Hyderabad FC team who will be representing the city in the Hero India Super League 2019-20.

The team was very excited

to make its debut in the Hyderabad league and reignite the passion for the sport in the city. Hyderabad FC will be headed by head coach Phil. With a strong bunch of players, the team will focus on consolidating its position in the league and make an impression in its very first season on October 20 at Kochi.

Hyderabad city has a history with football and the Hyderabad FC will revive and strengthen the soccer culture in the city. Hyderabad, once upon a time used to be the football hub, which contributed significantly to the Indian soccer team from early 1920s until the late 1950s. With Hyderabad FC, the city is all set to witness a euphoria, which will engulf the whole city with soccer fever.

Varun Tripuneni, co-owner, Hyderabad FC says, "We are very excited to unveil our new jersey that represents the rich culture of the city. The team is all geared up to hit the field and face challenges like true sportsmen."

Venkatesh Daggubati, says, "It feels so overwhelming to have our team fighting to

revive and strengthen the soccer culture in the city. Hyderabad is the city, which encourages sportspersons across the disciplines. We have produced the best football teams and had the honour of having 8 players in the 1956 Olympic team that finished 4. We hope that with Hyderabad FC we will be able to revive the passion for the sport and replenish the lost glory to the city and the country."

The 25-member team comprises of seven foreigners including each two from The UK, Spain, Brazil and one from Austria.

**WITH A STRONG BUNCH OF PLAYERS, THE TEAM WILL FOCUS ON CONSOLIDATING ITS POSITION IN THE LEAGUE AND MAKE AN IMPRESSION IN ITS VERY FIRST SEASON**



**PARTY**

**AN EVE OF POMP**

SUTRAA fashion and lifestyle exhibition had its grand launch in the city recently. Actress Saloni Mishra inaugurated the exhibition at Taj Krishna. The SUTRAA EXPO seemed promising to the attendees with its thematic and season based sound planning, strong marketing and efficient exhibition as it curated the best of emerging and established fashion brands all under one roof.



● Saloni Mishra



● Sonal



● Neha



● Umesh

Photos by SV Chary



● Manju



● Khushboo



● Kini

**CITY GUIDE**

» **COMEDY**

**FUNNY BUZZNESS**

● Funny Buzzness is a well known comedy gig series by Buzz Kya Entertainment and has been instrumental in bringing up artists like — Amit Tandon, Sorabh Pant, Sumukhi Suresh and Naveen Richards. October 20 at 6 pm HICC.



**BAS KAR BASSI**

● This is a show where comedian Anubhav Singh Bassi will tell you an honest story about his career choices and lifestyle. 'Bas Kar Bassi' is what he said to himself when he was fired from his last job. The show will be held till October 16 at Kulapati Munshi Sadan, King Koti, Basheer Bagh.



» **ART AND CULTURE**

**INDIAN PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL**

● The fifth edition of the Indian Photography Festival will be held till October 20 at various locations in Hyderabad. IPF is an international photography festival which showcases various events, including talks, discussions and more.



» **EXHIBITION**

**EMERGING PALETTES**

● A group art exhibition, a platform for emerging artists to display their work, has organised its 11th edition in collaboration with Goethe-Zentrum. The event will be held till October 6 at Shrishti Art Gallery, Jubilee Hills.



» **THEATRE**

**PICHLI IKKIS SAAL**

● Udaan Performing Arts Presents its 43rd theatre production 'Pichle Ikkis Saal'. Originally written by Dharmakirti Sumant (Pune) Translation, Design & Direction by Saurabh Gharipurkar. Wed Oct 2, 8 pm



**PISINARI / MANCHAM MEEDA MANISHI**

● Samahaara Workshop Productions is coming up with two plays on Oct 4, 5 titled Pisinari and Mancham meeda Manishi. Pisinari is written by Moliere and translated into Telugu by Vinayamani. While Mancham meeda Govindam is a satire written by Appalachari. Both plays will be held at Lamakaan, Banjara Hills.



**BAAGH**

● Baagh, a play written by Badal Sircar and directed by Malyaban Lahiri has friendship and relationships at its core. The play revolves around repressed pain, relationships, and structures that we adhere to. October 2 at 8 pm, Phoenix Arena



**MAHABHARATA - THE EPIC TALE**

● All history and mythology is based on cause and effect. Mahabharata - The Epic Tale... in-depth deals with the primary emotional and psychological causes that were the genesis of this destructive war. The planet has witnessed destruction based on the whims of a few people. Till October 6, multiple venues



**GET YOUR EVENT LISTED:** To get your events listed, please send your details along with a poster and contact number to [features.pioneer@gmail.com](mailto:features.pioneer@gmail.com)

**FUN TIME**

**ARCHIE**



**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**GARFIELD**



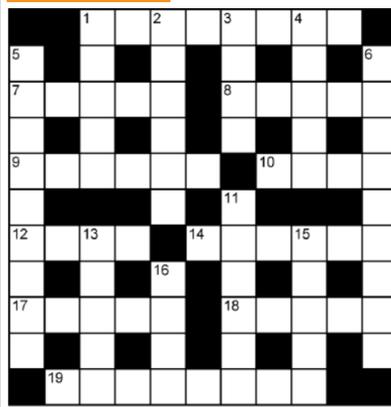
**REALITY CHECK**



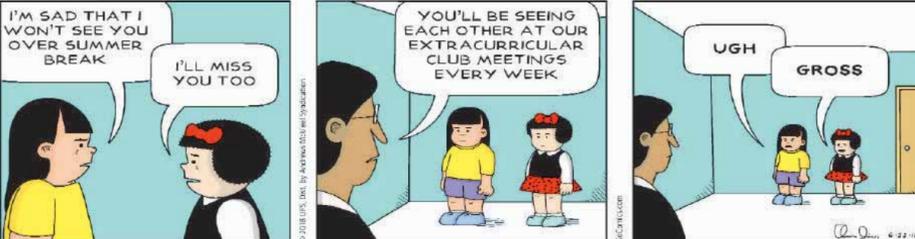
**SPEED BUMP**



**CROSSWORD**



**NANCY**



**SUDOKU**

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

**Yesterday's solution**

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

**Rules**  
● Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.  
● The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

**ACROSS**

- 1 In a battle
- 7 A baking ingredient
- 8 A clothing size
- 9 One or the other
- 10 A heavy metal
- 12 A small sharp carpet nail
- 17 Lump of gold
- 14 A smell
- 18 A body organ
- 19 A minder of sheep
- 5 A feeling of fondness or liking
- 6 An inscribed flat stone beside a grave
- 11 Speak unclearly
- 13 Fabric
- 15 Protect from danger
- 16 Hold tightly

**DOWN**

- 1 White frozen dew
- 2 Grow vegetables here
- 3 Have a conversation
- 4 A health professional

**SOLUTION**

H	R	O	O	L				
O	R	O	O	I				
N	A	I	L	W	A	S	H	E
E	L	N	T	A				
Y	O	L	K	S	C	R	U	E
M	I	I	C	R				
O	M	I	T	S	A	L	P	H
O	C	S	E	T				
N	E	P	R	I	E	T	A	I
N	E	A	C	A				
D	N	A	P	O	L	E	O	N



# CHIRU ACQUIRES LUCIFER TELUGU RIGHTS

The actor might reprise the role of Mohan Lal in the intense political drama which drew acclaim from several critics across the country

**I**n a recent turn of events Megastar Chiranjeevi has shown interest and bought the filming rights of the Malayalam blockbuster movie Lucifer. The film directed by Prithviraj Sukumaran had made ripples at the box office. The Mohan Lal starrer is an intense political drama which drew acclaim from several film critics across the country. "Please give me an opportunity to act under your direction," Chiranjeevi is quoted as asking Prithviraj

at the pre-release event of *Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy* in Kerala on Sunday. Chiranjeevi was seen fondly remarking at how 'handsome' he found Prithvi to look, since the first time he saw Prithvi in Bollywood movie *Aiyya*. Prithviraj was initially meant to star in *Sye Raa...* but he couldn't make it as he was preoccupied with shooting for his upcoming Malayalam survival drama *Aadujeevitham*. Speaking at the event, Prithvi said, "Chiranjeevi sir has bought the remake rights of Lucifer. Hope he does that."



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## Big B: Taapsee Pannu an accomplished artist

**M**egastar Amitabh Bachchan has explored many genres, but says working in mystery thriller *Badla* has been the most rewarding experience for him. After working on Sujoy Ghosh's *Badla*, Big B will team up with actor Emraan Hashmi for yet another mystery thriller. "Working on this mystery thriller has been a most rewarding experience for me. Sujoy Ghosh, the director of the film, needs to be given credit for putting this intricate tale in a most exciting and watchable manner," Big B said. "Taapsee Pannu, who has worked with me before, is a

most accomplished artist, and it has been a joy to be working with her again. The writing, the screenplay and the camerawork need special mention — they are responsible in giving this film its immense value," the veteran actor said. *Badla* also stars Amrita Singh, Tony Luke, Manav Kaul and Tanveer Ghani. It is about an interview between a lawyer and a business woman, in which the latter insists that she is being wrongfully framed for the murder of her lover. *Badla* will have its World TV Premiere on Zee Cinema on Sunday.

**AFTER WORKING ON SUJOY GHOSH'S BADLA, BIG B WILL TEAM UP WITH ACTOR EMRAAN HASHMI FOR YET ANOTHER MYSTERY THRILLER**



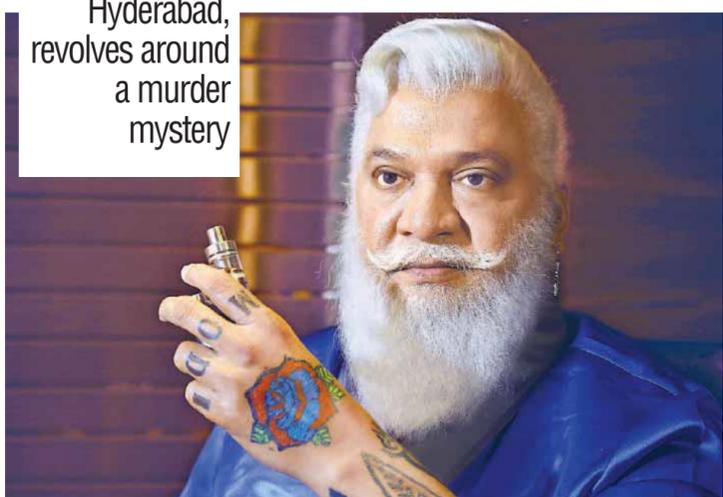
## Record views for Bunny's new song

**S**tylish star Allu Arjun's latest movie *Ala Vaikunta puramlu*'s first single *Samajavaragamana*, which was released on Saturday, has crossed six million views within a day. Directed by Trivikram, the song was written by Sirivennela Seetharama Sastry and the music was composed by SS Thaman. The song that was sung by Sid Sriram has got six million views and 3,13,000 likes in a day.

## Chasing the mystery

**A**ward-winning filmmaker Bhavani Shankar is coming up with his new venture titled as *Climax*. The film produced under Kaipas Film Productions banner stars Dr Rajendra Prasad, Prudhvi Raj, Shiva Shankar, Sasha Singh, Ramesh and Chandu in key roles. Bhavani Shankar's previous film *Dream* has won seven awards at various international film festivals and appreciated by film fraternity all over the world. One of the producers of *Climax*, P Rajeshwar Reddy, said that the film revolves around a murder mystery.

He says, "This film has a complete different screenplay. There are only limited characters in the movie, with every character given importance. Now, we are in the final stage of shooting and planning to make a song in a huge set in Ramoji Film City." Director Bhavani Shankar said, "In the movie, Rajendra Prasad sir character name was Modi and you would know the reason behind the name after watching the movie. We took utmost care for specs and tattoos for Modi character. We are sure of the film would do well at the box office."



## Bhagya Nagara Veedullo Gammattu's first look released

**C**omedian and actor Y Srinivasa Reddy has turned producer-cum-director with movie *Bhagya Nagara Veedullo Gammattu*. The first look of the movie that was released on Sunday received good response from the audience. Srinivasa Reddy, Satya and Shakalaka Shankar will be seen in lead roles. The film being under Making on the Plying Colours Entertainment banner, is scheduled to hit theatres in October.

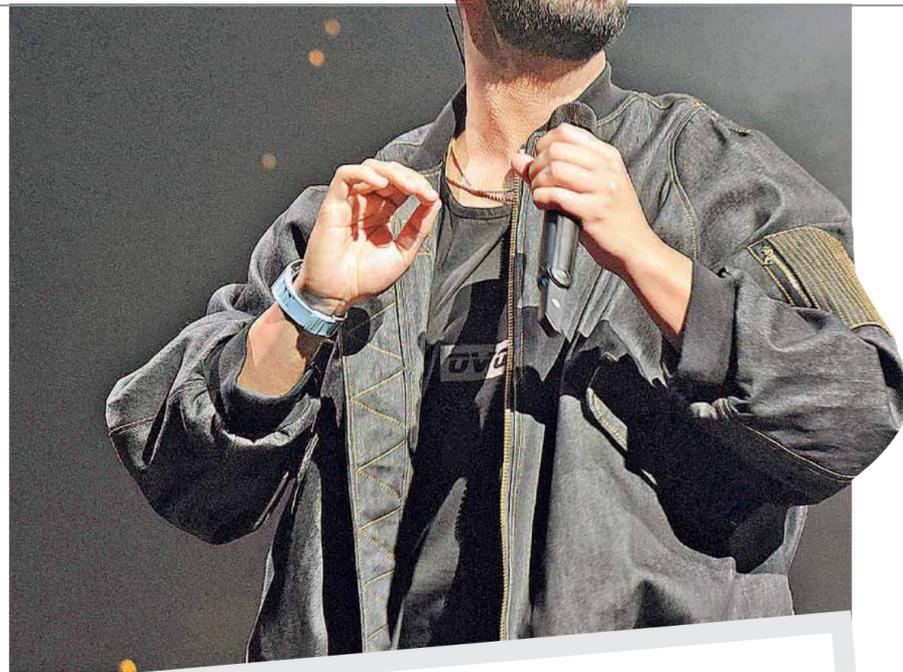
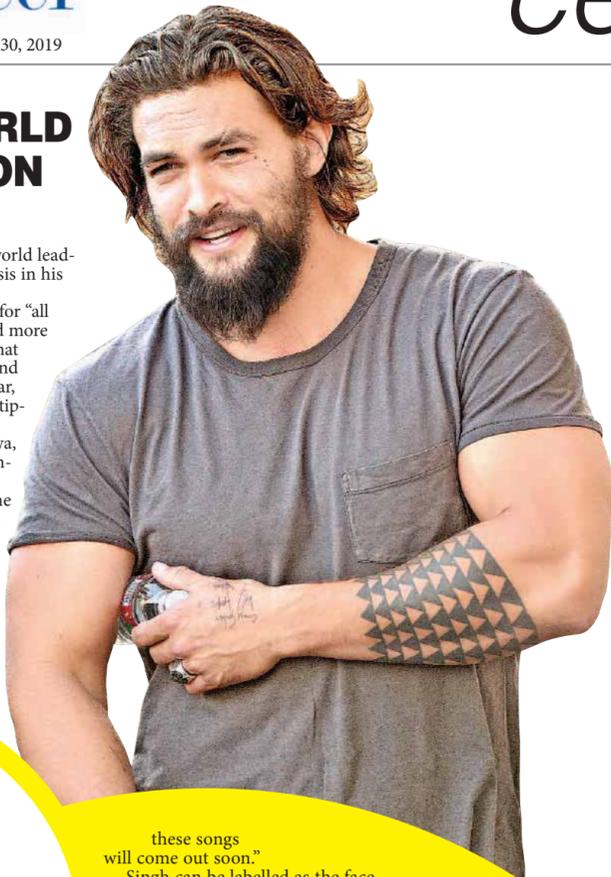
## JASON URGES WORLD LEADERS TO ACT ON CLIMATE CRISIS

**H**ollywood star Jason Momoa has urged world leaders to take serious actions on climate crisis in his United Nations (UN) speech.

The actor and ocean activist spoke up for "all island nations" at the UN, and demanded more action from delegates, listing the issues that threaten some of the world's most beautiful places and claiming the people of the South Pacific, in particular, are suffering more, insisting they are at the "critical tipping point" of a crisis that could kill the planet.

"As a native Hawaiian born to a mother from Iowa, I have seen how one place can be oblivious to another," he said. "The issues facing an island can feel so far removed from that place that is landlocked in the middle of our country. However, with a foothold in two worlds, I quickly began to see how a problem for one will soon become a problem for all..."

He added, "We, the island nations and all coastal communities, are the front lines in this environmental crisis. The oceans are in a state of emergency, entire marine ecosystems are vanishing with the warming of the seas, and as the waste of the world empties into our waters, we face the devastating crisis of plastic pollution."



## RAPPER DRAKE'S HIDDEN HILLS HOME VANDALISED

**C**anadian rapper Drake has received a sort of warning after he reportedly sent a private message to the wife of rapper Kanye West's former manager Don C. The *Hotline Bling* hit-maker's Hidden Hills home and OVO store were recently vandalised in the middle of the night. Some vandals spray-painted the store and Drake's house and recorded a video of them telling him to leave Los Angeles, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

However, it's not clear who was behind this, but according to a portal

*Hollywood Unlocked* which first reported the news, Drake's father Dennis Graham is also "being surveilled" for whatever the 32-year-old star did that has angered the culprit.

Drake's representatives, however, deny that his home was spray-painted and say it was only his store that was vandalised. Drake has not spoken up on the vandalism and it's currently unknown if he has reported it to police.

Don C and Drake used to be considered friends. Don's wife Kristen Noel Crawley is a designer of founder of KNC Beauty. She often posts on her Instagram page photographs of her modelling clothes and promoting her beauty products.

On the work front, Drake may soon work on the collaborative album with rapper Lil Wayne that they have teased for years.

"Were both doing what we do, but he already know," Wayne recently said about the long-awaited project.

He added, "We still text and send songs here and there, change a verse because he killed me or change a verse cuz I killed him. It's still the same competition."

## I'VE BECOME STRONGER NOW: HONEY SINGH

these songs will come out soon."

Singh can be labelled as the face of Punjabi pop in the late 2000s. His tracks became Bollywood specials, often a film's main ingredient, as he started giving one hit after the other in movies such as *Cocktail*, *Chennai Express*, *Khiladi 786* and *Boss*. However, Singh has faced his share of brickbats as his work has been perceived as misogynist by many.

How does he deal with the criticism? "I just keep working. I think an artiste should keep working. Many people might feel bad about several things but my intention has never been to hurt anyone. I just make music. Whether it works or not, and if it is liked or not or if anyone is hurt... I can't do anything about it," he said.

This year Singh was named Best Music Director for the film *Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweeti*.

He finds winning awards as motivation.

"It is a big thing for me. In fact, any award an artiste wins becomes a big inspiration for them. They may say that awards don't matter, but I feel winning an award does matter to an artiste. It motivates to do more good work," he said.

Now, since he has made a powerful comeback, what can his fans expect from him?

**H**e gained instant stardom by belting out hits such as *Main Sharabi...*, *Angeezi beat...* and *Lungi dance...* Punjabi rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh, who has openly spoken about his struggles with bipolar disorder and alcoholism, says he has emerged stronger after his battles with his demons. Singh was missing from the lime-light around 2016-2017. He made a stunning comeback with songs like *Dil chori...* and *Chhote chhote peg...* in the film *Sonu Ke Titu Ki Sweeti*. He even featured in music video after four years with the single *Makhna*.

Has he come out stronger? "I have become stronger now. I never faced such problems in life but when it happened I had my family to support me and help me fight and get out of it," Singh told IANS.

Singh, whose real name is Hirdesh Singh, says he was sick and hence his career got a little slow during that phase.

"I was sick and when I recovered I chose to stay in the studio, and I think I made around more than 35 songs from 2017 to 2019. All



## LIFE FOR ME IS ABOUT FEARS MASHED WITH EXCITEMENT: HRITHIK ROSHAN

**H**e may have defined the quintessential Bollywood hero, but Hrithik Roshan says he has been pushing himself as an artiste with atypical choices since the beginning of his career.

The 45-year-old actor, who reached the heights of stardom with his very first film *Kaho Naa... Pyaar Hai*, surprised his fans with his decision to do off-beat films like *Fiza* and *Mission Kashmir* following the humongous success of his debut movie.

In an interview with PTI, Hrithik says he has always looked for parts which have the power to "transform him and bend him into something better."

"I only look to find a movie where I can juice out my entire potential. I like to be in spaces where I am pushed to the edge. The struggle and search to find your edge, how far can I lean

over my edge and still survive that is what I continuously do.

"True joy is when you live on the edge. The adrenaline rush, the insecurity, the fears mashed with the excitement is what life should be about," he says.

Hrithik says from playing a mentally disabled man in *Koi... Mil Gaya* to a paraplegic in *Guzarish*, Mughal emperor Akbar in *Jodhaa Akbar*, a visually-impaired man out for revenge in *Kaabil* to a mathematician in *Super 30*, he has always picked characters that impact him.

"When I did Akbar, it impacted me. It excited me that I really went into it. Similarly the characters in *Koi... Mil Gaya*, *Super 30*, *Kaabil*, impacted me. It depends on how much impact the character has made on me.

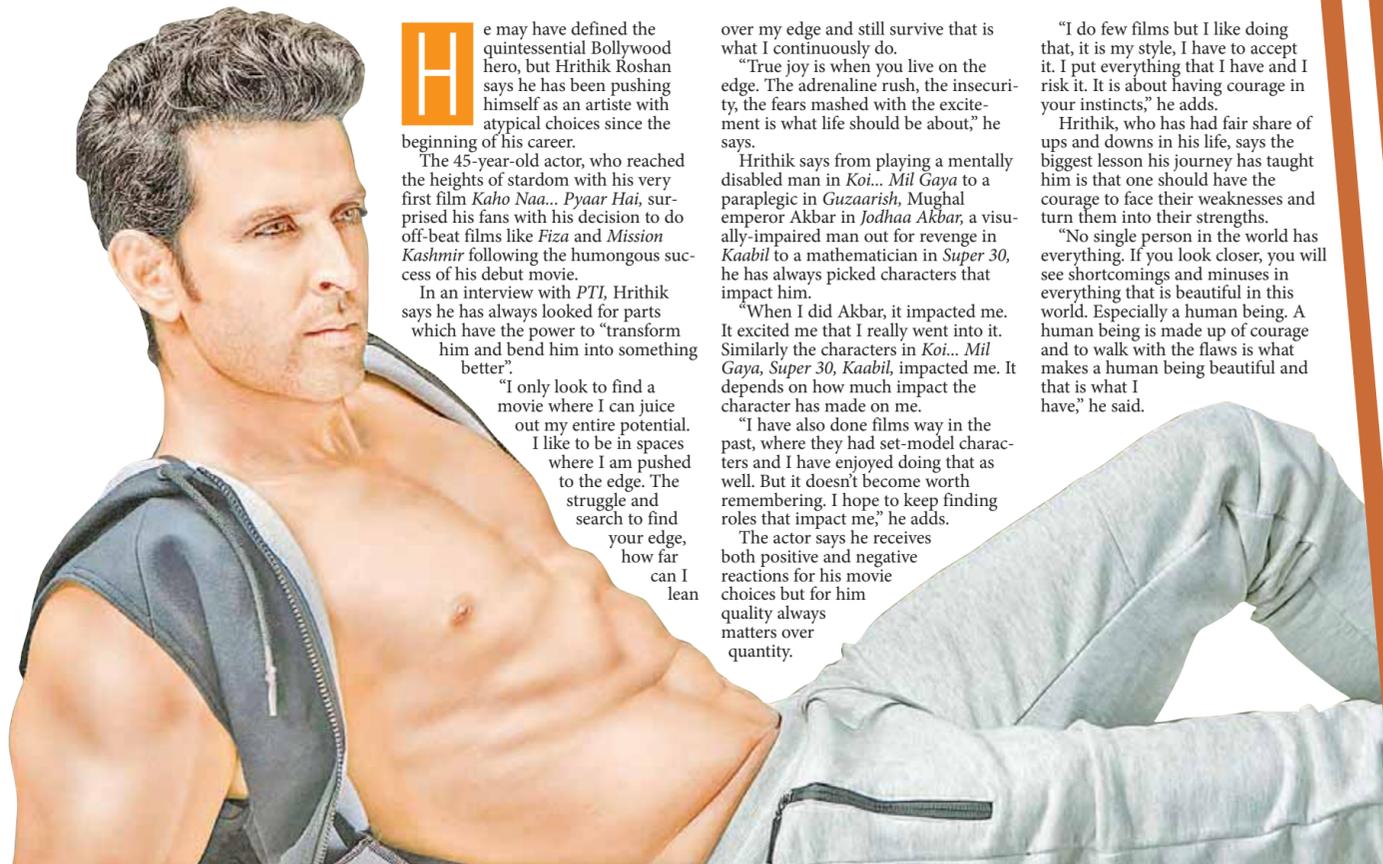
"I have also done films way in the past, where they had set-model characters and I have enjoyed doing that as well. But it doesn't become worth remembering. I hope to keep finding roles that impact me," he adds.

The actor says he receives both positive and negative reactions for his movie choices but for him quality always matters over quantity.

"I do few films but I like doing that, it is my style, I have to accept it. I put everything that I have and I risk it. It is about having courage in your instincts," he adds.

Hrithik, who has had fair share of ups and downs in his life, says the biggest lesson his journey has taught him is that one should have the courage to face their weaknesses and turn them into their strengths.

"No single person in the world has everything. If you look closer, you will see shortcomings and minuses in everything that is beautiful in this world. Especially a human being. A human being is made up of courage and to walk with the flaws is what makes a human being beautiful and that is what I have," he said.



## PREGNANT KALKI KOECHLIN PLANS WATER BIRTH IN GOA

**K**alki Koechlin is pregnant with her first child. The 35-year-old actress, who is five months pregnant now, has her due date in December. She is planning to deliver her baby through water birthing in Goa. The *Made in Heaven* actress is pregnant with her first child with boyfriend Guy Hershberg, who is an Israeli classical pianist, reported *HT Brunch*. Kalki is now spending time listening to Guy's music, going for walks with him and doing yoga. She has also reduced the use of mobile phone. "I already feel the changes in the way I react to things. I am more deliberate, slower, more patient. When motherhood comes eventually, it brings with it a new consciousness to your sense of person. I still want to work but it is less about the rat race and more about nurturing oneself through one's work. It becomes about infusing concentration and energy inward," she said. If reports are to be believed, Kalki herself was born through the process of water birthing and hence the decision to give birth to her little one in a similar way.

# Derby disappointment

Real hold off Atletico in tight goalless Madrid battle to grab top spot in La Liga

AFP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid regained top spot in La Liga on Saturday after a goalless derby with Atletico that saw them move above surprise package Granada and maintain their small lead over a crowded chasing pack.

Unbeaten Real are a point ahead of promoted Granada and Atletico Madrid after Diego Simeone's side failed to break down their well-drilled local rivals, whose disciplined performance at the Wanda Metropolitano was deserving of at least the point they gained.

"These matches with Atletico are very physical, this is one of the hardest grounds we have to visit during the season," Real captain Sergio Ramos told broadcaster Movistar.

"It was difficult to create chances in attack because they leave such little space. The point does little for us though as we wanted the three even more."

Real are a further point ahead of fourth-placed Barcelona, who won a hard-fought clash at Getafe 2-0 thanks to goals from Luis Suarez and Junior, and Real Sociedad, who can themselves go top on Sunday if they beat a Sevilla side down in eighth but just five points behind Zidane's leaders.

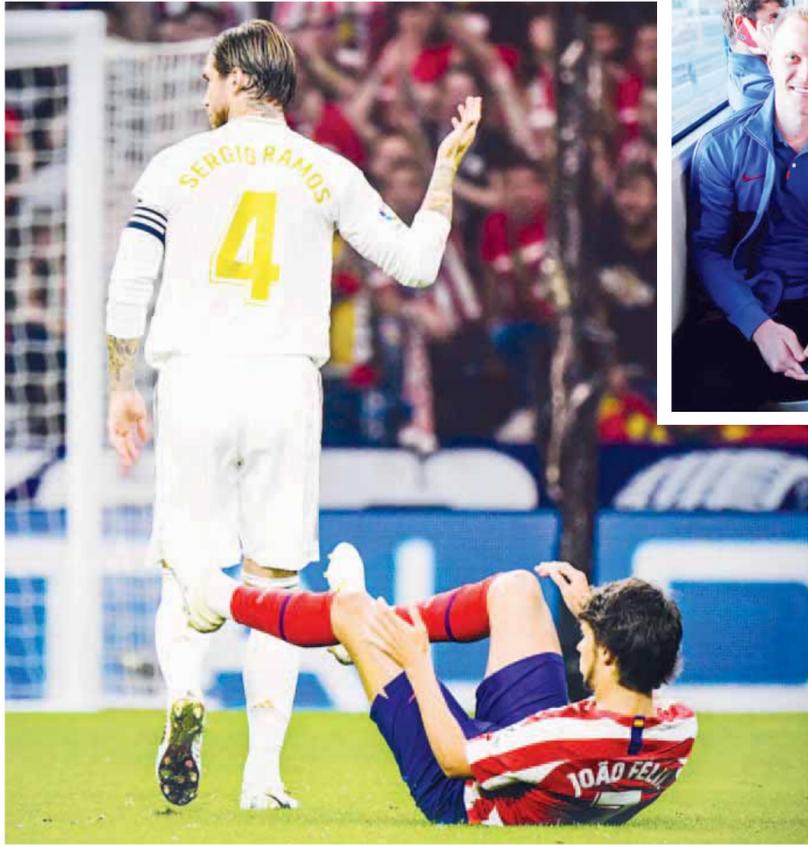
On a night of few clear-cut chances Atletico probably had the best opportunities but failed to test Thibaut Courtois in the Real goal, while the away side drew a couple of fine saves from Jan Oblak on their forays forward.

The best came 15 minutes from the end, when the Slovenian stopper got down brilliantly to his left to palm away Karim Benzema's powerful header from a Nacho cross.

Just seconds before Atletico had come to within inches of opening the scoring when Saul Niguez met a corner with a header that flashed just past the upright.

"It was a standard save for a goalkeeper," said Oblak.

"It was well-placed but I could



Real Madrid defender and captain Sergio Ramos moves past Atletico Madrid's Joao Felix during La Liga game at Wanda Metropolitano AP

see the ball and I hope it's always like that — the fewer goals we let in the better it is for everyone."

Granada had moved temporarily top of La Liga before the derby after Antonio Puertas' first-half strike saw them squeeze past rock-bottom Leganes.

Puertas crashed his long-range winner into an empty net after Juan Soriano had come charging out of

his goal to close down Roberto Soldado just before the half-hour mark.

A remarkable counter-attack goal launched by Marc-Andre Ter Stegen and finished off by Luis Suarez put Barcelona on their way four minutes before the break at Getafe, and Junior's tap-in shortly after the restart made sure of Barca's first away win since April.

"This match was crucial for us to rid ourselves of the sensation of

never being able to win away," said Valverde.

"We didn't play well in the first half but once we took the lead they basically didn't have any chances."

The win was Barca's second in a week as they attempt to recover from a miserable start that led to questions surrounding Valverde's future.

Athletic Bilbao lost for the first time this season at home to crisis club Valencia, who bagged their sec-

"We deserved much more, but what I have to do is congratulate the players since we have been supportive again and we kept a clean sheet. We lacked in creativity but we're happy with what we did."  
—ZINEDINE ZIDANE (Real Madrid manager)

"It was difficult to create chances in attack because they leave such little space. The point does little for us though as we wanted the three even more."  
—SERGIO RAMOS

ond win of the season thanks to Denis Cheryshev's 27th minute strike.

'Los Che' had been sent into turmoil when owner Peter Lim sacked Marcelino Garcia Toral earlier in the month.

But despite player and fan anger at Lim's decision, two draws and now a win after their shock victory at Chelsea in the Champions League have them in ninth on nine

# Balotelli scores but Brescia fall to Napoli

AFP ■ NAPLES

Mario Balotelli scored his first goal for new club Brescia but the promoted northerners fell to a 2-1 defeat to Napoli on Sunday as all the Italian teams in Europe warmed up with wins for next week's action.

Roma got back to winning ways beating Lecce 1-0 thanks to an Edin Dzeko goal, with city rivals Lazio also sealing all three points with a 4-0 hammering of Genoa.

Italian international Balotelli headed in after 67 minutes in his second match for his hometown club having missed four games because of a ban he incurred with former side Marseille.

First-half goals from Dries Mertens and Kostas Manolas ensured Napoli took all three points after their midweek loss to Cagliari, to boost confidence ahead of their Champions League trip to Belgian club Genk.

Carlo Ancelotti's Napoli stay fourth with 12 points from six games, six behind league leaders Inter Milan who beat Sampdoria 3-1 on Saturday, before they play Barcelona in Europe.

Inter have a maximum 18 points from six games — two ahead of Juve — after winning their first six league matches for the first time since the 1966-67 season.

Champions Juventus stay second with Atalanta third — a point ahead of Napoli — after thrashing Sassuolo 4-1 on Saturday.

Juve play Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday with Atalanta's first ever Champions League home game against Shakhtar Donetsk.

Roma are fifth, a point behind Napoli, with Lazio a further point back in sixth.

Balotelli carried his daughter Pia, who lives in Naples with her mother and was decked out in the Napoli colours, onto the pitch at the San Paolo Stadium.

In a nervy final half hour Balotelli got his head to a Sandro Tonali corner to serve notice to Italy coach Roberto Mancini of his ambitions to play Euro 2020.

It was his first goal in Italy in four years but Balotelli's losing streak to Napoli stretched to eight games —



Brescia's Mario Balotelli holds his daughter Pia wearing a Napoli jersey, as he enters the pitch prior to the start of the Serie A match AP

## FIGURATIV

**21** Dries Mertens has scored 21 goals in his last 20 Serie A matches against newly promoted teams

**10** Only Manchester City (11) have won more away games than Atalanta (10) in top-5 European leagues in 2019 calendar year

**2** Inter have won each of their first six games in a single Serie A campaign for only the second time in their history (the first in 1966/67).

**5** Stefano Sensi has been directly involved in five Serie A goals current season, more than any other Inter player.

having never won while playing for both Milan clubs, Manchester City, Nice and now Brescia.

Brescia slip to 14th in the table.

Elsewhere, both Roman clubs also warmed up for their Europa League games next week with wins after Serie A losses during the week.

# I'll give my life to PSG: Neymar

AFP ■ PARIS

Brazilian superstar Neymar pledged on Saturday to "give my life to PSG" after his goal kept the French giants top of Ligue 1 with a 1-0 win at Bordeaux.

The world's most expensive footballer, in an attempt to win over PSG fans, many of whom have become unconvinced by the player's attachment to the French capital, Neymar has looked a rejuvenated figure, scoring for a third time this season.

"I'm very happy to be able to help PSG, it's better with the fans," he said.

"It's like with your girlfriend, one moment you're bad, but with hugs and a lot of love, it's better."

"I am here to give my life to PSG. They are my team, my goal is to help my club, to continue to score goals."

On Saturday, Kylian Mbappe and Neymar played together for the first time this season and against Bordeaux at the Matmut stadium AP combined for the only goal in Bordeaux.

Mbappe, who had been out injured since August 25, started on the bench but, with PSG struggling for a breakthrough, came on after an hour.

The Parisian attack immediately gained a more menacing edge.

Both Mbappe, with a shot, and Neymar, with a header, went close before combining to open the scoring for the game's only goal in the 70th minute.

Mbappe outpaced the Bordeaux defence on the right. His precise low cross presented Neymar with a tap in at the far post.

"The most important thing is that these goals are decisive, in tight matches, that's why I'm here," added Neymar.

"It's obviously a pleasure to link up with Kylian again. He came back with his smile and with his football talent," he added.

French World Cup winner Mbappe said he is delighted to link-up again with Neymar although he admits their partnership remains a work in progress.

"There are things that have been said, but we have always had a relationship based on honesty and admiration," said Mbappe.

Meanwhile, Monaco's revival continued when a 4-1 home win over Brest allowed them to move into 12th spot.

Monaco have now taken seven points from their last three league games.



Neymar Jr in action during the Ligue 1 match against Bordeaux at the Matmut stadium AP

# Man City see off Toffees challenge

AFP ■ LIVERPOOL



Gabriel Jesus hugs Kevin De Bruyne after scoring AP

Riyad Mahrez and Raheem Sterling recalmed Manchester City's nerves on Saturday as the Premier League champions overcame a searching test to beat feisty Everton 3-1 and keep leaders Liverpool in their sights.

Pep Guardiola's team came into the match at Goodison Park knowing they could not afford to fall further behind Jurgen Klopp's high-fliers, who earlier extended their perfect record with a win at Sheffield United to stretch their lead to eight points.

It appeared to be normal service for City when they took the lead midway through the first half through Gabriel Jesus but Everton hit back nine minutes later through Dominic Calvert-Lewin.

Both sides had chances after the break in an entertaining contest but Mahrez's free-kick and Sterling's late strike put the game beyond the home side and allowed City to close to within five points of Liverpool.

"We know if we have a setback in a match we stick with the gameplan, that is the most important thing. The

## FIGURATIVE

**100** Raheem Sterling has now scored 100 goals in all club competitions in his career (77 for Manchester City, 23 for Liverpool)

**17** Riyad Mahrez has been directly involved in 17 goals in his last 17 starts for Manchester City in all competitions (seven goals, ten assists), including nine in his last seven (four goals, five assists)

**2** Dominic Calvert-Lewin has scored in back-to-back Premier League appearances for the first time in his career, and back-to-back league games for the first time since October 2015 whilst playing for Northampton in League Two

**22** Gabriel Jesus has scored 22 goals in his last 21 starts for club and country, netting in each of his last six starts for Manchester City

**8** Kevin De Bruyne has provided eight assists in the Premier League already this season — only Cesc Fabregas in 2009-10 has provided as many in his side's first seven games in a single campaign

chances will come," said Sterling. "Coming here is always one of the most difficult fixtures in a season. The pitch is narrow and they are always up for it but we got over the line."

"It is still early in the season and there are still (more than) 90 points to play for. We are behind at this moment in time but the league can change very quickly and we can stay focused."

City, playing in a garish yellow-and-pink kit, took a deserved lead in the 24th minute when Mahrez found Kevin De Bruyne, who placed a delightful curling cross onto the head of Jesus, an unused substitute during City's 8-0 demolition of Watford last week.

The home side responded brightly, with Gylfi Sigurdsson going close, and pulled level in the 33rd minute when Seamus Coleman chipped over goalkeeper Ederson from a tight angle and Calvert-Lewin head-

ed in on the goal line.

City had chances to restore their lead before half-time but Jesus blazed over and Gundogan fired straight at Everton goalkeeper Jordan Pickford.

Early in the second half De Bruyne hit the side-netting before Ederson was called into action at the other end, tipping over Yerry Mina's close-range header as Everton went toe to toe with last year's domestic treble winners.

Sterling missed a glorious chance to put City back in front on the hour mark, side-footing wide from Mahrez's incisive pass.

But the visitors eventually got the goal they craved when Mahrez curled a free-kick into the bottom corner past a despairing Pickford with about 20 minutes remaining.

Sterling made sure of the win when he smashed an effort against the underside of the bar and goal-line technology confirmed it had crossed the line.

# Osaka starts with win in China

AFP ■ BEIJING

Naomi Osaka said she had been "really riled up" as Japan's two-time Grand Slam champion reached the second round at the China Open on Sunday despite being far from her best.

The 21-year-old former world number one racked up 26 unforced errors on the way to a 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) win over Jessica Pegula of the United States.

Fourth seed Osaka looked frustrated and disgruntled on several occasions against the 76th-ranked Pegula.

Osaka, who plays Andrea Petkovic of Germany next in Beijing, was disappointed that she was unable to replicate the form which won her the Pan Pacific Open in Japan a week ago.

"During tournaments, the first match is always the worst for me," said the US-based star.

"But I was kind of expecting it to be better because I just played really well in Tokyo (actually Osaka)."

"I don't know, I thought it would carry on. I was a little bit frustrated that I felt my game wasn't really where I left it."

"I just felt like today I was really riled up, not really sure why," she added, also describing herself as "very stressed" and "very nervous."

"I also didn't want to lose in the first round," she said.



Naomi Osaka reacts during her match against Jessica Pegula in the China Open tournament AP

Another two-time Grand Slam winner, Simona Halep, cruised into round two in Beijing with a 6-1, 6-1 demolition of qualifier Rebecca Peterson.

Venus Williams, whose sister Serena is not in the Chinese capital because of a knee problem, battled into the next round with a 6-3, 4-6, 7-5 victory over Barbora Strycova.

# Mercedes extend Russian supremacy

AFP ■ SOCHI

Lewis Hamilton claimed his first win in four races on Sunday when he rode his luck to end Ferrari's winning streak with a well-judged strategic victory for Mercedes in a roller-coaster Russian Grand Prix.

The defending five-time champion came home 3.829 seconds ahead of his team-mate and nearest championship rival Valtteri Bottas as Mercedes took full advantage of Ferrari's reliability and tactical problems by delivering a solid Silver Arrows one-two.

Sebastian Vettel, who led from lap one, suffered a mechanical failure and retired after leading, gifting Mercedes a chance to extend their Sochi supremacy to six wins in succession.

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc came home a frustrated third after starting from pole and losing his advantage to Vettel on the opening lap in a race punctuated by two Safety Car interventions and one use of the Virtual Safety Car.

Hamilton's win was his first since the Hungarian Grand Prix on August 4, his ninth in 16 outings this year and the 82nd of his career, lifting him 73



Lewis Hamilton celebrates on the podium after winning at the Sochi Autodrom F1 circuit AP

points clear at the top of the drivers' title race.

He scored an additional point for fastest lap.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen finished fourth, having started ninth,

ahead of team-mate Alex Albon, who had started from the pit lane.

Carlos Sainz was sixth for McLaren ahead of Sergio Perez of Racing Point, Kevin Magnussen of Haas, Lando Norris in the second McLaren and Renault's Nico Hulkenberg.

Vettel, who ignored Ferrari team orders after snatching the lead on the opening lap, was forced to retire after 28 with a power failure.

"That's exactly what we needed," exclaimed a delighted Hamilton on team radio following a flawless strategic performance by Mercedes.

"It was an incredible job by all the team — not giving up. Keeping up with Ferrari was a hard task, but we kept pushing."

Bottas said his second was a credit to the team's belief.

"Starting fourth and finishing second is not bad, is it?" he said. "So, it's not so bad..."

Leclerc remained poised, despite his disappointment.

"At least we are consistent," he said. "It's a shame for the team not to have both of us up here... I will always trust the team, but our tactic was for me to give the slipstream, which I did — and then, well I need to speak to the team about that."

# 'Seniors should throw first punch'

Philander wants experienced Proteas players including him to make statement in Tests



Vernon Philander, right, chats with Kagiso Rabada during South Africa's training session ICC/File Photo

PTI ■ VIZIANAGARAM

South Africa pacer Vernon Philander wants the team's senior players to take responsibility and throw the "first punch" at "big dogs" India in the upcoming three-match Test series starting October 2.

The opening Test against India will mark the start of South Africa's ICC World Test Championship campaign and Philander said it is going to be a tough battle first up.

"It's a tough start... playing India in India but I don't think the South Africans would have wanted it any other way... take the big dogs in their home ground," he was quoted as saying by the ICC.

"All of us are looking forward to this challenge and there are a lot of player-to-player challenges as well."

It will be first Test series for South Africa since the retirements of experienced players such as Hashim Amla and Dale Steyn.

"Spotlight will be on a lot of big players to make a statement. Our job is to come here and give the first punch as India is obviously expected to do well," said Philander after the conclusion of the final day of the practice game.

**Spotlight will be on a lot of big players to make a statement. Our job is to come here and give the first punch as India is obviously expected to do well**

—Vernon Philander

"We are known as a team who starts slow so this time around we have to start well. There is a lot of pressure on players (but then) it's international cricket and you want to keep it that way."

Philander, who had picked up 15 wickets during South Africa's last Test series against India in 2018, wants the senior players to leave behind a legacy for the youngsters.

"We have lost some senior players and there are new players coming in and we want them to learn quickly."

"Hopefully we can use the experience of the senior players that are still around and mold this into a good Test side for the years to come. That's the most impor-

tant part, to lay a good foundation for players to take forward," he said.

Philander, who made his Test debut in 2011, geared up for the opening Test by taking two wickets and scoring 48 during the drawn three-day warm-up game between Board President's XI and South Africa here.

"It's always good to have some time out in the middle. Fortunately for me, I came here a couple of days earlier to join the A side... to get a bit of a game time," said the 34-year-old, who has taken 214 wickets at an astounding average of 21.64.

"Mainly it's just about getting a feel for the wickets. It is going to be a tough series, obviously, so the more time you spend out there in the middle, the better."

Talking about the World Test championship, Philander said: "The Test championship brings in a new dimension. It is a new sort of excitement for players. Also knowing that you will be playing against top teams more often (is great)."

"We are obviously prepared to do well. When we do well, it gives you that better confidence and I'll take that confidence with me. It's been a long winter for me and I am feeling in really good nick."



Heavy rainfall in Surat washes 3rd T20 game between India and South Africa women BCCI

## Third women's T20 washed out

PTI ■ SURAT

The third women's Twenty20 International between India and South Africa was abandoned on Sunday, without a ball being bowled due to heavy downpour here.

Persistent rain meant even the toss could not take place. The game was supposed to start at 7 pm local time but after inspecting the conditions at 7:30 pm, the umpires decided to call off the game.

This is the second consecutive match in the series which has been washed out. The second T20 was also abandoned due to rain on Thursday.

India lead the five-match series 1-0.

The fourth T20 is scheduled here on Tuesday.

## SINGLES

INDIAN JR BOYS WIN BRONZE IN TT

**MUMBAI:** Indian junior boys Raegan Albuquerque and Yashansh Malik paired with Netherlands' Lode Hulshof to win the Bronze medal at the Serbia Junior and Cadet Table-Tennis Open. The team put up a big fight before going down 2-3 in the semi-finals to the Czech Republic trio of Radek Skala, Tomas Martinko and Ondrej Kveton. Starting the proceedings, Raegan lost 2-3 to Radek but Lode got them back into the tie, beating Martinko 3-2. Yashansh then increased the lead in his team's favour and beat Ondrej 3-1. With just a win away from entering the final, Raegan and Lode went down by identical 0-3 margins to Tomas and Radek to end their campaign.

C GARH CONTINUE WINNING RUN

**BENGALURU:** Chhattisgarh continued its winning run in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, beating Andhra by 56 runs in the Elite Group A game on Sunday. Asked to bat first, Chhattisgarh, who had stunned defending champions Mumbai on Saturday, crawled to 268/9 in their allotted 50 overs at the Alur cricket stadium 11 near here. Opener Chandrakar (54) and one-down Ashutosh Singh (75) rallied the innings before Shashank Singh made a quick-fire 45 off 25 balls, with two fours and four sixes, to ensure that his team got past the 260-run mark. And then Chhattisgarh bowlers kept taking wickets at regular intervals and the Andhra innings eventually folded up at 212, way short of their target. In another Elite Group A match at Alur, Kerala defeated Hyderabad by 62 runs. While in third game at Just Cricket, Goa defeated Jharkhand by 42 runs to bag four points.

INDIA U-18 CLAIM MAIDEN SAFF TITLE

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian football team lifted the SAFF U-18 Championship for the first time when they defeated Bangladesh 2-1 in the title clash on Sunday. India surged ahead as early as the 2nd minute when Vikram Partap Singh sped past his marker and banged it in. The match-winner came in injury time when the nippy Ravi Bahadur Rana scored off a screamer from about 30 yards. Yeasin Arfat reduced the margin for Bangladesh in the 40th minute. "I had maintained that it will take a moment of brilliance to end this SAFF Championship, and it was fitting that Ravi finished it with a wonderful strike," head coach Floyd Pinto stated moments after the final whistle. "We were not just the best footballing team in the tournament, but also the most effective team. I am really happy for the boys. They earned it," he added.

DE MINAUR WINS THIRD CAREER TITLE

**ZUHAI:** Alex de Minaur of Australia won his third ATP title of a breakout year with victory over France's Adrian Panatta in the final of the inaugural Zuhai Championships on Sunday. The 20-year-old, who defeated former number one Andy Murray in the last 16, won 7-6 (7/4), 6-4 in a little over two hours. Ranked 31 in the world, De Minaur has been imperious in southern China all week and broke the lower-ranked Frenchman in the 10th game of the second set to seal his victory. De Minaur adds Zuhai to titles in Atlanta and Sydney this year.

BEKELE MISSES RECORD BY 2 SECS

**BERLIN:** Ethiopian Kenenisa Bekele won his second Berlin Marathon on Sunday in a time of two hours one minute and 41 seconds, just two seconds short of the world record. Bekele left it late to hit the lead, overtaking countryman Birhanu Legese on the 38th kilometre before hitting top speed as he chased the world record of 2:01:39 set in Berlin last year by Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge. Bekele was more than a minute behind the world record time with 10 kilometres to go, but finished in a flurry to better his personal best of 2:03:03 set at the 2016 Berlin Marathon. Legese finished second with fellow Ethiopian Sisay Lemma in third. Asheke Bekere, also from Ethiopia, was the fastest of the women, finishing just eight seconds ahead of countrywoman Mare Dibaba in a time of 2:20:14, highlighting the African nation's dominance in the sport.

PUNERI PALTAN OUT OF PKL SEASON 7

**PANCHKULA:** Naveen Kumar was once again the star for Dabang Delhi KC as they ousted Purneri Paltan from the Pro-Kabaddi League with 60-40 victory on Sunday. Naveen, the talented raider picked up another Super 10 (his 17th consecutive) as Delhi produced a near-flawless performance to end the paltan campaign in the cash-rich league. Delhi, as expected, started on the front foot, with their raider-in-chief Naveen Kumar looking unstoppable. Pune were badly missing the services of their raider Pankaj Mohite, who missed out due to a fever. Their raiders struggled as Ravinder Pahal (completed 50 tackle points for the season) and Joginder Narwal, the corners for Delhi, also got into the game with successful tackles. Naveen kept adding to his points tally as he clinched a personal record of becoming the fastest player to secure 400 raid points in the PKL history.

DHARMAMER WINS MALDIVES CHALLENGE

**MALE:** Indian shuttler Kaushal Dharmamer clinched the men's singles title at the Maldives International Challenge with a straight-games win over Sril Verma on Sunday. The 23-year-old from Mumbai, who won the Myanmar International Series earlier this month, registered a comfortable 21-13, 21-18 victory over his compatriot in a match that lasted 35 minutes. The final day of the competition saw Indians competing for the title in four of the five events.



Ashish Nehra chats with Jasprit Bumrah BCCI/File Picture

## Stress fracture has got nothing to do with Bumrah's action: Nehra

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ashish Nehra, who knows a thing or two about injury management, on Sunday insisted that India's premier fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah's stress fracture has got nothing to do with his unorthodox action.

Bumrah was recently ruled out of both South Africa and Bangladesh series owing to a stress fracture on his lower back, with a recovery time period of two months due to early detection.

Former India left arm speedster Nehra is confident that Bumrah will be as lethal post his comeback as he was prior to injury.

"Stress fracture is unrelated to action and we must get our concepts clear. He doesn't need to change his action and if he tries to do that, it won't be great. Let me assure you when he comes back, he can bowl with same action, intensity and pace," Nehra said.

"His action is not that unconventional as it is made out to be. The alignment of his body at the time of delivery is perfect.

"The only aspect that is not copy book is his left hand (works like a pivot), which doesn't go up. Even then, his action is 10 times better than Malinga. Malinga's knees, back leg bends giving a look of a javelin thrower," said Nehra, known for his in-depth technical knowledge.

For someone whose career was plagued by injuries, Nehra feels that it's not always prudent to set a time frame.

"In case of stress fracture there is no time frame. Jasprit might feel good in next two months and may not feel good even after six months. So only the player knows when his body is feeling cent percent match ready," he said.

The rehabilitation is very important as this is a type of back injury that doesn't involve any surgical process.

"Stress fracture doesn't have medication. It's only proper rest and rehabilitation unlike disc injury or any nerve tissue injury," he said.

Nehra feels that an injury like stress fracture can never be apprehended and Bumrah's was the classic case. "He had a month's break post World Cup. He didn't play white ball game and came for Test matches. But that means workload was well managed but still he had that fracture. Now can you explain why?" he asked.

Nehra elaborated, "Had they not done scans, they wouldn't even had figured as players wouldn't immediately figure out they have stress fracture."

"Stress fracture is detected through bone scans and not MRI. In bone scan plates, you will see doctors pointing at various spots. These are stress spots."

"Now fast bowling is a strenuous activity and do a bone scan of any bowler and you will see those spots. Do you stop playing? It's just that you have to manage it well as some injuries are chronic," he said.

Nehra elaborated, "Had they not done scans, they wouldn't even had figured as players wouldn't immediately figure out they have stress fracture."

He said that too much noise is made out of workload management and according to Nehra, the more the player plays, the better he gets.

"At this stage of his career, the more he plays, better he will get at it. Jessi is only 26 years old. He is playing international cricket for three years and he knows his body well. He will come back stronger and the pace in his deliveries will remain intact," he concluded.

# 'Successful SL tour will encourage other countries to play in Pak'

PTI ■ KARACHI

Sri Lanka's interim head coach Ramesh Ratnayake feels his side's trouble-free limited overs tour of Pakistan will encourage other nations to send their sides to this part of the world.

The Sri Lankan team began its tour of Pakistan on Friday, after 10 of its main players refused to travel citing security concerns.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had initially invited Cricket Sri Lanka to play two Tests of the ICC Test Championship in Karachi and Lahore but the Islanders instead opted to play a limited-overs series of three ODIs and as many Twenty20 matches.

The PCB is now looking at this tour to pass off successfully and have the Tests in December in Pakistan.



"This will be a precursor for that (Test) tour (in December). I'm sure this will certainly encourage the others (SL player, who refused to travel) to take decisions, we can't enforce it on them," Ratnayake told a media conference.

"They have taken a decision and we have to respect that, but certainly, if things go well, this series will be a huge thing for the future, not only for them but for all other

countries to be here."

Much to the disappointment of the players and fans, the opening ODI was washed out due to rain and Ratnayake said the downpour has affected the team's training as well.

"We have had only a day's training outside and today is another. The preparation hasn't been all that good but that's not going to be an excuse which I will give because they are all professional players," Ratnayake said.

## Momota takes Korea title

AFP ■ SEOUL

Top-ranked Kento Momota of Japan clinched the men's singles title at the Korea Open badminton tournament on Sunday with a win over number two Chou Tien-chen of Taiwan.

The 25-year-old downed Chou 21-19, 21-17 in a final that lasted 53 minutes.

In the women's final, China's He Bingjiao defeated Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand 18-21, 24-22, 21-17.

South Korea dominated the women's doubles, with Kim So-yeong and Kong Hee-yong beating compatriots Lee So-hee and Shin Seung-chan 13-21, 21-19, 21-17.

Indonesian pair Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto defeated Takeshi Kamura and Keigo Sonoda of Japan 21-16, 21-17 to clinch the men's doubles title.



Christian Coleman, left, crosses the finish line to win men's 100 meter race ahead of Silver medalist Justin Gatlin AP

# India complete hat-trick of wins

PTI ■ ANTWERP

Drag flicker Harmanpreet Singh yet again scored a brace as Indian men's hockey team thrashed Spain 5-1 for their third consecutive win, here on Sunday.

Harmanpreet (41, 51') and Randeep Singh (35') scored in the second half after Akashdeep Singh (5') and SV Sunil (20') had put India ahead at the half-time.

It was not a great start for the Indian team though, as they went a goal down in the third minute through Spain's opening attack. Iglesias Alvaro scored the opening goal of the match to put the pressure on the



Indian players listen to coach Reid's instruction during half-time H/Twitter

Indians. However, high on confidence from their two wins in the opening two matches, India responded with a quick equalizer in the fifth minute as Akashdeep Singh scored a field goal to make it 1-1.

SV Sunil marked his return to the team with a wonderful strike in the second quarter to give India a 2-1 lead. In the 20th minute the forward ran inside from the right flank, and struck the ball past Quico Cortes.

The Indian team started the third quarter with a flurry of good opportunities inside the Spanish circle, and it was in the 35th that they benefited from it as forward Randeep Singh scored India's third goal of the afternoon.

Harmanpreet converted a penalty corner to make it 4-1 in India's favour.

The last quarter saw a similar tale as India produced some outstanding team moves with their pressing and quick passing. They scored their fifth goal of the match when Harmanpreet step up yet again to convert another penalty corner. India will face world number two Belgium on Tuesday.

# Coleman roars to 100m title

AFP ■ DOHA

US sprinter Christian Coleman stamped his mark on world sprinting on Saturday with a dominant performance to sweep to the global 100 metres title and suggest the heir to retired Jamaican icon Usain Bolt has arrived.

The 23-year-old American, who escaped a doping ban earlier this month on a technicality, swept over the finish line in a world-leading personal best of 9.76sec to

claim his first major outdoor championship Gold medal.

Defending champion Justin Gatlin took Silver in 9.89sec at the age of 37 while Canada's Andre De Grasse claimed Bronze in 9.90sec.

It completed a flawless championship campaign for Coleman, who had been the only man to duck under 10 seconds in both Friday's opening rounds and Saturday's semi-finals.

He let out a roar of triumph as he crossed the line before punching the air in jubilation after a performance which makes him the sixth fastest man in history.

"It is an incredible time, it is a PR for me. I think the sky's the limit, I think I still have a lot of things I can work on and improve, I think I can keep dropping my time," the indoor 60 metres world record holder said.

There were also first world titles for Ethiopia-born naturalised Dutch distance runner Sifan Hassan in the 10,000m and DeAnna Price of the United States, who celebrated

victory in the women's hammer.

Price, 26, has only one kidney and suffered several serious injuries down the years.

"I didn't even think I was going to compete this year," Price said after her win. "I was in a lot of pain. I couldn't even throw over 70 metres."

OLDEST MEDAL

Jamaica's Tajay Gayle upset the form book to strike men's longjump Gold, producing the leap of his life to defeat favourite Juan Miguel

Echevarria.

The 23-year-old Gayle launched himself 8.69m with his fourth attempt while Cuba's Echevarria only managed 8.34m for Bronze.

Day two concluded with 50km walk races.

The men's race was won by Yusuke Suzuki, who became the first Japanese athlete to win the 50km men's race.

The women's race saw a Chinese 1-2 with Liang Rui taking Gold in 4hr 23min 26sec and Li Maocuo the Silver.