

Guest column

BY TS Sreenivasa Raghavan



SOCIAL MEDIA LIKES A BAD DREAM

DEALING WITH THE WHATSAPP COBRAS!

These days whenever someone insists that I become a member of his WhatsApp group I recoil in terror as if it's an offer to infect me with the dreaded smallpox virus!

any food that doesn't bite back. Wiping his hands with a towel, he would settle down salivating at the thought of the delicacies his wife would've prepared for his lunch.

for the health of the country or its immature population. That apart, the period between noon and evening is generally dry for any WhatsApp group.

says: "Donno how authentic it is. If yes, then it's a matter of concern." Another member gets irked by the video and the comment, you know what his ideology is, and retorts: "If you're so concerned why don't you buy a few of them?"

Seminar held on strengthening economy

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

Following the instructions of the PM Narendra Modi, banks in the district are gearing up to strengthen the nation's economy.

Training on qualitative research starts at HNB university

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

A week long training programme on the 'Dimensions of Qualitative Research' started at Academic Activity Centre, Chauras Campus, HNB Garhwal University, Srinagar on Wednesday.



Nautiyal said plagiarism should be avoided while writing and publishing research papers. "We must maintain the quality of research work."

without connecting it to social concerns," she said. Former Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences in the university, J P Pachauri stated that the knowledge ridden

The Director, the Faculty Development Centre, Indoo Pandey Khanduri highlighted the contents of short term training programme.

ation, report writing and issues related to research ethics. She said that objective of the training program is to enhance capacity and capability of the faculty members.

Workshop on entrepreneurship development held

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The secretary to Governor, R K Sudhanshu has said that universities provide a suitable environment for development of innovation and creativity.

youths. Sudhanshu also elaborated these schemes in detail. The director of MSME, Vijay Kumar said that the department helps youth in setting up small enterprises.

UCO BANK POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property) Where as The Authorized Officer of the UCO BANK under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No.54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand Notice dated: 31-05-2019 calling upon the Legal Heirs of borrower Late Shri Dev Raj Bhatia.

SCPCR holds hearing session

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR) chairperson Usha Negi addressed several issues during a hearing held on Wednesday.

also held in November 2018. However, no further directions were received by the department from state administration on this matter.

Re-encroachment still issue for MCD, consistent checks required

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Municipal Corporation Dehradun (MCD) continued the anti-encroachment drive on Wednesday with the help of local police.

Joshi said that in his knowledge re-encroachment has reduced considerably. He also said that police stations concerned especially when it comes to market areas will be responsible for keeping an eye on any such activity.

Sati Ghat parking to come under Haridwar Municipality

PNS ■ HARIDWAR

After protracted dithering, the Municipal Corporation of Haridwar (MCH) has finally woken up to resolve the disputed matter of Sati Ghat parking area.

everyday for doing last rites of their deceased ones and the parking generates lots of revenue which is being lost by the corporation on account of the site being encroached upon by an outfit.

Three killed in chopper crash

Incident took place as the chopper dropping relief supplies crashed on a mountain

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Three persons have died after the helicopter they were flying in after dropping relief supplies in disaster affected Moldi area of Uttarkashi, crashed on a mountain on Wednesday afternoon. Expressing grief at the mishap, chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat announced Rs 15 lakh for the dependents of each of the three killed in the crash.

According to official sources, a helicopter of Heritage Aviation engaged in rescue and relief in the disaster affected Arakot area of Uttarkashi district was on its way back after dropping relief supplies at Moldi.

The chopper reportedly hit a mountain while trying to avoid overhead wires in the area. Apart from electricity supply lines these included trolley wires installed by locals to ferry apples to the road-head from surrounding orchards.

The mishap resulted in the death of the pilot Ranjit Lal, co-pilot Shailesh- both residents of Delhi and Rajpal Rana a resident of Kharsali. Soon after the incident the chief minister Trivendra Singh Rawat held a meeting with officials at State Emergency Operation Centre (SEOC) to review the situation. Silence was observed for a minute as a tribute to those killed in the mishap. After expressing grief over the incident and taking stock of the sequence of events preceding the accident and actions following the same from the officials present, the chief minister announced relief of Rs 15 lakh to next of kin of the persons who died in the incident. Meanwhile, relief efforts continued in the disaster affected area where 15 villages with a total population of 8,107 have been affected. Fifteen persons have died, three are missing and 10 are injured in the area due to the disaster caused by heavy rains on Sunday. On Wednesday, five medical teams had provided treatment to 142 persons by 4 PM with 300 people having been treated so far. A team of veterinarians from Dehradun district had earlier reached the affected area on Tuesday. A total of 74 domesticated animals have died and



People view wreckage of the helicopter after it crashed in Uttarkashi

Pioneer photo

three are injured in the area. Of the 10 blocked roads in the affected area, the Public Works Department has reopened five roads for traffic. While the national highway to Arakot was been opened to traffic, 35

JCBs have been deployed to reopen the other blocked roads in the district. Out of the 52 villages where electricity supply was disrupted, the power supply to 37 villages has been restored. Meanwhile, in Dehradun, the chief minister visited the Government Doon Medical College Hospital to check on the condition of the injured people from disaster affected area undergoing treatment here.

Anti-Drug Abuse campaign to be conducted in 3 phases in Dehradun

ANANYA GAIROLA ■ DEHRADUN

In order to put a stop on the increasing drug abuse cases in the district, Dehradun Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Arun Mohan Joshi said that a full fledged campaign will be conducted in three phases against drug abuse. Initially police will be targeting suppliers and retailers who are selling drugs to people especially students in Dehradun. Later on, the police will issue an advisory to educational institutions in the second phase and in the third stage a detailed awareness campaign will be conducted.

It is pertinent to mention here that in the past ten days district police have seized 1.41 kilogrammes of hashish, 1.245 kilogrammes of smack, 18,910 kilogrammes of Ganja and 95 injectable drugs under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

In the excise cases, 223 crates and 11 bottles of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL), 224 crates and eight bottles of country liquor, 117 litre of locally brewed liquor and 22



crates of beer were seized. Regarding this SSP Joshi said, "We consistently seize such items but now we are focusing on retailers and dealers. The idea is to completely stop the import of such drugs in the district. The major focus will be on narcotics like hashish, smack and other hard drugs which not only affects a person psychologically but also biologically. Then in the second category we have placed ganja which can be given up by a user using will power."

He further said, "We are also working on a detailed advisory for educational institutions in which we will be focusing on three major factors that is traffic, drugs and crime. In all three categories we will be mentioning our expecta-

tions and their accountability. In the third phase we will be conducting a widespread awareness campaign."

According to official sources, Premnagar, Patelnagar, Clement Town and Rajpur areas are seeing rise in drug abuse as these areas have the maximum number of educational institutions.

Station House Officer (SHO) of Premnagar police station NS Gehlawat said, "There are nearly 105 hostels in this area, it is next to impossible to keep track of the activities happening in about two thousand rooms. However, we are patrolling consistently in places which are secluded and have less population. Also, if we find students using drugs we counsel them and their parents."



A weaver bird approaches its nest hanging from a tree in a suburban area of Dehradun

Prashant Badoni | Pioneer

Dhasmana's trust to help disaster victims

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The 'Devbhoomi Manav Sansadhan trust' has come forward for providing food to the relatives attending the victims of the Uttarkashi disaster undergoing treatment at the Government Doon Medical College (GDMC) hospital. On Wednesday the Chairman of the trust and Vice President of the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC),

Surya Kant Dhasmana met the victims of the disaster in the hospital and assured every possible help. He said that his trust would take over the responsibility of providing food three times a day to the attendants of the disaster victims. "Our trust has made advance payment to the Indira Amma Canteen situated in the hospital premises and asked it to serve food to the attendants of the disaster victims till they are in the

hospital," he said. The Principal of the GDMC Dr Ashutosh Sayana and the Medical Superintendent (MS) of the hospital Dr K K Tamta accompanied Dhasmana during his visit.

Eleven persons who were injured in the disaster triggered by cloud burst in the Arakot area of Uttarkashi district are currently admitted in the GDMC hospital. The deputy Medical Superintendent of the

GDMC hospital, Dr N S Khatri said that all the injured are out of danger now and are responding to the treatment. He said that three female and eight males including a 12 year old boy are undergoing treatment in the hospital. On Tuesday some of the attendants of the injured admitted in the GDMC hospital had complained that they are finding it difficult to find food in the hospital.

Kaushik meets Union Ministers for Kumbh Mela requirements



PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The State's Urban Development Minister Madan Kaushik met the Union Transport and Highways minister Nitin Gadkari and Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan and Union minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat in the national Capital on Wednesday. Kaushik discussed various issues related to the State's requirements for the Kumbh Mela to be held at Haridwar in 2021.

Meeting Gadkari, Kaushik said that CM Trivendra Singh Rawat has accorded top priority to swift completion of Muzaffarnagar-Haridwar national highway. To expedite this work, an agreement was arrived upon in the meeting to decrease the tender process period from 18 months to one year. Work on the Haridwar ring road is to be undertaken in three phases. To expedite work in view of the Kumbh

Mela, it was decided that the second phase work will be started first and that a Ganga bridge will be constructed on this route. Gadkari directed that the state's additional chief secretary Om Prakash should hold a meeting with NHAI officials in Dehradun on August 27 regarding this. Kaushik informed that the Kumbh Mela will be held from January to April 2021 in Haridwar. During the 2010 Kumbh Mela about eight crore people from across India and abroad had visited Haridwar. More than 16 crore are expected to arrive during the 2021 Kumbh Mela, he said. Most of the people arriving use NH 58, NH 73 and NH 74. Currently, four-laning, widening, construction of flyovers and other works are being undertaken on these national highways.

Kaushik requested that the tender process be started immediately for construction of 14 bridges on the 80 kilometre stretch of NH 58

between Muzaffarnagar and Haridwar being widened. The various works on NH 58 and NH 74 should be executed on priority basis before the Kumbh Mela 2021, he said. Kaushik also requested that the Puhana-Imlikheda-Bahadrad road be made a national highway to enable its widening as it is an important route to those travelling to Haridwar. Those coming from Haryana, Punjab and Saharanpur can be made to directly enter Haridwar through this route which will also decrease the crowd on NH 58. He also requested that the Roshanabad-Biharigarh road be made a national highway so that it can be widened and in case of heavy crowding in Haridwar, traffic can be diverted to this road towards Saharanpur and Dehradun. Gadkari assured that action would be taken soon after considering these issues. Union minister of State, general (ret'd) VK Singh, State additional chief secretary Om Prakash

and other officials were also present in this meeting.

Meeting Pradhan, Kaushik discussed aspects of a clean and green Kumbh. The Union minister directed officials to tour Haridwar and hold a meeting towards facilitating a pollution-free, fire-free and waste-free Kumbh Mela. Kaushik table proposal related to waste disposal and gas supply in Haridwar. He also discussed the laying of PNG and CNG lines from Roorkee to Mussoorie. He suggested proposal for a PPP mode project to ensure solid waste management and power supply in the Kumbh Mela area. During the Kumbh Mela, biogas and biodiesel and ethanol for biogas energy which will also aid fire safety.

Kaushik also met the Union Jal Shakti minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. He requested completion of Ghat construction under Namami Gange and modernisation of the crematorium in Haridwar before the Kumbh Mela.

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Sensex tumbles 268 pts; Tata Motors tanks 9 pc

AGENCIES ■ MUMBAI/HONG KONG

Benchmark equity index Sensex slumped 268 points on Wednesday, dragged by losses in ITC, HDFC, L&T and ICICI Bank as investors remained wary of an economic slowdown.

After plunging 305 points, the 30-share Sensex settled 267.64 points, or 0.72 per cent, lower at 37,060.37. It hit an intra-day high of 37,406.55 and a low of 37,022.52.

The broader NSE Nifty too ended 98.30 points, or 0.89 per cent, down at 10,918.70. During the day, it swung between a high of 11,034.20 and a low of 10,906.65.

Tata Motors was the biggest laggard in the Sensex pack, plummeting 9.29 per cent, followed by Yes Bank at 8.21 per cent. Other losers included Tata Steel, ONGC, IndusInd Bank, SBI, L&T, ITC, Vedanta, HCL Tech, ICICI Bank and M&M, which declined up to 4.26 per cent.

Hero MotoCorp, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, HUL, Bajaj Auto, Maruti, NTPC and HDFC Bank bucked the weak market trend, rising up to 1.78 per cent.

Meanwhile, the Indian rupee appreciated 22 paise to

71.49 against the US dollar intra-day.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, spurted 1.28 per cent to USD 60.80 per barrel.

ASIAN MARKETS DROP AS TRADERS AWAIT POWELL SPEECH

Equities stuttered in Asia on Wednesday as investors took a step back after recent gains, with focus now turning to a key speech by Federal Reserve boss Jerome Powell at the end of the week.

Rising hopes for China-US trade talks have provided a much-needed lift to markets over the past two days but with few fresh catalysts, dealers are keeping their powder dry ahead of Friday's address.

After positive signals from Donald Trump and some of his top advisers on Monday over progress in the talks with Beijing, and an olive branch with the delay of a ban on Huawei purchases, there have been few developments for traders to buy on.

"Our trade-war headline-inspired relief rally appears to have run its course as I suspect there is still a lot of nervousness among US investors as the global economic realities are just too hard to ignore," said

Stephen Innes at Valour Markets.

Hong Kong added 0.2 per cent, Shanghai was barely moved and Tokyo ended down 0.3 per cent. Sydney fell almost one per cent, Singapore shed 0.3 per cent and Wellington was 0.9 per cent lower. Taipei finished flat and Seoul added 0.2 per cent.

In early trade, London rose 0.5 per cent, Paris added 0.8 per cent and Frankfurt was up 0.5 per cent.

The Fed releases minutes of its July meeting later on Wednesday which will provide an insight into its deliberations when cutting interest rates for the first time since the financial crisis.

But Powell's talk at the central bankers' gathering in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, is the key event and will be closely pored over for clues about the bank's plans for next month, with experts unable to agree on whether or not he will announce further cuts.

There has been increased speculation that central banks and governments will step in with stimulus support to head off a global downturn, but analysts warn they could be disappointed by what Powell has to say regarding Fed action.

Gold hits new high of ₹38,820; silver jumps ₹1,140

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices on Wednesday appreciated ₹50 to hit a new high of ₹38,820 per 10 gram at the bullion market here on account of consistent buying support from jewellers, according to the All-India Sarafa Association. Silver also soared by ₹1,140 to ₹45,040 per kg on fresh offtake by industrial units and coin makers.

Traders attributed the gain in gold to increase in the domestic spot market demand. However, a weak trend in the international market restricted the gains, they said. Besides, the decline in equity markets also aided the rally in the precious metal as investors moved towards safe-haven assets such as gold, they added.

Gold prices traded weak with international spot gold prices but continue to hover around USD 1,500 an ounce.

In the national capital, gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity rose ₹50 each to ₹38,820 and ₹38,650 per 10 gram, respectively. Sovereign gold advanced by ₹200 to ₹28,800 per eight grams. Silver surged ₹1,140 to ₹45,040 per kg, while weekly-based delivery gained ₹210 to ₹43,632 per kg. Silver coins were in good demand and traded higher by ₹2,000 to ₹91,000 for buying and ₹92,000 for selling of 100 coins.

India's GDP growth set to slow further in Apr-Jun qtr to 5.7 pc: Nomura

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's economic growth is set to slow further in the April-June quarter of this year to 5.7 per cent amid contraction in consumption, weak investments and an under-performing service sector, says a Nomura report.

According to the global financial services major, even though growth is set to slow further in Q2 (April-June) the economy is expected to see some recovery in the July-September quarter.

"High-frequency indicators continue to show familiar pain points — a deep contraction in consumption, weak investment, a slowing external sector and an under-performing services sector," Nomura said in a research note.

The report added that some indicators are showing early signs of bottoming out. Data so far for July show that 53 per cent of indicators have improved compared with 31 per cent in June, the report noted.

Nomura's Composite Leading Index (CLI) for Q3 (July-September) has ticked marginally higher to 99.9 from 99.8 in Q2, led by higher industrial production growth, an improvement in visitor arrivals growth, equity markets and lower policy rates.

"While the concurrent state of the economy remains quite concerning, nascent signs of green shoots and positive performance of leading indicators provide some signs that a recovery may be slowly materialising," the Nomura report said. India's economic growth

slowed to 6.8 per cent in 2018-19 — the slowest pace since 2014-15. There are ominous signs showing that slowdown may be deep. Consumer confidence is waning, foreign direct investment has plateaued and international trade and currency war is further aggravating the problem.

To take stock of the situation, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman held several meetings with officials and industry leaders who have asked for stimulus measure to boost consumer demand and private investments.

Though there are increasing signs of the government taking stock of the slowdown, and possibly announcing some short-term measures to buoy business confidence, Nomura assesses limited fiscal space

for any substantive stimulus. "We currently expect GDP growth in Q2 to slow to 5.7 per cent YoY from 5.8 per cent in Q1, before improving to 6.4 per cent YoY in Q3 and 6.7 per cent in Q4," it said, adding that it was closely watching for signs of sustainability of the growth turnaround.

The Central Statistics Office will come out with the GDP figures for the first quarter (April-June) on August 30.

Meanwhile, the automobile sector is facing its worst crisis in two decades and reports suggest thousands of job losses in the auto and ancillary industry.

In the real estate sector, the number of unsold homes has increased, while fast-moving consumer goods companies have reported a decline in volume growth in the first quarter.

Nippon Life Insurance raises stake in RNAM to 54 pc

New Delhi (PTI): With the closure of open offer, Nippon Life Insurance stake in Reliance Nippon Life Asset Management (RNAM) has risen to 54 per cent. The open offer was part of the stake sale process. Nippon Life floated open offer to acquire nearly 22.49 per cent stake in RNAM for ₹3,179 crore under a deal with Reliance Capital which is exiting the mutual funds business. The mandatory open offer tendering period was from July 23 to August 5, sources said, adding that approximately 11 per cent shares were tendered in the open offer. Nippon Life paid ₹230 per share in the open offer.

P&G Q4 net up 36.45 pc

New Delhi (PTI): Procter & Gamble Hygiene and Health Care (P&G) on Wednesday reported a 36.45 per cent rise in net profit at ₹60.79 crore for the June quarter. The company had posted a net profit of ₹44.55 crore in the year-ago quarter. Total income in the quarter under review stood at ₹646.98 crore, up 21.73 per cent from ₹531.48 crore in the same quarter last year, P&G said in a regulatory filing. "In a challenging market environment, we delivered strong double-digit growth for the year and the fourth quarter... We will continue to focus on delivering balanced and sustained growth in a challenging and competitive macroeconomic environment," Procter & Gamble Hygiene and Health Care MD Madhusudan Gopalan said.

NIFTY 50

Table with columns: SCRIP, OPEN, HIGH, LOW, LTP, CHANGE. Lists various stocks and their price movements.

NIFTY NEXT 50

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BSE 500

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Trend Slazer

'Every child should have the right start'
Actress **SONAM KAPOOR** has joined the Bollywood bandwagon spreading awareness on children's rights, as part of #WhyTheGap campaign promoted by Save The Children India.
The actress shared a photo of her school days and tweeted, "My school days were the happiest. I believe that education is the path to independence and freedom. We should all be asking #WhyTheGap and working towards #TheRightStart for every child."
She believes that every child should have the right start because true independence can be achieved through education.



'I know that all my films have not made wonders at the box office, but that has not stopped me from experimenting. Even if they don't work, I am glad about the roles I am offered. They are strong and well edged-out. As an actor, I am always looking for something different which is a new challenge and a great learning.'
—Shraddha Kapoor



Ordering food online or getting heavy discounts on meals during a dinner at some outlet has changed the definition of how we look at eating out today. And certainly, Zomato and the likes of it have a huge role to play here. However, even though this might have made ordering and deliveries easier and even increased the popularity of the outlets associated with such platforms, it never gave a clear picture of who actually raked in the profits and who stood at the other end.

Well, picture this. A person called X has started his own venture, conceptualising a tiny, cloud kitchen tucked in the corner of the city, which serves the food only through deliveries via various food apps online. He listed his outlet on Zomato and Swiggy. However, a few months later, the advent of a set of new rules by Zomato, which restricted the food preparation time for restaurants to 15 minutes, disappointed X. He and his team prepare the dishes from the scratch and cannot finish working on them in such a short span. Zomato, to keep up the delivery game, also instructed the restaurants that fines would be levied on them if they delay the acceptance of orders or miss the deadlines. This might have benefited the food delivery service app in increasing its popularity but X certainly believes that such apps cannot dictate what and how he should sell to his customers. Another factor that hurts him and many like him in the industry is the concept of deep-discounting by food aggregators that has made many restaurants realise that they are losing more than they're gaining. And it has started to hurt the margins.

Launching a logging out campaign against the dine-in schemes, around 1,200 restaurants in major cities have delisted themselves from food aggregator apps like Zomato Gold, Dineout, Magicpin, NearBuy, etc. The campaign is led by the National Restaurants Association of India (NRAI). President Rahul Singh recently said, "It's decided that all aggregators will rejig their features, which will allow the restaurant-customer ecosystem to detox from the addition of deep discounts that has crippled the industry." As per the data, Zomato has said that it would consider redesigning its Gold membership, which allows users to avail one or two dishes or drinks free at the associated restaurants. It will also put on hold its Zomato Infinity offer, which enables the 'Eat As Much As You Can' offer. Over the past six days, Zomato has lost one per cent of its restaurant partner base of its membership-based dining-out scheme service, Gold. Zomato founder and chief-executive Deepinder Goyal had tweeted against the campaign, urging restaurant owners to stop it and rather plan out sustainable options together. The tweet also added that the aggregator will make modifications to Zomato Gold, "which will result in a win-win situation for restaurants and consumers."

The online food delivery and dine-in aggregators, including Zomato, have now agreed to tone down and rationalise their offers and heavy discounts. Ankit

DISCOUNTS NOT A PRIVILEGE

As the #Logout campaign is making waves in the food industry, here is a take of restaurateurs, who believe that units are not in the best of shape and as a result, food aggregators are scavenging from them. The latter, too, are now meeting them half way. By CHAHAK MITTAL



Mehrotra, co-founder and CEO, Dineout, tells us that the follow-up decision had been taken after they had an "insightful" meeting with the NRAI and restaurant owners regarding the campaign. He says that NRAI has acknowledged their "restaurant-first approach," and points out that over the past eight years, "we have always believed in sustainable discounting. Each of our 18,000 restaurant partners across 17 cities are free to decide their own promotions depending upon the day of the week and the time of the day and we do not believe in enforcing a common discounting strategy."

He draws comparisons and says that Gourmet Passport acts as a discovery programme for their curated list of 1,700 restaurants, "which restricts the unlimited 1+1 offer to three free dishes every restaurant per year, whereas, other platforms offer 1+1 every day of the year." He says that however, they are currently in constant discussion with restaurant-owners to create a "win-win" situation for all.

Zorawar Kalra, founder and managing director at Massive Restaurants, says, "In an industry with already razor-thin margins, the deep discounting being offered by some of the aggregators creates huge pressure on the industry." He points out how the adoption rates were initially high to get on to this aggregate

of platforms due to competitive pressures. "The picture that was initially shown was that of an increasing size of the industry. However, what started out as something that would increase footfalls to the restaurants and in general, increase revenues, enhance the guest experience, has turned into massive discounts that render unprofitable sales. In many cases, it ends up costing the restaurant to service these offers. The restaurant lives and breathes due to its patrons and will go to the ends of the earth for them. We believe in a sustainable ecosystem whereby aggregators help increase the size of the industry in a sustainable manner by focussing on quality rather than discounting," he says and suggests that only then can restaurants and aggregator platforms jointly thrive.

Savar Malhotra, managing partner of The Embassy Restaurant, Connaught Place, believes that it is a great initiative taken by NRAI and they are supporting the campaign because "we feel aggregators are misusing their power and dictating business terms to us."

Certainly, aggregators have built their products without taking into account any inputs from the restaurants. "They need to understand that the restaurant is the star. They are using our products to sell discounting addiction to the customer which is dangerous. Addiction of any

kind is poor and especially, if you give discounts, it only has a negative effect on the industry in the long run," says Kalra and goes on to add that a typical margin of the restaurant is 15 to 18 per cent and some of these discounts amount to more than 25 to 30 per cent. Says he, "And sometimes it is even 50 per cent, which means the restaurant is losing money every time they serve a customer, which comes through one of these platforms."

Pointing towards the GST reforms, where the input tax credit was removed from the restaurant industry, he says, it had even bigger "delusionary and deflationary pressure" on the industry and as a result, restaurants are finding it difficult to stay afloat. "One also needs to understand that the industry is the second largest employee of human capital in the country and contributes to almost two per cent of country's GDP. A few years ago before these aggregator platforms came on, their growth graph was good. The industry was growing at 21 per cent annually, which means every four years, it was doubling and margins were good," he says. It was the time when customers used to be happy when they were given a "complementary dessert or a cocktail."

However, today, the difference has come. Even if the customers liked the place but didn't get a sop, they would walk out. "And restaurants simply cannot

afford this. If the margin is 15 per cent, how can I pay a 25 per cent discount? It would mean I am losing out 10 per cent on every dish that I serve," adds Kalra.

Talking about how they can redesign their schemes, Malhotra says, "Restaurants don't have heavy margins to afford the 'buy one get one free' concept. Also, we are here to make money and not to work for aggregators. Hence, any scheme that will be introduced should take the cost of products in account."

Kalra suggests that the restaurants can serve better only if these platforms "do not come in the way" because Indians love eating out and it's always been a source of entertainment for them. He says, "We spend the highest amount of disposable income in eating out than any other form of entertainment. The restaurant industry is 40 times larger than Bollywood. The removal of discounts might create certain interim problems of some short-lived issues, where people who were addicted to discounts might start eating out less. But this will definitely change because people inherently love going out. Moreover, since the restaurant will be more profitable, it will be able to focus more on high quality rather than dilute quality to serve the discounted customers."

However, there are two questions which arise here. First, if these platforms are completely put away, many people and delivery partners would be left unemployed. What would happen to them? Second, there are many food outlets which had never associated themselves with these food apps. They have run on their original prices. Why did the registered restaurants then accept them in the first place, knowing that this might land them in losses?

Let's express art in motion

Kuchipudi dancer ARUNIMA KUMAR tells SAKSHI SHARMA that she wants to break the traditional notion associated with the dance form and use it as therapy to lift others

As newer dance forms make their way into the art industry, it is important to revive these traditional dance forms and teach the younger generation about their richness too. Ustad Bismillah Khan awardee and Kuchipudi dancer Arunima Kumar feels the urge to fill this void and takes dance to places it has never been before.

She practises dance therapy with cancer patients in hospitals as she is a keen believer of inclusive art. "We tell them stories through dance, do chants, slokas and a lot of rhythm and footwork next to their beds. This brightens them up and helps them validate their existence," says she.

Arunima recalls one of the incidents when a girl, who could sing well, sang with them and the entire ward joined her. It was a treat to their eyes. Such positive activities help them regain their confidence in life. And in a similar way, she makes the cancer survivors dance as they start getting better. Everyone has a state of distress in life at some stage or the other but Arunima feels that when you are involved in art, it has the capacity to lift you up and teleport you to a very different world altogether, where you forget the worries of life.

She believes that art deserves to travel places rather than sticking to the stage. "There shouldn't be any restrictions in dance. It should encompass a diverse range of human activities and their ways of expression," she says and adds, "Folk dance culture began from farmers who danced and celebrated the harvest season. And people enjoyed that together irrespective of the age gap or the differences in financial status between them." But things are different today. She points towards the rigid structure that we are slowly getting accustomed to and it needs to break down. Her first step towards this, she says, was "visiting villages and slums and teach the natives about dance and its diverse applications across the world. When I interact with them and answer their questions, the kind of happiness I see in their eyes is unparalleled."

She is trying to change the dynamics of Kuchipudi and Indian classical dance across the globe by organising festivals that would showcase its richness.



She will be organising the third edition of the Kuchipudi International Festival in November in London, which would provide a platform to 80 to 100 artists to show their talent. It will include her students ranging from the age of four to 60,

Natayanjali group from Cambridge, Bharatanatyam group and various others. She says, "It is a festival where we promote different dance forms and music but the focus remains on Kuchipudi. We also invite guest artists and facilitate inno-

vative collaborations." Through this she wants to inspire children as they see amazing artists perform so beautifully. This generates curiosity in them to know the dance form and its roots. "Otherwise they just perform with each other and get bored after a few years. Through this, they are not just looking among themselves but their seniors as well," she adds. It also helps to inspire their parents and tell them how important it is to teach the child about our traditions and dance forms at an early age. The audience consists of a lot of foreigners also, this in turn is taking Indian classical beyond the borders. The festival also includes dances on mythological tales, the tales of Vishnu and Kalangan Rathna.

Talking about one of the most innovative collaborations with a step chain studio, she says, "They have dancers who perform Latin American style on wheelchair. This year I have integrated Kuchipudi with it." She explains the idea behind this that such a dance form challenges the perception of body. When it comes to a disabled person, we look at them with sympathy as they can't dance. But, sometimes we cannot fathom their potential. "The way they dance with their challenge surprises me because they do

it so beautifully," Arunima adds.

She has collaborated with Baluji foundation, the world's only blind orchestra and created a piece called *antardrishti* (inner vision) with them. It is a blind cast of musicians and four dancers who could see. She did that show in darkness as she wanted the audience to feel it and understand how it feels when your world is dark. Citing the experience as an amazing one, she says, "While I was working with them they could sense when I am well and when I am not. They could figure out my mood."

She developed her love affair with Kuchipudi while she was learning it from Jayarama Rao and Vanashree Rao. Arunima says she found a home in terms of her dance school because she learnt a lot of tradition and history from them. Along with this she used to have make-up and *abhinay* session too. Talking about her journey, Arunima says, "It was a beautiful journey initially but was difficult to manage with my studies but I clinged onto it. I would skip a film with my friends but never skip the dance class." She feels it is this commitment which helped her step the ladder of success.

Talking about the strong identity India is gaining at an international level, Arunima says, "I am very proud of that. I proudly wear my Indian outfits and *bindi* but I am extremely contemporary in my outlook. I understand the aesthetics of my society so that I stay relevant." But there is a huge gap to promote classical Indian art in the UK and Arunima wanted to fill this gap. She is trying to embed her art in the DNA of the British society. Indian art can surpass barriers, even if people don't understand our language they know what we do. She wants to make this art accessible to the global audience. Arunima feels that just like yoga, an entire ecosystem needs to be created to revive dance forms as well. She says, "Indian dance has music and techniques and is an extension of yoga. Our poses, postures and rhythm coupled with mythology offers so much altogether."

She works on social issues like mental illness and domestic violence as it affects her deeply and is close to her heart. Arunima shares further that she loves to integrate with anything that affects her and her performances are making a difference. Arunima says, "I am glad that at least I am provoking debate, I am breaking barriers. It's always difficult for me to do it, when I start I don't know how it will go, but at the end of the day when the artist and the audience have something to say about the performance, I think I have done my bit."

Marvel breaks up with Spiderman



The Marvel Cinematic Universe will no longer produce *Spider-Man* films, after negotiations fell through between Disney and Sony Pictures.

The two studios have been sharing the brand *Spider-Man* across a plethora of films since 2015. As part of the previous agreement, Marvel had also been acting as producer of the 2017 and 2019 standalone Sony *Spider-Man* films starring Tom Holland. Both films were blockbusters.

However, Disney and Sony recently broke the deal as they are unable to reach new terms for funding of future films. Marvel president Kevin Feige, who served as creative lead in the two latest films of the franchise — *Spider-Man: Far From Home* and *Spider-Man: Homecoming*, will not have the same role in the two movies reportedly in the works, unless an agreement is reached.

A statement has been issued on behalf of Sony Pictures on their official Twitter handle. "Much of today's news about Spider-Man has mischaracterised recent discussions about Kevin Feige's involvement in the franchise. We are disappointed, but respect Disney's decision not to have him continue as a lead producer of our next live action Spider-Man film. We hope this might change in the future, but understand that the many new responsibilities that Disney has given him - including all their newly added Marvel properties - do not allow time for him to work on IP they do not own. Kevin is terrific and we are grateful for his help and guidance and appreciate the path he has helped put us on, which we will continue," the statement read.

The news left many Spider-Man fans in shock. *Deadpool* actor Ryan Reynolds also expressed grief. One fan tagged Tom Holland and Reynolds in a tweet, asking them for a crossover film featuring Spider-Man and Deadpool.

"Can we get a Spider-Man and Deadpool movie now," the person wrote. Responding to the tweet, Reynolds said, "You can. But you can only see it in my heart."

Not only this, actor Jeremy Renner, who played Hawkeye in the Marvel films so far, tweeted, "Hey Sony Pictures, we want Spider-Man back please." —JANS

The tourism minister of Uttarakhand, Satpal Maharaj, talks about his plans for enhancing Uttarakhand tourism in the coming years. He is exploring possibilities for broadening the trek route and upgrading the infrastructure to facilitate the process of tourism.

Uttarakhand is becoming a destination for winters. Maharaj says, "We will make an Alpine village during winters. At that time many tourists come who are interested in investing." This will help the state in meeting its demands. He has suggested the ministers to hold the next meeting in Kashmir so that they can work together and exchange their inputs which will help each other grow. He has been to Kashmir but was always in between the Armed Forces as the chairman of Defence Committee.

Uttarakhand is hit by landslides and floods too often. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to work on disaster management. Maharaj is making efforts to make the tourism of the state world class. But there are various things that hold him back. He says, "We need to have skilled people and expertise. How many people understand the potential of Uttarakhand?" They need to be aware of its future prospects and there is a dire need to develop the equipment for the training of various water sports too.

To add to the process he has written letters to his MLAs and asked them about "haunted or old houses and hot water springs nearby" so that he can develop and utilise them for some useful purpose. He shares about his idea of air balloons in Kumbh but the authorities denied. "They felt that

WORTH A VISIT

Uttarakhand Tourism Minister SATPAL MAHARAJ talks about his efforts in upgrading the state's infrastructure and tourism



it will collide but it will not. They don't have an understanding of the employment that it will generate," he adds. Talking about the void in the system he shares that he interacted with the

film council and requested them to come for shoots in the state. But when they came, they were questioned by forest authorities. "We need to erode this loophole at various levels. When

people from other states come, we should try to give them a personal touch. It will add charm to the beauty of the state. Local tourism is a good way to open local avenues for employ-

ment but infrastructure and water issues still needs to be worked upon," says he.

The state is looking for alternate Char Dham routes so that it becomes accessible to everyone and will increase tourists also. He has contacted the ropeway firms to provide their facilities at more places and also made a point that Ramnagar and Vikasnagar can become the routes for the yatra. The arrangements are being tightened up and work on infrastructure is being carried out heavily so that pilgrims do not face any difficulties.

Uttarakhand is gradually becoming a high end tourist state. It is planning to introduce mobile caravans which will offer various facilities and give a new sense of tourism coupled with luxury homestays. And as trekking routes are becoming more advanced, it will help in attracting domestic and international tourists as well. The efforts are clearly evident through Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board's (UTDB) campaign, #DoTheNew, which suggests to do something that would connect with the nature. This has helped the state to grab eyeballs from all across. The state is also geared up to hold the car rally and white water rafting in the forthcoming months.



India to compete in WorldSkills

The 48-member Indian team representing the country at the WorldSkills was given a grand send-off at a ceremony. It was organised by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) to motivate the participants as they gear up to pit their skills against the best in the world. India is the sixth largest team that will take part in the competition.

Nearly 1,500 competitors from 60 countries will compete in 56 skill competitions at this mega event in Kazan, Russia, which is on till August 27. Our team will participate in 44 skills, including mobile robotics, prototype modelling, hair-dressing, baking, confectionary and patisserie, welding, brick laying, car painting, floristry and so much more.

Dr Mahendra Nath Pandey, Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, said, "My heartiest congratulations to the 48 of you. You all will now represent the country at the world's biggest skill competition. My advice to you is to compete in the true spirit of participation and make India proud on the global platform and at the same time learn from your international peers competing with you. Participating at events of such scale adds to the larger cause of skill development, which is integral to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a skilled India."

Around 75 per cent of participants come from tier II and tier III cities, with 25 per cent from rural areas. Candidates have been exposed to international training with industry support from over 100 companies.

The Government of India has taken major initiatives to bring development in the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. The Institute of Company Secretaries of India aligning with the initiatives of the Government of India has launched a special fee waiver scheme for the students there.

Launching the scheme, Jamyang Tsering Namgyal, Member of Parliament (LS), Ladakh, appreciated the efforts of the Institute and said, "This initiative will immensely contribute towards bringing the students of Ladakh to the main stream."

ICSI launches fee waiver scheme

Informing about the scheme, CS Ranjeet Pandey, president of ICSI said, "The Institute of Company Secretaries of India has always considered itself a proud partner in the varied initiatives of the Government of India. Though



inclusive growth has been an agenda for the Government for long, we at ICSI firmly believe that the achievement of such a goal finds foundation in making available quality education to one and all. We are hopeful that this initiative shall open doors of education and opportunity for the youth of the nation."

Students belonging to J & K and Ladakh, who have cleared their 12th or bachelor's degree shall be eligible for fee waiver while registering for CS Foundation Programme and CS Executive Programme respectively.

It is expected that the above initiatives will not only play significant role in promoting excellence but will also empower the youth of J & K and Ladakh and bring them to the mainstream by nurturing their brilliance.

Sanrakshika celebrates its sixth foundation day

CISF Wives Welfare Association, Sanrakshika, has been playing a significant role in helping the families and wards of CISF personnel to attain their full potential and thereby empowering them to contribute in growth of their family and society at large.

The association celebrated its sixth foundation day at Siri Fort Auditorium. Sonal Shah, wife of Union Home Minister, was the chief guest on the occasion.

Ranjeeta Ranjan, president of the association, said



that it has been our endeavour that every member of the CISF family should become independent and capable so that a strong society can be created. "Since its inception, the association has carried out many activities such as, DG's merit award in academics, DG's scholarship exclusively for wards of martyrs, financial assistance to specially-abled wards of CISF, opening of computer centers and skill development centers at various locations," she added.

SRM TO SET UP A COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

With agriculture emerging as a competitive domain to traditional industry driven companies, SRM Institute of Science and Technology plans to set up a college of agriculture in Acharapakkam in Chengalpattu district. The chancellor Dr TR Paarivendhar announced on Monday. The chancellor Dr TR Paarivendhar, who is also the MP of Perambalur, said that 200



acres has been reserved for the college, where students can cultivate their own land in a rural ambience to emerge as agri-entrepreneurs instead of pursuing a career in an MNC. "You have to apply

your mind on how to do agriculture and horticulture with modern technology and earn five times more than what you would earn in an MNC or by pursuing a career in other fields," he said.

Strike at Ordnance Factories

The month long strike in response to the call given by the three recognised Defence Federations commenced on Tuesday. The strike has been undertaken to oppose the proposed corporatisation of the Ordnance Factories.

It is, however, emphasised that the proposed policy of corporatisation of Ordnance Factories by the Government of India is aimed at providing greater flexibility in day-to-day functioning, increased operational freedom and autonomy in decision making, leading to enhanced productivity. This will enable the Ordnance Factories to respond faster to the futuristic needs of the Armed Forces and provide an impetus to the export potential of its products.



As per DFS Government of India directives, a two-day seminar-cum-workshop was organised by AK Mishra, field general manager, Central Bank of India, for initiating bottom-up consultative and ideation process for bringing about required changes in the public sector banking activities to make India a five-trillion dollar economy.



Syndicate bank started the consultative workshops for idea generation at grass root level on Saturday. The objective of the workshop was to provide bottom-up approach to stimulate the ideation process at the bank. The ideas aimed at optimising banking by increasing the use of technology and aligning banking with the national priorities.



A campaign organised by UCO bank talked about generation of ideas and consultation till branch level as per the directions issued by Department of Financial Services, Ministry of Finance. Its primary objective was to align banking with national priorities, stimulate ideas and inculcate a sense of involvement among bankers at the branch level.

RIL joins hands with Neva BNP COUNCILLORS GET A BIG BLOW

R|Elan, the next-gen fabrics from RIL (Reliance Industries Limited), has joined hands with fashion retailer Neva Garments, based out of Ludhiana.

The arrangement will enable R|Elan and Neva to offer the best quality solutions to consumers across the country and meet their ever growing demand for comfortable apparel in activewear, athleisure, sportswear, sleepwear and innerwear.

Speaking about the partnership, Nirmal Kumar Jain, managing director, Neva Garments Limited said, "Neva has been a cotton dominated brand in all its segments. For the last three to four years, we have diversified into active wear category, which is growing at a rapid rate." Further Niti Jain, director of Neva, added, "Our quilted thermals are well appreciated and have a strong presence across the country with a loyal customer base."



R|Elan has made a strong impression by bringing in new generation of micro-polyesters with various functional properties like moisture management, wicking, odour-free antimicrobial and more. The products like kooltex, feelfresh, airtherm have a great potential to combine with cotton and also on a stand-alone basis to form great garments with aesthetics and at affordable prices. Thus there is a great synergy between both the brands.

Injured by the negative and malicious behaviour of some councillors, additional municipal commissioner Shiv Pujan Yadav has transferred himself to the Lucknow directorate. The transfer is considered a major setback for some BJP councillors and the mayor. This is the first time in the history of Ghaziabad municipal corporation that an officer had written to the UP

government and expressed his desire to transfer. Ghaziabad is considered as kamdhenu district for officers of Uttar Pradesh. Officers use political access to get the goods there. A few days ago, some BJP councillors accused Yadav of taking ₹78 lakh as scam, including financial irregularities in appointments of goods. The committee was made in which the



allegations were found malicious. Despite getting a clean chit from the inquiry committee, some BJP councillors tried to keep the matter intact. Therefore, Yadav wrote to the Uttar Pradesh directorate about his transfer, and the government transferred him. This shows that some councillors keep making ungrateful complaints against the officers to take them under pressure.



Chittaranjan Locomotive Works celebrated the Sadbhavana Diwas on Tuesday. Praveen Kumar Mishra, GM of the CLW, read out the pledge before a gathering of HODs, senior officers and employees.



Projects and Development India Ltd (PDIL) celebrated 73rd Independence day with patriotic fervour. The event began with hoisting of the national flag by the director, DS Sudhakar Ramaiah. The CMD, Partha Sarthi Sen Sharma paid tribute to the martyrs and congratulated the employees on PDIL achieving a turnover of ₹131.50 crore from operations of ₹16.50 crore and Profit After Tax (PAT) of ₹30.36 crore and dividend of ₹11.80 crore.



GAIL chairman and managing director, Dr Ashutosh Kamatak (centre) and company directors at the 35th Annual General Meeting of GAIL (India) Limited



The renowned prosthodontist professor Mahesh Verma took over as the new Vice Chancellor of the IP University. Before joining, he was the director of the Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences. He is a recipient of many coveted awards like Padma Shree and BC Roy Award for his contributions in the field of medicine.



Maa Amba Girls' Degree College, Gwalikheda, organised an environmental protection campaign. The students made the conservation campaign successful by planting trees. The school principal, Dr Rajeev Gupta, said that plantation is an important part of our life, we are creating difficulties for our next generations by not paying attention to environmental protection.

