

OPINION 8
CHEQUE BOOK
DIPLOMACY

CELEB TALKS 14
VIOLA DAVIS TO BE AWARDED LIFE-
TIME ACHIEVEMENT AT ROME FEST

SPORTS 16
DEBUT BY
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HYDERABAD, THURSDAY OCTOBER 3, 2019; PAGES 16 ₹3



the pioneer



KALYAAN DHEV
IN TALKS WITH
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DD official suspended for not telecasting PM speech

CHENNAI: Indian public broadcaster Prasar Bharati has suspended R. Vasumathi, Assistant Director (Programme) of Doordarshan (DD) allegedly for not allowing live telecast of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech at the Singapore-India Hackathon 2019 on DD Poddhagai on September 30.

The Singapore-India Hackathon 2019 prize distribution function was held at Indian Institute of Technology, Madras (IITM) here on Monday. The broadcaster is contemplating disciplinary proceedings against Vasumathi of the Tamil channel.

600 prisoners across India released on Gandhi Jayanti

NEW DELHI: Nearly 600 prisoners, convicted of offences other than murder, rape and corruption, released from 150 jails across the country on Wednesday, the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. All these prisoners will be released under a special remission scheme.

However, around 80 convicts selected from jails in Maharashtra and Haryana, will have to wait for their release. With the announcement of Assembly elections in the state and the model code of conduct coming into force, their release date has been shifted till the elections get over. Of the five prisoners named, the Tihar jail administration will release only three.

PM proposes 'Einstein Challenge'

NEW DELHI: In a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has penned an op-ed piece in The New York Times, calling Gandhi as the "best teacher" and proposed an "Einstein Challenge".

Enumerating his government's work in the field of sanitation, eliminating poverty and renewable energy, Modi invited thinkers, entrepreneurs and tech leaders to be at the forefront of spreading Gandhi's ideas through innovation, as part of the "Einstein Challenge".

We know Albert Einstein's famous words on Gandhi: "Generations to come will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth."

TODAY

ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Ashwini & Sukla Paksha
Panchangam
Tithi: Panchami: 10:11 am
Nakshatram: Anuradha: 12:10 pm
Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work)
Rahukalam: 01:33 pm - 03:02 pm
Yamagandam: 06:10 am - 07:38 am
Varjyam: 05:49 pm - 07:38 pm
Gulika: 09:07 am - 10:36 pm
Good Time: (to start any important work)
Amritkalam: 03:28 am - 05:05 am
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:41 am - 12:28 pm

HYDERABAD WEATHER
Forecast: Thunderstorms
Temp: 31/23
Humidity: 90%
Sunrise: 06:06
Sunset: 06:03
Current Weather Conditions Updated October 02, 2019 5:00 PM

NIZAM'S FUND BELONGS TO INDIA, RULES UK COURT

Dismisses Pakistan's claim over £ 35mn bank deposit

PNS ■ LONDON

In a major setback for Pakistan, the UK High Court on Wednesday ruled in favour of India in a decades-old legal dispute with Islamabad over funds belonging to the Nizam of Hyderabad at the time of Partition in 1947 and deposited in a London bank account.

The Nizam's descendants, Prince Mukarram Jah the titular eighth Nizam of Hyderabad and his younger brother Muffakham Jah, had joined hands with the Indian government in the legal battle against the Pakistan government over around 35 million pounds lying with NatWest Bank plc here.

In his judgment handed down at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, Justice Marcus Smith ruled that the "Nizam VII was beneficially entitled to the Fund and those claiming in right of Nizam VII the Princes and India are entitled to have the sum paid out to their order".

"Pakistan's contentions of non-justiciability by reason of the foreign act of state doctrine and non-enforceability on grounds of illegality both fail," the verdict notes.

The dispute revolves



The dispute revolved around 1,007,940 pounds and nine shillings transferred in 1948 from the then Nizam of Hyderabad to the high commissioner in Britain of the newly-formed state of Pakistan

around 1,007,940 pounds and nine shillings transferred in 1948 from the then Nizam of Hyderabad to the high commissioner in Britain of the newly-formed state of Pakistan. That amount has since grown into 35 million pounds as the Nizam's descendants, supported by India, claimed it belongs to them and Pakistan counter-claimed that it is rightfully

theirs. "We are delighted that today's judgment recognises His Exalted Highness the VIII Nizam's rights to funds which have been in dispute since 1948. Our client was still a child when the dispute first arose and is now in his 80s. It is a great relief to see this dispute finally resolved in his lifetime," said Paul Hewitt, partner in Withers LLP, who have acted for the VIII Nizam

since Pakistan issued proceedings in 2013.

"Justice Smith's judgment covers a complex historical and legal set of issues, interpreting facts and events that occurred 70 years ago to establish that the funds, which now amount to 35 million, were always held in trust for our client's grandfather, the VII Nizam. The judgment also makes important findings on justiciability and whether a nation state can be a trustee, he notes.

In 2013, Pakistan had waived sovereign immunity by issuing a claim for the fund that opened the way for the current case to proceed. The Pakistan government's legal team had claimed the fund on two alternative bases.

One, referred to as the Arms for Money Argument, claimed that funds were transferred to compensate/reimburse/indemnify Pakistan for assistance provided in procuring/facilitating the supply and/or transportation of weapons. The second ground was that the funds were transferred in order to keep them out of the hands of India, referred to by the judge as the Safeguarding Argument.

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CM KCR to meet PM Modi tomorrow

First meeting after Modi assumed office for second term in May. Both are meeting after a gap of nine months

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrababu Naidu will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on October 4. It would be the first meeting between them after Modi assumed office for a second term in May this year.

After assuming office as Chief Minister of Telangana for a second term on December 13, 2018, KCR met Modi only once -- on December 26 last year. Thus, KCR is meeting Modi after a gap of more than nine months.

KCR had skipped Modi's swearing-in ceremony in the evening on May 30 this year in New Delhi, as he was delayed in Vijayawada where he attended Jagan's swearing-in as AP Chief Minister in the morning. KCR's special flight

was not given permission to land at New Delhi airport due to technical reasons and he had to return to Hyderabad from Vijayawada.

Subsequently, KCR skipped NITI Aayog meeting convened by Modi with Chief Ministers of all states in June, citing busy schedule due to the Kaleshwaram project inaugural function.

After the LS results were out in May, TRS and BJP have been engaged in a fierce political one-upmanship. BJP upped the ante against TRS since the saffron party could bag four Lok Sabha seats after trouncing TRS and defeating even KCR's daughter Kavita in the process. Thereafter, BJP had been projecting itself as an alternative to TRS in Telangana.

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AP CM Jagan to meet Modi on Oct 5

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

AP Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on October 5. The CM is expected to take up pending bifurcation-related issues concerning AP with the PM.

Interestingly, Jagan is meeting a day after his Telangana counterpart K Chandrababu Naidu is meeting Modi on October 4. Jagan is expected to urge Modi again on granting special category status to AP, as promised by the Centre at the time of bifurcation of unified Andhra Pradesh in 2014.

Besides, Jagan is likely to seek special financial assistance to AP to bridge revenue-deficit and enhance share to AP in central grants.

He is also likely to seek Centre's help in early completion of Polavaram irrigation project across Godavari river and funds for construction of capital city.



Jagan's moves put KCR in a fix

L VENKAT RAM REDDY ■ HYDERABAD

There was a time when the Andhra Pradesh government used to feel the pinch of decisions taken by the Telangana government post 2014 bifurcation. Five years down the line, the situation seems to have reversed, with Andhra Pradesh showing the way at least to disaffected sections of people. This explains why TS Chief Minister K Chandrababu Naidu winces whenever his AP counterpart Jaganmohan Reddy takes a policy decision in keeping the promises made by YSRCP during his pre-poll padayatra.

Several crucial decisions taken by KCR between 2014 and 2018 nettled the Andhra Pradesh government headed by TDP chief and then CM N Chandrababu Naidu. It was then not an issue for KCR as, upon bifurcation of undivided AP in 2014, Telangana became 'revenue-surplus', while residual AP became 'revenue-deficit'.

Flush with funds, KCR announced highest fitment (basic pay hike) of 43 per cent to State government employees in February 2015. Chandrababu was forced to follow suit. He yielded to the demand of AP employees that they be given hike matching that of TS employees. Within three months, KCR followed it

- KCR dominated Chandrababu with sops to various sections in his first term
- Now Jagan lands KCR in trouble with his sops in AP
- Jagan's sops to APSRTC staff fuelled TSRTC strike from Oct 5



up by announcing 44 per cent fitment to TSRTC staff. Naidu could not help succumbing to the demand for 43% fitment by APSRTC staff, though he was disinclined to go beyond 25 per cent hike.

Subsequent decisions of KCR relating to hike in honorarium or salaries, as the case may be, for home guards, police constables, ASHA workers, Vidya volunteers etc fuelled demands for comparable hikes from AP staff. Naidu had to virtually sign on the dotted line just to keep up appearances and to avoid being seen as a leader who was no match to KCR.

In spite of being derided for copying TS scheme, Naidu adopted and adapted KCR's Rythu Bandhu. He intro-

duced "Annadata Sukhibhava", though with a few restrictions.

However, the change of guard in AP, following TDP's rout in the Assembly polls in May this year and YSRCP ascent to power with a thumping majority, has seen Jaganmohan Reddy take financially challenging decisions just to keep the promises he had made during his statewide padayatra. These decisions have begun to haunt KCR.

A case in point is the strike by TSRTC employees from October 5th. This is a consequence of Jagan's recent decision to merge all the employees of APSRTC with the state government staff. This is a tall order for KCR. This demand has been there since the 1980s when late NTR was CM. Yet, none of the CMs could dare to address this demand because of the complications involved in absorbing a perennially loss-making organization. It was Jagan who blazed a trail in the changed circumstances and against odds.

Continued on Page 2

No headway in talks with JAC of RTC staff

RTC workers to go on strike as planned from October 5

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

RTC Workers' JAC leader Aswadhdhama Reddy has made it clear that the corporation employees would go on strike from Oct 5 as scheduled, as negotiations with the government-appointed three-member committee headed by special chief secretary Somesh Kumar have failed.

Addressing media persons after talks with the committee here on Wednesday, Reddy said that JAC would fight for getting their 26 demands fulfilled, particularly merger of RTC employees with government staff. He called upon RTC

workers to launch the strike with a missionary zeal. JAC had been striving to find a solution to workers' problems and wanted the state government also to do its part in resolving their problems.

Reddy pointed out that committees appointed in the past to examine their problems did not submit their reports to the government. The present committee had sought additional time to resolve their problems, he said, citing comments of the committee members. He wanted the committee members to think of a solution from the workers' perspective.

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Trump wanted electrified border wall fortified with snakes, alligators

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump is so impatient to stop immigration in the United States that he suggested the border wall be electrified with spikes on top that could pierce human flesh, and proposed that it should be fortified with a "water-filled trench" with "snakes or alligators", during a March meeting with the White House advisors in the Oval Office, The New York Times reported. He also asked his advisors to shut down the entire 2,000-mile border with Mexico by noon the next day. Trump also advised that migrants be shot in their legs.



The New York Times report is based on interviews with more than a dozen White House administration officials involved in the events during the week of the meeting. The article published Tuesday was adapted from "Border Wars: Inside

there, along with Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law, and other senior staff. Trump was furious with Nielsen and Pompeo over their soft approach over the immigration issue. He had routinely chided Nielsen as ineffective and, not tough-looking enough. The President was angry with Pompeo for having cut a deal with Mexico to reject some asylum seekers.

Trump believed that the complete shutdown of the border was the only solution. Nielsen tried to make the president understand that building a wall will not solve the problem as people will still be permitted to claim asylum.

Onion, tomato prices rule high

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Prices of onions and tomatoes continue to skyrocket, making them unaffordable for the poor. Till Tuesday, onion was the only pricey vegetable. With tomato too becoming scarce due to reduced supplies to the city, its prices have moved up sharply. The decline in supplies is attributed to shortage caused by floods in neighbouring states, from where tomato is sourced. According to reports from the city's main markets, supplies of tomato to Gudimalkapur, LB Nagar, Bowenpally, Madannapet, Mehdiapatnam, Yerragadda, Kukatapally, Alwal and LB Nagar markets have come down drastically. As against 100-150 truck-loads of tomatoes received a week ago, supplies have come down to 60-

80 truckloads currently. Traders attribute the decline in supplies to failure of various crops, including tomato, due to spells of heavy down-pour across the state witnessed during the past 7-10 days. The impact of heavy rains on tomato crops has been high in Rangareddy, Medak, Siddipet, Nizamabad and Mahabubnagar



districts, according to officials of marketing department.

Moreover, tomatoes coming to the market are found to be of sub-standard quality. Besides, unripe tomatoes have flooded the market. Yet, they are commanding high prices.

In the wholesale market, a kg of tomatoes is being sold at Rs 25-30. Retailers are selling it at Rs 40-50 per kg. Sourcing of tomatoes to city from Maharashtra, Karnataka and Rajasthan is not in line with the demand. Traders attribute this phenomenon to hike in prices of tomatoes.



The masked men in the jewellery store they robbed

Men wearing masks rob Lalithaa Jewellery

PNS ■ TRICHY

Two masked robbers have made away with jewels worth several crores at a branch of the popular Lalithaa Jewellery in Tamil Nadu's Trichy district. When employees entered the store on Wednesday just before 9 am, it was discovered that an entire section of jewellery mannequins had their valuables missing with the protective covering undone. These consisted of gold and diamond necklaces. Even as a police investigation is underway, the latest estimates suggest that these jewels weighing approximately 100 kg could be worth many crores. CCTV footage captured at the store shows two men - one wearing a dog mask and another a cat mask - enter-



The hole made by the robbers to gain entry into the shop

ing the ground floor of the store with duffel bags in hand. The store is located near the busy Chattram bus stand area of the city. However, the store borders an empty plot of land through which the thieves are suspected to have drilled a hole for passage.

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V-P calls for translation of great literature into many languages

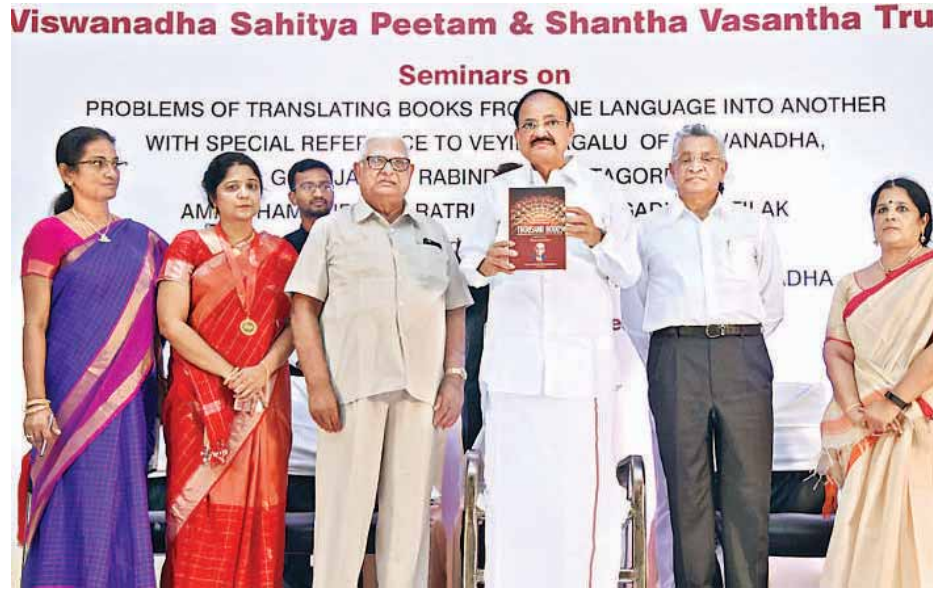
PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu has called for translation of great literary works from different languages into as many languages as possible, Indian as well as foreign. He said that in a country such as ours, translations would also play an important role in promoting national integration.

Addressing a gathering after releasing the English translation of epic Telugu novel 'Veyipadagalu' written by 'Kavi Saamraat' Viswanadha Satyanarayana in Hyderabad on Wednesday, he said such steps would enable readers across the globe to not only enjoy good creative literature, but also expose them to different cultures and ways of life.

The Vice-President said that there was an urgent need to digitise and preserve works in different literary forms in Indian languages and promote their translations. He said translation of such works would enable the readers to know about the traditions, culture, customs, values, and ideas of the author and his immediate world.

The Vice-President also wanted universities and col-



Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu releases an English translation of epic Telugu novel 'Veyipadagalu' in Hyderabad on Wednesday

leges to set up separate departments to promote translations. He also urged all states to make mother tongue mandatory up to primary education.

Talking about the genius of Viswanadha Satyanarayana, Naidu said that the legendary writer had articulated issues such as education, family, society, economy, politics, culture, poverty and such other pressing problems in his writ-

ings with remarkable foresight.

Naidu said that the writer saw a crucial difference between reading and education, adding that education must empower individuals and instill good conduct, discipline and calibre in students.

Saying that good books such as Veyipadagalu transpose the reader into a new world and

enrich his or her understanding of the many facets of life as narrated by the author, Naidu said that the great works have the power to leave an everlasting impression on the minds of the readers.

The critically acclaimed novel was earlier translated into Hindi by former PM PV Narsimha Rao as 'Sahasra Phan'.

The Vice-President also presented Viswanadha Sahitya Award to Dr C Mrunalini for Literary Criticism and Velchala Keshava Rao Award to Dr Vaidehi Sashidhar for Bilingual Poetry. The chairman of Viswanadha Sahitya Peetam Dr Velchala Kondal Rao, chairman of Shanta Biotechnics Dr KI Varaprasada Reddy and others were present on the occasion.

■ Calls for steps to digitise and preserve works in different literary forms in Indian languages

■ All states should make mother tongue mandatory up to primary education

■ Releases English translation of epic Telugu novel 'Veyipadagalu'

■ Also presents Viswanadha Sahitya Award & Velchala Keshava Rao Award

Govt releases Rs 83 cr for Anganwadi staff salary

WAGES PAID EARLY ON ACCOUNT OF DASARA

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

At the request of Women and Child Welfare Minister Satyavati Rathode, Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao on Wednesday released Rs 83 crore towards payment of wages to Anganwadi teachers and helpers before Dasara festival. The finance department issued a GO for the purpose.

Generally, wages are paid to Anganwadi staff towards the end of the month.

On Tuesday, leaders of Anganwadi teachers and Ayahs called on Satyavati Rathode and urged her to request the CM to get the salaries released in advance to enable them to celebrate Dasara. The minister took the Anganwadi employees' problems to the notice of the CM, who agreed.

Satyavati Rathode recalled how the CM has been responding positively to resolve the problems of Anganwadi workers. She pointed out that the TRS government hiked the wages of Anganwadi workers twice, which is unprecedented in the country.

In an indirect reference to erstwhile TDP regime headed by Chandrababu Naidu, she pointed out how that regime



Welfare Minister Satyavati Rathode recalled how the CM was responding positively to resolve problems of Anganwadi workers

got Anganwadi workers, who had staged a massive protest, trampled upon by mounted police. In sharp contrast, she said that the TRS government will hold the Anganwadi workers close to its chest. Within 24 hours of placing the request, the government acted with alacrity and released salaries, she said calling the TRS government as prof-women government. The incident time and again proved that it gives top most priority to protect interests of women.

On Huzurnagar by-election, Satyavati Rathode said that the women are strongly with the TRS and predicted TRS nominee Sanampudi Saidireddy winning the seat with a thumping majority.

Further, she said that the people were in no mood to believe what the opposition says.

Several welfare schemes for women and child welfare since a woman's conception to her girl child's marriage are being implemented by the TRS government, which is unique to Telangana, she pointed out.

Further, she elaborated that house-site pattas are being given in the name of women and noted that her government enacted many laws for women's protection and implementing them.

Anganwadi teachers and Ayahs association leaders Bhikshapamma thanked Satyavati Rathode for honouring the association request immediately.

CM KCR to meet PM...

Continued from Page 1

KCR is expected to cite economic recession and seek financial assistance to states from the Centre, considering the dwindling revenues of various state governments and cuts in central grants to states.

KCR is expected to also take up pending bifurcation-related issues concerning Telangana such as the setting up of steel factory in Bayyaram, railway coach factory in Kazipet, changes in zonal system in the wake of creation of two more districts in TS this year, faster disbursement of pending funds from the Centre, Rs 24,000 crore financial assistance to Mission Bhagiratha and Mission Kakatiya as recommended by NITI Aayog three years ago and according 'national project' status to one of the irrigation projects in Telangana etc.

Jagan's moves put KCR in a fix

Continued from Page 1

Compounding KCR's woes, Jagan enhanced the retirement age of employees of APSRTC, from 58 years to 60 years, two days ago. This has generated a lot of goodwill for him among RTC employees in both TS and AP.

Now, TSRTC employees have decided to go on strike from October 5, demanding merger of corporation employees with the government staff and enhancement of retirement age. It is not easy for KCR to answer their question: "If AP can do it, why not TS?"

They point out that those who had been their colleagues until five years ago are now government employees and that too with enhanced age limit of 60 years in AP.

The pressure being felt by KCR can be gauged from the fact that he had to discuss this issue for over five hours during Tuesday's cabinet meeting. KCR has bought time by constituting a committee with senior IAS Officers to examine the demands of RTC employees. The committee, comprising Somesh Kumar, special chief secretary, as chairman and principal secretary Ramakrishna Rao and principal secretary Sunil Sharma as members, will discuss with RTC employees. After examining their demands thoroughly, they will submit a report to the government as early as possible.

Even this had a false start on Wednesday. For, the first round of talks held with RTC staff failed, with employees sticking to their guns.

Village man fined for removing plants

PNS ■ MEDAK

Chilukoti Rajireddy, a villager of Appanapalli gram panchayat in Dubbaka mandal of Siddipet district, was fined Rs19,000 by the village secretary for removing saplings planted as part of Haritha Haram.

Village secretary Vishnuvardhan issued the fine notice to Rajireddy as provided for in the 30-day comprehensive plan for rural development. He was charged with the offence of removing 40 saplings planted in the green drive. The accused paid the fine to Panchayat.

SPREADING FRAGRANCE OF FLOWERS



Telangana Jagruthi founder Kalvakuntla Kavitha meets Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan Bathukamma good wishes in the city on Wednesday

Implement 30-day plan: Etela to mandals

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Medical and Health Minister Etela Rajender on Tuesday exhorted mandal officials of Huzurabad to take up cleanliness drive under the 30-day development plan with a concerted approach.

The minister was taking part in Huzurabad mandal parishad's general body meeting. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said cleanliness in villages would minimize disease risk. He said the Huzurabad hospital would be developed on par with MGM hospital in Warangal in coming days.

Communist cadres upset with CPI joining hands with TRS

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Communist party cadres in Suryapet district have expressed disappointment over the CPI leadership's meeting with the TRS high command. The Huzurnagar cadre felt it was a 'strategic lapse by the party leadership' in taking the decision to join hands with the TRS.

Members of CPI as well as CPM in the Huzurnagar seg-

ment had been resenting any such move by their leaders for the past few days, although the CPI had not spelled out clearly its decision on supporting the TRS nominee in the by-poll.

Venkat Ramaiah, a senior communist cadre in Huzurnagar segment said the CPI's "meek surrender" in the crucial by-election had projected the party in bad light, adding that the

decision would cost the communist party dearly in the region.

The general sentiment among communist cadres in Suryapet district was that their party must remain focused on opposition unity on public issues.

The rejection of CPM candidate Shekhar Rao's nomination was also viewed as setback for the communists in Huzurnagar.

Nizam's fund belong...

Continued from Page 1

Pakistan had made two further arguments that the facts of this case were such as to render it non-justiciable because the original transfer was governmental in nature and that India's annexation of Hyderabad in 1948 was an unlawful act, which tainted India and Nizam VIII's claim.

The UK High Court, during a trial earlier this year, had been asked to determine the central question of who exactly is the beneficial owner of the funds belonging to the late Nizam, Osman Ali Khan. While the Nizam, who faced the quandary of joining Pakistan or staying with India

at the time of the funds transfer back in 1948, had later reportedly sought the return of the funds.

NatWest Bank has since held on to the funds deposited into the London bank account of then Pakistan High Commissioner Habib Ibrahim Rahimtoola in safekeeping until its rightful legal owner is established.

While acknowledging that there was evidence of the supply of arms by Pakistan to Hyderabad around this period, the judge said he had not been persuaded by Pakistan's Arms for Money argument. He notes there was no evidence linking the funds in the NatWest bank account to the supply of arms.

Telangana Jagruthi lauded for popularising Bathukamma globally

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister KTR stated that Telangana Jagruthi played a key role in taking the Bathukamma festival to an international level. He appreciated Telangana Jagruthi founder and president Kalvakuntla Kavitha for her efforts in bringing worldwide fame for Telangana's state festival Bathukamma.

Minister KTR mentioned that when the earlier government had imposed a ban

KTR appreciated Telangana Jagruthi founder and president Kalvakuntla Kavitha for her efforts in bringing worldwide fame for Telangana's state festival Bathukamma

on celebrating Bathukamma at Tank Bund, it was Telangana Jagruthi which appealed to the High Court and brought orders to celebrate Bathukamma. He also stated that Telangana Jagruthi played a signifi-

cant role during the Telangana movement.

KTR said that the state government is distributing Bathukamma sares to women in Telangana and the programme is aimed at increasing the income of weavers. He extended Bathukamma greetings to all women of Telangana.

CHIPS ARE DOWN FOR COMMUNIST PARTIES

MANDAL LEVEL CADRES SAY THE SLIDE IS SEVERE, LEADERS OF CPI, CPM FEEL THINGS ARE NOT SO DIRE

PV KONDAL RAO ■ WARANGAL

Communist parties in north and south Telangana districts have been facing an acute resource and manpower crunch for the past few years, which is beginning to affect the morale of the remaining cadres even in their previous strongholds such as Khammam and Nalgonda.

Though the two communist parties, CPI and CPM, have contested the elections as two different political fronts, their presence has reduced to negligible in the villages. Cadre and trade union activists of the parties could not get motivation and funding from their party leadership in the districts for some years now. Full-timers on whom the party relied till date are unable to garner the support



of the public on the issues confronted by them from time to time.

The weakening of communist influence is not restricted to politics in Telangana state though, their presence has reduced in trade union pockets

such as Singareni Collieries Company Limited in Telangana and the industrial areas of Hyderabad and its suburbs in the recent years.

The main groups of communists parted ways and embraced two different lines during the

Though the two communist parties, CPI and CPM, have contested the elections as two different political fronts, their presence has reduced to near-negligible in the villages

statehood struggle of Telangana. At that time, the CPI supported the separate Telangana state struggle to become a part of Telangana state political JAC. On the other hand, the CPM favoured a Unified Andhra Pradesh state and it supported the Samaikyandhra movement. Since the Telangana statehood movement was a stronger entity, the JACs and political parties supporting that struggle could mobilise resources for their struggles and at that cru-

cial point only their funds mobilisation process suffered a serious setback.

At the same time, the full-time party members of CPI and CPM, who used to motivate and guide their cadre, were reduced in number in certain pockets where the party lost its crucial influence, which led to further erosion of morale to motivate the support base to undertaking people's struggles.

The resource base at this crucial juncture was captured by the statehood struggle of

Telangana which diverted attention from all other popular movements for at least five years till 2014. In the subsequent years, the communists maintained a wait-and-watch stance in the new state of Telangana while reacting to the issues confronted by the state.

Later when Telangana movement torch-bearers became leaders in all aspects, including political leadership, the public too were diverted to that group while the communists remained mute spectators on many occasions in the subsequent period.

Ever since, their presence and participation in public affairs has reduced further. The now-weakened communists could no longer attract the working class in rural parts and the party bases suffered further dents.

Currently, the two communist parties find themselves as a mere reflection of their former image in bastions like Khammam and Nalgonda. They were compelled to play second fiddle to the main parties in the successive elections. Even in trade union elections, their presence is unlikely to draw much support in the face of competition from TRS and the national ruling party BJP, which have started focusing on entities like RTC and regions like the Singareni belt.

Although leaders of the two main communist parties differ with this view, the mandal level activists and full-timers of one time strongly suggest the chips are down and their party high command need to do introspection in order to regain lost ground.



Panchayat Raj official commits suicide

PNS ■ JAGITYAL

A Panchayat Raj executive engineer committed suicide in Venkatraopeta of Medipalli mandal on Tuesday. The deceased was identified as Sandhya. Reasons for her taking the extreme step have not been known yet. Police got an inquest done and shifted the body to a government hospital here for post-mortem.

CRIME CORNER



Five pickpockets nabbed

The Commissioner's Task Force, West Zone Team apprehended a five-member gang of pickpockets and recovered net cash of Rs 91,020, a car and seven cell phones from their possession. The accused were identified as Vemula Raju, 28, Jalachitra Nageswar Rao, 42, Janapareddy Kondal Rao, 35, J. Naga Raju, 23, and Sathupati Nagaraju, 45, who committed offences in the limits of Banjara Hills in Hyderabad and Alair of Rachakonda, said the police. Raju's mother, Kondamma, is a notorious pickpocket and is involved in several cases in Hyderabad and Cyberabad limits. Raju is kingpin of the gang and is working as car driver in Hyderabad. As per his plan, he engaged the others, who were previous offenders on commission basis, said the DCP, Commissioner's Task Force, P. Radhakrishna Rao. "As per their plan, on September 27, the gang went to Alair in a car, bearing the number TS 07 FT 3463, for a meeting of oath taking ceremony of Alair Agriculture Market Committee Chairman at ANR Garden. They picked pockets of people in the said place and fled with more than Rs 1 lakh in the car. Again on September 29, they went to City Center bus stop at road number 1 Banjara Hills, and picked Rs 9,000 from a person's pocket while he was waiting for the bus" said the official. Their modus operandi is to wear white to appear neat and decent. They usually go to political parties and other meetings by wearing white shirts and park their vehicle closeby. They identify the target and surround him to commit offence. On Monday, when the gang came to Banjara Hills area in their car, the West Zone Task Force team apprehended them and handed them over to the Banjara Hills police for further necessary action.

Property offender arrested

The Cyberabad police arrested an automobile thief and recovered six motorcycles worth Rs 2.5 lakh from his possession. According to the police, the offender, identified as P Dattu, 22, an auto-rickshaw driver from Hafeezpet in Miyapur and a native of Pedda Shankarampet in Sangareddy district, recce residential colonies in secluded places and targeted parked motorcycles. Using a duplicate key, he unlocked the bikes and fled with them, police said. Cases were booked against him in Bachupally and KPHB police stations. He was produced before a court and remanded in judicial custody.

Sept rains leave behind 3,606 potholes in city

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) said that it had identified 3,606 potholes after the recent rains that lashed Hyderabad in September.

"Due to recent heavy rains, the damaged roads are being repaired at a rapid pace by the Engineering Department of the GHMC...the repair works are being taken up with the monsoon teams and temporary arrangements have been made for smooth movement of commuters," a press note stated.

The GHMC said that more than 200 monsoon teams had been deployed to re-carpet the roads wherever necessary, with their focus being on main roads and arterial roads.

"On Tuesday, 556 potholes were identified out of which 134 potholes were repaired. This included 48 in LB Nagar zone, 72 in



Charminar zone, 127 in Khairatabad zone, 127 in Serilingampally zone, 53 in Kukatpally zone and 168 in Secunderabad zone," the GHMC press note stated.

"From June to September, the number of potholes identified are 21,471 and most of them were repaired," the

municipal body added.

During September, Telangana received 241 mm rainfall against normal of 163.9 mm, an excess of 47 percent.

Despite nearly 40 percent deficit in June due to the delayed monsoon and its sluggish movement during July, heavy rains during the subse-

GHMC said more than 200 monsoon teams had been deployed to re-carpet the roads wherever necessary, with primary focus being on main roads and arterial roads

quent months helped Telangana overcome the shortfall.

The excess rainfall in Hyderabad during September was 116 percent. The city repeatedly received heavy rains over the past few weeks, which inundated low-lying areas and affected normal life.

School draws flak for objectionable hoarding

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A flexi banner of a private school carrying photos of students of nursery, LKG and UKG as 'toppers' has invited the wrath of netizens after a video of the banner went viral on internet.

The banner was put up by a private institution, Priya Bharathi school, in the city. The school banner showed ranks and gradings of pre-KG, LKG and UKG students. It proudly declared as 'top rankers' of the school. Photos of 44 such students figured on the flexi.

Academicians are breathing fire at the school management for awarding ranks to such small children. World over, education is imparted to nursery students in a pleasant atmosphere, free from competition. Pushing them into competition at a tender age is unfortunate, said many academicians.

Several netizens posted



World over, education is imparted to nursery students free from stress. Pushing children into competition at a tender age is unfortunate, said many academicians in the city

similar opinions on social media. Suneesha, one of the respondents on social media, expressed her dislike and described the phenomenon as unfortunate. India's ambassador in France Dr Mohan Kumar in a message

tweeted saying that the country's primary education is full of loopholes. Another netizen Dheeraj Singla demanded derecognizing such schools for fostering competition in kids from a tender age.

Gang-rape accused detained under PD Act

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In the ongoing drive against habitual offenders to ensure safety, security to the general public and to preserve public order in Rachakonda, the police commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat has detained four gang rape offenders under PD Act.

The four men, identified as Rahul Maaji, 25, Manoj Samrat, 23, Durga Samrat, 20, and Dhaya Nidhi Maji, 20, and the victim woman hailed from Odisha state and are labours by profession.

"Since two months, they were working as a labour at JMB Brick Kilns at ND Thanda, Maheshwaram. On the night of August 16, while the victim women went to attend nature's call, they followed her from backside and took her to an isolated place under the cover of bushes and raped her and fled the place" said the official, adding that the Maheshwaram Police arrested the gang on August 22 and remanded them to judicial custody.

Detention orders were invoked against them by Rachakonda Commissioner of Police on October 1.

PRACTISING WHAT WAS PREACHED



National Thermal Power Corporation Limited and Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation officials, accompanied by hundreds of volunteers, conducted a cleanliness drive at Charminar on Gandhi Jayanti in the city on Wednesday

GHMC hikes ads rates by 50%

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In a move to boost revenue, the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) on Tuesday announced a revision in advertisement rates.

The move will lead to an increase in advertisement rates of around 50%. GHMC Commissioner DS Lokesh Kumar said that the new advertising rates would be applicable for the current fiscal year.

Advertisement fee is one of the key sources of revenue GHMC and every year it earns about Rs 40 crore through advertisement hoardings on over 2,600 hoardings and also the ad boards on several central dividers, uniforms, neon glossine boards, bus shelters, wall paintings, glass posters,



pillar boards, shop shutters, balloons, umbrellas, slides, short films, auto backs, buses, and cabs.

Their revenue is likely to double, and the ads are likely to reduce. The corporation said the advertisement fee has not been revised for over four years.

GHMC said, Because the city is rapidly expanding, becoming a global city and making significant strides in the IT and industrial sectors, it has been decided to increase these advertising charges by 50 per cent.

City dogs 'join' Delhi Police squad!

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Five retrievers bought from a kennel in Hyderabad by Delhi Police a few months ago are set to be inducted into the canine squad of the Delhi Police.

The 12 to 15 months old Congo, Zendra, Krisi, Kosbi and Kamat were born in Hyderabad got trained for six months in a dog training centre run by the BSF in Tekanpur in Madhya Pradesh.

Retrievers are known for their intelligence, agility and a keen sense of smell that makes them popular among law enforcement agencies across the world. The five new Delhi Police recruits can detect any bomb or explosive like RDX. Officers told the reporters that the dogs are ready for their induction and have been trained and medically examined.

Men wearing masks rob Lalithaa Jewellery

Continued from Page 1

The robbery, which appears to have been meticulously planned, also saw the burglars wear gloves in order not to leave their fingerprints at the crime scene

The hole remained partially hidden from view thanks to the compound wall.

The incident is said to have taken place between 2 am and 4:30 am in the wee hours of Wednesday. The robbery, which appears to have been meticulously planned, also saw the burglars wear gloves in order not to leave their fingerprints at the crime scene. According to reports, the criminals had also sprinkled molagapodi (chilli powder) to throw the sniffer dogs off their scent. Though many movies have popularised this trick, many experts believe that other than distracting the sniffer dogs for some time, it will not wipe away the

human scent. The district police has formed seven special teams to nab the thieves. In addition to examining CCTV footage of the area, the police has also reportedly sought a log of guests at nearby lodges and hotels.

No headway in talks with JAC of RTC staff

Continued from Page 1

Earlier, Somesh Kumar said that JAC of RTC workers had been advised against observing strike during the Dasara festival. He told them that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao had focused his attention to resolve the workers' problems. Briefing media separately about the outcome of the meeting with JAC leaders, Somesh said the discussions centered on three issues. Another round of talks would be held soon. A comprehensive report would be submitted to the State government on measures that could be taken to strengthen RTC. The committee was armed with a comprehensive plan on how to deal with the situation in the event of the strike, he said.

Sweets shop fined Rs 20k over hygiene

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Acting tough against violation of Swachh activities in the city, GHMC imposed a fine of Rs 20,000 on 'Sweet Magic' restaurant at KPHB on Wednesday.

The civic body imposed the fine for maintaining unhygienic conditions, usage of plastic and for not segmenting dry and wet waste, which is an offense under

many sections of HMC Act 1955.

Corporation officials said that the fines are being imposed to deter individuals and establishments for impeding the Swachhata programmes and 'behaving irresponsibly,' and not to boost the revenue of civic body. They said the operations for inspections on restaurants will continue.



OU in-charge V-C Arvind Kumar inaugurated LED lights installations at the varsity's ladies' hostel on Wednesday

LEDs put up near OU ladies' hostel

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Osmania University in-charge vice-chancellor Arvind Kumar on Wednesday inaugurated LED lights installed near the ladies' hostel in the university campus at a cost of Rs 10 lakh under a corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative by MB Illumination Engineering company.

Arvind Kumar said that the LED bulbs were installed in a radius of 1.75 km around ladies hostel to illuminate the ladies hostel cluster. He thanked the company for its gesture.

CCTV cameras and electric fences have been installed for protection of inmates of the ladies' hostel. The in-charge V-C asked university officials to draw up plans to illuminate OU Arts College premises and university library premises so as to lend beauty to these structures.

Arvind Kumar said that the LED bulbs were installed in a radius of 1.75 km around ladies hostel to illuminate the hostel cluster

ture department officials working jointly to improve greenery in the university campus. He wanted the university officials to pay attention to creation of basic amenities in the university. Registrar Prof Ch Gopal Reddy, principals of OU Arts and Science Colleges Principal Ravinder and OU Science College Prof Pratap Reddy and others took part in the ceremony.

Curtain drawn over muck, Musi, Esi for VIP visits

■ GANDHI JAYANTI EVENT AT BAPU GHAT SEES HYD'S UNDERBELLY SHROUDED FROM GUV, CM'S SIGHT

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Many places on the route taken by Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan and Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao to reach Bapu Ghat at Langar House were covered on the sides by large temporary sheets for the 150th Gandhi Jayanti event.

Officials of the tourism department made the arrangements at Bapu Ghat before the notables arrived to pay tribute at Mahatma's memorial where his ashes were immersed at the confluence of rivers Musi and Esi.

Residents of Langer House were overwhelmed to have a spic and span ambience overnight. The civic body had covered up unseemly sights on

Officials of the tourism department made arrangements at Bapu Ghat before the VIPs arrived to pay tribute at Mahatma's memorial near the confluence of rivers Musi and Esi

the VIP with temporary blinds. Luminaries who paid floral tributes to Gandhi's Memorial completely failed to get a glimpse of Musi and Esi flowing adjacent to venue. The area is partially encroached, highly polluted, hyacinth borne and littered with human excreta.

"Till a week ago, the memorial was covered with grime and the river bank was full of rubbish. But yesterday, the place was done up with flow-

ers and DDT was sprayed everywhere to keeps the swarms of mosquitoes away," said Raj Kumar, an engineering student and resident of Bapu Ghat area.

After paying the floral tribute, the governor and chief minister and other dignitaries went to the building which displays photographs of the freedom struggle. The photo museum is open only twice a year i.e. on 2nd October and 30th January.



Workers hang up cloth sheets to cover up the sides of the route to Bapu Ghat

GMR's Hyd airport launches breath analyser test facility

Step has been mandated by DGCA to enhance safety at all airports

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

On the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and in compliance with the latest directive given by the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) to enhance safety at airports across the country, GMR Hyderabad International Airport Ltd. (GHIAL) on Wednesday inaugurated the breath-analyser examination facility at the Airport Medical Centre (AMC).

The facility was inaugurated in the presence of senior officials from GHIAL, DGCA and various other stakeholders from the airport community. The breath-analyser examination is being conducted in collaboration with Apollo Hospitals, which runs the Hyderabad Airport Medical Centre. The breath-analyser examination has been mandated by DGCA for the personnel engaged in aircraft maintenance, Air Traffic Control (ATC) services, aerodrome operations, ground



handling services for detecting consumption of alcohol.

GHIAL is committed to safe workplace operations and has a zero tolerance policy towards unsafe work practices and the latest initiative by the DGCA further strengthens GHIAL's

efforts towards this.

The DGCA circular mandates at least 10% of the individuals employed in their respective organisations engaged in safety sensitive functions pertaining to airside operations are randomly sub-

jected to breath-analyser examination on a daily basis, when they report for duty at the airport. Disciplinary action will be taken by DGCA on personnel found to be in breach of regulations.

Telangana Govt appoints 18k edu volunteers

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The TRS government has appointed 18,178 education volunteers for the academic year 2019-20 to use their services till vacant posts in schools are filled. A GO has been issued in this regard.

The services of the education volunteers will be used to make up for leave vacancy, regular and vacant posts and also in primary and upper primary schools to teach Telugu.

Over 16,870 have been appointed in leave vacancies, regular and vacant posts, 1308 have been posted as Telugu teachers.

The newly recruited will resume work in June 2020 and draw an honorarium of Rs 12,000. Earlier, the government appointed education volunteers but defaulted payment of honorarium to many forcing unions to take to the streets.

No headway in scientist's murder; flat lacked CCTV

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Local residents of Ameerpet were shocked to learn about the death of 56-year-old S Suresh Kumar, an employee with ISRO's National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC) on Tuesday. Suresh Kumar's neighbours in Annapurna Apartments described him as a reserved and quiet man.

Suresh lived in a flat on the second floor of the complex, which lacks a CCTV camera, while his wife lives and works in Chennai. His family who had been trying to reach him since Monday evening and also requested the neighbours to check on him on Tuesday. His body was found lying in a pool of blood by the police, who were alerted by the neighbours when they found the house locked around 11.30 am. He seemed to have suffered from a blow to his head and was found lying face down. The body was taken to Gandhi Hospital for post mortem, the results of which are still await-



The watchman and neighbours said that in the past few weeks a young man had often visited Suresh at his apartment

ed, sources said.

The watchman and neighbours said that in the past few weeks a young man had often visited Suresh at his apartment. "We did notice a young man visiting him at times recently, Suresh told us that the youth was someone known to him and works at a diagnostics centre," said a neighbour.

West Zone DCP B Sumathi said that the police are investigating the case but have not identified any suspects. The officer neither confirmed nor denied the presence of a youth

as reported by the neighbours.

"We are investigating the case as murder. There were no relationship or financial issues involved in the death. As of now, we have no suspects but are working things out, give us 24 hours," she said.

Suresh is a native of Kerala and had been living in Hyderabad for 20 years. His wife was also earlier worked in the city but was transferred to Chennai in 2005. Their son is settled in the US while their daughter lives in Delhi.

Biker rams into electric pole, dies

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Helmet-less driving has cost his life for a 30-year-old man who had the protective gear latched onto the bike while speeding up and ramming his vehicle on an electricity pole at Mailardevpally on Sunday evening.

The deceased, Pulijala Vijay, and pillion rider, Anil Kumar, aged about 28 years, were travelling from Attapur to Katedan on a bike bearing number TS 13 EM 8214, said the police.

"They fell down from the bike at Aramghar Underpass and hit an electrical pole on the divider and both received multiple injuries and the rider Vijay died on the way to hospital due to head injuries and Anil is undergoing treatment. A case was registered with the Mailardevpally police and the investigation is on to ascertain the causes of the accident" said the police.

On observation, it was found out that the helmet was hung to the bike at the back side instead of being worn by the rider, said the Cyberabad police commissioner, V. C. Sajjanar, adding that the chances of the rider dying due to the accident would have been very less if he had put on the helmet properly.

"Every year, hundreds of precious lives are lost in Cyberabad limits on different roads due to head injuries to bike riders without wearing proper helmets during accidents. Hence, the Cyberabad Traffic Police advise the public to mandatorily wear a good quality helmet while riding or pillion riding a two wheeler / motor cycle always on all roads to be safe.

Gudur thanks TJS for backing Congress in Huzurnagar

Congress leaders had tied up with Kodandaram

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) treasurer Gudur Narayana Reddy thanked the Telangana Jana Samithi (TJS) for extending its support to Congress party in the by-elections for Huzurnagar Assembly constituency.

Gudur Narayana Reddy, along with other Congress leaders, had successful negotiations with TJS President Prof M Kodandaram with the latter agreeing to support Congress candidate Padmavathi Reddy in the bye-elections to be held on October 21.

Speaking to media persons later, Gudur Narayana Reddy said that the Telangana State has been facing severe agriculture, financial and health crisis. In this situation, the bye-elections for Huzurnagar seat could make a huge impact not only on the present government but also on the overall political scenario. While the TRS Government was trying to downplay the crisis, people of Huzurnagar could send a strong message to Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao with their votes in favour of Congress party. Therefore, the support of TJS to Congress party at this juncture was crucial for the entire Telangana State as it strengthens the voice of opposition, he said.

Gudur Narayana Reddy said that the Congress party was quite strong in Huzurnagar and with TJS joining hands its victory was imminent. He said although Huzurnagar bye-elections were being fought in a constituency, but it would



Kodandaram vows support

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TJS President Prof Kodandaram on Wednesday pledged the TJS full support to Congress in the by-elections to the Huzurnagar constituency.

Addressing media at the TJS office here, he said that the party would expose the anti-people's policies of the government, charging the government with looting the natural resources to meet the vested interests of some.

She directed his anger at the TJS for illegally arresting the village Sarpanchs. He charged the whole Cabinet has embarked on a single-point agenda of working for TRS success in Huzurnagar.

The CPI extending support to the TRS is a historic blunder, he felt. Congress leader Gudur Narayana Reddy offered sweet to Prof Kodandaram for having extended the TJS support to the Congress.

change the entire political course in Telangana. "KCR has tried to ransack democratic structure by engineering defections in opposition parties. However, the victory of Congress party in Huzurnagar would revive the democracy and re-establish the importance of opposition in Telangana. I'm thankful to Prof Kodandaram and his

team of office bearers for turning the bye-elections into a fight between people of Telangana with an arrogant, negligent and dictatorial government," he said.

He hoped that the TJS support to Congress party would act as an impetus in the process of revival, survival and strengthening of democracy in Telangana State.

Tributes paid to Mahatma Gandhi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD



Telangana Governor Tamilsai Soundararajan and Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao paid floral tributes and attended a programme of Mahatma Gandhi's favorite bhajans to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Father of the Nation at Bapu Ghat on Wednesday.

Ministers and local leaders also garlanded Gandhi statues located in different parts of the city on the occasion. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) chairman G Satheesh Reddy led a cleanliness drive at Mallapur and its surrounding village at Hyderabad.

India-origin SA cricketer makes dream Test debut

BHARAT SHARMA ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Batting all-rounder Senuran Muthusamy on Wednesday realised his dream of playing international cricket for South Africa and he could not be happier that his debut is against the country of his origin: India.

Though his family moved to South Africa from Tamil Nadu generations ago, the 25-year-old from Durban is no stranger to India, having toured here with South Africa A last year.

He has been born and brought up in South Africa, but says they are like "any other South Indian family" back home. "Our roots are from Chennai. I have still got family in Nagapattinam (about 300



km from Chennai). Many generations have passed through, but the Indian connect is very much there and our culture is very much Indian," Muthusamy said ahead of the first Test.

"My parents were ecstatic when they found out about my selection (for South Africa) and my debut tour against India makes it even more special."

Talking about his Indian

lineage, Muthusamy said: "I do yoga back home in Durban which has the largest Indian population in South Africa. We visit temples regularly and some of my family even speaks Tamil. Unfortunately I don't but I am slowly starting to learn the language."

With Keshav Maharaj, another South Africa cricketer of Indian origin, and Dane Piedt certain to feature in the eleven as the specialist spinners, left-arm spinner Muthusamy was not sure about his selection. However, the dry conditions here forced South Africa to rethink their plans and they included Muthusamy as the third specialist spinner, who considers himself more of a batsman.

Hyd, Sec'bad platform ticket rates hiked too

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Anticipating an excessive number of passengers and accompanying non-travellers during Dasara festival season, SCR has doubled the platform ticket rate at Kacheguda and Secunderabad railway stations from Rs 10 to Rs 20 temporarily. The increase in ticket price is to regulate the flow of people who enter the platforms and to avoid inconvenience to the travellers.

Family counselling centre completes three years

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Rachakonda Police celebrated the third anniversary celebrations of family counselling centre at Kusaiguda which is run by Ankuram Organization and Rachakonda police on Wednesday.

In this, nearly 468 families got reunited, 491 family matters were addressed and counselling was done. A further 314 criminal cases were registered in different Police stations of Malkajgiri Zone, said the police commissioner of Rachakonda, Mahesh Bhagwat.

"Counselling centre was inaugurated on Dussehra, 2016 as a social responsibility the Rachakonda Police in Collaboration with Ankuram Organisation has started the Ankuram family counselling centre in Kusaiguda Police Station for counselling the victims of domestic violence cases in Rachakonda Commissionerate. With the Co-ordination of Ankuram Counselling Centre, employees in 2,757 cases of various domestic violence cases pertains to Rachakonda Commissionerate were dealt with during the

Three year period. The Counselling Centre works from 10.30 am to 05.00 PM during the working days for counselling of domestic violence



In the last three years, as many as 468 families got reunited, 491 family matters were addressed

cases. Because of this counselling centre the domestic violence cases are reduced during the above period" said the official.

During the three years period, the counselling centre dealt with 223 cases of domestic violence due to dowry, 335 cases of alcohol addiction, 164 cases of harassment by in-laws for petty reasons, 165 cases of violence due to the suspicious nature of husband, 164 cases of husband negligence with his family, 186

cases of violence due to extra-marital affairs, 14 cases of violence due to the birth of a girl child, 46 cases of male complainants, 18 cases of inter-religion marriages and living together relationships and four cases of PoCSO, all pertains to Rachakonda Commissionerate.

"All the victims of domestic violence living in Malkajgiri zone are requested to utilize the services of this Counselling centre" concluded the Rachakonda commissioner.

PRIMARY EDUCATION

Niti Aayog gives Telangana poor ranking

Report says state failed in recruiting enough teachers; student strength also declined

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Niti Aayog has ranked Telangana State 18th in terms of primary education and observed that the state is lagging in the quality of primary education.

Telangana ranks 18th in the rankings announced by Niti Aayog for states based on various criteria. Rajiv Kumar, vice-chairman of Niti Aayog, Amitabh Kant, CEO, and Reinare, secretary of school education, released the memorandum on Monday.

According to Niti, Telangana ranks third from below. It scored 49.78 in Learning



The state ranked number three in single-teacher schools category and figured at the bottom of the list in outcomes and imparting training to teachers. It showed 3 per cent improvement in providing amenities

The state ranked number three in single-teacher schools category and figured at the bottom of the list in outcomes performance and also at the bottom in imparting training to teachers. It showed 3 per cent improvement in providing amenities but lagged behind in computer education.

It figured at the 19th position in catering to education needs of out-of-school children. It also failed in teacher recruitment. While the number of students attending primary schools showed a decline, those joining high schools from upper primary schools increased.

Outcomes, 60.98 in Access Outcome and 20.49 for Infrastructure and 29.96 for Equity Outcome in the Aayog's report.

Kerala is at the top of the list of states while Uttar Pradesh

ranks last. The neighbouring state of Andhra Pradesh was ranked 4th. The government and authorities need to wake up and take measures to develop primary education in the state.

INDIA HAS NO EXTRATERRITORIAL AMBITION, SAYS GEN RAWAT

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has no extraterritorial ambitions and does not want to "transplant" its ideology on others, Army Chief Gen Bipin Rawat has said, asserting that the country will fulfil its regional and global security obligations as a responsible emerging power.

In an address to strategic affairs experts and defence personnel in Maldivian capital Male, Rawat also said instability in energy-rich West Asia has the potential to significantly increase global tensions and trigger unrest and that the tension between the US and Iran was "worrisome".

Without naming Pakistan, the Army Chief said Indian armed forces are countering a proxy war in Jammu and

Kashmir on a daily basis and that India reserves the right to acquire military capabilities to counter any security threats emanating from its neighbourhood. The Army Chief, who is on a five-day visit to Maldives, held extensive talks with the country's top defence brass to expand bilateral military cooperation. On Wednesday, Gen Rawat called on Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. "Our strategic culture flows from two cardinals — we have no extraterritorial ambitions and no desire to transplant our ideology on others," the Army Chief said.

At the same time, he said India continues to retain its commitment to strategic independence and autonomy in decision making as well as

'WILL FULFIL REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY OBLIGATIONS'

Gen Rawat identified 'unending threat of terrorism' as the principal challenge facing the entire world while calling proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and increasing assertion of power over international norms as other key challenges

acquiring military capabilities to counter the security threats and challenges emanating in its neighbourhood. "We seek to fulfil our regional and global security obligations, as a responsible emerging power," he said. Gen Rawat identified "unending threat of terrorism" as the principal challenge fac-

ing the entire world while calling proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and increasing assertion of power over international norms as other key challenges.

"Instability in West Asia which affects energy security of majority of the nations in the world is another major

factor. It has the potential to add significantly to global tensions and create unrest," the Army Chief said. Gen Rawat observed that the global security environment is increasingly becoming complex and uncertain, and that many nations are increasingly resorting to nationalism.

"I am certain that if we work with friends, we can mitigate the hazards to regional peace," he said. "Even in this uncertain security environment, economic interdependence, quest for common resources and depth of global engagements drive strategic relationships. As protectionism rises, complex global interdependencies are likely to

remain," he said.

Talking about challenges in the maritime domain, he said any disruption of trade routes in the Indian Ocean Region will be a major security challenge for both India and Maldives.

"The Indian Ocean Region is the lifeline to both our nations," he said. Gen Rawat said India's strategic vision has been in harmony with its traditional character as a peaceful and responsible nation. "Our vision of being a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic is enshrined in the preamble of our Constitution. We have always played a constructive role in international relations.



"India's national security aim is to ensure a conducive internal and external environment for unhindered economic progress and socio-

political development so that we can secure all our citizens and assume our rightful place in the emerging world order," he said.

SHORT READS



Cong needs Gandhian approach to get mojo back: Pitroda

NEW DELHI: The Congress needs to take the "Gandhian approach" of public service and get 5,000 workers in every district dedicated to the cause of helping people to get its mojo back, technocrat-turned-politician Sam Pitroda said on Wednesday. He said all Congress leaders must spend six months studying the father of the nation on his 150th birth anniversary to be ideologically equipped. Pitroda, a long-time adviser of the Gandhi family and head of the Indian Overseas Congress, said the country is facing a "major conflict" for the idea of India. The Congress needs to keep talking about this ideological battle and take its message to the people, the 77-year-old said over phone from Chicago. "We are perhaps not doing enough of that. We need to educate our young. Need to learn Gandhi. Understand the real history of India and not through sound bites and WhatsApp," he said, adding that all young leaders coming into the Congress need to read about the father of the nation. He said the challenge for the party is to rebuild its cadre and have about 5,000 Congress workers in every district. "Everybody wants to work in Delhi, nobody wants to work in the districts, everybody wants a ticket."

Cattle smuggler held after exchange of fire in UP's Mathura

MATHURA: A cattle smuggler was held after an exchange of fire here, an official said on Wednesday. The incident took place on Tuesday night, the officer added. "A country-made pistol, three live cartridges and a motorbike were recovered from him," SP (Rural) Aditya Kumar Shukla said. He said on a tip-off from a reliable source, inter-state cattle smuggler Robin, a resident of Palwal district in Haryana, was nabbed. He was admitted to a hospital after suffering a bullet injury on the leg. He was trying to escape with his associate after being chased by police following the exchange of fire, Shukla said, adding that his associate Mohd. Tarif managed to flee under the cover of darkness. Tarif is a resident of Mahamadka village in Hathin of Palwal. Wanted in 14 cases, Robin carried a reward of Rs 25,000, the SP said.

Yogi blames oppn parties for 'zero contribution' to check encephalitis

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath blamed the opposition parties that ruled the state from 1977 to 2017 on Wednesday for their "zero contribution" in checking encephalitis, which took the lives of over 50 thousand children in this 40-year period.

"The encephalitis patients were first seen (in Uttar Pradesh) in 1977. No initiative was taken by any government to check its spread to 38 districts of eastern UP, including VIP constituency Raebareilly. Between 1977 and 2017, 50,000 children aged between one and 15 years died due to it and the opposition, which ruled the state then, had zero contribution to check it," the chief minister said in his address in the state Assembly.

Among those died, 70 to 90 per cent were Dalits or belonged to minority communities, he said, adding that he raked up the issue when he first became an MP in 1998.



Between 1977 and 2017, 50,000 children aged between one and 15 years died due to it and the opposition, which ruled the state then, had zero contribution to check it

— YOGI ADITYANATH, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister

Citing figures, the chief minister said while in 2016, there were 2,900 cases of Acute Encephalitis Syndrome (AES) accounting for 491

deaths, there were 3,911 AES cases and 641 deaths in 2017. Till August 30 in 2019, 938 AES cases were detected and 35 deaths reported due to it,

he said, adding that his government was trying to control the spread of the disease through team work and focus on cleanliness.

Claiming that unlike in some neighbouring states, there was no spread of any vector-borne disease in Uttar Pradesh, Adityanath said, "There is no spread of dengue, malaria, filariasis, encephalitis, chikungunya. This is due to our focus on the Swachh Bharat campaign, on which the state has got an award for its attempts." He said on the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLAs participated in an anti-plastic campaign in different wards of the state capital here.

"I urge the MLAs to launch a similar campaign in their respective constituencies also and ensure the success of the Swachh Bharat campaign. Those MLAs, whose constituencies turn out to be the best, can be awarded also," the chief minister said.



Khattar takes part in Swachhta campaign in Gurugram

PNS ■ GURGAON

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar on Wednesday took part in a 'Swachhta' campaign here and asked people to take a pledge to keep the country clean.

Paying tributes to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary, Khattar said, "He taught us the best way to know oneself is to immerse oneself in the service of others."

"Let us pledge to follow his footsteps on the path to a vibrant India... To realise the

Khattar said it was Mahatma Gandhi's dream to see countrymen join hands to keep surroundings and the country clean

dreams of the Mahatma, we will have to take a pledge to keep our surroundings and our country clean in the same manner we like to keep our

homes clean," he said. He said it was Mahatma Gandhi's dream to see countrymen join hands to keep surroundings and the country clean.

On the occasion, Khattar also picked up a broom to promote the cause of cleanliness. He was accompanied among others by his Minister Rao Narbir Singh, sitting MLA from Badshahpur, who has been denied ticket for the October 21 assembly polls from the seat. Khattar also paid tributes to former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri on his birth anniversary.

Police seek permission to attach MLA's property

PNS ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR

Police have sought permission from a court in Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district to initiate property attachment proceedings against absconding SP MLA Nahid Hasan, who was booked for misbehaving with an officer and driving a vehicle without valid documents, officials said on Wednesday.

The court has fixed October 5 as the date for hearing on the police's application, they said.

According to Superintendent of Police Ajay Kumar, the Kairana MLA was facing a non-bailable warrant and had not yet surrendered in the court.

On September 9, the officer had stopped Hasan's SUV for checking but he allegedly misbehaved with him.

Later, it was found that the MLA's vehicle was not registered, Kumar said.



MAHA POLLS

BJP nominee Lodha declares assets worth Rs 441 crore

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai BJP president Mangal Prabhat Lodha, who is contesting the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly elections from Malabar Hill seat here, has declared assets worth over Rs 441 crore in his poll affidavit.

The 63-year-old MLA, who is seeking a sixth consecutive term from the posh Malabar Hill Assembly seat in south Mumbai, filed his nomination papers here on Tuesday.

As per the affidavit submitted by Lodha along with the nomination form, he and his wife have movable assets worth over Rs 252 crore and immovable assets of about Rs 189 crore. The MLA also owns a Jaguar costing Rs 14 lakh and his other investments are in bonds and shares.

He also has liabilities worth about Rs 283 crore. Lodha, whose family is into real estate business, has five residential flats in south Mumbai and a plot in Rajasthan.

Both Lodha and his wife also own a house in the Malabar Hill area. Besides, his wife also owns another flat and a commercial property in south Mumbai.

As per the affidavit, Lodha has five pending criminal cases against him.

The Maharashtra Assembly elections will be held on October 21 and counting of votes will take place on October 24.



Lodha, whose family is into real estate business, has five residential flats in south Mumbai and a plot in Rajasthan

Nitesh will contest Maha polls on BJP ticket: Narayan Rane

MUMBAI: Former Maharashtra chief minister Narayan Rane on Wednesday said his son Nitesh Rane will contest the upcoming state Assembly polls from Kankavli seat on BJP's ticket. He claimed his son's name will figure in the second list of the BJP. Nitesh Rane won the 2014 Assembly polls from Kankavli seat in Sindhudurg district on Congress' ticket by defeating the then BJP MLA Pramod Jathar. The ruling BJP on Tuesday declared its first list of 125 candidates for the October 21 state polls, including names of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis and state unit

president Chandrakant Patil, but high-profile figures Eknath Khadse and Vindo Tawde missing from it. "Nitesh's name will figure in the second list and he will contest from Kankavli," Narayan Rane said. On

speculations of merging his Maharashtra Swabhimani Party with the BJP, he said, "It is likely to happen in a week's time." The former state chief minister was earlier in the Shiv Sena, which he quit in 2005 and joined the Congress. He remained with the Congress till 2017 following which he formed his own political outfit and became an ally of the ruling BJP. He is currently the RS member on BJP's ticket.



'BJP miles away from Gandhi's principles yet celebrating his birth anniv'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav lashed out at the BJP on Wednesday saying those who never

walked on Mahatma Gandhi's path of truth, non-violence and social harmony are now celebrating his 150th birth anniversary.

Participating in his party's programme at GPO park on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti, he said this is only a part of the saffron party's politics to hiding their wrong deeds.

"The BJP and its people are

miles away from the principles of Mahatma Gandhi... They never walked on the path of truth shown by Father of the Nation. They want to adopt

Lohia, Bhimrao Ambedkar and Swami Vivekananda. The party whose people believe in violence are today celebrating Gandhi's birth anniversary," Yadav said. SP chief spokesperson Rajendra Chowdhury said, "Gandhi believed in the ideology of truth, non-violence and social harmony in the country, and honour for labour."



3 killed in wall collapse due to heavy rains

PNS ■ AMETHI

A 25-year-old woman and her two minor sons died after a portion of a wall at their residence in Mohanganj area collapsed on Wednesday following heavy rains, police said.

Madhuri, her two sons Aryan (6) and Arush (4), and one other were injured in the incident, Tiloi SDM Sunil Trivedi said. All the injured persons were rushed to a community health centre, where Madhuri and her two sons were declared brought dead by doctors, he added.

Those who don't understand Gandhi talk about NRC: Cong

PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Congress president Somen Mitra lashed out at the BJP-led government at the Centre on Wednesday, saying those who do not understand the principles of Mahatma Gandhi talk about NRC and driving out the Muslims from the country.

The BJP was quick to retort, saying the Father of the Nation is not the personal property of the Congress.

Mitra, who participated in a march from the Subodh Mullick Square to the Gandhi statue at Mayo Road to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, said both the TMC government at the state and the BJP-led govern-



Somen Mitra

ment at the Centre do not understand the principles of Mahatma Gandhi.

"Hence, they should stop pretending to respect Gandhi

and his struggle. Only those (political parties) who do not understand Gandhiji talk about about the National Register of Citizens (NRC), driving out

The West Bengal Congress president said, Mahatma Gandhi had fought for communal harmony throughout his life but those in power at the Centre and the state are determined to destroy that harmony to serve their political purposes

Muslims and communal divide in the country," Mitra told reporters.

The West Bengal Congress president said, Mahatma Gandhi had fought for communal harmony throughout his life but those in power at the Centre and the state are determined to destroy that harmony to serve their political pur-

poses. Reacting to Mitra's statement, BJP national secretary Rahul Sinha said, "Mahatma Gandhi is the Father of the Nation. The Congress should stop behaving as if Gandhiji is the personal property of the party and the Nehru-Gandhi family."

Sinha said that since Independence, the Congress

had tried to create the impression as if Gandhiji and the party were synonymous, but that is not true.

"We don't need to take lessons on Gandhiji from the Congress," he asserted.

Marches and commemorative events marked the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi across the state on Wednesday.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had earlier in the day said, the renovated Gandhi Bhavan in Belegata area in the eastern part of the city, where Mahatma Gandhi had stayed for over three weeks during Independence to calm down rioters, would be inaugurated as a museum on the occasion.

9-ft-long python gobbles up cat in Guj village, rescued

PNS ■ VADODARA,

A nine-foot-long python strayed into the backyard of a house in Gujarat's Vadodara district where it gobbled up a chubby cat, but later coughed it out. The reptile was rescued by a forest guard with the help a local NGO.

The python ventured into the backyard of a house located in Vejalpur village on Tuesday. It chanced upon a cat there and tried to swallow it, forest guard Vijay Parmar said.

Some locals spotted the huge snake and alerted the forest department following which Parmar and a volunteer from local NGO Wildlife



Rescue Trust rushed to the spot.

The python, which was hiding behind a heap of wood, tried to swallow the cat, but then found it too big and spat it out," Parmar said.

After hectic efforts for about an hour, the reptile was rescued and later released into a forest, he added.

SHORT READS



Mumbai suburban train services hit as coach derails

MUMBAI: Suburban train services were briefly affected as a local train coach derailed between Kings Circle and Mahim stations here on Wednesday, officials said. The incident took place on the CSMT-Bandra route where a Bandra-bound train derailed at around 11.30 am. The wheel of the front trolley of a coach derailed, officials said. There are no reports of anyone sustaining injuries in the incident, officials said.

Oppn boycotts UP legislature's special session

LUCKNOW: The special 36-hour session of the UP legislature to mark Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary got underway on Wednesday, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath flaying the opposition's decision to boycott proceedings as not only an "insult" to the Father of the Nation but also a "contempt" of the House. The simultaneous sessions of the state assembly and legislative council begun at 11 am and will continue till Thursday night without a break. "I am astonished that the opposition, which had in an all-party meeting agreed to discuss issues concerning the poor, has boycotted proceedings. The opposition's decision to stay away from constructive discussion to form a concrete policy for development is not only an insult to Mahatma Gandhi but also a contempt of the House," he said addressing the state assembly. The special session will see leaders deliberate on 16 sustainable development goals to mark Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary.



Why Modi didn't object to Trump's comment: Gehlot

JAIPUR: Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Wednesday took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, questioning his silence on US president Donald Trump calling him "the father of India" during a recent visit to that country. He asked why the PM did not object to it if he had any regard for Mahatma Gandhi, who was known as the "Father of the Nation". "Today, on Gandhi Jayanti, I want to put my objection regarding the US president calling Modi the father of India and Modi not objecting to what Trump said. Why did Modi remain silent if he had any regard for Mahatma Gandhi," he said. "If Modi truly respected Mahatma Gandhi, then he should have corrected the US president there that India has only one Father of Nation and his name is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and no one else could take this place," Gehlot added.

'PASSENGERS NO LONGER SUFFER IN RAILWAYS'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Railway and Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday said that the passengers travelling in the national transporter no longer have to "suffer" as the quality of services has improved in the last five years, and India in the coming years will become the world's biggest coach manufacturing hub.



several programmes highlighting the cleanliness drive have been organised at over 6,500 stations across the country to create awareness. Highlighting the works of the Railway Ministry

— PIYUSH GOYAL, Railway and Commerce Minister

Goyal said this while releasing the station cleanliness report on Wednesday at the New Delhi railway station, and later inaugurated an exhibition on Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary. During his address Goyal said: "In the last five years the experience of travel in railways has changed. Now people don't have to suffer anymore and they complete their 'safar' (travel) with comfort."

Goyal said that cleanliness has an important place in our life. "And the way in which people adopted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call

for a clean Bharat, is the biggest tribute to Babu on his 150th anniversary."

He said that several programmes highlighting the cleanliness drive have been organised at over 6,500 stations across the country to

create awareness. Highlighting the works of the Railway Ministry, he said: "In the last few years we have shifted our focus from the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) coaches and have decided to adopt the safer Linke

Hofmann (LHB) coaches." Busch

"Currently, all the coach manufacturing units are producing over 8,000 coaches annually, and in the coming years this will go up. Similarly, manufacturing of bio toilets is also on the rise as we are making highest number of bio toilets. So, I can say that in the coming years, India will become world's biggest coach manufacturing hub," Goyal said. The Railway Minister, who is also a Rajya Sabha MP, said: "When we think of Babu, we can recall that he was the biggest critic of railways."

"We are open for criticism. From criticism we get the chance to learn," he said.

He said that the Indian Railways as per the instructions of the Prime Minister has formed 150 nurseries in the vacant railway lands adjacent to the tracks.

Goyal also made a surprise inspection at the New Delhi railway station and also interacted with the passengers in the waiting room.



Google lists 57K public toilets in 2,300 cities in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Google Maps has listed over 57,000 public toilets in over 2,300 cities across the country, a company statement said on Wednesday. The initiative was launched in 2016 as a pilot in three cities — New Delhi, Bhopal and Indore — in collaboration with the Swachh Bharat Mission and Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry. In the statement, Anal Ghosh, Senior Program Manager, Google Maps said, "With Google Maps, our aim has always been to help people as they navigate and explore

According to the company, users can simply type 'public toilets near me' on Google Search, Google Assistant or Google Maps and get results

the world, wherever they are. "We believe that making information about public sanitation facilities easily accessible to people is a key element for social good — one that also constitutes the cornerstone of the government's Swachh Bharat campaign to promote clean habits and hygiene, Ghosh said.

According to the company, users can simply type 'public toilets near me' on Google Search, Google Assistant or Google Maps and get results. In addition, the Google My Business' platform helped the HUA take ownership of these listings on Google Maps so that they could monitor visits, ratings, reviews among others.

BJP must pursue path of truth and then talk about Mahatma: Priyanka

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Taking a swipe at the BJP, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi on Wednesday said it should first pursue the path of truth shown by Mahatma Gandhi and then talk about him. She made the remarks before participating in a silent march organised here by the Congress on 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

"It was the order of Gandhiji to pursue the path of truth. First, the BJP should pursue the path of truth and then talk about Gandhiji," the Congress leader said. The silent march is also being viewed as a show of strength by the Congress which has been on the sidelines of state politics for a long time.

About 80 Congress workers were arrested on Monday at a public meeting ahead of a march they planned in support of the student who has accused BJP leader Swami Chinmayanand of rape.

In an informal chat with media persons just before embarking on the march, she



said, "Atrocities are being committed on women and when they raise their voice to fight against them, they are being crushed. We will definitely struggle against it."

The silent march which started from Shaheed Smarak here will culminate at the GPO park, where Congress leaders will pay floral tributes to the father of the nation.

The Congress, along with other opposition parties, have boycotted the 36-hour special session organised by the Uttar Pradesh government on the occasion.

Later, Priyanka Gandhi is also scheduled to interact with party workers and leaders at the UPCC headquarters here.

'Modi only PM who made cleanliness a mass movement'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary today, Union Home Minister Amit Shah gave a clarion call to shun single-use plastic while urging citizens to take an initiative to make this a mass movement.

After flagging off the party's 'Gandhi Sankalp Yatra' on Gandhi Jayanti, Amit Shah, along with Delhi BJP leaders, undertook a 'padyatra' amid tight security.

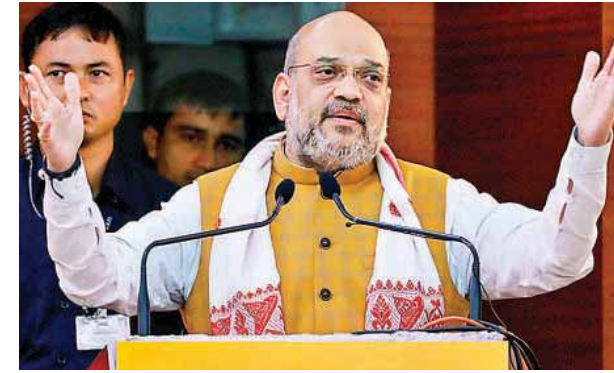
Before participating in the march, Amit Shah, in a meeting highlighted the perils of single-use plastic, saying it takes nearly 400 years for the plastic to degrade.

Amit Shah said even animals are adversely affected due to single-use plastic.

"It is the responsibility of BJP workers and people of country to make it a mass movement. Single-use plastic is dangerous to the country and the world," he said.

Mr Shah said the Narendra Modi government has organised several events to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi to re-establish his values and principles in the country.

"Today is the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma



It is the responsibility of BJP workers and people of country to make it a mass movement. Single-use plastic is dangerous to the country and the world

— AMIT SHAH, Union Home Minister

Gandhi ji who not only played a vital role in getting the country its Independence but he also displayed to the world the power of satyagrah," the Home Minister said.

"Mahatma Gandhi was the ambassador of cleanliness and after independence, PM Modi is the only Prime Minister who has made it a mass movement," Mr Shah said.

He said PM Modi has worked to take the concept of cleanliness to the grassroots level.

Amit Shah said the party's elected representatives will undertake the 'padyatra' for the next 15 days to take forward Mahatma Gandhi's values and principles among the masses.

Delhi BJP chief Manoj Tiwari and Union Minister Harsh Vardhan were also present at the event. The BJP had earlier said the party's MPs, MLAs, other elected representatives and office-bearers would join the march in different parts of the country.

BIHAR RAIN

Toll rises to 42, rescue operations intensified

PNS ■ PATNA

At least 42 people have died in rain-related incidents in Bihar following a torrential spell that took place between September 27 and 30, authorities said.

The state continued to trudge towards normalcy on Wednesday with intensified rescue and relief operations and water being pumped out of submerged localities.

With a let up in the showers since Monday, restoration work was on in full swing.

Supervising rescue and rehabilitation work in Patna on Tuesday night, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar urged people to "have patience".

According to a release issued by the state disaster management department, 42 casualties have been reported so far from the districts affected by the heavy rainfall, though a district-wise breakup was not yet available.

The release put the total number of people affected by the devastating spell at 17.09 lakh.

The districts hit by the disaster were Patna, Bhojpur, Bhagalpur, Khagaria, Samastipur, Begusarai, Lakhisarai and Vaishali situated on either side of the Ganga besides Arwal, Nawada and Nalanda in the Magadh region and Darbhanga and Katihar in Mithila.



Experts blame climate change, unplanned development for floods in UP, Bihar

ADITI GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

As heavy rains pound several states across India throwing life out of gear, environment experts have blamed climate change and rising global temperature for an erratic rainfall pattern which has claimed over 100 lives. While some experts stress on reducing carbon footprint, some feel it is not a natural phenomenon but a result of unplanned construction. Several parts of India are currently facing severe flooding as a result of unusually heavy monsoon rain, with the states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar particularly affected.

Nearly 110 people have died

Climate change is resulting in more erratic rainfall patterns, including a large portion of seasonal rainfall being concentrated in a limited number of days, leading to flooding

in the last five days. While 79 people have died in UP, 28 lives have been lost in Bihar.

Tarun Gopalakrishnan, climate policy researcher at the Centre for Science and Environment, said there was a need to reduce carbon emissions as climate change was resulting in erratic rains. "Climate change

is resulting in more erratic rainfall patterns, including a large portion of seasonal rainfall being concentrated in a limited number of days, leading to flooding. Limiting the human cost of this trend will require drastically cutting carbon emissions around the globe, while investing in adaptation for the new climate

reality," he said. Scientists on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) believe that the rise in global and local temperatures have contributed to the observed anomalies in rainfall. "Parts of Bihar and the Uttar Pradesh-Uttarakhand belt already exhibit a rising trend in terms of the number of heavy rainfall events. Though we cannot pinpoint each event to climate change unless we do in-depth attribution study, it is likely that the rise in global and local temperatures have contributed to observed anomalies in rainfall," said Roxy Mathew Koll, Co-Author of IPCC's special report on oceans and cryosphere.

Monsoon outcome belies initial forecast of IMD, Skymet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As the four-month rainfall season ended with "above normal" monsoon, initial predictions by the India Meteorological Department and the private forecaster Skymet Weather were found to be contrary to the outcome.

While IMD in April had said the country would receive 96 per cent of the Long Period Average, Skymet had predicted 93 per cent of the LPA.

Both had given an error margin of plus or minus five per cent. Ninety-six per cent of LPA falls on the border line of

"below normal" and "normal" rainfall. Skymet had cited El Nino as the reason behind a possible below normal rainfall.

However, as the rainfall season ended, IMD recorded a whopping 10 per cent more rainfall.

Mohapatra, director-general of IMD, said the department would do a detailed analysis.

He, however, added that IMD was able to gauge the trends like El Nino turning neutral and the Indian Ocean Dipole turning positive. Mohapatra

said the IMD also did not change the forecast even when June ended with 33 per cent deficiency.

"We will carry out an analysis on this," he said, adding that there has been a significant improvement in seasonal forecast.

Mohapatra said several global models had predicted below normal monsoon because of the El Nino but IMD

stuck to its prediction and did not revise it.

Honey-trap case: SIT chief replaced again

PNS ■ BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh government has removed Sanjeev Shami as chief of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up to probe the honey-trap and black-mailing racket busted in the state last month. Shami has been replaced by cyber cell's Special Director General Rajendra Kumar, according to an order issued by the state Home department late Tuesday night. With this, the SIT has been



re-constituted for the second time in nine days.

Besides Kumar, who is a 1985-batch IPS officer, the SIT will have two other members - cyber cell's Additional Director General (ADG) Milind Kanaskar and Indore's Senior Superintendent of Police Ruchi Vardhan Misra, the order said.

It did not mention any reason for reconstruction of the SIT. Last week, CID Inspector General Sreenivas Verma was replaced by ADG Shami as the SIT chief.

At 99, scribe recounts his coverage of Gandhi assassination

PNS ■ MUMBAI

In today's era of blinding-fast technology when news spreads across the world in seconds, it is hard to imagine that even well-connected journalists in faraway Indian towns found out about Mahatma Gandhi's assassination, a global news-break, more than an hour later.

Walter Alfred, who turned 99 last month, was a journalist for Press Trust of India based in Nagpur when Gandhi was shot dead by Nathuram Godse on January 30, 1948.

In recalling that fateful day, Alfred provided insight into how news travelled, virtually at snail's pace, in those days.

"January 30, 1948 was a lean day for all of us... I might have



filed a few news stories till evening. The office phone rang around 6.30-7 pm and that's when I got to know about the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi," recalled Alfred, who now lives in Mira Road near Mumbai.

A colleague from Mumbai was at the other end, informing him about the fatal attack on the Mahatma in New Delhi's Birla House at 5.17 p.m. while he was his way for his evening prayers. Alfred, who says he was born on

Those were the days when telex and teletypewriter machines were cutting-edge technology, which were used to transmit written material over telegraph lines. A 300 word story would take a few minutes to be typed automatically and appear on the machine

September 21, 1920 in Mangalore, remembers the colleague's name only as Ponskhe. Those were the days when telex and teletypewriter machines were cutting-edge technology, which were used to transmit written material over telegraph lines. A 300 word story would take a few minutes to be typed automatically and

appear on the machine. But even these were not available in Nagpur at the time. The office of the newly-minted PTI in Nagpur was just being set up and new technology had not yet been introduced. Mumbai, then known as Bombay, was the other big centre for PTI besides New

Delhi. In those days, non-urgent news was sent from the headquarters to smaller PTI offices by telegram. The telegrams were then transcribed by local PTI journalists by hand, and copies were distributed by messengers to local newspaper subscribers of the news agency.

If urgent, journalists at HQ would be deployed to make trunk telephone calls to colleagues in smaller bureaus to dictate the breaking news, which would then be copied by hand to make PTI dispatches. Ponskhe, who was apparently a sub-editor in Mumbai, was directed by his chief reporter to call Nagpur on phone and dictate the urgent news of Gandhi's death to Alfred.

HK flash-mob rallies erupt as anger mounts over shot protester

AFP ■ HONG KONG

Spontaneous flash-mob rallies broke out in Hong Kong on Wednesday as anger mounted over police shooting a teenage protester who attacked officers in a dramatic escalation of the violent unrest that has engulfed the territory for months.

A few thousand demonstrators, including office workers in shirts and suits, mustered in a park and then began marching through the city's commercial district in an unsanctioned rally, chanting anti-police and anti-government slogans.

Hours earlier, hundreds of students staged a sit-in at the school of 18-year-old Tsang Chi-kin, who was shot in the chest by a policeman as he and a group of masked protesters attacked officers with umbrellas and poles.

The international finance hub has been left reeling from the shooting, the first time a

demonstrator has been struck with a live round in nearly four months of increasingly violent pro-democracy protests.

Hong Kong was battered by the most sustained political clashes of the year on Tuesday as China celebrated 70 years of Communist Party rule with a massive military parade in Beijing.

The spiralling violence underscored seething public anger against Beijing's rule and shifted the spotlight from China's carefully choreographed birthday party, which was designed to showcase its status as a global superpower.

Running battles raged for hours across multiple locations as hardcore protesters hurled rocks and petrol bombs.

Police responded for the most part with tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannon.

Police said the officer fired at Tsang because he feared for his life on a day that saw his colleagues fire five warning shots from their pistols



Protesters throw petrol bomb outside the Tsuen Wan police station in Hong Kong on Wednesday AP

throughout the city. "In this very short span of

time, he made a decision and shot the assailant," police chief Stephen Lo said.

But protest groups said the officer charged into the melee with his firearm drawn and condemned the increasing use

of live rounds.

"The people of Hong Kong are sick and tired of having mere words of condemnation as their only shields against lethal bullets and rifles," a masked protester said at a press conference near Tsang's school.

The shooting was captured on video that quickly went viral.

Opinion towards the shooting has largely cemented along ideological divides with pro-democracy activists condemning the police and establishment figures calling it a justified use of force.

Tsang, who was filmed trying to strike the officer with a pole as he was shot, was taken to a nearby hospital in a critical condition but authorities said his condition had since improved.

A friend and classmate of Tsang, who gave his first name Marco, said the 18-year-old was a keen basketball player who was infuriated by sliding freedoms

in Hong Kong and the police response to the protests.

"If he sees any problems or anything unjust, he would face it bravely, speak up against it, instead of bearing it silently," Marco told AFP.

Police said 25 officers were injured in the National Day clashes, including some who suffered chemical burns from a corrosive liquid that was thrown at them by protesters. The liquid also wounded some journalists.

Hospital authorities said more than 70 people were admitted on Tuesday.

Police made some 160 arrests throughout the day.

On Wednesday, 96 protesters arrested during clashes with police on Sunday appeared in court charged with rioting, according to court documents. Their ages ranged from 14 to 39.

The majority were students in their early twenties but other occupations listed included a waitress, a teacher, a doc-

tor, an advertising executive and a cook.

Hong Kong's protests were ignited by a now-scraped plan to allow extradition to the mainland.

But after Beijing and local leaders took a hardline they snowballed into a wider movement calling for democratic freedoms and police accountability. With Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam seemingly unwilling or unable to find a political solution, police have been left to battle increasingly radicalised protesters.

Sentiment is hardening on all sides. Protesters and some local residents routinely shout "trials" at officers who often respond by calling demonstrators "cockroaches".

The protest movement's main demands are an independent inquiry into police actions, an amnesty for those arrested and universal suffrage.

But Beijing and Lam have said they are unwilling to meet those demands.

Trump denounces impeachment enquiry as 'coup'

AFP ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump on Tuesday denounced the impeachment inquiry threatening his presidency as a "coup," as his administration pushed back against the investigation.

Trump's comments came after Secretary of State Mike Pompeo pressed to prevent or delay five former or current State Department staffers from testifying in the investigation probing accusations that Trump abused his office by seeking dirt from Ukraine on a 2020 election rival.

"As I learn more and more each day, I am coming to the conclusion that what is taking place is not an impeachment, it is a COUP," Trump tweeted.

It is "intended to take away the Power of the People, their VOTE, their Freedoms, their

Second Amendment, Religion, Military, Border Wall, and their God-given rights as a Citizen of The United States of America!" he wrote.

Pompeo meanwhile accused three Democratic House committee heads conducting the impeachment inquiry of "an attempt to intimidate, bully and treat improperly the distinguished professionals of the Department of State."

But Democrats accused the top US diplomat of "stonewalling" the investigation and, according to media reports, scheduled interviews with at least two of the diplomats who both had direct involvement in the Ukraine matter.

It was the first major clash of the days-old impeachment probe, pointing to a dramati-

cally mounting political and legal siege as Trump battles to save his presidency.

Trump faces the possibility of becoming only the third president ever impeached by Congress, which could lead to his going on trial in the Senate.

Democrats decided last week to seek impeachment after a whistleblower complaint, supported by a White House call transcript, showed Trump pressuring Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky to supply him with politically useful information on Democratic former vice president Joe Biden.

Biden is the most likely Democrat to challenge Trump's reelection bid next year.

The first move of the three powerful House Democrats -- Adam Schiff of the Intelligence Committee, Eliot Engel of the



House Foreign Affairs Committee and Elijah Cummings of the Oversight Committee -- was to subpoena Pompeo and Trump's private lawyer Rudy Giuliani for documents and to summon the five diplomats to testify. "Secretary Pompeo was reportedly on the call when the President pressed Ukraine to smear his political opponent,"

they said.

Pompeo's letter suggested that the committees could be forced to subpoena the five diplomats, and that the State Department and White House could seek to limit what they can talk about.

"I will use all means at my disposal to prevent and expose any attempts to intimidate the dedicated professionals whom I am proud to lead," Pompeo said.

But news reports said the State Department's former special envoy to Ukraine, Kurt Volker, would testify Thursday and that the ex-ambassador to Kiev, Marie Yovanovitch, would appear behind closed doors on October 11. Volker had been sought by Giuliani to help pressure Zelensky, while Yovanovitch was removed earlier this year as ambassador

after she reportedly resisted that effort.

The three committee heads warned Pompeo in a statement Tuesday that any effort to prevent witnesses from speaking to them was "illegal and will constitute evidence of obstruction of the impeachment inquiry." Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani suggested he might not comply with a House subpoena issued on Monday.

Giuliani spent months earlier this year contacting Ukraine officials to encourage them to investigate Biden, whose son had business ties to Ukraine.

While Pompeo and Giuliani battled the House committees, Trump also stepped up his personal attacks on Schiff, the leader of the impeachment investigation, as well as the anonymous whistle-

blower.

"Why isn't Congressman Adam Schiff being brought up on charges for fraudulently making up a statement and reading it to Congress," he asked.

On Monday, Trump said the White House was trying to get more information on the whistleblower, whose identity is protected by law.

But politicians from both parties warned the president against threatening or attempting to unmask the whistleblower, who was reported to be a CIA analyst.

"This person appears to have followed the whistleblower protection laws and ought to be heard out and protected," said Republican Senator Chuck Grassley.

"Folks just ought to be responsible with their words."

Five bodies found, one still missing after Taiwan bridge collapse

Taipei: Five bodies have been recovered from under a collapsed bridge in Taiwan, rescuers said Wednesday, as the search continued for the last person missing after the structure smashed onto fishing boats moored underneath.

Taiwan's National Fire Agency said the deceased were fishing workers from Indonesia and the Philippines whose bodies were found in waters near two damaged boats late Tuesday and earlier Wednesday.

"The search and rescue mission continues," transport minister Lin Chia-lung told reporters, adding evidence was being collected for an investigation.

The Philippines labour ministry confirmed that two of its nationals were killed while one remained missing and five others were injured in the incident.

The ministry pledged assistance to the affected workers and their families. Dramatic CCTV footage captured the moment the 140-metre (460-foot) long single-arch bridge

came crashing down early on Tuesday morning in Nanfangao, on Taiwan's east coast.

In the video, a vertical cable at the centre of the bridge's steel arch suddenly snaps.

The road then collapses into the water, crashing down on three fishing boats as a petrol tanker, which nearly made it across, also plunged into the water.

Twelve people were injured, including six Filipino and three Indonesian fishing workers, the Taiwanese driver of the petrol tanker, and two coastguard personnel. The petrol tanker burst into flames at some point after it hit the water, sending a thick plume of black smoke into the air.

The local landmark was completed in 1998 and spanned a small fishing port. It was featured in a number of TV dramas and commercials.

Taiwan was skirted by a typhoon on Monday night, which brought heavy rains and strong winds to parts of the east coast. AFP

Two dead, 200 injured in clashes at Iraq protests

Baghdad: Two demonstrators were killed and more than 200 people injured Tuesday, health officials said, in clashes with security forces during protests in Baghdad and the provinces that mounted the first challenge to Iraq's fragile one-year-old government.

More than 1,000 protesters had descended on the capital before security forces dispersed the crowds with a volley of gunfire and tear gas.

Protests in Baghdad left one dead and 200 wounded, including 160 civilians, the health ministry said without providing further details.

According to medical and police sources, most of them needed treatment for tear gas inhalation and some were injured by rubber bullets.

A health official in Dhi Qar later said that one protester was killed and two others were wounded in the southern province.

With Iraqi flags draped over their shoulders or wrapped around their foreheads, the demonstrators had gathered in the iconic Tahrir Square, with a

wide range of grievances but apparently without a unified leadership.

"Those thieves robbed us!" they cried out in condemnation of the political class in Iraq, considered the 12th most corrupt country in the world by Transparency International.

"The problem is that parliament is a bunch of gangs that have divided up everything amongst themselves," said Abbas Fadel, a 30-year-old demonstrator.

Some were on the streets to protest at the lack of public services, including rampant power cuts, water shortages and unemployment, particularly among youth.

"Show us what you can do: show us paved roads, a city that functions, reconstruction, work, public services. We have none of that," said Mustafa Khaled, 34.

And others carried portraits of Staff Lieutenant General Abdulwahab al-Saadi, who was this week removed from his post in Iraq's Counter-Terrorism Service in a shock move.

Demonstrators were cleared

from Tahrir Square a first time but then regrouped, facing a steady volley of live shots, water cannons and tear gas from security forces.

More shots were fired even after the crowds had dispersed into adjacent neighbourhoods.

Three young men could be seen carrying a wounded demonstrator wearing a checkered white-and-black scarf to protect him from the tear gas.

Some protesters made their way towards Al-Jumhuriyah Bridge, which leads into the high-security Green Zone that houses government offices and foreign embassies.

Police had set up metal barricades and stationed trucks at the mouth of the bridge to prevent protesters from crossing, and a security source inside the zone told AFP that reinforcements were requested.

The gathering was the biggest demonstration against Prime Minister Adel Abdel Mahdi since he came to power in late October 2018, just months after demonstrations that engulfed the southern city of Basra last summer. AFP

North Korea fires ballistic missile ahead of nuclear talks

Seoul: North Korea fired what appeared to be a "submarine-launched ballistic missile", Seoul said Wednesday, a day after Washington and Pyongyang announced they would resume stalled nuclear talks.

Pyongyang frequently couples diplomatic overtures with military moves, as a way of maintaining pressure on negotiating partners, analysts say, and may believe this weapons system gives it added leverage.

A proven submarine-based missile capability would take the North's arsenal to a new level, allowing deployment far beyond the Korean peninsula and a "second-strike" capability in the event of an attack on its military bases.

The South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it detected a ballistic missile early Wednesday fired around 450 kilometres (280 miles) in an easterly direction at a maximum altitude of 910 kilometres.

The missile was "believed to be one of the Pukkuksong models", the JCS said in a statement, referring to a line of submarine-

launched ballistic missiles (SLBM) under development by the North.

"Such actions by North Korea to raise tensions are not helpful to efforts to ease tensions on the Korean peninsula and we urge it again to stop immediately," it added.

The North carried out a successful test of the Pukkuksong-1, also known as KN-11, in August 2016 which flew around 500 kilometres.

The United States said it was monitoring the situation on the Korean peninsula.

One of the projectiles fell into waters within Japan's exclusive economic zone -- a 200-kilometre band around Japanese territory -- Tokyo said.

"The launching of ballistic missiles violates UN Security Council resolutions and we strongly protest and strongly condemn it," Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told reporters.

The North is banned from ballistic missile launches under UN Security Council resolutions. AFP

Johnson prepares to unveil 'final' Brexit offer

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Prime Minister Boris Johnson will submit "final" proposals for a new Brexit agreement on Wednesday, officials said, warning that if the European Union did not engage with them, Britain would leave the bloc this month with no divorce deal.

Johnson will provide details of what his Downing Street office said was a "fair and reasonable compromise" during his closing speech to his Conservative party's annual conference in Manchester.

But a statement issued late Tuesday stressed this was a "final offer" and Johnson would be keeping his pledge to leave the EU on October 31, with or without a deal. Johnson himself told The Sun newspaper that he had "10 days" to listen to EU counter-offers and find a compromise.

"If there's a deal to be done, it could be done in that time," said Johnson. "If there isn't, then we'll know. That's the truth."

Johnson, a leading "leave" campaigner in the 2016 EU referendum, took office in July vowing to deliver Brexit at the end of this month in all circumstances. But like his predecessor Theresa May, he has struggled against a hostile parliament and the complexities of untangling four decades of EU integration.

Johnson has pledged to renegotiate the exit terms May agreed with Brussels, which were rejected by the British parliament three times.

He is now focused on replacing the controversial "backstop", a longstanding sticking point that aims to keep an open border between British Northern Ireland and EU member Ireland after Brexit. May's proposal would have

done this by keeping Britain in an effective customs union with the EU, which critics argued would force London to abide by the bloc's rules indefinitely.

The Daily Telegraph newspaper reported that Johnson instead wants to keep Northern Ireland in the EU's single market until 2025, but in a customs union with the rest of Britain.

This would potentially create two new borders -- regulatory checks between mainland Britain and Northern Ireland along the Irish Sea, and customs checks on the island of Ireland itself.

After that, a new power-sharing authority in Northern Ireland would decide whether to keep the region aligned with EU or UK standards, the newspaper said.

Johnson had earlier denied a media report that he was looking at installing customs posts along the Irish border, amid outrage from Dublin. The issue is hugely controversial, as the removal of border posts was seen as key to bringing peace to Northern Ireland after three decades of violence over British rule that left thousands dead.

But Johnson said it was a "reality" that there would have to be checks somewhere after Brexit.

Ireland's initial response to Johnson's latest reported offer was strongly negative. "Certainly, the reports we're hearing are concerning, to put it mildly," Irish Deputy Prime Minister Simon Coveney said late Tuesday.

Coveney said Ireland could not accept a time limit to any border solution because there was no guarantee that a new and permanent EU-UK trade agreement dealing with the frontier could be reached within a specific timeframe.



Police officers demonstrate to denounce bad working conditions, lack of equipment and dilapidated police stations, in Paris on Wednesday. Police unions point out overwork due to the Yellow Vests anti-government protests and say officers are exposed to excessive violence. AP

GLOBAL TROTTERING

XI, PUTIN HAIL 70TH YEAR OF DIPLOMATIC TIES

Beijing: Chinese President Xi Jinping and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on Wednesday exchanged congratulatory messages on the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the two countries' diplomatic ties.

25 SOLDIERS KILLED IN MALI MILITANT ATTACK

Bamako: At least 25 Malian soldiers were killed and 60 others were missing after militants attacked two army outposts, the government said. Camps in the towns of Boukessy and Mondoro near the border with Burkina Faso came under attack on Monday, the BBC reported on Wednesday.

5 ISLAMIC STATE MILITANTS KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN

Kabul: At least five Islamic State (IS) militants have been killed in a NATO-led coalition drone strikes in Afghanistan's Nangarhar province, an official said on Wednesday. "The coalition pilotless planes fired missiles on two militants' compounds in Wazir Tangai locality of Khogyani district on Tuesday, killing five IS militants," Xinhua reported citing a statement by the Nangarhar provincial government.

IRAN WELCOMES DIALOGUE WITH SAUDI ARABIA

Tehran: Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani has welcomed Saudi Arabia's proposal for holding talks to resolve mutual issues, Tasnim news agency reported. "We welcome (Saudi Crown Prince) Mohammed bin Salman being quoted as saying he wants to resolve issues through talks with Tehran," Larijani said on Tuesday.

NASA's InSight lander 'hears' strange sounds on Mars

Washington: NASA has released recordings of eerie sounds on Mars picked up by one of its missions to the Red Planet, the InSight lander.

Far below the human range of hearing, these recordings had to be speeded up and slightly processed to be audible through headphones, NASA said on Tuesday.

The spacecraft's exquisitely sensitive seismometer, called the Seismic Experiment for Interior Structure (SEIS), can pick up vibrations as subtle as a breeze.

The instrument was provided by the French space agency, Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales (CNES), and its partners.

The instrument was designed to listen for quakes on Mars, known as marsquakes.

Scientists want to study how the seismic waves of these quakes move through the planet's interior, revealing the deep inner structure of Mars for the first time.

But after the seismometer was set down by InSight's robotic arm, Mars seemed shy. It did not produce its first rumbling until this past April, and this first quake turned out to be an odd duck.

It had a surprisingly high-frequency seismic signal compared to what the science team has heard since then.

Out of more than 100 events detected to date, about 21 are strongly considered to be quakes, NASA said.

The remainder could be quakes as well, but the science team hasn't ruled out other causes. IANS

PAPER WITH PASSION

Plastic problems

The Government's U-turn on the ban of single-use plastics may be temporary but we should all ease up on its use



There is little doubt that India is in the middle of an industrial slump with statistics showing that both growth and jobs are declining. The fact that the Government had to reverse its decision to ban single-use plastics because it did not want to cause more industrial disruption is founded on pragmatism. However, this should not stop it or the society's efforts to use less plastic. In fact, a gradual phasing out of its production, re-introduction of alternatives and a sectoral approach could be the executive's view, considering its

widespread use in pharmaceuticals and hospitals for example, but we should all work towards eliminating single-use plastics from our lives. We do not have the luxury to look at excuses provided by a Government decision. It is impossible to imagine modern society without plastics. Indeed, from toys to cars and even the carbon-fibre reinforcement that forms the fuselage of modern aircraft, plastics are everywhere. Everywhere means everywhere, as trash piles have been found at the bottom of the deepest trenches of the Pacific Ocean and the highs of Himalayan peaks. And single-use plastics like glasses, straws, plates, bottles, cutlery and bags are entirely within the domain of individual behaviour and lifestyle change. Unfortunately, while India generates about 9.4 million tonnes of plastic waste a year, it recycles only about 60 per cent of it. Studies by The Energy Resources Institute (TERI) on landfills found that 10.96 per cent of the waste was only plastic and of these, the non-recyclable kind accounted for 9.6 per cent.

We should all start adapting and be mindful about daily life, use bags made out of jute or even reuse our plastic bags more than once. If we can avoid using a straw or buying a plastic bottle of water, we would have done our best to clear the heap. Paper cups and metal cutlery will help as well. One shouldn't blame the industry for not providing options because until we ask for alternative products and create a demand swell, we will not get them. That said, we should also know if the replacement products turn out to be as damaging or possibly worse than the plastics they replaced. What we think are "woven paper" bags are actually made from long plastic polymers, wood fibre products, which mostly have plastic elements in them as well. And because both are not pure plastics, they actually do not bio-degrade like some modern variants. So our attempts to be altruistic to the environment should not end up damaging it instead. It is also important that the plastics industry continues its work towards developing less environmentally damaging products. On this front, the industry has been very proactive and is moving fast. Laws, too, have been framed. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2018, call for producing industries to collect a fixed percentage every year. The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, make it crystal clear that it is the duty of all — producers, importers and brand owners — to adopt a give-and-take policy where it is their responsibility to ensure that they collect back as much of the filth as they introduce into the environment. The same Act also bans plastic bags that are less than 50 microns in thickness. The crux of the matter is that all such laws have been ineffective due to the sheer lack of enforcement. So the big change has to come from us as enforcers if we want to ensure that we leave the next generation a viable ecosystem. To channel Greta Thunberg, "How dare we not change?" We can't imagine a life without plastic and it is unlikely that it will disappear from our lives. But we must reduce our dependence on it whether the Government orders it or not.

SC recall

By rescinding the provision that diluted clauses of the SC/ST Act, the top court has prioritised societal sensitivities



With mounting political and societal pressure and given the vulnerability of Dalits across the country, the Supreme Court has recalled its earlier order diluting provisions of arrest under the Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. The verdict last year had done away with the clause of immediate arrest of the accused without proper investigation and provisioned for bail, both of which were found to be easy to play around with and intimidate the victims of hate

crimes. Dalit anger has been simmering since and the atrocities against them have spiralled out of control, an abuse being committed against a Scheduled Caste (SC) member every 15 minutes by some estimates. Last year, the apex court had sought to clarify the application process of the law so that it was not subject to misuse by either the offender or the complainant and was not seen as an automatic and instant disbursement of justice. So it made a judgement call by insisting that "immediate arrest" be replaced by "arrest only after preliminary enquiry," thereby eliminating the "heat of the moment" factor and fixing the culpability of the real offender indulging in atrocities against Dalits. But in keeping to legal niceties, it ignored the perception that was created, that the provisions empowered the accused and weakened the complainant. There were fears that the latter would not report atrocities or wrong-doing if the provision of unqualified, non-bailable arrest was done away with, encouraging coercive hit-backs during inquiry. As it is, Dalits find it very difficult to register a simple FIR and with some time lag implied in last year's verdict, the probe itself was feared to be compromised badly. As of now, conviction rates in crimes against Dalits and tribals add up to 23.8 per cent and 16.4 per cent compared to the 40.2 per cent in general criminal cases. Besides, the court, as it rightly admitted this week, had, under the veneer of fair play, assumed that SC/ST community members could cook up false cases, that they could be "a liar or crook." The judge regretted that the umbrella assumption was against "basic human dignity" and could bear heavy on an exploited people, who are already at the receiving end of upper caste authoritarianism. To that extent, the court did well to take a holistic view of sensitivities, one that had been subverted by looking into technicalities.

For the ruling BJP, this comes as a big relief, considering Dalits have been agitated over the death of Rohith Vemula, the beating of Dalit youths at Una in Gujarat, the demolition of the press of Babasaheb Ambedkar and the riots in Bhima Koregaon. In fact, in Maharashtra, Ambedkar's grandson Prakash Ambedkar has been leading a convincing charge against the current regime and is spearheading a renewed movement for legitimacy. With Assembly elections due in the State, the new verdict could not have come at a better time for the BJP. Considering that nearly a fourth of Dalit voters voted for the BJP back in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi believes in consolidating that vote pie and turn it into an asset base with his welfare schemes. But after Vemula's suicide and the attacks in Maharashtra, it is the new-age Dalit voter who is questioning his/her choice and is at the forefront of new assertive agitations. But a movement is still scattered and not coalesced enough and BJP would like to stem that hereon.

Cheque book diplomacy

China's ability to impress upon nations the benefits of joining its bloc is not unknown. Counter-moves like the Quad need to be strengthened



BHOPINDER SINGH

The Chinese have either deployed "intimidation" or their famed cheque book diplomacy to "win" over other nations towards their own purposes. Both as an undisputed military and an economic powerhouse, the options for Beijing vary from flexing its military muscle (as done in the South China Seas) or by ensnaring nations into economic bondage by pouring billions of dollars. Take the example of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), where a nation-sustaining investment of up to \$60 billion has been made to Pakistan, whose economy is cash-starved today. Often, there is a hybrid model in between that entails the overlapping of the commercial-military footprint through strategic investments by China.

The attempt to stitch together Chinese presence along the crucial sea routes, pursuant to the "String of Pearls" policy, is an ostensibly commercial initiative, one that will subsequently evolve into the invariable presence of Chinese military's boots on civilian ports such as Djibouti. Wherever physical distance still challenges the Chinese "supply chain abilities" to maintain a viable military presence, it can dominate the narrative by out-funding other donor nations or organisations and champion these distant lands, such as in the African hinterland or Latin America.

By punting in these distant lands, not only does Beijing sustain captive sources for raw materials and a ready market for its Chinese end-products but also guarantees invaluable political and diplomatic influence. The importance of having such beholden nations can be gauged from the fact that in the high tables of international diplomacy, like the United Nations, each country's vote counts as "one." This theoretically makes the vote of a country like Nauru, that has a population of less than 15,000 people, matter as much as that of China with a population of 1.5 billion.

One global theatre that was spared the Chinese radar of urgency was the island region of Polynesia, Micronesia and Melanesia in the Pacific Ocean. The sheer distance, fragmentation and "non-threatening" idyll of these small island nations ensured an isolated tropical paradise that was bereft of any major geo-political or geo-strategic posturing till now. In an increasingly interdependent and interconnected global waterway of the 21st century, three factors have driven a sudden interest in this region of less than 2.5 million inhabitants.

First, the growing domestic aspirations within these nations. Second, the strategic relevance of individual nation "vote" in multilateral fora. And third, with increasing reach of the Chinese military-economic might, these nations offer a breakout opportunity from the supposed "encirclement" of China, pitchforking these island nations into the competitive calculus of Chinese hegemonic instincts. Even these nations are creatively leveraging their



geographical position to "counter-balance" the predominant and historical Australian tilt and influence in this region to extract the maximum attention and benefit of competitive bidding among regional powers.

However, among the foremost considerations for Chinese diplomacy is also the need to isolate and "compress" Taiwan internationally by "winning over" those nations that still recognise its official status. This ongoing Chinese concern and project to get nations to switch sides on the Taiwan issue has accelerated in recent times. A record seven countries switched sides since 2016.

These Pacific island nations have historically held a pro-Taiwan position and they had made a sizeable part of the 25-odd countries that recognised it till recently. Today the number to do so is a mere 15 countries. The latest ones to fall prey to the Chinese "buyout" were the Solomon Islands and Kiribati, who were openly assured of "unprecedented development opportunities" in order to grease the deal. The then Prime Minister of Solomon Islands was candid enough to admit that Taiwan was "completely useless to us", both politically and economically.

As part of the "switchover" conditions, Kiribati had to sever ties with Taiwan and re-establish diplomatic relations with China.

“HOWEVER, AMONG THE FOREMOST CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHINESE DIPLOMACY IS THE NEED TO ISOLATE AND 'COMPRESS' TAIWAN INTERNATIONALLY BY 'WINNING OVER' THOSE NATIONS THAT STILL RECOGNISE ITS OFFICIAL STATUS. A RECORD SEVEN COUNTRIES SWITCHED SIDES SINCE 2016”

Meanwhile, credible rumours abound in Kiribati about the Chinese largesse in the pipeline, which includes very soft loans and a Boeing 737 to boot. The Taiwanese are left high and dry, fuming at the obvious play of the Chinese cheque-book diplomacy that brooks no moral, historical or positional consideration.

Traditional dominance of former colonial powers, like Australia, the US, France, New Zealand and Japan in the region, is increasingly diminished as the Chinese go about hunting one nation after the other. Beijing's flush treasury comes handy as does the dispatch of an occasional bomber flying overhead these hapless countries.

The Chinese footprint is visible in the under-developed oil-fields of Sudan and as investment in freight train infrastructure in Bolivia. Now the Pacific Island countries are its new domain of attention. All eyes are now in the neighbouring rim of the remaining Taiwanese allies in Palau, Tuvalu, Nauru and Marshall Islands to see if they, too, would be enticed or coerced into abandoning Taipei and joining the Chinese "bloc."

That the Chinese "generosity" never comes without strings attached is something that these nation states will invariably discover. The Sri Lankan experience with Chinese investments to develop the Hambantota Port

ultimately led to the surrender of the same to Chinese authorities for a lease of 99 years. The Chinese bankrolling was also able to overturn the Filipino bitterness that had earlier led Manila to lodge a case against China in the International Court of Justice and win the same. Almost immediately, the Philippines Government incredulously embraced the Chinese hand and reneged on its historical relationship with the US.

Expectedly, large sums of Chinese investments were assured and all portents of traditional animosity buried. In recessionary times like now, where cash is the king, the ability of China to impress the benefits of joining its "bloc" via gargantuan carrots like the "Belt and Road Initiative" are immense. This allows it the freedom to indulge in profligate chequebook diplomacy that wins it an ever-increasing kitty of vassal nations to do its bidding.

Counter-moves like the Quadrilateral meet (QUAD), enjoining the China-wary nations like Japan, Australia, India and the US, have yet to go beyond the conceptual framework and discussions as the transactional dragon ensnares all, anyhow and anywhere.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry)

SOUNDBITE

Those doing politics of falsehood will not understand Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence.



Congress interim chief — Sonia Gandhi

You can't be a hero all your life. Everyone has to go through this transition phase where you have to do character roles.



Actor — Sanjay Kapoor

The new era calls for both India and the US to press the refresh button of their relationship as the really important relationships are the less transactional ones.



Foreign Minister — S Jaishankar

The BJP and its people are miles away from the principles of the Mahatma... The party, whose people believe in violence, are celebrating his birth anniversary.



Samajwadi Party chief — Akhilesh Yadav

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What is the law?

Sir — It was shocking to learn about the two Dalit children, who had to relieve themselves on a road in Madhya Pradesh because they had no toilet at home and were beaten to death by two upper caste men. This happened at a time when the Centre was preparing to declare India open-defecation free.

It is a fact that the two children belonged to a poor family, who could not afford getting a toilet constructed inside their house. The panchayat had apparently sanctioned a house with a toilet for the family but the sarpanch, a relative of the accused, had scuttled the proposal. Then who is really at fault here? The authorities or the children? Is it not the responsibility of the authorities to ensure that the poor have access to basic facilities?

This incident has also tarnished India's reputation. Further, one of the accused reportedly declared that he had killed the children as in his dreams, god had commanded him to kill "demons", justifying monstrosity in the garb of faith. Urgent steps must be taken to educate people

Wake up to the disaster before it's too late

This refers to the editorial, "Tame the flood fury" (September 1). By now it is pretty clear that floods have become a recurring phenomenon. The present deluge in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar is among the worst in 25 years. Despite rescue efforts, floods have killed 140 people. Disasters are caused due to natural factors that are beyond our control but human activities can certainly rein in the impact with adoption of better management practices. Interestingly, the current floods were attributed to the planets by a political leader, reminding us of the old ways of looking at natural calamities as punishment by God and negating both science and human intervention and greed.

Stark images of cities under knee-deep waters warn us of the scale of the disaster. Water stagnating without receding and inundated homes are examples of the collapse of drainage systems. The blockage of natural drainage channels, caused by accumulation of construction cement and other impermeable materials, soil and sand, is silting up river delta and catchment areas.



Denuded forests and rampant mining and quarrying mean the top soil is losing holding capacity. In the past, we used to receive "light to moderate" rains for a number of days. Nowadays, we get "heavy to very heavy, even extremely heavy" rainfall for fewer days. We cannot afford to be fatalistic or complacent that this, too, shall pass.

G David Milton Maruthancode

who are falling prey to blind faith. Open defecation is an old habit, especially among those living in rural areas. I recently discovered that in Tamil Nadu, even well-off families in villages consider it unhygienic to have a toilet within the premises of the house and prefer open grounds for defecation. Clearly, a lot more needs to be done to educate the people

the need to change this practice. TK Nandanam Chennai

Prepare for the worst

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Tame the flood fury" (September 1). The wrath of mother nature is such that nobody, the rich or the

poor, is spared from the horrors of climate change. That Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sushil Kumar Modi and his family were stranded and had to be rescued in lifeboats depict just that.

The extended monsoon this year has left behind a trail of destruction with 1,685 deaths being reported by 14 States till September 30 and hundreds

still missing. Although there is no available data on the extent of economic damages, such episodes pose a heavy economic burden for the country. Urban planning is in a mess, infrastructure is in shambles and above all, there is no dearth of governance. If indeed we have to minimise our losses, we must start preparing for such weather events that bring only destruction.

Anand Via email

Celebrating Gandhi

Sir — This refers to the editorial, "Whither Gandhi?" (September 2). It is indeed ironic that we are celebrating Gandhi even as we are busy destroying everything he believed in and stood for. It is time for us to reflect on why our country has changed so drastically since Independence. Only by ensuring that Gandhi's ideals come true can we truly celebrate him.

Manisha Via email

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

Relevance of the Mahatma

Reversing the civilisational slide will require a shift towards a need-based economy, whose cornerstones are just morality and justice



HIRANMAY KARLEKAR

Mahatma Gandhi's message and the way of living have a special relevance in the world today given the direction in which the dominant global civilisation is unfolding and the impact of its economic infrastructure on values.

The contemporary dominant global civilisation increasingly owes its character, direction and thrust to market capitalism. As its name suggests, this latest phase in the evolution of capitalism derives its surplus for survival and growth from the market through sales. The latter is a result of demand, which since the days of primeval societies, has been the result of existential human activity and the desire to possess. The process was very simple to begin with. The issue was survival, which required, in its most basic form, security (the need to live), food, shelter and clothing. Thus, the perception of the need for better weapons for hunting and warding off attacks by wild animals and other human groups might have led to devising of sharper stone spearheads.

Satisfaction over their use would have led to demands for more of these, and perhaps, also for even better weapons, leading to their invention and production. The search for such and other items led to the emergence of technologies. Jacques Ellul, who uses the words "technique" and "technology" almost synonymously, writes in his classic, *Technological Society*, that the latter "is nothing more than means and the ensemble of mean." The technical operation, he adds, "includes every operation carried out in accordance with a certain method in order to attain a particular end. It can be as rudimentary as splintering a flint or as complicated as programming an electronic brain. In every case it is the method which characterises the operation."

The application of technology on the available resources led to the invention and manufacture of products and the emergence of services that were felt to be necessary. This, shorn of trappings, was the basic process. The growing diversity, complexity and sophistication of economic, societal and political activity through centuries and the concomitant evolution of institutions, *weltanschauungs* and practices through millennia, has led to the evolution of the primeval barter economy to the present information technology and financial capital-based market economy, which as we have seen, derives the surplus for its survival and growth from sales in the market. Market capitalism does not just respond to demands; it creates these through seductive marketing and sales strategies whose cutting edge is advertising, which has emerged as a major high-profile industry.

Advertising seeks to boost sales through multiple strategies that, in bare essentials, is tantamount to projecting the possession of certain goods and the enjoyment of certain services as an end in themselves and the measure of a person's worth. For example, X is an outstanding person because he/she wears a certain brand of clothing and a certain make of watch, owns a certain make of car and, if a woman, wears a certain brand of make-up. People consume not only because they want to do so but to show others that they can afford to do so or are superior people who can do so.

The result is competitive and not just conspicuous consumption, causing the alienation of those who cannot indulge in it and social tension and violence. The other result is aggravation of climate change as the increasing levels of greenhouse gas emissions are a result of economic activity to cater to spiralling consumer demands. As is increasingly clear, the two processes taken together can mean the extinction of humankind.

Mahatma Gandhi stood for a need-based economy whose cornerstone was morality and justice. The first part of it is encapsulated in his famous, oft-quoted statement, "The world has enough for everyone's need but not for everyone's greed." The ubiquitous conspicuous consumption of our time was absent in his, but the statement underlined his strong disapproval of unnecessary, self-indulgent consumption and was in keeping with his belief that an economy should be guided by principles of universal morality. He wrote in *The Veins of Wealth* (Selected Works Vol III), "The real value of acquired wealth depends on the moral sign attached to it, just, as sternly as that of a mathematical quantity depends on the algebraical sign attached to it. Any given accumulation of commercial wealth, may be indicative, on the one hand, of faithful industries, progressive energies and productive ingenuities; or on the other hand, it may be indicative of mortal luxury, merciless tyranny, ruinous chicanery."

Inequality, to him, was not condemnable *per se*. He wrote in *The Veins of Wealth*, "Inequalities of wealth, unjustly established, have assuredly injured the nation in which they exist during their establishment; and unjustly directed, injure it yet more during their existence. But inequalities of wealth, justly established, benefit the nation in the course of their establishment; and nobly used, aid it yet more by their existence."

Mahatma Gandhi was against competition, which led to exploitation and low wages and for cooperation. The objective of acquiring wealth was not consumption and self-indulgence. According to him, "The final consummation of all wealth is in the producing as many as possible full-breathed, bright-eyed and happy-hearted human beings." (*Veins of Wealth*).

Here the view of the aim of economic growth is very different from what is prevalent. It, however, does provide a counter to the frenetic celebration of consumption latent with disastrous consequences.

(The writer is Consultant Editor, The Pioneer, and an author)



POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE BIHAR GOVERNMENT ISSUED AN ALERT ASKING THE PEOPLE TO BE ON GUARD. BUT WAS IT ON GUARD ITSELF? WE OWE THE PEOPLE AN APOLOGY.

—UNION MINISTER GIRIRAJ SINGH



IS WATER IN SOME PARTS OF PATNA THE ONLY PROBLEM WE HAVE? WHAT HAPPENED IN AMERICA? NO ONE IN THE GOVERNMENT IS SITTING IDLE.

—BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER NITISH KUMAR

The storm ahead

The worst drag in life is poverty, so Indians must now choose whether they wish to continue living in poverty or sacrifice 135 million people for a gigantic revolution



MARKANDEY KATJU

Hai maujazan ek kulzum-e-khoon, kaash yahi ho. Aata hai abhi dekhiye, kya kya merey aage. (A turbulent sea of blood is before me. But see what is coming ahead.)

—Mirza Ghalib

I am in my sunset years (I just crossed 73) and my remaining time will be spent on educating my fellow Indians (including non-resident Indians in America — where I am living at present — who though very good in their technical jobs, are gullible in other respects).

The crux of what I teach is this: There are really two worlds. One is that of the developed, highly industrialised countries like the US, Europe, Japan, Australia and China and second is that of the under-developed countries, including India (which is perhaps the most developed of the underdeveloped nations).

Our national aim must be to transform India from the second world to the first. In other words, from being an under-developed country, we must make it a developed, highly industrialised one. This is necessary if we wish to abolish poverty, unemployment, malnourishment, lack of healthcare and good education and so on. Because only a high-level and widespread industry can generate the wealth needed to provide for the welfare of our people and create millions of jobs to wipe out unemployment.

But how is this to be done? We no doubt had a limited degree of industrialisation after 1947 but then the process stalled. And of late our economy has tanked; the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has declined to five per cent, there have been massive retrenchments in the auto, Information Technology (IT) and other industries while real estate and power sectors are in the dumps. In fact, it is to divert attention from this economic crisis that the Government has resorted to gimmicks like cow protection, building the Ram temple, Yoga Day, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, abolition of Article 370, Howdy Modi in Houston and so on. But economic slowdowns cannot be wished away by such gimmicks and stunts.

One can win elections on the plank of Hindutva (as happened in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections) but one can't live off it. One has to eat food and to get food, one must have a job. But jobs are getting less (as the National Sample Survey, a Government of India organisation, admitted recently). Twelve million Indian youth are entering the job market every year but opportunities are drying up (due to manufacturing decline). Consequently many Indian youths will end up as criminals, beggars, hawkers or will end their lives. I submit that the Indian people must now make a choice: Either keep living in their miserable conditions characterised by poverty, unemployment, malnourishment (the highest in the world, with every second Indian child malnourished, as stated by the Global Hunger Index, UNICEF), farmers' distress and the consequent unabated suicides, poor healthcare and education for the masses, discrimination against minorities, Dalits and so on. Or else, sacrifice about 10 per cent of the 1,350 million population in a gigantic, historical people's revolution which alone can destroy backwardness, the fe-



UNFORTUNATELY, THE POLITICAL LEADERS IN INDIA TODAY RELY EITHER ON CASTE OR RELIGION FOR WINNING ELECTIONS. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT OUR SOCIETY IS STILL SEMI-FEUDAL, WITH RAMPANT CASTEISM AND COMMUNALISM, THEY POLARISE SOCIETY FURTHER AND SPREAD CASTE AND RELIGIOUS HATRED TO GET MOSTLY CORRUPT. THEY HAVE NO IDEA OF HOW TO SOLVE OUR MASSIVE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS BUT ARE EXPERTS IN MANIPULATING CASTE AND COMMUNAL VOTEBANKS



dal casteist and communal mindsets and practices among our people. This hydra-headed monster was obstructing any progress and keeping us chained to poverty and other social evils.

Many would say I am presenting a horrible choice between the devil and the deep sea and a cruel prognostication and augury. Do we really want our 135 million men, women and children to rise up and set off a revolution? I am not a bloodthirsty person and I wish this great historical transformation could take place peacefully. But unfortunately that is not how history operates.

Consider the experiences so far. The transformation of feudal Europe of the 16th century to a modern Europe of the 19th century was not accomplished peacefully. It witnessed wars, revolutions, chaos, massacres, social churning, intellectual ferment and so on. It was only after going through that fire that modern society emerged in Europe.

Similarly, after the Chinese Revolution was completed in 1949, the Chinese authorities made an investigation about how many people were killed in this churning (which lasted for a quarter of a century, from 1924 to 1949). It was found that about 10 per cent of the then 550 million Chinese people, which is about 50 million, were killed. Similarly, about four of the then 40 million Vietnamese people were killed in the liberation war in Vietnam, which lasted from 1945 to 1975. So it

can be assumed that about 10 per cent of the people are killed in a revolution. For, after all, what is a historical revolution? It is a period when the old society and its values are being uprooted and torn apart but new values have not yet replaced them. Everything is in ferment, in chaos.

Can this be a peaceful affair? Not at all. The reactionary elements in the old order will fiercely oppose any change, as happened in France in the period prior to the 1789 Revolution and even during the one in Vendee in 1793. And many of the ordinary people in society, being conservative by nature, will oppose any fundamental change. In India, most people still have casteist and communal mindsets, and to replace that by modern minds is 10 times more difficult than changing the physical environment.

In India, all our State institutions have collapsed and become hollow and empty shells. We adopted the parliamentary system of democracy but this has degenerated into caste and communal vote banks, as everyone knows. Casteism and communalism are feudal forces, which must be destroyed if India is to progress but parliamentary democracy further entrenches them. So we have to replace parliamentary democracy by another system which enables us to rapidly progress.

Today, India has two of the three pre-requisites to becoming a modern industrial giant, like China, namely a huge pool of technical talent (our IT

engineers are manning Silicon Valley, and many Indians are professors in Science, Maths and Engineering Departments in American Universities), and immense natural resources. What it lacks is the third prerequisite — a modern, patriotic political leadership. Without this, our transformation from the second to the first world is impossible.

Unfortunately, the political leaders in India today rely either on caste or religion for winning elections. Taking advantage of the fact that our society is still semi-feudal, with rampant casteism and communalism, they polarise society further and spread caste and religious hatred to get votes. Being mostly corrupt, they have no idea of how to solve our massive economic problems but are experts in manipulating caste and communal votebanks. Obviously such people are unfit to transform India into a modern, highly industrialised country.

It is only modernist, selfless and patriotic leaders who can solve India's massive socio-economic problems. Who these movers will be, when will the revolution which they will lead occur, what form it will take is impossible to predict. But about one thing there can be no doubt: The next two decades in our country will be very turbulent and bloody. As the great Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib said, "Aata hai abhi dekhiye kya kya mere aage. (I wonder what lies ahead of me.)"

(The writer is a former judge of the Supreme Court of India)

Time to put salve on wounds

Bangladeshi Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India comes at a time when the relations between the two neighbours are a bit strained



JOYEETA BHATTACHARJEE

Indo-Bangladesh relations will get a boost with the visit of our neighbouring country's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to India, beginning today. This will be the first visit by Hasina after the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) formed the Government for the second consecutive time at the Centre. The visit comes at a time when the relations between the two neighbours are a bit strained over the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and Bangladesh nurturing defence ties with China. There are concerns that such issues will affect the relationship between the two nations who have historic linkages.

Hasina's visit provides both New Delhi and Dhaka the opportunity to

dispel any prevailing doubts about the future of the relationship and highlight the importance India gives to its friendship with Bangladesh. Indo-Bangladesh relations made significant progress under Hasina's decade-long rule that began with her second term as Prime Minister in 2009. At present, except for some minor irritants, the alliance between New Delhi and Dhaka is said to be at an all-time high and India considers Bangladesh a trusted friend and partner in the neighbourhood.

After the Uri attacks, our Government used all possible avenues to try and isolate Pakistan diplomatically. As part of that strategy, it refused to attend the 2016 SAARC summit in Islamabad and was supported by Bangladesh. Dhaka was also the first nation to back New Delhi's entry as an observer in the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation in 2018, a club open only to Muslim-majority countries.

Recently, after the promulgation of Article 370 and the anti-India propaganda by Pakistan and radical groups, Bangladesh echoed our stance

that Kashmir was our internal matter. Again, on the NRC, an initiative primarily undertaken to identify infiltrators from Bangladesh into Assam, the Hasina government refrained from indulging in any negative comments in public.

India and Bangladesh share a deep sense of bonhomie, especially at the Governmental level. Nevertheless, rising scepticism among the people, particularly in Bangladesh, cannot be overlooked. It is an area that demands in-depth introspection as the importance of public opinion in influencing Government policies is established.

In Bangladesh, reasons for apprehensions among the masses include the pendency of the Teesta River water-sharing agreement since 2011. India refrained from signing it during former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit after West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee objected to the draft agreed upon by the two countries. The delay in the signing of the agreement substantially hurt India's credibility in the eyes of common Bangladeshis.

Again, India's initial reluctance in taking a firm stance on Rohingya refugees, a vital issue for Bangladesh inundated by the influx of refugees, further dented public perception. India being a regional power, expectations from it are always high and any fall from them leads to resentment among the people. The most prominent and recent case is India's disjointed response on the NRC, where one of the arms of the Government assured that none would be deported to Bangladesh while another repeatedly expressed its resolve to deport Bangladeshis and referred to migrants as a security threat. Besides, the venom spewed against Bangladeshis by some political leaders close to the ruling dispensation, who equated them to "termites", has added to the people's apprehensions.

Similarly, people in India have been watching Bangladesh's growing ties with China closely, especially in defence cooperation. In particular, Bangladesh's recent contract to China for construction of a submarine dockyard has raised eyebrows in India because the feeling on the

ground is that such contracts always have some strategic consideration. This unease is despite the fact that during her July visit to China, Sheikh Hasina categorically mentioned that her nation's relationship with Beijing is economic and with New Delhi, it is organic and cannot be measured by any monetary benefits.

In the backdrop of these niggling issues, Hasina's visit signifies the special relationship the two countries share. During her stay, she will be discussing a wide range of issues of bilateral, regional and international importance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

A deepening economic cooperation is also an important aspect as Hasina will be accompanied by a large delegation of businessmen. In addition, she will participate in the India Economic Summit, organised by the World Economic Forum. So one hopes that the two neighbours will put a salve on any wounds before they fester.

(The writer is a Senior Fellow at the Observer Research Foundation and views expressed are personal)

CAPSULE



NoBroker.com raises \$ 50 mn for business expansion

NEW DELHI: Realty platform NoBroker.com has raised USD 50 million from investors, including Tiger Global Management, for business expansion. The company said in a statement that it has raised USD 50 million in Series D Funding. "This brings the total funding raised by NoBroker to USD 121 million," it added. The round was led by Tiger Global Management and included participation from existing investor General Atlantic. NoBroker.com is a tech-based brokerage-free real estate platform that makes transactions seamless and efficient. NoBroker currently operates across six cities: Mumbai, Bengaluru, Pune, Chennai, Hyderabad and Gurgaon. More than 30 lakh properties are already registered on NoBroker and more than 70 lakh individuals have used its services. "This current funding will help us provide the NoBroker service to more customers across the country and also accelerate our deal closure growth," said Amit Kumar, CEO and Co-Founder of NoBroker.com.



Bank of Baroda signs MoU with Indian Army

NEW DELHI: Bank of Baroda (BoB) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Army under which the bank would offer customised services along with a host of facilities to account holders. The MoU includes handsome free personal accident insurance cover, free air accident insurance cover of Rs 15 lakh to Rs 50 lakh and an overdraft facility up to three times of monthly net salary, the public sector bank said in a statement. The features are also applicable for pensioners of Indian Army up to the age of 70 years, it said. The second largest public sector bank with more than 9,500 branches will provide customised banking experience for serving and retired personnel of Indian Army, it added. The agreement was signed by Lt Gen Harsha Gupta of Indian Army and BoB Executive Director Vikramditya Singh Khichi, it said.

'Student housing, retirement homes, new realty drivers'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Confident about real estate sector doing well as long as there are "right developers, right pricing and right unit size", eminent banker Deepak Parekh has said a number of new growth drivers are also emerging in form of student housing, retirement homes and co-living projects.

He also said foreign investors have also been investing in a big way in good commercial projects, while warehousing is another segment where they are showing keen interest. "Student housing is a very big growth area and it has taken off well. Many universities, colleges and educational institutions are now in fact selling their own housing to raise money to build more classes, facilities etc," Parekh told PTI in an interview.

"The other growth area right now is co-living. People, including foreign investors, have also started talking about rental housing. And many are also building projects for senior citizens, including some being built by people themselves. We are funding some of them actually," the chairman of the country's biggest housing finance company HDFC Ltd said.

Retirement homes are like hostels with all kinds of facilities available for senior citizens, including medical facilities, and places like Delhi-NCR, Bangalore and Mumbai-Pune region have started seeing such projects.

According to a recent study conducted by News Corp and Softbank-backed realty portal PropTiger, the co-living space has emerged as a "real estate goldmine" that remains largely untapped and has potential to become USD 93 billion market annually on rising demand from students and professionals.

"This is evident from the fact that the supply by organised players in co-living is currently limited to over one lakh beds. Assuming they earn ₹1.44 lakh (USD 2,021) per annum per bed, organised players in this segment are currently USD 206 million," the study said.

The report further said that the co-living sector has total untapped demand of about 46.3 million beds, out of which 8.9 million is from student housing.

Among the existing players in the segment are RentMyStay, Rentroomi, SimplyGuest and Flathood. Other players such as NestAway, Stanza Living, Zolo, Placio and CoLive have recently entered this sector and raised funds to spread the business.

On the other hand, the co-working space is also seeing huge growth. According to property consultant Knight Frank, co-working operators have leased 4 million sq ft of office space across eight major cities during the first half of 2019 to meet rising demand of such flexible area from corporates and startups. This marks a growth of 42 per cent over H1-2018.

Asked whether foreign investors, mostly private equity players, are also keen on investing in residential projects, Parekh said, "They are going big on commercial projects, malls etc. A large number of them are getting into joint ventures."

"They are also getting into warehousing, including for food, data, commodities etc. Warehousing is a big business now," he said.

He said some foreign players are also keen on residential projects and they would be keen to buy parts of a project if they get good discounts and this can be of significant benefit for developers who have unsold properties.

Earlier in his annual letter to shareholders, Parekh had said the housing market in India has been so far been looked at from the lens of the country's young demographic profile.

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—DEEPAK PAREKH, eminent banker

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RCEP trade ministers to meet in Bangkok

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Trade ministers of 16 RCEP countries, including India and Japan, will hold a crucial meeting in Bangkok next week to take stock of the negotiations that are in the last phase, an official said.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will attend the eighth RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) Ministerial Meeting being held in Bangkok from 10-12 October.

The official said that this would probably be the last ministerial-level meeting as only a few issues like rules of origin are pending for finalisation.

The RCEP agreement is being negotiated among 10 ASEAN members (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) and their six trade partners -- Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand.

According to the official, India is expected to reduce or eliminate duties on about 74-80 per cent of goods imported from China under the proposed agreement. Bilateral talks are still going on with the neighbouring country, with which India has a trade deficit of over USD 50 billion.

Similarly, India may cut customs duties on 86 per cent of imports from Australia and

The official said that this would probably be the last ministerial-level meeting as only a few issues like rules of origin are pending for finalisation

New Zealand, and 90 per cent for products imported from ASEAN, Japan and South Korea, with which India already has a comprehensive free trade agreement, the official added.

The cut or elimination of these duties could be implemented over a period of 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years.

Negotiations are also on for an auto-trigger mechanism, wherein India would have the option to increase customs duties if there would be a sudden surge in imports of a particular prod-

uct particularly from China to protect the domestic industry.

India wants to use this mechanism for about 60-65 products being imported from China. However, China wants it for around 20 items.

The negotiations for the RCEP deal has reached at a fundamental phase as the member countries are targeting to conclude the talks by November.

As many as 28 rounds of talks have been held at chief negotiators level and no more rounds are scheduled now.

India can be major electric vehicles markets: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has the potential to become one of the largest electric vehicles (EVs) markets in the world, with the government pushing for the segment in order to curb pollution and reduce reliance on import-dependent fossil fuel, says a report.

However, the uptake of EVs has been slow in the country due to the high upfront as well as lifecycle costs cost but long-term investment in research and development (R&D) will create sustained growth, according to the report by the World Economic Forum and Ola Mobility Institute.

Apart from investment, government backing and direction will be crucial for accelerating adoption and deployment of electric mobility, it added.

The report said there are 10 states and union territories (UTs) that are leading the way in building production, infrastructure and ser-

These states and UTs are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh

vices to increase the momentum of EV usage in India.

These states and UTs are Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Delhi, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh. "Considering the strong governmental push towards EVs, India has a huge potential to become one of the largest EV markets," the report noted.



PMC's suspended MD blames 'superficial auditing' for mess

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The suspended managing director of Punjab and Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank, Joy Thomas, has blamed the auditors for the mess at the bank, accusing them of only "superficial auditing" of the books of the now crippled lender due to "time constraints".

In a five-page letter to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) dated September 21 after a board member blew the lid on the fraud at PMC, which is among the top ten urban cooperative banks, Thomas has confessed to the role of the top management, including a few board members, in hiding the actual NPA numbers and also the actual exposure to the bankrupt HDIL, which is stated to be around Rs 6,500 crore or over 73 per cent of its total loan book of Rs 8,880 crore.

While Thomas has not named any auditor in the letter to the RBI written two days



before the regulatory clamp down which PTI has reviewed, according to its annual report for FY19, the bank had three auditors -- Lakdawal & Co, Ashok Jayesh & Associates and DB Ketkar & Co since FY11.

Emails from PTI sent to all these auditors did not elicit any replies even after 24 hours.

The shallow auditing of the books of PMC by its statutory

auditors was done as the 'bank was growing', Thomas claimed in the letter.

The letter of Thomas is part of the first information report (FIR) filed by the Economic Offence Wing of the Mumbai Police on Monday. The FIR names Thomas, PMC chairman Waryam Singh and the promoters of the HDIL and related entities.

ICAI to check role of auditors

NEW DELHI: Chartered accountants' apex body ICAI has sought information from the RBI and other authorities on the PMC Bank crisis to check whether any auditor was involved in the alleged financial irregularities at the lender.

Taking note of the "enormity of the matter", the ICAI on Wednesday said it has triggered its disciplinary mechanism and has written to the bank as well as regulatory agencies concerned.

The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has written to the Vigilance Department of the RBI and the Commissioner of Maharashtra Co-operative Societies.



UK retail king Tesco says CEO to step down in 2020

AFP ■ LONDON

Britain's biggest retailer Tesco said Wednesday that CEO Dave Lewis will step down next year, and will be replaced by Walgreens Boots Alliance executive Ken Murphy.

Lewis, who has overseen a radical overhaul of Tesco since his appointment in 2014, added that the group's turnaround was "complete" and he desired to move onto new challenges.

"My decision to step down as group CEO is a personal one," he said in a group statement issued alongside first-half earnings.

"I believe that the tenure of the CEO should be a finite one and that now is the right time to pass the baton.

"Our turnaround is complete, we have delivered all the metrics we set for ourselves. The leadership team is very strong, our strategy is clear and it is delivering."

Former Unilever director Lewis was parachuted into Tesco in July 2014 to help turn around the group.

More than 10,000 jobs have been cut in a far-ranging cost-cutting drive at Tesco, since Lewis took charge with the brief to save 1.5 billion pounds.

He took the reins just as the group was rocked by crisis in October 2014 after overstating profits in an accounting error.

Banks to hold loan fairs across 250 districts

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The first phase of 'Loan Mela', an outreach programme for providing credit to retail customers and MSMEs, will begin from Thursday across 250 districts across the country to meet demand during the festival period.

During the four days beginning October 3, loans will be sanctioned for retail, agriculture, vehicle, home, MSME, education and personal categories on the spot.

All banks, including State Bank of India (SBI), Punjab National Bank (PNB), Bank of Baroda (BoB), and Corporation Bank have geared themselves up to take advantage of festival season demand. SBI is the lead banker in 48 districts across the country. Likewise, BoB is the lead banker in 17 out of 250 districts in the first phase.

Simultaneously, it is holding Baroda Kisan Pakhwada during which most of its branches would focus on promoting farm loans, BoB said in a statement. During the annual performance review earlier this month, public sector banks decided to undertake outreach exercise in identified 400 districts. Later, the private sector too expressed their will-



This is part of the systematic bank reform process which envisioned taking banks to doorsteps of customers

ingness to join the initiative.

This is part of the systematic bank reform process which envisioned taking banks to doorsteps of customers.

These camps will provide a one-stop destination for MSMEs, small retail businesses and end customers to access all bank services, especially loans in auto, home, personal and business section.

While at one level it will help businesses to gear up for the festive season, it will also provide ready cash in the hands of consumers.

'Infra investment key to boost jobs'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government can create a large number of jobs by making infrastructure investment its priority and roping in private sector in it, a report has said.

India faces a crucial policy challenge of ensuring access to adequate employment for its 473 million strong workforce, an IDFC Institute report on "Infrastructure Priorities for Job Creation in

India" has said. "By prioritising infrastructure investment, governments can provide direct employment in large numbers. And they can enable the private sector which is impeded by absent or poor infrastructure," the report said.

It also said that a dynamic private sector is essential for meeting this challenge and the state has an equally critical role to play.



Water supply to firms stopped in Latur

PTI ■ LATUR

Water supply to the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation (MIDC) area in Latur district has been stopped due to insufficient reserves in the Manjara dam and other resources after poor rainfall this monsoon, an official said on Wednesday.

With companies in Latur's MIDC already troubled due to the industrial slowdown, the stoppage of water supply since Tuesday has come as a double whammy for factories, speciality pulses and cement units, a local industry body said.

The Manjara dam, consid-

ered as the lifeline of Latur city, currently has 4,000 million litres of water against its total storage capacity of 2.24 lakh million litres. The requirement of the industrial zones in Latur, located in the perennially drought-hit Marathwada region, is around 3 million litres of water per day, an official said.

In view of this water crisis, the district administration and industry stakeholders held a meeting a month ago, Collector G Shrikant told PTI.

"The industries then demanded that the decision to stop water supply be postponed till October 1 against the earlier plan of September 1. But now, since the Manjara dam and other reserves have very low storage, the water supply to MIDC has been stopped since Tuesday after taking owners of the industries into confidence," he said.

ers held a meeting a month ago, Collector G Shrikant told PTI.

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'Indian banks fail on climate, human rights policies'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Most Indian banks fail on policies of environment and human rights and this inaction leaves the Indian banking sector vulnerable to investment risks arising due to climate emergencies, according to the first edition of Fair Finance Guide India scorecard.

The scorecard, that analysed environmental, social and governance (ESG) policies, disclosures and commitments of various banks in India, noted that Indian banks have policies on financial inclusion and corruption, but are found wanting on social, environmental and human rights issues in their investment policies. Fair Finance Guide India is



a group of civil society organisations to create an ecosystem amongst financial sector actors to recognise the ESG risks in their investments.

The scorecard is an assessment of policy disclosures of a sample of eight Indian banks

Fair Finance Guide India is a group of civil society organisations to create an ecosystem amongst financial sector actors to recognise the ESG risks in their investments

Nature and Climate Change, Labour Rights, Human Rights, Gender Equality, Financial Inclusion and Arms, Transparency and Accountability, Corruption and Tax.

As per the Fair Finance Guide India scorecard, three out of eight Indian banks have scored high on parameters of financial inclusion and corruption.

However, seven out of eight banks scored zero on the themes of climate change and environment. The banks also scored poorly on the themes of labour rights and human rights.

"Indian banks demonstrate their leadership on issues of financial inclusion and tackling corruption. However, their inaction to deal with climate emergency and human rights

issues is very worrying," said Namit Agarwal, private sector engagement lead at Oxfam India.

Agarwal further noted that "this inaction leaves the Indian banking sector vulnerable to investment risks arising due to the climate emergency. The sector is also likely to be directly or indirectly linked to human rights violations caused by the companies they finance".

As per the report, banks can have a positive impact on the environment and reduce risks of climate change by screening for companies that are committed to protecting biodiversity, reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and supporting a low carbon economy.

WHEN SOCIAL MEDIA BECOMES THE TEACHER

Social media has changed lives for the better. Barring a few instances where it has been misused, it has been a boon for people from all over the world sharing information about topics like motivation, education, health, safety, wellness and more. EduTok, a short video sharing platform, helps people share their work and spread their knowledge, finds

V SATEESH REDDY

Short video sharing platform TikTok's initiative EduTok, is getting rave reviews all over the world for enabling users create and share content on themes like education, motivation, safety, health, wellness and more. EduTok was launched as an effort to empower TikTok users to create meaningful and inspiring content.

Having received an overwhelming response for EduTok, the campaign has enabled Indian users to not only share their inspiring stories and knowledge, but also build a unique identity for themselves. EduTok has empowered Indian users to reach a global audience who have similar interests and has allowed creators to bring a change in the society by sharing their knowledge.

Nitin Saluja, director, public policy, TikTok India, said, "The campaign has given our users a diverse set of themes and topics to explore, which has led to a great appetite of content generation and consumption. We've seen a great engagement on EduTok on a variety of subjects. From motivation, language

lessons to career advice, EduTok has allowed users to showcase their talent, knowledge and creativity from even the most remote towns in the country." He informed that the EduTok initiative has over 40 billion views since May 2019. He shares, "We allow users to post 15 second videos and encourage them to showcase their creativity in unique ways. This has worked well amongst our users. The format also encourages creativity and pushes creators to more effectively share their thoughts with the world."

He added that EduTok has been well received by users and has been trending consistently with views reaching close to the 40 billion mark.

Awal Madan, one of the contributor said, "I create short lessons on English language with explanations in Hindi. I cover everything about English, from grammar to vocabulary. What's unique is that I teach in a funny and interesting manner, through sketches, mimicry, role-plays, etc., instead of the traditional whiteboard method. My objective is to help people learn conversational English and not just bookish English."

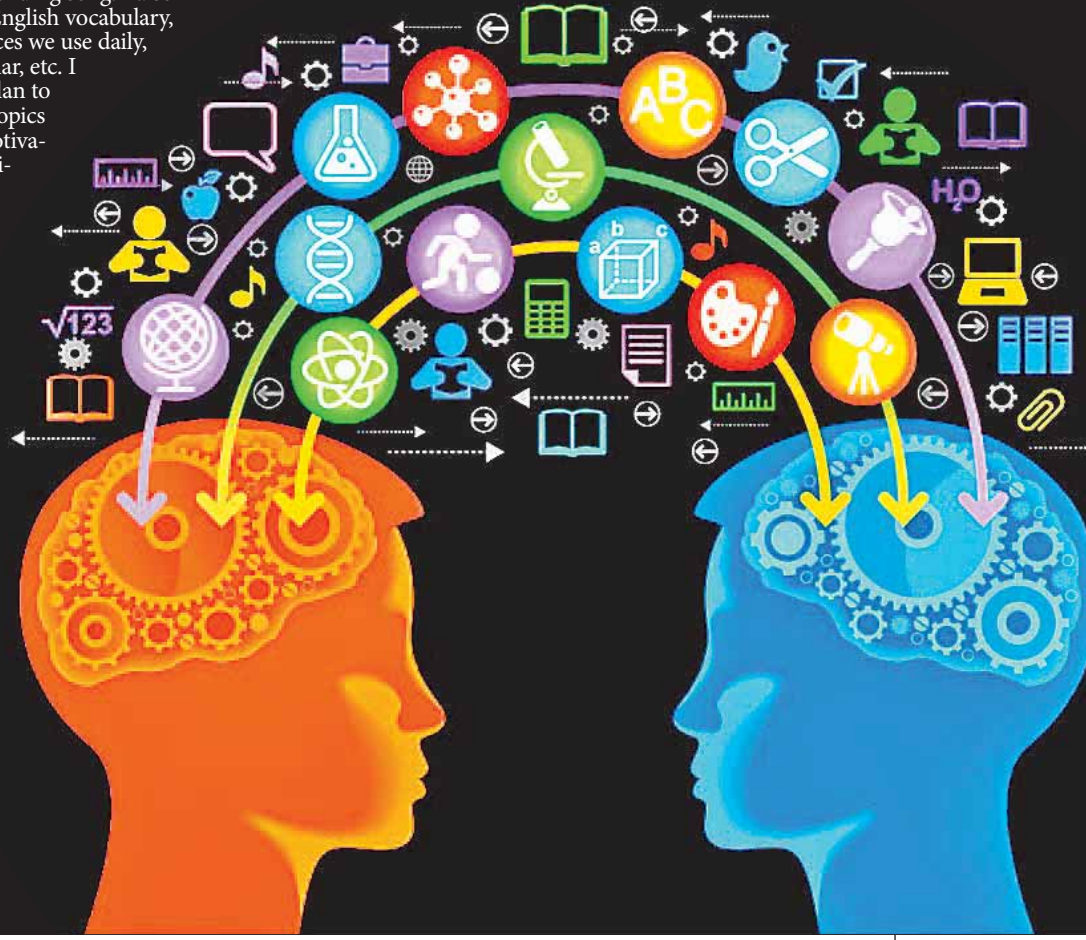
He adds, "Though people understand that learning English is a professional requirement for jobs, they tend to give up at times. I try to keep them motivated. My viewers include students who want to understand grammatical concepts, those who are employed and self-employed individuals who want to enhance their spoken English skills. Even the elderly who want to chat with their grandchildren in their style watch my videos sometimes."

Another EduTok user, Geet, says, "I create motivational videos and relationship advice videos. Occasionally, I also post a video where I am dancing on a trending song. I also teach English vocabulary, sentences we use daily, grammar, etc. I soon plan to cover topics like motivation, climate

change, clean India, domestic violence and more."

Paras Tomar, who mostly covers health and wellness said, "Most of my content has information about skincare and wellness. The USP of these videos is that I use natural ingredients. The response is heart-warming as with every new thing I've tried. The incredible part about the people who start following you is that they become a part of your life. They're so aware when you're working out, when you're cooking and even when you're unwell. These are people who see every facet of you."

Mahendra Dogney says, "I create motivational content which largely focuses on the problems faced by youth these days. I create videos in the form of stories and couplets which make it engaging for my audience. The topics I cover through my videos include career information, awareness, education and health. As I hail from a small town, I understand the misconceptions people have about life in a small town. My videos work towards changing this perception and making people realise that talent sees no boundaries."



“

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AWAL MADAN
ONE OF THE CONTRIBUTOR



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MAHENDRA
DOGNEY



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PARAS TOMAR

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NITIN SALUJA

“

I create motivational videos and relationship advice videos. Occasionally, I also post a video where I am dancing on a trending song. I also teach English vocabulary, sentences we use daily, grammar, etc.

GEET



Cycling to spread 'Fit India' campaign

More than 200 school-going children took part in a 50-km cycling event that was held in the city to spread awareness on Fit India campaign

On 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, Hyderabad Cyclists Group is organised a 50-km ride with more than 200 cyclists from across the city taking part in it to spread about Fit India campaign. The ride was cheered with various slogans by promoting various Indian campaigns like Make In India, Digital India and Fit India.

Ravinder Nandanoori, founder of Hyderabad Cycling Group said that they started HCG with just two members and now there are more than 600 active members. He says, "We wanted to do something different on Gandhi Jayanthi. Hence, I thought why not we involve school-going children to spread the message on Fit India campaign started by Prime Minister Narendra Modi?" Ravinder informed that



students of St Martins School of Chintal and Balanagar participated in the event.

When asked about involving students in 50-km ride, Ravinder says, "For many days, we have been practising with school children for

Single Line Moving Bicycles event. During the practise sessions, we realised that these kids could easily complete long rides like 50-km and after speaking to school authorities we conducted this event." Recently, the Hyderabad

Cyclists Group also completed a Guinness World Record fete of 'the longest single line bicycle parade' by at Outer Ring Road.

He adds, "We are also fighting against pollution in the city by conducting various cycling events. Cycling

helps one to lead a happy and peaceful life," Ravinder informed that many students are very happy for completing the race and told him that the race gave them the confidence to reach their goals.

— V Sateesh Reddy



GEAR UP FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Ever since the first biker embraced the open roads instead of the noisy metro life, bikers have always been combining popular pastime with a sense of duty; travelling across the country and spreading awareness about important social causes. Keeping up

with the tradition, Novotel Hyderabad Airport (NHA) hosted the 'Distinguished Gentleman's Ride' (DGR) at the hotel. The event was attended by over 300 bikers from across the city who came together for spreading awareness about prostate cancer and suicide prevention. Around 70,000 bikers in 550 cities

globally participate in the DGR each year. The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride was founded in Sydney, Australia by Mark Hawwa. The first ride in 2012 brought together over 2,500 riders across 64 cities. Punjab Enfield Group (PEG Mc) Hyderabad is the official host for DGR 2017 Hyderabad.

PARTY

A LABEL OF LUXURY

A ce couturier Gaurav Gupta unveiled the brand's debut Couture store in Hyderabad recently. Located in the posh Banjara Hills, the first ever Gaurav Gupta Franchise store, is an experiential retail space unraveling the couturier's dreamscape, with an added focus on haute couture and customisation. Several high-profile celebrities like Pinky Reddy, Shriya Saran and Shruti Hassan graced the event.



● Lakshmi Rana



● Sony Kaur



● Pinky Reddy



● Shruti Hassan



● Sonalika



● Khushboo



● Shriya Saran

Photos by SV Chary

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 Shristi Art Gallery, Jubilee Hills.



» **THEATRE**

THE RE-TURN

● Samahaara Workshop Productions presents a play, The Re-turn, on October 5 at Phoenix Arena from 7.30 pm onwards. This story reveals a tearful truth of our life. Although, we human beings are constantly growing and have made a subsequent progress in the field of science and technology today, we are losing ourselves. The tendency of people wishing that good things should happen to them as per their convenience and the entire focus shifting towards the results is extensive these days.



PISINARI / MANCHAM MEEDA MANISHI

● Samahaara Workshop Productions is coming up with two plays on October 4 and 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.



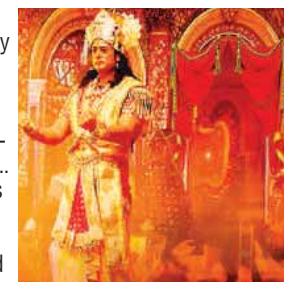
CHUHAL

● Kissago Theatre is staging a play Chuhal on October 12 at Lamakaan from 8pm. The story begins when Sudheer comes to 'see' Aarti for marriage and goes on to evaluate, through these two characters, the existentialist tussle between what one has to be vs what one wants to be, how one chooses to live vs how one wishes to live.



MAHABHARATA - THE EPIC TALE

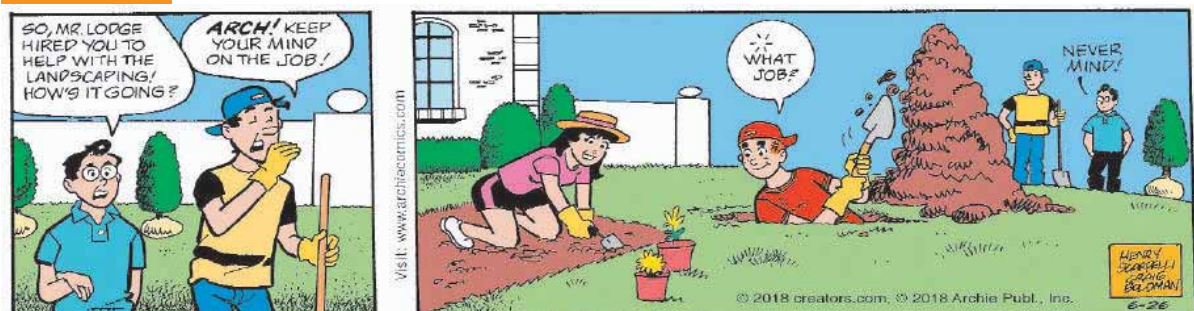
● All history and mythology is based on cause and effect. Mahabharata - The Epic Tale... in-depth deals with the primary emotional and psychological causes that were the genesis of this destructive war. The planet has witnessed destruction based on the whims of a few people. Till October 6, multiple 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

FUN TIME

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



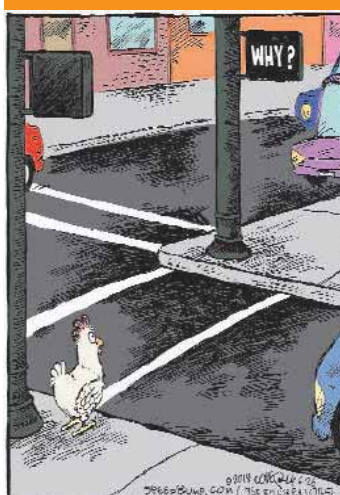
GINGER MEGGS



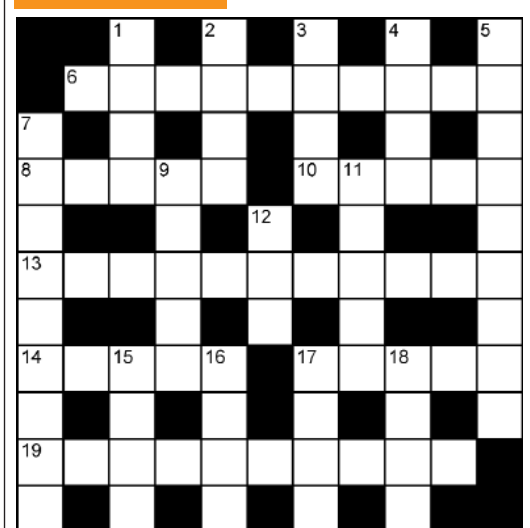
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- 6 A two-wheeled vehicle
 - 8 Unclean
 - 10 Our planet
 - 13 A party for something special
 - 14 Close-fitting
 - 17 Money used in France before the euro
 - 19 Cooked too long
- DOWN**
- 9 Use these to bite
 - 11 Change
 - 12 Attempt
 - 15 Got bigger
 - 16 Mark correct
 - 17 You need this to stay alive
 - 18 Chopping tools



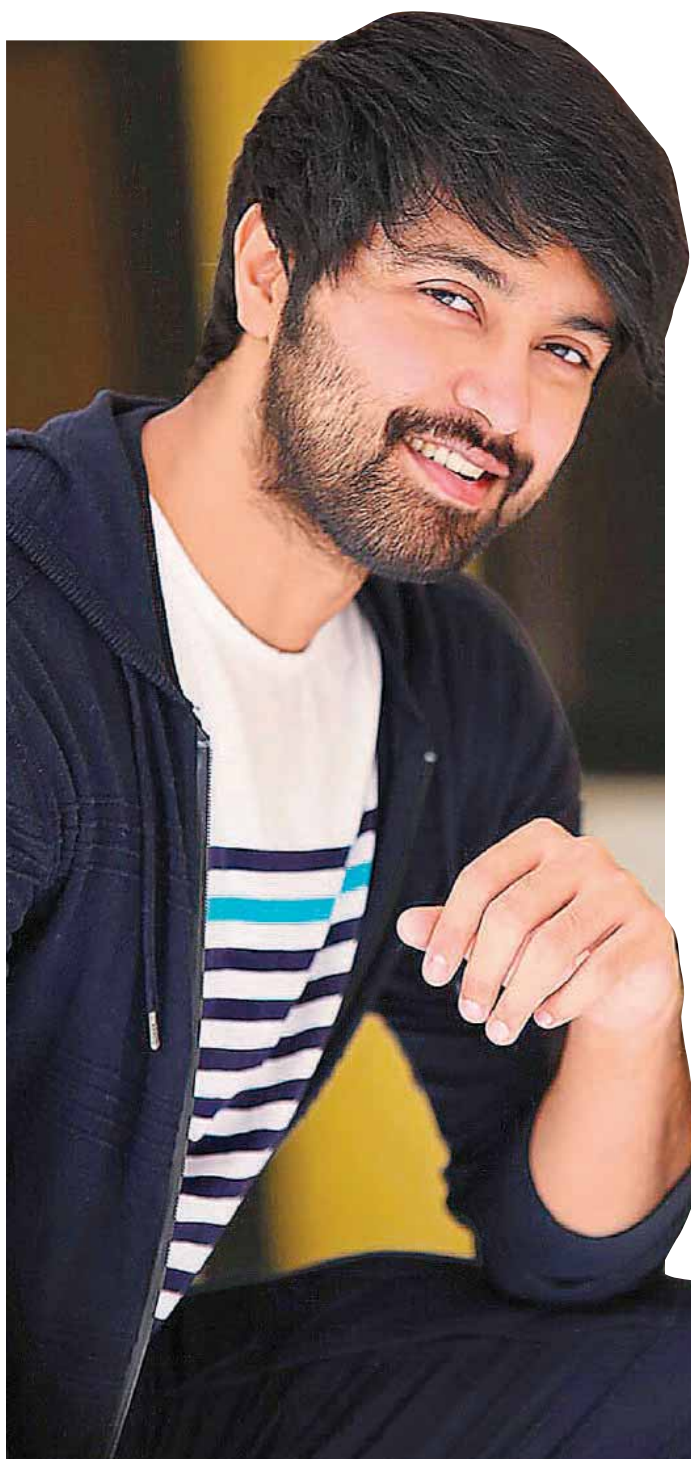
SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

- 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.



KALYAAN DHEV IN TALKS WITH SREENIVASS REDDE

Redde had met Kalyaan with a full-length commercial drama with dollops of humour sometime last month, finds NAGARAJ GOUD

While the status of his film with debutant director Puli Vasu, announced last year, is unclear, Kalyaan Dhev, Megastar Chiranjeevi's son-in-law, has initiated talks with other filmmakers for his next. To this end, we've exclusively learnt the actor is in advanced talks with director Sreenivass Redde for a new film. The director, who is known for his comedy entertainers *Bommana Brothers Chandana Sisters*, *Tata Birla Madhyalo Laila* and *Adirindayya Chandram*, is presently awaiting the release of his comeback film *Ragala 24 Gantalalo*, starring Eesha Rebba and Satyadev.

A source close to the development shares, "Redde has met Kalyaan with a full-length commercial drama with dollops of humour sometime back last month. There's

also a love story integrated into the script. The actor took a strong fancy to the story and his part. He believes it is the right story for him to attract masses and find his foothold in the industry. He might, however, seek the inputs of his uncle before he gives his green signal. The result of Redde's

film *Ragala 24 Gantalalo* might also have a bearing on his decision."

Kalyaan Dhev debuted last year with *Vijetha*, directed by Rakesh Sashi.

Although the film failed to light up the box-office, he received fairly decent reviews for his acting chops.



Success smiles!

With *Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy* opening to fairly positive reviews and good word-of-mouth, Megastar Chiranjeevi decided to shower his love on son Ram Charan who produced the film on a massive scale. The veteran actor also met producers NV Prasad and DVV Danayya at his residence in Hyderabad and received their congratulations on the film's earth-shattering opening. The likes of SS Rajamouli, Harish Shankar and Anil Ravipudi were some of the noted faces who praised the film on Twitter.



Choreographer Swarna switches tracks

Swarna master, who has choreographed songs for more than 850 films, has turned producer and director with *Adi Oka Idhi le*. A love story laced with family emotions, it features newcomers Savyasachi and Radhika Preeti in the lead roles. Its trailer was unveiled by leading producer Dil Raju in Hyderabad recently. "The trailer is nice. The film looks like a cute love story in the backdrop of an apartment," he said, before extending his best wishes to the unit. Savyasachi said, "From story sessions, workshops to actual shoot, the film's journey has been nothing short of a dream. I consider myself lucky to have worked with some big technicians."



TARAK treats Sanjay Dutt and Yash

Known for his hospitality in the film circles, Jr NTR has treated *KGf 2* stars Sanjay Dutt and Yash at his residence in Hyderabad earlier this week. The shoot of the period action-drama has shifted to Hyderabad from

Bengaluru last month and the actor upon knowing the presence of Sanjay in town, extended an invitation to him along with Yash. Both were happy to accept it and dropped by Tarak's residence on Monday evening. They were treated to a sumptuous dinner over a spread of cock-

tails and the topics all three discussed varied from current politics to respective film industries, a source says. Sanjay, impressed with the way Tarak showered love on him, told him to make it a point to visit his residence in Mumbai if he lands there for work or otherwise.

THEY WERE TREATED TO A SUMPTUOUS DINNER OVER A SPREAD OF COCKTAILS AT TARAK'S RESIDENCE



'There is no story in www.meenabazar'

Filmmaker Rana Sunil Kumar Singh, who has produced and directed *www.meenabazar*, states the film is a true documentation of what he saw in life. "In bazar, everything is available. Likewise, our film has all emotions-love, crime, drama-woven into the proceedings. In short it's a multi-genre film. The idea behind the title is to attract viewers. Also, it carries a lot of significance attached to the story," Sunil Kumar, who

comes from theatre background, informs. He adds that the Telugu-Kannada bilingual, featuring himself, Vaibhavi Joshi, Srijita Ghosh, Madhusudhan and Rajesh Nataranga, has no story as such. "The film is the journey of five principal character and the conflicts they encounter with each other result in the formation of a story in the end. That's the USP. All the five characters have equal importance," he points out, adding that it's definitely not a regular film and the idea behind going in with new faces is

that they will not carry any expectations. "Noted faces means the film will carry expectations, which I didn't want. If the audience watches the film devoid of expectations, they will be awed by it. It's a director's film all the way. We've conducted a workshop for the actors for three months before going to shoot." He further informs that the film, shot in 75 days, with outings in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Mangalore and Kodachadri, has been cleared with 'U/A' certificate and they are planning to arrive later this month. — NG



CHANAKYA makes handsome revenue from non-theatrical rights

In what is a handsome deal for AK Entertainments chief Anil Sunkara, Gopichand-starrer *Chanakya*, which is making decent buzz, has made close to Rs 15 crore from non-theatrical avenues, making it the best deal for the actor till now. According to a

marketing source close to the unit, the film's lion share of Rs 9 crore-of the ancillary revenue came from Hindi dubbing rights alone. Telugu dubbed action films have always found viewers on prominent general Hindi entertainment channels and the film's theme-of a RAW agent's covert operation in Pakistan-meant that the interest party paid big bucks

to snatch the rights from Sunkara. On the other hand, the digital rights have been bagged by steaming giant Amazon for Rs 2 crore while a leading Telugu GEC acquired the satellite rights for Rs 4 crore, taking the total tally to Rs 15 crore. The film, directed by Thiru, is scheduled to release this Saturday.



MATT DAMON REVEALS HE HAD TURNED DOWN AVATAR

Hollywood superstar Matt Damon has revealed that he has lost a chance to make huge profits by turning down a role in James Cameron's sci-fi blockbuster, *Avatar*. "Cameron offered me *Avatar* and when he offered it to me, he goes, 'Now, listen. I don't need anybody. I don't need a name for this, a named actor. If you don't take this, I'm going to find an unknown actor and give it to him, because the movie doesn't really need you. But if you take the part, I'll give you 40 per cent of...'"

Damon said, in an interview to a men's magazine. When the interviewer asked if he was implying whether Cameron had "offered you 10 per cent of the *Avatar* profits", Damon replied: "I told John Krasinski this story when we were writing *Promised Land*, and he goes, 'what?!' And he stands up and he starts pacing in the kitchen. He goes, 'OK. OK. OK. OK. OK!' He goes, 'If you had done that movie, nothing in your life would be different; nothing in your life would be different at all — except that, right now, we would be having this conversation in space.'"

"So, yeah. I've left more money on the table than any actor actually. That sucked and that's still brutal. But my kids are all eating. I'm doing OK," said Damon, according to a report in a British news agency.



MICHAEL SHEEN REVEALS NAME OF NEWBORN DAUGHTER

Actors Michael Sheen and Anna Lundberg have officially confirmed the birth of their first child together and the couple have named their newborn daughter, Lyra. The *Good Omens* star revealed that the child was born on September 23.

"Happy to say that at 8:41 am on Monday September 23rd our beautiful daughter Lyra was born. Thank you so much to Louise and all the brilliant midwives at both the Singleton and Neath Port Talbot Hospitals," Sheen wrote on Twitter. "On behalf of Anna and myself thanks to everyone

for your lovely messages of congratulations. It's been a wonderful, bleary-eyed week full of love and kindness and extraordinary poo. #NotReferringToMyself," he added.

This is a second child for Sheen, who also shares daughter Lily (20) with former partner, actor Kate Beckinsale.

AVA DUVERNAY TO DIRECT AMERICAN CIVIL WAR SERIES

Hollywood director Ava DuVernay is set to direct a futuristic drama set during an American civil war series for the network HBO. The *When They See Us* and *Queen Sugar* multihyphenate and Westworld executive producer Roberto Patino are developing a series based on DC Comics title *DMZ*, a futuristic drama set during an American civil war. The project has a pilot order at the WarnerMedia streaming platform, reports *hollywoodreporter.com*.

Based on the critically hailed Brian Wood-Riccardo Burchielli comic, *DMZ* is set in a near-future where America is embroiled in a bitter civil war. The island of Manhattan has become a demilitarised zone separating the two sides, largely destroyed and isolated from the rest of the world.

The series will follow a fierce female medic who saves lives while desperately searching for her lost son. As she contends with the gangs, militias, demagogues and warlords who now control the lawless island, she becomes the unlikely source of what everyone there has lost: hope. Filming on the pilot is slated to begin in early 2020.

The pilot order comes a day after US President Donald Trump, facing an impeachment inquiry in Congress, tweeted a quote from

Fox News contributor Robert Jeffress referring to a "Civil War-like fracture" if Trump is removed from office.



VIOLA DAVIS TO BE AWARDED LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AT ROME FILM FESTIVAL

Actress Viola Davis is set to be honoured with a lifetime achievement award at this year's Rome Film Festival scheduled to run between October 17 to October 27.

The Oscar, Emmy and Tony-winning actress will attend the festival to take her prize besides participating in a 'Close Encounter' on-stage conversation, in which she will speak about her career across film, theatre and TV, reported *Deadline*.

"Viola

Davis is an extraordinary actress, who has transformed sincerity and dignity into sublime thespian art. It is a great honour for me, and for the Rome Film Fest, to celebrate her formidable talent and deep humanity," the outlet quoted Antonio Monda, Rome's artistic director.

Rome will award two lifetime achievement awards this year. Previously, Bill Murray was announced as the recipient of the other award and Wes Anderson will present the award to Murray.



NETFLIX SHOW STRANGER THINGS TO RETURN WITH SEASON 4

A fourth season of the massively popular Netflix show is on the way, the streaming company announced Monday. No word on a release date for the fourth season of the show, which last left the pubescent heroes of Hawkins victorious against their supernatural supermonster, the Demogorgon, but without their portly leader, Sheriff Jim Hopper (David Harbour). A final scene from the third season hinted that the evils they faced in the first three seasons might not be limited to quaint Hawkins. And a teaser trailer

released by Netflix on Monday seemed to confirm that hint. "We're not in Hawkins anymore," the trailer read with an ominous scene from the *Upside Down*. Still, a statement from the Duffer Brothers assured fans that they won't be leaving the beloved town entirely: "We can't wait to tell many more stories together — beginning, of course, with a return trip to Hawkins!"

The show's third season, which premiered at the start of the long fourth of July weekend, brought Netflix an unprecedented amount of binge-watchers. The streaming company tweeted at the end of that week-

end that "40.7 million household accounts have been watching the show since its July 4 global launch — more than any other film or series in its first four days. And 18.2 million have already finished the entire season."

Given that, the upcoming deal is bound to be sizable. *Deadline* reports that the Duffer Brothers could stand to nab a multiyear pact similar to the one Netflix signed with *Game Of Thrones'* David Benioff and DB Weiss. We can only hope that Steve 'The Hair' Harrington's godawful bowl cut will not be making an appearance in the fourth season.





North London is RED

Former Gunners boy Gnabry nets four as German champions batter Spurs 7-2 at White Hart Lane

Gnabry was born in Stuttgart, but joined Arsenal's academy as a teenager before moving back to Germany for spells at Werder Bremen, Hoffenheim and then Bayern recruited him as replacement for Arjen Robben in 2017

Kimmich but the home side went toe to toe with Bayern for most of the first period.

Bayern forged ahead on the stroke of half-time, though, thanks to a superb finish from Robert Lewandowski, who picked up the loose ball at the edge of the area and swivelled to fire into the bottom corner.

GNABRY STRIKES

The second half belonged to former Arsenal man Gnabry, who struck four times as the visitors completed a rout. Lewandowski also scored a second.

It was the first time Spurs had conceded seven goals in a home match in any major competition.

The result leaves Bayern in pole position in Group B with two wins from two matches while Spurs have just one point after seeing a 2-0 lead wiped out in their opening game against Olympiakos.

But despite their poor start they are just two points behind second-placed Red Star Belgrade, who beat Olympiakos 3-1.

Bayern extended their advantage eight minutes after the break as Gnabry broke at pace down the left and burst into the box before drilling into the bottom corner.

Spurs' misery was compounded as Gnabry struck again two minutes later, capitalising after Harry Winks lost possession.

Pochettino's men were handed a lifeline as the referee pointed to the penalty spot for a foul on Danny Rose, with Kane reducing the deficit to 4-2 on the hour mark.

But Gnabry sealed his hat-trick for Bayern in the 83rd minute after racing beyond the Spurs defence and slotting past Lloris from 15 yards.

There was still time for Lewandowski to side-foot home a sixth for the German giants and Gnabry was able to add his fourth, and a seventh for Bayern, in the 88th minute.



Emmanuel Dennis celebrates after scoring Club Brugge's opening goal against Real Madrid during UCL match day 2 at Santiago Bernabeu

Zi-done?

Casemiro spares Real's blushes against brilliant Brugge

AFP ■ MADRID

Casemiro's late header rescued Real Madrid from an embarrassing defeat at home against Club Brugge on Tuesday as Zinedine Zidane's side came from two goals down to salvage a 2-2 draw.

Madrid were run ragged in the first half by a brilliant Brugge and their speedy striker Emmanuel Dennis, who scored twice at the Santiago Bernabeu and should have completed his hat-trick shortly after the interval.

Instead, Madrid came storming back as Sergio Ramos headed in, before Casemiro claimed a dramatic equaliser in the 85th minute, seconds after Brugge's Ruud Vormer had been sent off for a second yellow card.

"I would like to keep the second half and forget the first," said Zidane afterwards. "The goals we conceded were laugh-

able.

"The match was historic, the point was historic and the way we played was as well," said Brugge coach Philippe Clement.

After losing 3-0 to Paris Saint-Germain two weeks ago in what was Zidane's worst ever loss as coach, Madrid will be relieved to have avoided another defeat that would have left them facing their first ever group-stage exit in this competition.

But there were no celebrations at the final whistle from those in white shirts after a chaotic performance checked any morale and momentum gained following three consecutive victories in La Liga.

"I am not worried about anything," Zidane said. "We know we are in a worse situation in the Champions League but we keep going." "We have to do more, we have to do better," added Ramos.

IT'S DIFFICULT TO PUT THIS INTO WORDS, WINNING 7-2. NONE OF US WOULD HAVE IMAGINED THIS. TO HAVE SCORED FOUR GOALS IS ALSO AN AMAZING FEELING. I IMAGINE ALL THE ARSENAL FANS ENJOYED THAT ONE!

Serge Gnabry scored four second-half goals as Bayern Munich embarrassed Tottenham 7-2 on Tuesday — the biggest-ever margin of defeat suffered by an English team at home in any European competition.

The Bundesliga champions fell behind to an early Son Heung-min goal but then clicked into gear, producing a ruthless display of finishing in the north London rain as Spurs fell apart.

Harry Kane briefly gave the home side hope with a penalty to reduce the deficit to 4-2 but that was merely the prelude to another masterclass in finishing from the five-time European champions. "It was a great evening for

Bayern Munich and for German football," said Bayern boss Niko Kovac. "Playing this way here in England is really unique."

"I have compassion for my colleague (Spurs boss Mauricio Pochettino)," he added, praising the "amazing" Gnabry and Manuel Neuer for his display in the Bayern goal.

Spurs, who reached the Champions League final in June, where they lost to Liverpool, also had a sluggish start to the competition last year, winning a single point from their first three games.

But Pochettino faces a huge task now to lift the team after this humbling at their new ground following an unconvincing start to the season.

The Spurs boss urged his side to stay together despite the traumatic defeat, saying the timing of Bayern's second goal just before half-time was a hard blow.

"The most important thing is to stay calm, no rushed analysis, no rushed judgement, no rushed assessment," he said, praising the clinical finishing of Bayern, who had 11 shots on target.

"You need to show your quality like a man first," he added. "To face it like a professional. This type of situation you have to show your quality, how you are strong."

The early exchanges gave no clue about the carnage to come.

Tottenham's deserved early lead was wiped out 194 seconds later by Joshua

FIGURATIVELY

7 Bayern Munich scored 7 goals in a Champions League away match for the second time, they did so in October 2014 before (7-1-win at AS Roma)

4 Serge Gnabry is the 2nd German to score 4 or more goals in a Champions League match, that has only been achieved by Mario Gomez before, also for Bayern Munich (4 goals versus Basel in March 2012, 7-0-win)

5 Tottenham's 2-7 defeat to Bayern Munich was the biggest ever margin of defeat by an English team at home in any European competition

7 Tottenham Hotspur are the first English side to concede seven goals in any European competition since Tottenham Hotspur lost 0-8 to FC Koln in the UEFA Intertoto Cup in July 1995

5 Harry Kane has scored more Champions League goals versus German teams (5) than he has versus sides from any other nation

13 Robert Lewandowski has scored 13 goals in just 10 appearances in all competitions for Bayern Munich this season, more than any other player in the big-five European leagues

194 There were just 194 seconds between Son Heung-Min's opener for Tottenham Hotspur and Joshua Kimmich equalising for Bayern Munich

18 Raheem Sterling has been directly involved in 18 goals in his last 16 home appearances in the Champions League for Man City (11 goals, seven assists), scoring or assisting at least once in 12 of his last 13 such matches

0 Before Atalanta, the last Italian side to lose each of their first two games in a Champions League group stage were Inter, in 2006-07 — the Nerazzurri progressed that stage

10 Sergio Ramos has scored in a 10th different season in the Champions League, becoming just the second defender to do so in the competition after Gerard Pique (also 10)

3 Real Madrid have conceded 2+ goals in three consecutive home games in all European competitions for the first time in their history

0 Real Madrid have failed to win their opening two games to a Champions League season for the first time ever (D1 L1)

19 Aged 19 years and 325 days, João Félix has become Atlético de Madrid's youngest ever goalscorer in UCL, overtaking Sergio Agüero (20y 106d against PSV in September 2008)

33 Cristiano Ronaldo has scored to the joint-most different teams in Champions League: 33, equalling the record of Raúl.

26 Paris have scored a goal in each of their last 26 games in CL, only Real Madrid (34) and Barcelona (29) have done a longest streak in the history of the competition

AFP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola said Phil Foden's lack of minutes for the English champions is "unfair" as the 19-year-old came off the bench to score in a 2-0 win over Dinamo Zagreb.

Foden has been limited to just one start, in the League Cup against Preston, so far this season as the return of Kevin De Bruyne and signing of Rodrigo has seen the England under-21 international fall further down the pecking order.

But he made the most of barely a few minutes on the field against the Croatian champions after being introduced as a substitute in stoppage time to fire home after fellow sub Raheem Sterling had opened the scoring.

"I know he deserves to play. I want to give him minutes, every time he doesn't play I am completely unfair to him, I'm sorry," said Guardiola.

"But Kevin De Bruyne is there, David Silva, Bernardo Silva, Rodri, (Ilkay) Gundogan. It's what it is.

City close on last 16

"I know the best way to grow up is play minutes and minutes, but he is so young.

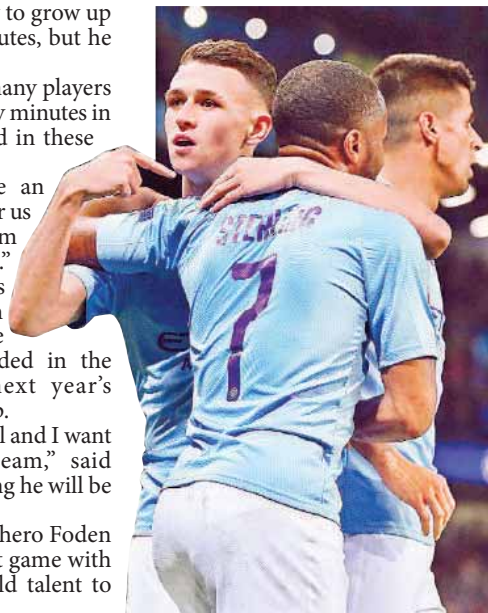
"I don't know how many players of that age played as many minutes in the recent past he played in these last seasons with us.

"He is going to be an incredible future player for us because we count on him and we trust a lot in him."

Sterling even hopes Foden will get enough chances to shine to make a late run to be included in the England squad for next year's European Championship.

"I am buzzing for Phil and I want him in the national team," said Sterling. "If he keeps going he will be there."

However, City's local hero Foden is happy to play a patient game with such an array of midfield talent to



compete with.

"You have to show the manager what you can do each day in training," said Foden. "Every young kid wants to play but you have to keep patient."

City enjoyed 71 percent possession and had 19 attempts on goal, but had to wait until 24 minutes from time to make the breakthrough when Sterling rounded off an excellent team move.

The English champions have maximum points from their opening two games with back-to-back matches against bottom-of-the-group Atalanta to come.

"It was good. We didn't concede one shot on target, with our huge possession we created enough chances to score earlier, but we were patient," added Guardiola.

"We need two more victories to qualify for the last 16 and hopefully we can make against Atalanta almost the definitive step to be there."

"Nobody is going to give us anything," said Guardiola. "We did it ourselves and that's top. That's why I love this team."

Old Lady still strong

AFP ■ TURIN

Cristiano Ronaldo scored his first goal in this season's Champions League, sealing a 3-0 win for Juventus over Bayer Leverkusen in their Group D game in Turin.

Ronaldo blasted in the third goal in the 89th minute to extend his record to 127 strikes in the competition to add to Gonzalo Higuain and Federico Bernardeschi's earlier efforts.

Juventus move top of their section, level on four points with Atletico Madrid, who defeated Lokomotiv Moscow 2-0 in Russia.

The Italian champions had been held 2-2 by the Spaniards at the Wanda Metropolitan in their opener.

"We had a good match against a team who love possession and are not easy to deal with," said Juventus coach Maurizio Sarri.



"They took a lot of energy out of us in the first half. After the break, they slowed down a little and we took control." Leverkusen face an uphill

battle after their shock 2-1 defeat at home against Lokomotiv Moscow and are rooted to the foot of the table.

"It was a clear defeat," said Leverkusen coach Peter Bosz. "We played well in the first half even if we didn't have chances, and then we made the mistake which led to the first goal."

"It's the difference between a team who has experience in the Champions League and one that is beginning its journey at this level."

Juventus next host Lokomotiv and Leverkusen travel to Atletico on October 22.

"It was an important match, after the draw in Madrid we had to win to get closer to the qualification," said Higuain.

"Now we head to Sunday, because another battle awaits us," added the Argentine of next weekend's Serie A clash with leaders Inter Milan.

Icardi off the mark

AFP ■ ISTANBUL

Mauro Icardi scored his first Paris Saint-Germain goal as the French champions beat Galatasaray 1-0 to move four points clear at the top of their group A.

Argentina forward Icardi, who joined PSG on loan from Inter Milan last month, opened his account for the club to maintain their perfect start to their European campaign after downing Real Madrid 3-0 two weeks ago.

The Turkish champions sit third in the standings with a single point from the draw at Club Brugge on September 18 and have not registered a win in four games in all competitions.

PSG were without Neymar, serving the last match of his European suspension for abusing a referee on social media, Edinson



Cavani due to a hip injury, and Kylian Mbappe who started on the bench as he continues to recover from a thigh injury as Icardi led the attack in Istanbul.

"It wasn't the hardest goal to score but it came from excellent build-up play. He's worked a lot," coach Thomas Tuchel said.

Next for PSG is a trip to Club Brugge, while Galatasaray host the Spanish giants on October 22.



MOSCOW: Portuguese teenager Joao Felix scored his first Champions League goal on Tuesday as Atletico Madrid recorded a precious 2-0 win away to Lokomotiv Moscow.

The 19-year-old Felix, Atletico's club-record signing, put the visitors ahead three minutes after half-time in Russia and helped set up Thomas Parthey for the second goal on the hour. Diego Simeone's side sit level on four points at the top of

First of many

Group D with Juventus, who eased to a 3-0 victory at home.

"I'm delighted to score my first Champions League goal. It was a great game, and the important thing was that we came away with the three points," said Felix.

Atletico rallied from two goals down a fortnight ago in a

2-2 draw with Juventus, but they took the lead here on 48 minutes when Felix stabbed in a rebound after his first effort was parried by Guilherme.

Felix, who last season became the youngest player to score a hat-trick in the Europa League while with Benfica, created the second goal with a sear-

ing break from deep.

Atletico cleared a corner and Felix surged into the Lokomotiv half before floating a cross-field ball towards Costa, who unselfishly squared for a sliding Parthey to tap home on 58 minutes.

Jan Oblak then produced two sublime stops as Atletico remained unbeaten in seven trips to Russia, winning for the fourth time in five visits to Moscow.

Extra time winner

AFP ■ MILAN

Israeli forward Manor Solomon scored a dramatic winning goal deep into stoppage time as Shakhtar came from behind to beat Atalanta 2-1.

The sides looked set to share the spoils as the game moved into a fifth minute of added time, but then the

Brazilian Dodo found fellow substitute Solomon in the box and neither Atalanta goalkeeper Pierluigi Gollini nor defender Timothy Castagne could stop him from scoring.

It was cruel for Atalanta, who had been denied by Shakhtar Donetsk goalkeeper Andriy Pyatov on several occasions and remain without a

point in Group C.

Hammered 4-0 by Dinamo Zagreb in their first ever match in the Champions League group stage, the side from Bergamo now face a daunting double-header against Manchester City next.

Shakhtar had been beaten 3-0 at home by Pep Guardiola's side in their opening game but this result gives the Ukrainian champions a massive lift in their bid to reach the last 16.



Debut 2.0

Rohit scores hundred on his maiden game as Test opener

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Rohit Sharma's Test career got a new lease of life as he struck an unbeaten 115 in his first innings as an opener to take India to a commanding 202 for no loss against South Africa before rain washed out the final session of the series-opener, here on Wednesday.

There was an 80 percent chance of rain on the opening day but it only arrived during the tea break with India comfortably placed after 59.1 overs of play.

Mayank Agarwal was on course for a maiden Test hundred, having played extremely well for his 183-ball 84.

Thunderstorm, followed by a heavy spell of rain, ensured no play was possible after the tea break.

Before weather played spoilsport, Rohit stole the show in what could be a career changing knock for him.

While South African bowlers did trouble the Indian batsmen on a few occasions in the first session, they seemed toothless in the second session where Rohit and Agarwal scored at a brisk rate.

Rohit, who got to his fifty before lunch, shifted gears and was particularly harsh on the spinners.

He hammered off-spinner Damie Piedt for successive sixes over deep midwicket to get into the nineties before completing his fourth Test ton with a single off debutant spinner

Senuran Muthusamy.

The entire dressing room, including skipper Virat Kohli, stood up to laud Rohit's feat. His 174-ball unconquered innings contained 12 fours and five sixes.

At the other end, Agarwal was cruising towards his maiden Test ton. He too looked assured at the crease and played his shots.

Early into the afternoon session, he brought up his half century with a spectacular six over extra cover off Keshav Maharaj.

Clouds gathered over the stadium towards the end of the session and thunderstorms forced the umpires to take the tea break eight minutes before scheduled time.

Earlier, Rohit and Agarwal played out 30 overs in the morning session after safely negotiating the South African pacers Kagiso Rabada and Vernon Philander, taking India to 91 for no loss.

India, who had named their playing on the eve of the first Test, opted to bat on a dry surface with skipper Kohli calling his decision a "no brainer."

Expecting the pitch to turn, South Africa picked three spinners in Maharaj, Piedt and Muthusamy, who is more of a batting all-rounder.

All eyes were expectedly on Rohit whose stop-start Test career has taken a new direction with the management accommodating him at the top of the order.

He left the first ball he

faced before driving Rabada past backward point with minimal feet movement for a four.

His second scoring shot was also a boundary as he punched Philander towards backward point. The pitch offered very little to the pacers and spinners in the first two hours of play.

What worked for Rohit was standing outside the crease when Philander was bowling to negate any little swing that was available.

Rabada has the express pace but he did not test the Indian openers as much as Philander.

Rohit and Philander's battle in the first hour was absorbing. Philander, who got the better of Rohit in the warm-up game, challenged Rohit by moving the ball both ways in his opening spell of four overs.

After a few play and misses, Rohit chose to walk down the pitch before South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis asked wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock to stand up to the stumps.

After getting the measure of the surface, Rohit went for his strokes like he does in white-ball cricket.

His first big hit was a typical one as he gently stepped out of the crease to smash Maharaj over long-on. A little later, he played a similar short off Piedt and this time the ball flew well above the long-on fielder.

Rohit completed his 11th Test half-century towards the end of the session.

Opening suits Rohit's game

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Emphasising that opening the batting suits Rohit, Rohit Sharma said he was mentally prepared to make the switch as he scored an unbeaten 115 in his first Test innings as opener and with his assuring knock, India seized the initiative on day one of the series opener against South Africa.

Asked about his mindset in the lead up to the series, India's limited overs vice-captain said he kept things simple in his head.

"The talk (of him opening in Tests) was going on for a long time. In the West Indies (in August), they told me clearly it is going to happen now. I was prepared for the past two years. At some stage, I was aware that I might have to open so I was ready," said Rohit after scoring his fourth Test ton.

He was part of the squad for West Indies series but could not final place in the middle order.

"Of course, opening the batting is a different ball game in red ball cricket. Mentally you have to train your mind more than anything else. At the same time, you do need to look into some technical aspects of batting but more than that you have to challenge yourself mentally to play the new ball and take the game forward. "Those are the things I kept in mind when I went out to bat. There was no confusion about how I wanted to approach the innings."

In ODIs too, Rohit used to bat in the middle order but he became a white-ball great only with his stupendous success at the top of the order.

"I think it (opening) just suits my game, just wear the pads and bat. It was a waiting game, when I used to bat at five or six. I won't say it didn't suit my batting. Your mind is fresh, we know we have to play the new ball. You know the bowlers who will bowl the new ball, these will be the fielders, so the game plan is easier for you.

"At number six, the ball is reversing, field placement is different and you need to keep all those things in mind. That game of wearing the pads and going in to bat suits me more," said the maker of more than 10,000 runs in limited overs cricket.

Young boxers eye glory at Worlds



PTI ■ ULAN UDE

Six-time champion M.C. Mary Kom's seemingly endless reservoir of experience makes her a strong medal contender yet again but the spotlight will also be on some youngsters when India takes guard at the World Women's Boxing Championship starting here today.

Mary Kom was on Wednesday seeded third and handed a bye into the pre-quarterfinals. She will begin her campaign on October 8 against a yet to be decided opponent.

In all, five Indians got first-round byes into different stages depending on the size of the draw. No Indian will be in action on the opening day of the mega-event.

The 36-year-old Manipuri has been an ambassador of the sport not just in India but also the world over. However, there is a minor blemish in her magnificent record — the lack of a world title in the 51kg category.

She would be aiming to set it right in this Russian city. This is not to say she hasn't done well in the hard-fought category — Mary Kom has the Olympic Bronze medal and the Asian Games Gold to her credit in the division.

Former champion and Mary Kom's contemporary L Sarita Devi (60kg) is another one to watch out for after she defeated last edition's Bronze-winner and a much younger Simranjit Kaur in the trials. Sarita, seeded fourth, has also got a bye but into the round of 32.

Outside the ring, the eight-time Asian medalist is in the running to become a member of the International Boxing Association's (AIBA) first ever athletes commission, the voting

for which will take place during the mega-event here. She is expected to make the panel as there hasn't been any other nomination from the Asian block.

Previous editions Bronze-medallist Lovlina Borgohain has moved up a division to 69kg this time. She is seeded third and given a bye into the pre-quarterfinals.

India Open Gold-medallists Neeraj (57kg) and Jamuna Boro (54kg) are among the five boxers, who will be making their debuts at the big event and can be expected to create a flutter. Neeraj, a former national champion, has got a bye into the round of 32.

In the 75kg category, former Asian champion Saweety Boora will be keenly watched. She was a Silver-medallist in the 2014 edition of the marquee tournament.

"This squad is a nice mix. Last time we had four medals, let's see how the debutants respond to the challenge this time. Fingers crossed," national coach Mohammed Ali Qamar said.

"Before coming here, we had a fruitful training stint in Italy where we got to spar with the Chinese, which is not something that happens quite often. They hardly travel elsewhere and they are the biggest force in women's boxing," he added.

In the 48kg category, which Mary Kom made her own, Strandja Cup Silver-medallist Manju Rani will be fighting it out this time. A debutant at the world championship, Rani got a bye into the pre-quarterfinals.

"She has shown a lot of promise and hopefully, it would translate into a medal here," Qamar said.

AFP ■ KARACHI

Recharged opener Danushka Gunathilaka scored a career best century to lift Sri Lanka to a challenging 297-9 against Pakistan in the third and final day-night international against Pakistan in Karachi on Wednesday.

The 28-year-old left-hander knocked a 134-ball 133 with 16 boundaries and a six for his second hundred which lifted Sri Lanka after they won the toss and batted on a flat National stadium pitch.

Gunathilaka, suspended twice for breaches of disciplines in the last two years, held the innings together with stands of 88 with skipper Lahiru Thirimanne (36) for the second, 50 for the third with Angelo Perera (13) and 74 with debutant Minod Bhanuka (36) for the fourth in a brilliant display of bat-

Gunathilaka takes SL to 297-9



ting. He was finally dismissed in the 45th over, bowled by paceman Mohammad Amir who was the best Pakistani bowler with 3-50.

It was Amir who gave Pakistan an early breakthrough when he had Avishka

Fernando caught behind for four by Sarfaraz Ahmed, leading Pakistan for the 50th time in an ODI.

Gunathilaka defied Pakistan's bowling with guts and determination, improving his previous ODI best of

Shehzad, Umar for T20s

AFP ■ KARACHI

Pakistan Wednesday recalled trouble-making opener Ahmed Shehzad and middle-order batsman Umar Akmal for the three-match Twenty20 series against Sri Lanka starting this weekend.

It will be the first time the 27-year-old Shehzad will represent Pakistan since a four-month ban for a failed dope test last year. Shehzad played the last of his 57 Twenty20 internationals in Scotland in June last year.

Umar, 29, played the

last of 82 Twenty20 internationals in 2016 against the West Indies.

The three Twenty20 internationals will all be played in Lahore on October 5, 7 and 9.

Chief selector Misbah-ul-Haq announced the changes to the squad. "From the ODI side against Sri Lanka there are three changes. Shehzad, Umar and Faheem Ashraf have replaced Abid Ali, Mohammad Rizwan and Imam-ul-Haq," said Misbah.

Sarfaraz Ahmed will lead the Twenty20 squad.

116 he made against Zimbabwe at Hambantota in 2017.

Thirimanne hit four boundaries off 54 balls while Bhanuka had two sixes in his 39-ball knock.

Allrounder Dasun Shanaka hit a quick 24-ball 43 with five boundaries and two sixes as Sri Lanka added 50 in the last five overs.

Pakistan, who leads the three-match series 1-0 on winning the second match by 67 runs, brought Abid Ali and Mohammad Nawaz for Imam-ul-Haq and Imad Wasim.

For Sri Lanka, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Isuru Udana and Oshada Fernando made way for Bhanuka, Lakshan Sandakan and Perera.

The first match was rained off, also in Karachi, on Friday.

PTI ■ MARLOW

The Indian women's hockey team tasted its first defeat on England tour when it went down 1-3 against Great Britain in the fourth match here on Wednesday.

Great Britain took an early lead through Hannah Martin (5th minute) but India's Neha Goyal (18th) scored the equaliser.

However, a goal before half-time from Charlotte Watson (29th), and one in the last quarter through Giselle Ansley (50th) meant that Great Britain secured their first win of the tour, snapping India's unbeaten run.

World No 9 India had notched up a 2-1 win in the first match, before drawing the next two games 1-1 and

Indian Eves suffer 1-3 defeat

0-0 respectively.

The hosts dominated possession in the early stages and won their first penalty corner in just the 3rd minute, but India's goalkeeper Rajani Etimaru produced a fine save to deny the hosts early on.

However, the visitors could not deny the hosts on the second occasion as they took the lead through a field goal by Hannah in the 5th minute.

India gradually came into the game, and had a few chances of their own in the latter stages and with the momentum on their side, the Indian team combined well at the start of the



second quarter, and pressed for the equaliser, which eventually came in the 18th minute as Neha produced a slick finish to make it 1-1, and put the pressure back on the host nation.

It was in the 29th minute at the stroke of half-time that Great Britain created a great chance through combination play by their forwards, and managed to take a 2-1 lead into half-time as Charlotte Watson scored their second.

Neither team could create any real opportunity in the third period, and were battling it out in midfield. The Indian team tried to attack their opponents more in the last quarter, but it was Giselle Ansley, who made it 3-1 in the hosts' favour via strike from penalty corner.

Murray reaches Beijing quarters

AFP ■ BEIJING

Exhausted Andy Murray battled into a singles quarter-final for the first time in a year on Wednesday — and then immediately grabbed a snooze.

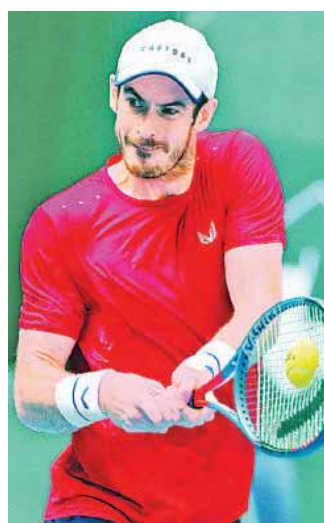
The former world number one outlasted fellow Briton Cameron Norrie 7-6 (8/6), 6-7 (4/7), 6-1 over nearly three gruelling hours in hot and hazy Beijing.

The 32-year-old, now ranked a lowly 503, will play top seed Dominic Thiem in the last eight of the China Open on Friday.

On the mend after a career-saving hip operation in January, Murray looked all in afterwards, and walked gingerly in and out of the post-match press conference.

Blowing out his cheeks several times, the three-time Grand Slam champion said he had slept in the 90 minutes between his victory and talking to reporters.

"I'm tired, I just had a sleep before coming. I mean, I'm real-



ly tired," he said.

The hard-fought triumph over 69th-ranked Norrie means he reaches the last eight in singles at the ATP Tour for the first time since Shenzhen in September last year.

Also into the quarter-finals was Russian fourth seed Karen Khachanov, a 7-6 (7/0), 7-6

(7/5) winner over France's Jeremy Chardy. He faces the Italian Fabio Fognini.

BARTY ADVANCES

In the women's draw, world number one Ashleigh Barty will face Czech seventh seed Petra Kvitova in the quarter-finals.

The top-ranked Australian, 23, beat home hope Zheng Saisai 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-2, but was unhappy to have been forced to three sets.

"I think I was pretty loose, I played a pretty stupid (second) set," said Barty.

"I made far too many errors, let her back in the match well and truly.

"I think too many times I gave away cheap service games... when I did have my opportunity, I didn't take it.

"A bit of a frustrating one." Teenage US Open champion Bianca Andreescu reached the last 16 with a 6-3, 7-6 (7/5) victory over Belgium's unseeded Elise Mertens.

Andreescu meets Jennifer Brady of the United States.

Djoker continues winning run



AFP ■ TOKYO

Novak Djokovic stepped up a gear at the Japan Open on Wednesday, fending off a tough challenge from Japanese wild card Go Soeda 6-3, 7-5 to advance to the quarterfinals.

The world number one said he had no problems with the injured shoulder which forced him out of the US Open as he looked to face French fifth-seed Lucas Pouille at the Ariake Colosseum.

Djokovic was cruising to a victory until late in the second set when the 35-year-old Japanese player put up a tenacious fight as the Serb began missing many of his first serves, reducing his 5-3 lead to 5-5.

But Djokovic snapped back in form and took the final two games without

giving a single point away, ending the match in just over 90 minutes.

"Obviously, I was pleased to get that done in two (sets)," Djokovic said. "We must give credit to Go Soeda, who played a really good match, fought hard, made me work for my win today.

"For my side, I am really pleased. Probably I played even on a higher level than the first round. So the game is going in the right direction for sure," he said.

"I played now three days in a row," he said. "Everything is fine."

Elsewhere, third-seed David Goffin came from behind in a dramatic first-round victory against Pablo Carreno Busta 1-6, 7-6(8), 6-0.

Djokovic's next opponent Pouille defeated Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka 6-1, 6-2.

American Reilly Opelka squeezed past Gilles Simon 7-6(4), 7-6(2).

Australian qualifier John Millman defeated Adrian Mannarino of France 4-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Japanese qualifier Yasutaka Uchiyama beat Radu Albot 6-7(2), 6-3, 6-4.

Lloyd Harris of South Africa edged past Australian eighth-seed Alex de Minaur 6-3, 6-7(6), 7-6(8).