

NATION 5 TRADITIONAL MEDIA SHOULD INTROSPECT: PREZ

MONEY 6 PM-KISAN: CENTRE PAYS RS 50,850 CRORE TO FARMERS

SPECIAL 7 WHEN INTELLIGENCE IS ARTIFICIAL

VIJAYAWADA, SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23, 2020; PAGES 12 ₹3



Getting people to go oh Baby!

sunday pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

12

AYUSHMANN KHURRANA'S GAY ROM-COM: TRUMP SAYS 'GREAT'

US President Donald Trump got into the mood on Friday ahead of his upcoming India trip by issuing a surprising thumbs-up for Bollywood's newly released gay rom-com movie. "Great!" the US president wrote as he retweeted gay rights activist Peter Tatchell's own expression of support for the movie "Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan". Released on Friday, "Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan" stars actor Ayushmann Khurrana as a young man bucking social disapproval to be with his beloved - another man. Trump is not a regular advocate of gay rights, while some of his more right-wing supporters actively oppose them.



GSI: NO DISCOVERY OF AROUND 3000-TONNE GOLD DEPOSITS IN UP

The Geological Survey of India (GSI) on Saturday said there has been no discovery of gold deposits estimated to be around 3,000 tonnes in Sonbhadra district of Uttar Pradesh, as claimed by a district mining official. "Such data was not given by anybody from GSI... GSI has not estimated such kind of vast resource of gold deposits in Sonbhadra district," GSI Director General (DG) M Sridhar told PTI in Kolkata. "We share our findings regarding any resources of ore after conducting survey with the state units... We (GSI, Northern Region) carried out work in that region in 1998-99 and 1999-2000."



CONJOINED TWINS VEENA-VANI TO HAVE SEPARATE ANSWER SHEETS

Telangana education department has said that conjoined twins Veena and Vani will be treated as two individuals and both will take separate exams. Initially, district education authorities were unsure whether to consider the girls as one or two individuals when it came to giving them hall tickets for the examination. The twins, who received special tuition, were coached by teachers deputed by the Education Department at the state home in Hyderabad where they currently live. Veena and Vani are children of M Murali and Nagalakshmi from Beerishettygudem of Mahabubabad.



NEW VIRUS HAS INFECTED MORE THAN 77,000 PEOPLE GLOBALLY

A viral outbreak that began in China has infected more than 77,000 people globally. The World Health Organization has named the illness COVID-19, referring to its origin late last year and the coronavirus that causes it. The latest figures reported by each government's health authority as of Saturday in Beijing: Mainland China: 2,345 deaths among 76,288 cases, mostly in the central province of Hubei Hong Kong: 69 cases, 2 deaths Macao: 10 Japan: 739 cases, including 634 from a cruise ship.



'ALL AND SUNDRY'

Owaisi sitting pretty after anti-CAA protests

2

HEAT IS ON Tour operators in AP lose crores in biz to coronavirus

Hardly any bookings ahead of peak tourist season

SUMIT ONKA VISAKHAPATNAM

The outbreak of coronavirus has effectively devastated the tourism industry in North Andhra region, if one goes by the fact that tourism agencies are hardly getting any booking for summer holiday trips.



TU 142 Aircraft museum at beach road Visakhapatnam

Tour and travel operators in AP are expected to suffer a loss of around Rs 20 crore, according to a rough estimate of Tours and Travel Association of Andhra Pradesh (TTAA) which has around 450 agencies registered with it.

From here mostly fly to Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, while the more affluent prefer European destinations.

people had cancelled their travel plans and now we are not getting fresh bookings for the summer holidays too. Summer holidays, mainly two months, are the peak time for tourism business. However, coronavirus has devastated business," said Vijay Mohan.

Given the outbound travel history in summer, about 40,000 people fly from North Andhra and its surrounding areas, said TTAA president, K Vijay Mohan. The tourists

AIMIM leader withdraws controversial comments

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Following a nationwide furore over his "communal hate-speech", All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) ex-legislator of Maharashtra Waris Pathan withdrew his controversial remarks here on Saturday.

"I had no intentions to hurt the sentiments of any community...My remarks were not 'anti-Hindu', I hereby withdraw my statement," Pathan told mediapersons here this evening.

He added that attempts were being made to portray him as "anti-national", but he clarified that his remarks were not intended to create any kind of discord among people or communities.

A huge political storm erupted after Pathan addressed an anti-CAA protest in Kalburgi (Gulbarga) in Karnataka on February 15 and said that "15-crore (Muslims) will prove stronger than the 100-crore majority (Hindus)."

Insulate constitutional values: Justice Ramana

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Justice N V Ramana, the seniormost judge in the Supreme Court, on Saturday exhorted courts to help prevent populist decisions from affecting constitutional rights and pitting the rights of once group against those of other groups.

Justice Ramana was speaking at the inaugural function of the International Judicial Conference here on the theme 'Judiciary and the Changing World'.

Mentioning that the conference would deliberate upon the important topic of 'Role of the Judiciary against Populism', Justice Ramana observed: "This topic assumes fundamental importance because populist decisions affect the constitutional rights, and more often than not, rights of one group are pitted against the rights or interest of other groups. Hence, courts will have to rise to the occasion and guard constitutional values, at the same time balance all constitutional considerations."



Justice N V Ramana

'Right to privacy covers online data'

NEW DELHI: Right to privacy, recognised as a fundamental right by the Supreme Court, has evolved to protect not only telephonic conversations but also online data, an apex court judge said on Saturday.

Justice L Nageswara Rao said the evolution of the law assumes importance because it represents the progress of a nation and its social conditions, and that failure to evolve the law in accordance with the changing circumstances often leads to injustice.

Coronavirus vaccine candidate developed

PNS ■ SYDNEY

A team of researchers at the University of Queensland in Australia has created their first vaccine candidate in the laboratory for the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

The team will move immediately into further development before formal pre-clinical testing, the university said on Friday.

The proof-of-concept milestone comes in less than a month after the project's announcement on January 24 as part of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) rapid response programme.

"There is still extensive testing to ensure that the vaccine candidate is safe, but the technology means the first hurdle has been passed," said University of Queensland V-C Peter Hoj AC.

Nationalism misused to construct militant idea of India: Manmohan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Nationalism and the slogan of 'Bharat Mata Ki Jai' are being misused to construct a "militant and purely emotional" idea of India that excludes millions of residents and citizens, former prime minister Manmohan Singh said on Saturday, in an apparent attack on the BJP.

Addressing a gathering at the launch of a book on Jawaharlal Nehru's works and speeches, Singh said that if India is recognised in the comity of nations as a vibrant democracy and, if it is considered as one of the important world powers, it was the first prime minister, who should be recognised as its main architect.

Nehru had led this country in its volatile and formative days when it adopted a democratic way of life, accommodating divergent social and political views, Singh said.

India's first prime minister, who was very proud of Indian heritage, assimilated it, and harmonised them into the



needs of a new modern India, he said

"With an inimitable style, and a multi-linguist, Nehru laid the foundation of the universities, academies and cultural institutions of Modern India. But for Nehru's leadership, independent India would not have become what it is today," Singh said.

"But unfortunately, a section of people who either do not have the patience to read history or would like to be deliberately guided by their prejudices, try their best to picture Nehru in a false light. But I am sure, history has a capacity to reject fake and false insinuations and put everything in proper perspective," he said.

Army man stalks girl, shoots mom

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

An Army man on Saturday opened fire with a country-made gun at the mother of a girl he had been stalking for some time, at Nadimpalli village under Cherukupalli Mandal of Guntur district.

The woman, identified as K. Ramadevi, is undergoing treatment at a local hospital and her condition is said to be stable.

According to Sub-Inspector P Ramesh, the serviceman, identified as Balaji, had been stalking the girl for some months. Initially, the girl avoided him and when he proposed to her, she rejected the proposal outright.

Balaji is said to have continued to stalk her, following which the family lodged a complaint with the police.

He was arrested and sent to jail. Blaming the girl for his landing behind bars, the serviceman reportedly reached her house early on Saturday. When Ramadevi, the girl's mother, opened the door, he opened fire at her. However, Ramadevi managed to move aside, resulting in the bullet grazing her ear.

The sound of the shot, and the woman's screams, alerted the neighbours who rushed to the spot. Seeing the advancing people, Balaji took to his heels leaving the country-made gun and vanished. Police said that Balaji is a native of Nallamothuvarpalem village under Karla mandal of Guntur district. Three teams have been formed to nab Balaji, police said.



Botsa Satyanarayana

Botsa: SIT will expose TDP corruption

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Brushing aside allegations that the YSRCP Government is vindictive and is targeting BCs and has been pooling land by force, Municipal and Urban Development Minister Botsa Satyanarayana on Saturday said that no one is above the law and all irregularities during the past five years of TDP rule would be unearthed and brought to public view.

Speaking to the media here, the Minister gave a blow by blow reply to the allegations and statements by TDP leaders. Setting the record straight, Botsa said that it was the TDP leaders who had challenged that there were no irregularities during their term and had dared the government to order an inquiry.

Cong: Thackeray requires briefing on how NPR is the basis of NRC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Manish Tewari on Saturday said Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray "requires a briefing" on the Citizenship Amendment Rules-2003 to understand how the NPR is the

basis of the NRC. Tewari also said that on the CAA, Thackeray needs to be reacquainted with the design of the Constitution that religion cannot be the basis of citizenship. The sharp remarks by the former Union minister on the

chief of the Shiv Sena, the Congress' ally in Maharashtra, came a day after Thackeray met Prime Minister Narendra Modi, following which he said no one needs to fear about the CAA as it is not meant for throwing anyone out of the country.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Magha & Krishna Paksha Panchangam: Tithi: Amavasya: 09:00 pm Nakshatram: Dhanishtha: 01:43 pm Time to Avoid: (Bad time to start any important work) Rahukalam: 04:50 pm - 06:16 pm Yamagandam: 12:29 pm - 01:56 pm Varjyam: 09:42 pm - 11:29 pm Gulikam: 03:23 pm - 04:50 pm Good Time: (to start any important work) Amritakalam: NIL Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:06 pm - 12:52 pm

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Sunny Temp: 32/17 Humidity: 36% Sunrise: 06:38 Sunset: 06:20 Current Weather Conditions Updated February 22, 2019 5:00 PM

Man held for crude post against Dy CM

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Vizianagaram police on Saturday arrested a 45-year-old man, identified as JR Venkateswarulu, for posting objectionable comments about Deputy Chief Minister Pamula Pushpa Srivani on Facebook.

ASP Parvathipuram, Sumit Garud clarified that Venkateswarulu does not belong to any political party or organisation.

Venkateswarulu posted the objectionable comments about Pushpa Srivani along with her picture on June 11, 2019 while he was drunk, Garud said.

Upset with the comments, Pushpa Srivani had approached the police on October

20, 2019. Based on the complaint, the police had registered a case and started investigations.

The police wrote to Google and Facebook and other websites to trace the IP address and other details of the accused. The investigation led the police to Venkateswarulu, a resident of Bengaluru and native of Kavali in Nellore district. The police arrested him under relevant Sections of the IPS and IT Act in Bengaluru. The accused was produced before court and was remanded.

The police said that posting objectionable comments about any individual or political leader on social networking sites is a punishable offence.

'Football' and 'Biscuit' in Trump's security armour

Football is the ultimate power accessory, a nuclear device with a secret code and alarm

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As India is gearing up to welcome US President Donald Trump who will arrive on his maiden visit on February 24, a high level security apparatus has been put in place.

Trump's security is in the hands of the American Secret Service which is tasked with protecting the US President. In India, the SPG and the NSG will help the secret service agents maintain the security machinery of Trump.

According to reports, secret service agents came to India a month ago, as is the routine. The American agents laid their own communication system through which they will keep track of every development minute by minute. According



to media reports, permission was taken from the Indian authorities to bring the technology and equipment from the US to India. As it landed in India the bar code was scanned at the airport to see that the return from India is as smooth. In the entire security appa-

The American President's security agents laid their own communication system through which they will keep track of every development minute by minute

destroy the entire world. It is in fact a nuclear device with a secret code and alarm. According to reports, the 'nuclear football' has an antenna protruding from it. The antenna is linked to a satellite phone.

According to Dailymail, the US has been using this nuclear football since 1962.

There are four things in the football and the most important thing is the 'biscuit', a debit card sized piece of plastic containing the codes the US President needs to order the launch of nuclear weapons.

Trump will arrive in Ahmedabad around noon on February 24 for a little less than a 36-hour-long trip to India.

Ajay Tomar, Special police commissioner (crime) of Ahmedabad, said, "Arrangements have been made for traffic management apart from the security. On the 22-km long route of the roadshow, more than 1000 officers and jawans have been deployed. Rehearsals are being held to see that everything goes off smoothly. I don't want to share more details."



Owaisi sitting pretty after anti-CAA protests

The agitation against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and other controversies surrounding it have gone so much in favour of Asaduddin Owaisi, president of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), that he could be laughing all the way to his vote bank. If he is sitting pretty today, he must thank the ruling dispensation in Delhi as much as his allies.

His all-weather friend, Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Naidu has opened the floodgates for opposition to the new legislation while the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has added fuel to the fire by issuing notices to several people in the Old City to produce documents to authenticate their Aadhaar cards.

An articulate leader, Owaisi

remains way ahead of other mainstream Muslim politicians in leading the cause to repeal CAA. The ruling party in Telangana, in a bid to keep the State's 12.7 per cent Muslim population on its side, is on the same page. It has decided to introduce a resolution in the Assembly seeking abrogation of the Act as it runs counter to India's secular spirit.

This has added muscle to the campaign by Owaisi who led a massive 'Tiranga' rally in January under the United Muslim Action Committee (UMAC) banner soon after MIM's arch enemy Majlis Bachao Tehreek took out an impressive 'Million march' with the support of Congress, CPI, CPI (M) and the controversially-mired Popular Front of India.

The TRS had ruffled MIM's feathers earlier when it backed scrapping of Article 370 and abstained from voting on the

However, a party's ex-MLA, Waris Pathan remarked in the senior Owaisi's presence at a rally in Karnataka on how 15 crore people belonging to a section could dominate 100 crore people, an unsaid reference to Muslims and Hindus respectively, while a girl shouted pro-Pakistan slogans from the same dais.

triple talaq bill. However, when it came to citizenship bill, the party vehemently opposed it in both Houses, though less dramatically than Owaisi who tore the bill with a flourish in the Lok Sabha.

Despite his toxic speeches decrying the injustices done to minorities in India, Owaisi rarely crossed the Rubicon of his party's professed secularism in contrast to his younger sibling Akbaruddin whose infamous, rabble-raising 15-minute threat speech against Hindus in 2013 landed him in

legal trouble and revived dark memories of MIM's pre-independence avataar.

However, a party's ex-MLA, Waris Pathan remarked in the senior Owaisi's presence at a rally in Karnataka on how 15 crore people belonging to a section could dominate 100 crore people, an unsaid reference to Muslims and Hindus respectively, while a girl shouted pro-Pakistan slogans from the same dais. Such embarrassments, if indeed they are, remain a small blip on MIM's political radar. The party's footprint is rapidly



S NAGESH KUMAR
Former Resident Editor,
The Hindu

expanding beyond the Old City. It has now two MPs, seven MLAs, and significant strength in Aurangabad and Hyderabad municipal corporations and will find fresh pastures after CAA.

UIDAI's notices to 87 Old City residents are clearly ill-timed and have given anti-CAA

protestors and parties like MIM a handle. Worse still, they have bolstered fears among large sections of Muslims that CAA was aimed at depriving them of citizenship, in spite of innumerable claims to the contrary by the Prime Minister and the Home Minister.

If the alleged discrepancies in a 13-year-old Aadhaar card could become a tool for UIDAI to seek proof of citizenship from Mohd. Sattar Khan, a resident of Bhavani Nagar Talab Katta, what would a 'mysterious' entity like the CAA do. Asaduddin Owaisi was not off the mark while accusing the UIDAI of abusing power by turning it into a case of citizen verification.

The flip side of the argument is expressed by BJP leaders who say that thousands of Rohingyas and Bangladeshis are illegally staying in Hyderabad, while the number

of Pakistanis who have merged into the Old City's population by overstaying their visas is unknown. Is the UIDAI, therefore, unjustified in weeding out Aadhaar cards of persons whose addresses do not exist and of those who provided false information?

If the opposition parties, including MIM, get traction in Shaheen Bagh, Lucknow's Clock Tower or elsewhere, it can be attributed to the government's failure to anticipate such widespread opposition to the Bill. Giving piecemeal clarifications after several parts of the country were rocked by protests is different from gauging the likely repercussions and holding talks with the Opposition. Defiant statements that there will be no going back on CAA or claims that there are no linkages between CAA, National Population Register (NPR) and National Register of Citizens

(NRC) are unhelpful and lack credibility.

Section 14 (a) of CAA, for example, enjoins upon the Centre to issue a national ID card to every citizen and to maintain a National Register of Indian Citizens. Home Minister Amit Shah even announced in Parliament that a nationwide registry of citizens was on the agenda. Besides, the Home Ministry in November 2014 categorically stated that "the NPR is the first step towards creation of NRIC by verifying the citizenship status of every usual resident".

It is nobody's case to scrap CAA, NPR, or NRC on which it backed down later for the simple reason that they existed earlier. What is needed is accommodation by Government on contentious aspects of CAA to allay people's fears and see that fissiparous forces don't get political legitimacy.

CAPSULE

Depressed girl ends life

SRIKAKULAM: A Degree student committed suicide when her parents fixed her marriage against her wish. According to police, B Bharati, the eldest daughter of B Ramaiah and Lakshmi, a native of Basava Kotturu in Srikakulam district, was studying Degree second year. It is learnt that she is being the elder daughter, her parents wanted to marry off so that they can see matches for their second daughter. But Bharati asked them to postpone the marriage as she wanted to get married only after completing her education. When her parents did not heed to her plea, she committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling fan when she alone in the house. Her younger sister, who came from college, noticed her sister hanging in the room and altered neighbours. Immediately, they broke open the door and shifted her to the Sompeta government hospital and from there she was shifted to a private hospital for better treatment but she died on way to the hospital.

LHMS, a blessing in disguise

C PRADEEP
VIJAYAWADA

The Locked House Monitoring System (LHMS) has become a blessing in disguise for those who venture out on work and tours. It may be recalled that in order to curb thefts and offences, the police department introduced the Locked House Monitoring System (LHMS) under the Vijayawada Police Commissionerate limits, which evoked good response from denizens.

House owners have to download the LHMS AP police app from the Google Play Store on their Android phones and after installing the app by furnishing their details like name and residential address, they would be given a unique ID indicating their successful registration. If any house owner is going out of the city, he has to place a request through the app and indicate the period of time.

After receiving the request from house owners, the department people will visit the house and install the Wi-Fi modem and cameras. This



Deputy Commissioner of Police (crime) D Koteswara Rao said 10 people are sending requests to install the LHMS equipment to protect their house and property on a daily basis under the City Commissionerate limits.

In all, 31,000 have registered for the LHMS app till date and the number is increasing every day, he said

unit is linked to the owner's phone and also to the Police Control Room. If there is any movement in front of the house, camera installed in the house will record pictures and videos and send the same to the Control Room and the house owner's smartphone.

Speaking to The Pioneer, Deputy Commissioner of Police (crime) D Koteswara Rao said 10 people are sending a request to install the LHMS equip-

ment to protect their house and property on a daily basis under the City Commissionerate limits. In all, 31,000 have registered for the LHMS app till date and the number is increasing every day.

The DCP appealed to put their cash and jewellery in the bank lockers for safety. He advised house owners to set up a burglar alarm system at home for getting alerts when house-breaking offenders try to enter houses for committing any

kind of offence. There are 75 cameras and in one go, LHMS devices can be installed at 38 locations. Over 1,000 houses in the city utilised the LHMS service till date, he said.

The police department is implementing the beat system at all areas in the city to prevent crime and robberies. Rakshak vehicles moving all corners of the city and night vehicle checking and lodge checking is underway to avoid any untoward incident and maintain peace in the city.

Awareness is being created on LHMS, cybercrime, eve-teasing and other offences by screening short films at various parts of the city every day, the DCP said.

• Around 31,000 registered for LHMS app till date

• LHMS devices can be installed at 38 locations at a time

• 1,000 houses fixed LHMS devices till now

Workshop on 'Research opportunities in petro & natural gas

ReOPEN to discuss challenges being faced by energy sector

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

"Energy, petroleum and natural gas sectors continue to have the greatest impact on a country's future. Thus, technological innovation, economic and financial challenges faced by these sectors cannot be ignored", said Dr VSRK Prasad, Director, IPEE.

In this regard, Indian Institute of Petroleum and Energy, Visakhapatnam, is organising a four-day workshop on 'Research opportunities in petroleum, energy and natural gas (ReOPEN-2020)', he informed.

The workshop will be held from February 24 to 27. The primary intent of this workshop is to bring together various experts from India and abroad to discuss advanced research opportunities and challenges associated with petroleum, renewable energy and natural gas processing, he added.

"Major focus will be on technologies that can improve energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions and bring renewable closer to implementation. The workshop will feature elaborate sessions on recent and future aspects in energy and petroleum sector, research and educational opportunities in petroleum and energy engineering, energy conversion and solar energy, energy storage, fossil fuel, bio-fuel and biomass, catalysis, carbon free hydrogen production, thermal barrier coating and power generation cycle", he said.

The ReOPEN inaugural session is scheduled for February



ASV Ramanan, Officer on Special Duty, Prof S Neogi, IIT Kharagpur faculty, Dr VSRK Prasad, Director, IPEE, Dr B Sridhar Reddy, Registrar, IPEE, Dr Arun Kumar Pujari, faculty, IPEE, release a brochure on a four-day workshop on 'Research Opportunities in Petroleum, Energy and Natural Gas (ReOPEN-2020)', in Visakhapatnam on Saturday

This workshop is an attempt to bring industry and academic professionals on a common platform to explore opportunities in the area of petroleum, natural gas and energy based on current scenario and requirements

24 in the presence of oil industry members and academicians. Eminent professionals from industry and research laboratories such as IOCL R&D Faridabad, BPCL R&D Greater Noida, TECHNIP India Limited and ENTEK Environmental Laboratories, Baton Rouge, will share their expertise on current and future research scenario in industries.

Renowned international and national academicians from Texas A&M University, University of Louisville, Rowan University, Cranfield University, IIT Delhi, NIT Trichy, Southern University and A&M College, will share their views on the research and opportunities in petroleum, natural gas processing and implementation of renewable in India and across the globe.

Prof Mahendra Sunkara and Prof Dandina N Rao from University of Louisville, Prof Oswald D'Auvergne from Southern University and A&M College and Prof KV Ramanujachary from Rowan University are a few distinguished personalities to grace the workshop and enrich the young minds.

Poster and networking sessions will provide prospects for students to interact with distinguished national and international professionals. The workshop will be concluded with an industry panel discussion. This workshop is an attempt to bring industry and academic professionals on a common platform to explore opportunities in the area of petroleum, natural gas and energy based on current scenario and requirements.

Farmers should diversify into poultry, dairy: V-P

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Farmers need to diversify into other allied sectors like dairy and poultry to make agriculture more sustainable, said Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu. He was speaking at the second edition of Agritech South, jointly organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry and Prof Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University here on Saturday.

Speaking on the occasion, Venkaiah Naidu said, "Agriculture as a profession is becoming non sustainable and there is a need to make it more attractive and sustainable. There is a need for crop diversification and adding value by food processing. Farmers should diversify to other allied sectors like dairy and poultry to make agriculture more sustainable. Sericulture, horticulture and fish/prawn culture is in great demand and farmers should



Venkaiah Naidu said, "Agriculture as a profession is becoming non sustainable and there is a need to make it more attractive and sustainable. There is a need for crop diversification and adding value by food processing"

venture into them, along with agriculture."

The Vice-President also urged students and research community to spend half of their time on the field with farmers to gain practical exposure and knowledge. Farmer is the best teacher on agriculture, he said. Applauding the Government of Telangana for the major irrigation projects in the State,

Venkaiah Naidu stressed the need for preserving and conserving traditional water bodies.

Telangana Agriculture Minister Niranjan Reddy, in his address termed agriculture and allied sectors as the backbone of the country. "Telangana has a farmer-friendly government. The TRS government has brought several farmer-friendly schemes such as Rythu

Bandhu, Rythu Bhima, 24X7 power supply and others for the welfare of farming community," he said.

Stating that despite doubling of yield per hectare in recent years, several factors have contributed to depleting farmers' income. Dr V Praveen Rao, Vice-Chancellor of Prof

Jayashankar Telangana State Agricultural University mentioned that the variety has been able to do some impactful research. "The research priorities of the university have been realigned to meet the changing needs of the State. The university has also mapped 133 varieties of crops with a target to double farmers' income," he said.

Earlier, CII Telangana chairman D Raju mentioned that the conference and exhibition would help in bridging the gap between the agricultural research & farmers through the dissemination of the research & latest agri technology & methods to the farmers.

The three-day event is organised with the objective to create business opportunities to the technology holders and also introduce practical learning to the technology users & farmers, with special focus on farmer-expert interface.

This bacteria fights climate change, soil pollutants

IAN S ■ NEW YORK

The newly discovered bacteria belong to the genus Paraburkholderia madseniensis, which are known for their ability to degrade aromatic compounds and, in some species, the capacity to form root nodules that fix atmospheric nitrogen

Researchers have found a new species of soil bacteria that is particularly adept at breaking down organic matter, including the cancer-causing chemicals that are released when coal, gas, oil and refuse are burnt.

The newly discovered bacteria belong to the genus Paraburkholderia madseniensis, which are known for their ability to degrade aromatic compounds and, in some species, the capacity to form root nodules that fix atmospheric nitrogen.

In studying the new bacteria, the researchers noticed that madseniensis is especially adept at breaking down aromatic hydrocarbons, which make up lignin, a major component of plant biomass and soil organic matter.

According to researchers, aromatic hydrocarbons are also

found in toxic PAH pollution. This means that the newly identified bacteria could be a candidate for biodegradation research and an important player in the soil carbon cycle.

In the case of madseniensis, Buckley's lab wants to learn more about the symbiotic relationship between the bacteria and forest trees.

Initial research suggests that trees feed carbon to the bacteria, and in turn the bacteria degrade soil organic matter,

thereby releasing nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus for the trees.

Understanding how bacteria break down carbon in soil could hold the key to the sustainability of soil and the ability to predict the future of global climate, the researchers said.



According to the study, researchers at Cornell University in the US with colleagues from Lycoming College described the new bacterium in a paper published in the International Journal of Systematic and Evolutionary Microbiology.

VIJAYAWADA BULLION RATES	
GOLD	
₹ 42,150 (10 gm)	
₹ 300	
SILVER	
₹ 48,300 (10 gm)	
₹ 0	
CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹119
Without Skin	₹135
Broiler at Farm	₹82
EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	340
VIJAYAWADA	355
VISAKHAPATNAM	375
RETAIL PRICE	₹3.55

CAPSULE

Holy dip turns tragic as boy drowns on Shivaratri

VISAKHAPATNAM: Taking a holy dip in the sea during the Maha Shivaratri festival turned tragic for a youngster as he drowned in the sea in Pedajalaripeta here on Saturday. Thousands of people took the holy dip in the early hours of Saturday after staying awake for the whole night. Swarms of devotees were seen spending nights on the beach road on Friday night. The deceased was identified as G Sidhu, 11, a Class VI student and resident of Peda Waltair area in Viag city. Sidhu, along with his friends, had gone to the beach near the Waltair Bus Depot in Vizag city on Saturday morning to take a holy dip. While Sidhu was taking a dip, rip current dragged him away from the shore. Since Sidhu was not good in swimming, he drowned in the waters. Though locals tried to rescue Sidhu, their efforts proved futile. Locals retrieved the body. It may be recalled that two years ago two persons drowned after they were pulled in by a strong current at the beach near Sagarnagar in Vizag city when they were taking the holy dip in the sea on the occasion of Maha Shivaratri.

Tour operators in AP lose crores in biz...

Continued from Page 1

Tour operators are trying to push their business, persuading tourists to visit locations in India. "The panic created following the outbreak of the virus is damaging the entire industry," he added. Given the traffic movement report of the Airport Authority of India, in April and May of 2018 and 2019, Vizag airport saw more than two lakh domestic and about 14,000 international passengers each month. The tour operators are monitoring the situation closely along with the travel industry.

GVMC MAKES IT OFFICIAL

Vizag scraps parking fee

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

It's official now. Consumers in Vizag city no longer pay parking fees at commercial establishments including shopping malls, multiplexes if they park their vehicle for 30 minutes and after the free time exceeds one need to produce a purchase bill.

GVMC has issued an official letter on February 22 regulating the parking fees. According to the GVMC order, every commercial establishment shall submit the details of parking area they have and the rates being charged for parking. They shall flash the parking rate on their building premises and send the same details to the zonal commission



within seven days.

Zonal commissioners have been directed to visit the commercial establishments and inspect if the order was being implemented.

For violation of the order, establishments would be charged

a penalty of Rs 10,000 and Rs 20,000 for first and second violations. And, for the third violation, GVMC would seal the commercial establishment.

The grievances related to parking fees collection could be filed with Sachivalayam or toll

- Shopping malls, multiplexes to be sealed if they collect parking fees from consumers
- But, for more than 30 minutes, consumers need to show a purchase bill

free number of GVMC. Zonal commissioner would look into the complaints.

"Illegal parking near commercial establishments and cinema theatres often leads to traffic congestion. So, we have decided to provide free parking facility at the commercial establishments to overcome traffic congestion", said GVMC commissioner G Srijana.

Vundavalli asks Jagan to scrap proposal to acquire varsity land

PNS ■ RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

Former MP Vundavalli Arun Kumar on Saturday wrote to Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, urging him to cancel East Godavari Collector's proposal to acquire 20 acres of land of the Potti Srimamulu Telugu University's Nannaya Pranganam in Rajamahendravaram for housing purposes to the poor.

In his letter, former MP Vundavalli pointed out that the varsity originally had 45 acres of land. In 1993, the varsity authorities had set aside 25 acres for hostels, restricting the area of the campus to just over 20 acres. Vundavalli wrote that the



Collector's proposal was "detrimental to public policy and Section 75 of AP Reorganisation Act". He reminded that a GO stipulates that Collectors should

not use lands belonging to educational institutions for house-site purposes.

The former MP also pointed out that the Telugu University is included in the 10th Schedule of Central Act 6 of 2014.

The university with five campuses located in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. "It is envisaged in the Act that two States have to agree for bifurcation of the university. If no agreement is reached within the specified period a notification from the Union government is needed for dividing its campuses," Vundavalli wrote, requesting the Chief Minister to withdraw the proposal of acquiring its lands.

AIMIM leader withdraws controversial comments

Continued from Page 1

The BJP and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena have demanded stringent action against the AIMIM ex-MLA, while activist lawyer Syed Ejaz Abbas 'Naqvi' wrote to Mumbai Police urging them to lodge an FIR against Pathan. "They say we have kept our women in the forefront. I want to tell these people -- only the lionesses have come out and you are in a cold sweat. You can understand what would happen if all of us come together."

"We are just 15 crore but can be a bigger force than the 100-crore majority population," Pathan said. He added that the minority community could well snatch 'your azaadi'. As the issue snowballed, AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Friday 'gagged' Pathan and has told him not to speak with the media and reportedly sought an explanation from him.

Insulate constitutional values, says Justice Ramana

Continued from Page 1

Justice Ramana identified terrorism, cyber crime, environmental degradation and health problems as major issues plaguing the world, including the Indian subcontinent. The judiciary needs to appropriately respond to them by evolving innovative principles while keeping in mind the rule of law, he said.

Justice N V Ramana remarked that terrorism is one of the main issues which has affected every part of the world and has no end in sight. "Presently our globalised world is closer than it seems. Issues are common and solutions need to be unanimous," he suggested.

Justice Ramana said the judiciary needs to appropriately respond to this problem by "evolving innovative principles and jurisprudence so that terrorism is kept at bay, while, at the same time upholding the rule of law". He said globalisation demands the rule of law and with

'Right to privacy covers online data'

Continued from Page 1

"The right to privacy, which is a topic for panel discussion and which has been recognised as a fundamental right by the Supreme Court, has truly transformed in shape and form in the last 60 years of its existence in Indian law. While it was initially limited to dealing with issues of surveillance and protection of epistolary communications, it has now evolved to protect not only telephonic conversations but also protection of online data.

increase in cross-border dealings, movement of citizens, goods and investment, there is a requirement of stronger trust between nations. "This trust can be built by creating institutions with strong emphasis on the rule of law, which creates a secure environment," Justice Ramana said. India's contribution to evolu-

"It is this challenge of interpreting unchanged laws in light of vastly changed social and political contexts which courts constantly grapple with. Judges across countries would presumably deal with such issues differently. However, an understanding of different judicial approaches adopted across the globe would allow us to approach legal problems in a more holistic manner. This is essentially because in democracies, the fundamental values and goals on the basis of which judges discharge their duties remain similar," he said.

The SC judge said India has contributed to the evolution of jurisprudence in many areas. "Our judgments have been cited with acceptance overwhelmingly by other jurisdictions such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Singapore, Bangladesh and other countries in the Asian continent.

Nationalism misused ...

Continued from Page 1

The book 'Who is Bharat Mata?' by Purushottam Agrawal and Radha Krishna, contains selections from Nehru's classic books Autobiography, Glimpses of World History and the Discovery of India; his speeches, essays and letters from pre and post independence years; and some of his most revealing interviews. It was first brought out in English and now its Kannada translation has been released.

The book also comprises reminiscences and assessments of Nehru by some of his contemporaries such as Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, Aruna Asaf Ali, and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, among others.

"It is a book of particular relevance at a time when Nationalism and the slogan of Bharat Mata Ki 'Jai' are being misused to construct a militant and purely emotional idea of India that excludes millions of residents and citizens," he said.

Botsa: SIT will expose TDP corruption

Continued from Page 1

"The YSRCP government has done precisely that and now the TDP leaders are making a hue and cry," Botsa said.

The formation of a SIT has been sending chill down the spine of TDP leaders, which indicates their guilt, he said, and added that it was the outcome of a Cabinet subcommittee report went into the details of irregularities in CRDA, land pooling, insider trading, breach of oath by the executive head of the government of that time, designing and redesigning of city boundaries, promising to paying the architects exorbitant amount as fees and the like.

"TDP has been crying foul, and its allegations are growing increasingly strident that the government is vindictive and has been targeting BCs. This is totally wrong and all are equal before law," Botsa said.

He added: "When the TDP was in the Opposition and I was a minister in the Dr YS

Rajasekhara Reddy government, the Volkswagen issue came up and they demanded a CBI probe and named me in it. We agreed to their demand for a probe and law had taken its own course. Even I am a BC like Atchannaidu. The TDP did not spare me and even now has been spewing venom against me and other leaders of our party. The law does not recognise caste or social status but will treat everyone in the same measure."

He said that when the YSRCP leaders were persisted about the irregularities in the relief and rehabilitation work in wake of the Hudhud Cyclone, the then TDP government ordered a SIT asking it to probe the irregularities from 2004 onwards. "Now the same TDP is asking how can there be a probe into what has happened five years back," Botsa said.

He refuted allegations that the YSRCP government is forcibly acquiring land.

OUR SPEAKERS



NITIN GADKARI
Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways



PIYUSH GOEL
Union Minister of Railways and Commerce



PRAHLAD S PATEL
Union Minister of State for Tourism & Culture



BHARAT BALA
Filmmaker and Storyteller



RITU BERI
Indian heritage and luxury entrepreneur, fashion designer



AMAN NATH
Co-chairman, Neemrana group, architectural restorer



ROCKY AND MAYUR
Highway travellers, writers, TV show hosts



ZORAWAR KALRA
Restaurateur and progressive cuisine specialist



ASHWANI LOHANI
Ex-CMD, Air India



PRANAB SARKAR
IATO President



ANIL CHADHA
COO, ITC Hotels



MANDEEP SINGH SOIN
Mountaineer, Founder, Responsible Tourism Society of India



SUMITRA SENAPATY
Founder, Women on Wanderlust



SUMANT BATRA
Boutique museum hotelier



SHILPA SHARMA
Curated travel expert



SUBHASH GOYAL
Tourism policy specialist



ANUP KUTTY
Co-founder, Ziro Festival of Music



ABU SUFYAN
Founder, Puraani Dilli Walo Ki Baatein



RAVEE SINGH AHLUWALIA
Chief Functionary, Patiala Foundation



HARKIRAT AHLUWALIA
Founder, Citrus County Farmstays



SAMIL MALHOTRA
Tirun Travel Marketing

EXOTICA TOURISM SUMMIT

February 26, 2020
Hotel Shangri-La, New Delhi








ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

Development will be BJP's plank in Bihar: Nadda

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Exhorting party workers in Bihar to spread the message that "BJP is synonymous with development", its national president J P Nadda on Saturday asked them to work towards ensuring the NDA's return to power in the assembly elections due later this year.

Nadda inaugurated, through video conferencing, 11 new district offices of the BJP across the state.

Speaking at the function, he called upon party workers to make use of technology at their disposal and explain to the people that "Bihar has the blessings of Narendra Modi, who has provided assistance worth billions to the state and these have been effectively utilised on the ground through Chief Minister Nitish Kumar".



Nadda also asked workers to dispel "misinformation" about the Modi government's measures such as abrogation of Article 370 provisions and making triple talaq a punishable offence. He said they should explain to the people that these "decisive steps" had brought "happiness" to resi-

dents of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir who were previously deprived of many rights and women who were aggrieved by the practice of instant divorce.

Apparently mindful of the dissidence that comes to the fore ahead of the elections with many aspirants not being

Nadda also asked workers to dispel "misinformation" about the Modi government's measures such as abrogation of Article 370 provisions and making triple talaq a punishable offence

considered for tickets, Nadda said, "Always do remember, politics is a serious full-time job where there is an entry point but no exit."

"Do not get swayed by concerns of individual benefits. Do remember that if the party thrives, the benefits will reach all," he added.

Bike Bot scam: ED conducts multiple raids in Noida

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Saturday conducted searches at around a dozen locations in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh in connection with its money laundering probe against a Noida-based firm alleged to be involved in a ponzi scam, officials said.

They said the raids are being conducted at about 12 premises in Delhi, Noida and Lucknow under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in connection with the 'Bike Bot' case.

The searches are aimed to collect additional evidence and documents to take forward the probe in the case, the officials said.

The Greater Noida-headquartered Bike Bot taxi service is accused of duping Rs 3,000 to Rs 4,000 crore from 2.25 lakh investors in multiple states including Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Haryana.

Over a dozen company officials including the chief of Bike Bot company, Sanjay Bhati, have



The GIPL company in Greater Noida had come out with multi-level marketing scheme "Bike Bot" and lured investors with a promise of double returns in an year

been sent behind bars by the Noida Police. A few others wanted in the case are absconding.

The Garvit Innovative Promoters Limited (GIPL) company in Greater Noida had come out with multi-level marketing scheme "Bike Bot" and lured investors with a promise of double returns in an year.

They sought Rs 62,100 in investment for a motorcycle taxi and assured monthly returns besides double the investment amount in just one year but failed to deliver on the promise, as per the police.

The bike-taxis have been

operating in districts like Gautam Buddh Nagar, Ghaziabad, Hapur and Bulandshahr in western Uttar Pradesh, while its network was also active in states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, among others, officials said.

The company had used internet, social media, pamphlets, and motivators to spread word about the scheme and encourage gullible people to invest in it.

The investors would be further assured of some extra bonus if they could connect more investors with the scheme.

SHORT READS



UP BJP MLA gets clean chit in gangrape case, nephew arrested

BHADOHI (UP): Police on Saturday gave a clean chit to local BJP MLA Ravindra Nath Tripathi in a gangrape case as "no evidence" was found against him and arrested his nephew, officials said. Five others, who had also been named in an FIR lodged on Wednesday, were also absolved of rape charges by the district police, they said. The FIR was lodged against Tripathi and his kin on a complaint by a 40-year-old woman who had alleged that they had raped her in 2017. "During investigation, no evidence was found against the Bhadohi MLA and five others. They have been given a clean chit," Superintendent of Police (SP) Ram Badan Singh told newsmen here. "Tripathi's nephew Sandeep Tiwari has been arrested on charge of rape," he said. Another member of the family, Neetesh, who had been named in the FIR, has been booked for manhandling and abusing the woman, he added.

Manipur university V-C dismissed over irregularities

NEW DELHI: Manipur University Vice Chancellor Adya Prasad Pandey was dismissed by the government following complaints of financial and administrative irregularities, according to an HRD Ministry order. The human resource development (HRD) ministry on Friday dismissed Pandey after an inquiry. In an inquiry report, he was found indulging in "financial and administrative irregularities, including misconduct, dereliction of duties, abuse of power and lack of commitment, causing great harm to the academic environment and bringing the varsity into disrepute", the order stated. Pandey was placed under suspension in 2018 after violent protests erupted on the varsity's campus which led to prolonged shutdown of the institute.

Students, girls being used to create unrest: K'taka Minister

BENGALURU: Karnataka Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Saturday claimed students and girls were being used to create unrest in society besides rift between faiths and termed it as a larger part of a conspiracy hatched across the country. The minister was responding to questions about two women-Amulya Leona and Arudra- who were arrested recently in separate cases for raising pro-Pakistan slogans at an anti-CAA event and holding a "Kashmir Mukti (liberation), Dalit Mukti, Muslim Mukti" placard during a counter protest in the city respectively. "This is a larger part of a conspiracy, where students and girls are especially used by some vested interests to create unrest in the society besides rift between faiths," Bommai told reporters at Davangere.

Modi a versatile genius who thinks globally and acts locally: SC judge

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Supreme Court judge Justice Arun Mishra on Saturday was all praise for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and termed him as an "internationally acclaimed visionary" and a "versatile genius, who thinks globally and acts locally".

Complimenting the PM and Union Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad for doing away with 1,500 obsolete laws, Justice



Mishra said India is a responsible and most friendly member of the international community under the "stewardship" of Modi.

Delivering the vote of thanks at the inaugural function of the International Judicial Conference 2020 - 'Judiciary and the Changing World' at the Supreme Court, he said challenges faced by the judiciary at the national and international levels are com-

mon and judiciary has a "significant role" in the ever-changing world.

"Dignified human existence is our prime concern. We thank the versatile genius, who thinks globally and acts locally, Shri Narendra Modi, for his inspiring speech which would act as a catalyst in initiating the deliberations and setting the agenda for the conference, Justice Mishra, who is third in seniority in the apex court, said while expressing gratitude to the PM for inaugurating the conference.

Academician, ex-MP, Krishna Bose dead

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Academic-turned-politician Krishna Bose died on Saturday due to age-related ailments. She was 89.

Bose, the former Trinamool Congress MP from the Jadavpur constituency, was unwell for quite some time, family sources said.

She died at a private hospital off EM Bypass at 10.22 am, they said.

Bose was admitted to the hospital with irregular heart beat on February 16 and suffered a cerebral infarct on February 17 and remained in



critical condition, a senior doctor said.

"She was suffering from age-related ailments for quite some time. She suffered her second stroke a few days ago and was admitted to the ICU," her son

Sumantra Bose said. She was married to Sisir Kumar Bose, nephew of Subhas Chandra Bose.

Born on December 26, 1930, to constitutional expert Charu Chandra Chaudhuri in Dhaka, Bose taught at the City College in Kolkata for around 40 years. She headed the English department for several years and later also became the principal of the college.

Though Bose started in active politics as a member of the Congress, she was close to Mamata Banerjee and switched sides when the Trinamool Congress was formed.

"I lost someone respected, loved & admired by me. Saddened & shocked to hear about the demise of Krishna Basu, ex-TMC MP & wife of freedom fighter Dr Sisir Bose. Being a part of Netaji's family, she was a revered social reformer, renowned poet & a courageous educationalist," Banerjee said in a tweet.

"Krishna di was a mother to her son's Sumantra & Sugata, daughter Sarmila as well as the whole Trinamool family. Her immense contribution to Indian society & Bengali culture will be revered for times to come," she added.

NIRBHAYA CASE:

Convict's claim of mental illness a 'bundle of distorted facts'

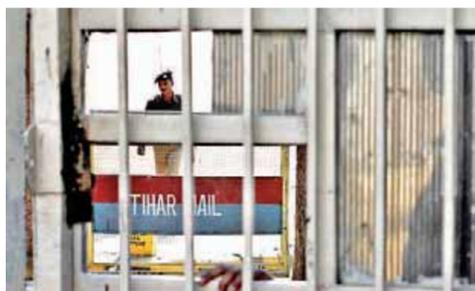
PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tihar jail authorities Saturday termed as a "bundle of distorted facts" the claim by one of the four death row convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder that he is suffering from mental illness.

The authorities told Additional Sessions Judge Dharmender Rana that CCTV footage established that the convict, Vinay Kumar Sharma, had inflicted "superficial" injuries on himself and was not suffering from any psychological disorder.

The court has reserved its order on Sharma's plea seeking relief on grounds of mental illness and is likely to pronounce it shortly. "These (convict's claims) are all a bundle of distorted facts. Doctor attended to him and found there was an injury. They gave him medicine. All injuries are self-inflicted and superficial in nature," the public prosecutor representing jail authorities said.

"The medical records say he is not suffering from any such mental illness and his checkup



in any hospital is not required. He is under regular check by the jail doctor," he said.

The psychologist, who appeared on behalf of the jail, said regular medical checkups of all four convicts were done on a daily basis and they are all fine.

"He talked to his mother and lawyer. So it's wrong to say that he is not able to recognise them," the prosecutor said.

The defence counsel said the convict has plaster on his hand that shows he has fractures and not superficial injuries.

"Why did the jail conceal the fact about his injuries from the

court? Why are documents not being filed?" advocate A P Singh, appearing for the convict, asked.

However, the Tihar authorities said "it's wrong to say he had a plastered arm. It wasn't a fracture. It was only a slab around his hand."

In his plea, Vinay has sought better treatment for his alleged mental illness, schizophrenia and head and arm injuries.

According to prison officials, Sharma injured himself by banging his head on his prison cell's wall in Tihar Jail.

The incident happened in jail

number 3 on Sunday afternoon, they said, adding that he got some minor injuries and was treated at the prison premises.

The plea claimed that when Sharma's counsel visited him in prison on the request of his family members, he found that he had sustained a grievous head injury, fracture in his right arm with plaster and was suffering from "insanity", "mental illness" and "schizophrenia". Sharma could not identify his counsel and his mother in jail, it said.

The petition further claimed that he had "decreased sleep" for a long time and was referred to a senior psychiatrist in view of drug dependence.

The court had on February 17 issued fresh death warrants for execution on March 3 at 6 am against the four death row convicts in the Nirbhaya gang rape and murder case.

It had issued fresh warrants against death row convicts -- Mukesh Kumar Singh (32), Pawan Gupta (25), Vinay (26) and Akshay Kumar (31). This is the third time that death warrants have been issued against them.

CORONAVIRUS:

Centre asks citizens to avoid non-essential travel to Singapore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In furtherance to the travel advisory issued earlier in the wake of the deadly coronavirus outbreak, the government on Saturday advised citizens to avoid all non-essential travel to Singapore.

It also said screening at airports is now being planned for flight passengers coming to India from Kathmandu, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia from Monday.

Currently, passengers from China, Hong Kong, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore and Japan are screened at 21 designated airports in the country for a possible exposure to the novel coronavirus.

The decision was taken during a review meeting chaired by the Cabinet Secretary to take a stock of the status, actions taken and preparedness of states and UTs regarding management of novel coronavirus (COVID19) here on Saturday, the Union Health Ministry said.

"In furtherance to the travel advisory issued earlier, citi-



Passengers from China, Hong Kong, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore and Japan are screened at 21 designated airports in the country for a possible exposure to the novel coronavirus

zens are advised to avoid all non-essential travel to Singapore," the ministry said in a statement.

As on date, 21,805 passengers have been brought under community surveillance. In addition, 3,97,152 flight passengers and 9,695 travellers at sea ports

have been screened, it said.

After a detailed review, in addition to the screening as per earlier advisories, universal screening at airports is now being planned for flights from Kathmandu, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia from Monday, the ministry said.

Relief plane to Wuhan: China 'delaying' permission to India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

China is delaying grant of clearance to India's proposal to send an Indian Air Force plane to carry relief material for people affected by coronavirus in the neighbouring country and bring back Indians from its city of Wuhan, official sources said on Saturday.

India was to send a C-17 military transport aircraft to Wuhan, the epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak, on February 20 but the plane could not take off as permission was not granted.

"China is deliberately delaying grant of clearance for the evacuation flight," a high-level source said.

Official sources said Japan, Ukraine and France have been allowed to operate flights between February 16 and 20 but India's request has not been approved.

When contacted, a Chinese Embassy spokesperson said there was no deliberate delay in grant of permission for the



Indian flight to reach Wuhan.

"The current epidemic situation in Hubei province is complicated, and the prevention and control of Covid-19 has entered into a critical stage. There is no such thing as China deliberately delaying granting flight permission," spokesperson Ji Rong said.

The sources said Indian nationals stuck in Wuhan are waiting to be brought back home and the uncertainty over evacuation is causing them

mental stress and anxiety.

The aircraft was to carry a large consignment of medical supplies to China and bring back more Indians from Wuhan.

Sources said while the Chinese side continues to maintain that there was no delay in granting permission for the flight to go, the clearance has "inexplicably" not been given.

In a letter to President Xi Jinping earlier this month,

"The current epidemic situation in Hubei province is complicated, and the prevention and control of Covid-19 has entered into a critical stage. There is no such thing as China deliberately delaying granting flight permission," spokesperson Ji Rong said

Prime Minister Narendra Modi conveyed India's solidarity to the people and government of China in meeting the challenge of the coronavirus outbreak and offered to provide assistance to the country.

India then put together relief supplies in pursuance of Modi's commitment as a token of India's solidarity, particularly in the 70th year of the anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

"These supplies have been offered even as India faces tremendous shortage itself, given our ethos of helping others in their hour of need," said a source aware of the issue.

The items being supplied are gloves, surgical masks, feeding pumps and defibrillators based on the requirements as indicated by the Chinese side.

"The Chinese side always attaches great importance to the health and safety of Indian nationals in China, and provides assistance and convenience for the return of Indian citizens," Rong further said in reply to the query.

"We are carefully assessing the ground situation, as prevention work requires. Competent departments of the two countries are keeping communication and coordination in this regard," he said.

India's national carrier Air

India has already evacuated around 640 Indians from Wuhan in two separate flights.

According to estimates, over 100 Indians are still living in Wuhan. A sizeable number of countries have evacuated their citizens from China and restricted movement of people and goods to and from the country in view of the massive outbreak of coronavirus there.

Indian nationals in Wuhan continue their long wait for the flight. The delay is causing them and their family members in India tremendous mental anguish, said the sources.

They said relief and evacuation flights from other countries including by France are allowed to operate by China but the permission has not come through in India's case.

"Are they not interested in Indian aid provided as our token of support? Why are they creating roadblock in evacuating our nationals from Wuhan and putting them under hardship and mental agony?" said a person aware of the issue.

Cong: Modi govt gave loans to 'crony friends', no relief for farmers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday cited a Credit Suisse report to allege that the Modi government waived loans worth Rs 7,77,800 crore of "crony friends" in five years, and asked why it could not give debt relief to farmers.

"Shocking state of bank loan waivers, NPAs & impaired banking assets exposed by Credit Suisse report! Since 2014, Modi government has given super sized bank loans waivers worth Rs 7,77,800 Crore!" Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said in a series of tweets.

Why is the Modi government not disclosing the names of the beneficiaries of this 'largesse', Surjewala asked. "Gross banking NPAs are a



whopping Rs 9,10,800 crore! Impaired banking assets are a colossal Rs 16,88,000 crore! Credit growth of private banks down to 12 per cent, PSU banks down to 4 per cent!" he said.

"Modi government can waive loans of Rs 7,77,800 crore in 5 years of crony friends, why no debt relief to India's farmers? Who is responsible for safety of people's money in banks?" Surjewala asked.

SHORT READS



NCP factions come face to face during Supriya Sule's speech

AURANGABAD: Supporters of two rival NCP leaders raised slogans against each other when party MP Supriya Sule was addressing workers at Patthan city in Maharashtra's Aurangabad district. The incident took place on Friday. When the Baramati MP was addressing NCP workers, the supporters of party leader Datta Gorde, who had contested the 2019 Maharashtra Assembly polls, and those of former MLA Bhausaheb Wagchoure came face to face. The rival factions started raising slogans against each other, which disrupted Sule's speech. Sule had to intervene and pacify the members of both the groups. After the sloganeering ended, Sule continued her speech and reprimanded the members for their misbehaviour. "NCP chief Sharad Pawar has put in tremendous efforts to build the party...If the party workers behave in this manner again, they will have to face me," she warned.

Jaipur airport to be alternative landing for Trump's aircraft

JAIPUR: A special aircraft of the US Army carrying top officials arrived on Saturday at Jaipur International Airport to take stock of security arrangements ahead of US President Donald Trump's visit to India, an airport official said. "The aircraft landed at the airport at 9 am and flew out at 11 am. US Embassy officials took stock of the security measures at the airport. There is no scheduled programme at the airport but precautionary measures are being taken," Jaipur International Airport Director J S Balhara said. Trump will be on a two-day visit to India from February 24 to 25 and Jaipur airport will be the first alternative for landing his aircraft in case of bad weather, the official said.

SHAHEEN BAGH PROTEST

An example of struggle between rights and duties of people: Naqvi

NEW DELHI: Minority Affairs Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Saturday termed the Shaheen Bagh protest against CAA an example of the struggle between rights and duties of the people. "They (protesters) understand their rights but not their duties. I do not think one can achieve their rights by abducting (blocking) a road," Naqvi said at Indian Student Parliament event held at Vigyan Bhawan here. "We will always be caught up in confusion if we do not understand our rights and duties," he said. The protest against Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), primarily by local women, started in Shaheen Bagh in mid December, has led to blocking of a road connecting southeast Delhi areas to Noida causing daily hardships to commuters.



'1.3 bn Indians wholeheartedly welcomed critical verdicts'

● Modi on judgement's that became subjects of global discussion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday said "1.3 billion Indians" have disregarded apprehensions and "wholeheartedly" accepted recent critical judicial verdicts which were subjects of global discussion.

Speaking at the inaugural function of the International Judicial Conference 2020 - 'Judiciary and the Changing World' at the Supreme Court, Modi spoke about recent crucial judgements, in an apparent reference to path-breaking verdicts including in the politically-sensitive Ayodhya case.

The Prime Minister said no country or society in the world can claim to achieve holistic development without gender justice and referred to laws on transgenders, 'triple talaq' and on the rights of 'Divyang' (persons with disabilities).

He said the government has also taken steps to give rights to women in military service and in providing paid maternity leave for 26 weeks. He also hailed the Indian judiciary for redefining environmental jurisprudence to strike a balance between development and ecological protection.

Modi, while emphasising



The Prime Minister said no country or society in the world can claim to achieve holistic development without gender justice and referred to laws on transgenders, 'triple talaq' and on the rights of 'Divyang' (persons with disabilities)

on the use of technology and the internet, said it would help in procedural management of courts and would benefit the justice delivery system to a large extent. He also referred to synchronisation of artificial intelligence with human wisdom and said it would bring "speed to delivery of justice".

"In addition, in the changing times, issues like data protection, cyber crimes pose new challenges for the judiciary," he said in his inaugural address.

"In recent times, there have been some critical judicial judgements and decisions which have been the subject of global discussion. Before these

judgements were delivered, several apprehensions were being expressed about the consequences. But look what happened! 1.3 billion Indians wholeheartedly accepted the judicial verdicts," Modi said.

He said it is going to be a decade of remarkable changes across the world which will impact all frontiers, be it society, economy, or technology, and these changes need to be rational as well as just and fair.

Talking about the contribution of Mahatma Gandhi, the Prime Minister said, "Gandhiji's life was dedicated to the cause of truth and service, which are the foundational tenets for any system of justice and as you all know, he was himself a barrister and belonged to the fraternity of lawyers".

Hailing a vibrant judiciary, legislature and executive, the PM said, "Respecting each other's jurisdiction and dignity, these three pillars of the Constitution have resolved various challenges faced by the country on several occasions.

"We are proud of having developed such a rich tradition in India. In the last five years, various institutions of India have further strengthened this tradition".

TRUMP'S GUJARAT VISIT

Committee reviews steps for grand welcome

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

A committee formed to oversee various programmes that are part of US President Donald Trump's visit to Gujarat on February 24, held its first meeting at the Circuit House in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

The 'Swagat Samiti' is a 10-member committee that includes Ahmedabad Mayor Bijal Patel, who is its chairperson, BJP MPs from Ahmedabad East and West Lok Sabha seats Hasmukh Patel and Kirit Solanki respectively, architect and Padma Bhushan awardee BV Doshi, Gujarat University Vice Chancellor Himanshu Pandya, and Durgesh Buch of the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

"It has been our culture that we welcome our guests with enthusiasm, and we are committed to that," Mayor Patel told reporters.

MP Kirit Solanki said, "Heads of two of the world's largest democracies are visiting Ahmedabad. To welcome them is a historic event, not just for



Ahmedabad but for the country and the world...I feel proud to be part of the committee. There are ten members in the committee." Solanki informed that the committee members will visit the newly-built Sardar Patel Stadium in Motera, where the 'Namaste Trump' event will be held.

The formation of the committee, first announced as Donald Trump Nagarik Abhivadan Samiti by Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson

Raveesh Kumar, had drawn flak from the Congress.

In a tweet on Thursday, Congress spokesperson Randeep Surjewala asked, "Dear P.M, Intriguing news from @MEAIndia! Pl state- 1. Who is the President of Donald Trump Abhinandan Samiti? 2. When was the invitation extended to U.S President & accepted? 3. Why is President Trump then saying you have promised him a grand event with 7 million people?"

Heads of two of the world's largest democracies are visiting Ahmedabad. To welcome them is a historic event, not just for Ahmedabad but for the country and the world...I feel proud to be part of the committee. There are ten members in the committee

— KIRIT SOLANKI, Ahmedabad West MP

'Promote culture where students earn and learn'

PNS ■ KOZHIKODE

Kerala Labour and Skills Minister T P Ramakrishnan on Saturday said there is a need to promote a culture where students earn while studying and to this end will soon bring out a state Skills Policy. "Kerala will soon bring out a state Skills Policy and also a Career Policy considering the recent surge in the importance of technology in the new age," he said here at the inaugural of India Skills Kerala 2020, an endeavour to showcase the technical proficiency of the youth.

"We must promote a culture where students earn while studying. The state needs its youth in educational institutions to do part-time jobs," the Minister added.

He said the government had initiated several skill development programmes and added, "India Skills Kerala is part of that mission."

The three-day state-level round of India Skills Kerala which began here today, offers total prize money of around Rs 78 lakh.

The event features 253 par-

"We must promote a culture where students earn while studying. The state needs its youth in educational institutions to do part-time jobs"



ticipants who will be showcasing their skills in 39 disciplines with several prizes and a ticket for an international-level competition in China at stake. India Skills Kerala gives the winner of each skill Rs one lakh, while the runner-up will receive Rs 50,000. Those finishing in the subsequent four ranks get Rs 10,000 each. "Kozhikode has a history of popularising peoples festival," Ramakrishnan said. "Let genuine and extraor-

inary skills lead the youth to greater heights," he added.

Kozhikode North MLA A Pradeepkumar, who is chairman of the events organising committee, in his presidential address, said events focused on the skill development of youth are a welcome sign.

India Skills Kerala comes as a result of its district-level competitions held last month, with 4,298 contestants.

The 1,278 winners among them subsequently qualified for the zonal rounds held separately for the north, central and south regions of the state. While the state-level winners qualify for the national competitions, the prize-winning performers in that round will represent the country at World Skills 2021 in Shanghai. That global round next year will have youngsters from 83 countries vying for honours and prizes in 54 skills.

Prahar Janshakti Party leader shot dead

PNS ■ AKOLA

A local leader of the Prahar Janshakti Party (PJP) was allegedly shot dead by two unidentified assailants at Akot town in Maharashtra's Akola district, police said on Saturday.

Tushar Pundkar, who was former Akola district chief of the PJP, was shot at around 10 pm on Friday, and died in the wee hours of Saturday while undergoing treatment at a hospital in Akola, police said.

Giving information about the incident, a police official said, "Pundkar was walking in Police Colony area of Akot around 10 pm on Friday when two motorcycle-borne persons fired two bullets at him from behind. Pundkar collapsed on the ground. Some local residents alerted the police and rushed him to the Rural Hospital in the town."



PNS ■ BENGALURU

President Ram Nath Kovind on Saturday asked the traditional media to introspect on its role in society in the face of the new media, driven by the internet and social media, to earn the reader's full trust again. "The new media is fast and popular and people can choose what they want to watch, hear or read.

But only the traditional media has, over the years, developed skills to authenticate a news report, and that is a costly operation," he said in his inaugural speech at the fourth edition of 'The Huddle' by English daily The Hindu.

The President said the traditional media would have to introspect on its role in society and find ways to earn the reader's full trust again.

"The project of democracy is incomplete without informed citizens which means, without unbiased journalism," he said.

Speaking about the new media, the President said rapidly evolving Information Technology has impact-

ed journalism in all its aspects, from news gathering to delivering news to readers and finally making money to sustain the activity.

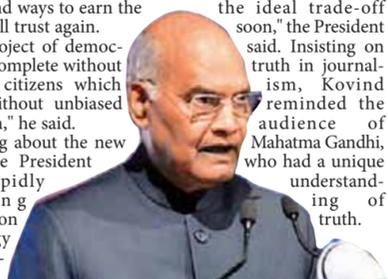
The internet and social media have democratised journalism and revitalized democracy, said Kovind, adding that it has also led to many anxieties.

In this context, only the traditional media remains authentic.

"The new media is fast and popular and people can choose what they want to watch, hear or read.

But only the traditional media has, over the years, developed skills to authenticate a news report, and that is a costly operation.

I hope that we will arrive at the ideal trade-off soon," the President said. Insisting on truth in journalism, Kovind reminded the audience of Mahatma Gandhi, who had a unique understanding of truth.



'Why is Cong unhappy when country's stature is growing?'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Hitting out at the Congress over its scepticism about US President Donald Trump's visit to India, the BJP on Saturday asked the opposition party why it is unhappy when the country's stature is being raised globally.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, party spokesperson Sambit Patra said Trump's visit will be a landmark moment in the Indo-US relationship and advised the Congress to "start taking pride in the nation's achievements".

"This is a meeting of the world's largest and oldest democracies and it should be celebrated," he said. Underlining that Trump himself has said multiple times that India is a hard bargainer, Patra said the Congress should not be worried about India's interests. With PM Narendra Modi's hardwork, India's relations with other countries have further strengthened from Sochi to Mallapuram, he said.



GOA CARNIVAL

Thousands line up to watch float parade

PNS ■ PANAJI

The world-renowned Carnival began in Goa's Panaji on Saturday and thousands of people lined the streets to watch the float parade led by the mythological King Momo.

The parade, flagged off by state tourism minister Manohar Ajaonkar, traveled three kilometres on the picturesque DB Bandodkar Road along the Mandovi river and culminated four hours later near the Kala Academy here.

Lawyer Shalom Saldanha was chosen as King Momo by the state tourism department for this year's festivities, which will culminate on February 25. Among the highlights of the float parade were martial arts performers and decorated cars.

Before the start of the parade, 'King Momo' Saldanha said festivities this year were dedicated to a drug-free Goa. "Say no to drugs. When you drink, drink responsibly," he said.



'Unnao DM suspended over irregularities in expenditure of school education funds'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh government on Saturday suspended Unnao District Magistrate Devendra Kumar Pandey over alleged irregularities in expenditure of Composite School Grant fund of the Basic Shiksha Department.

Kannauj DM Ravindra Kumar will be the new district magistrate of Unnao, an official spokesperson said.

In an inquiry conducted by the Lucknow commissioner, Unnao DM Pandey has been found prima facie responsible for taking wrong decisions in spending the Composite School Grant fund in the district and in implementation of various programmes linked to it, the spokesperson added.

The inquiry has found that most of the material which had to be purchased under it was procured from one firm in Jaunpur at rates higher than the market rates, the spokesperson said, adding the quality of the purchased goods too was below the prescribed standards, the spokesperson said.



Rule of law essential feature of modern Constitutions

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The rule of law is probably the "most fundamental feature" of modern constitutions and its success depends on how judiciaries across the world respond to emerging challenges, Chief Justice SA Bobde said on Saturday. The CJ, while speaking at the International Judges' Conference on the subject of 'Judiciary and the Changing World' at the Supreme Court here, also stressed on the need for citizens to perform their legal duties.

"Probably the most fundamental feature of most modern constitutions is the idea of the rule of law," he said, adding,



"Undoubtedly, the success of the rule of law in our countries depends on how the judiciaries respond to such challenges and

how they emerge." Referring to Constitutional provisions, Justice Bobde said it was often implicit in law that "legal rights have correlatives of legal duties."

"A feature often neglected is a chapter on fundamental duties imposing on every citizen the duties to abide by the constitution, the whole of it and respect its ideals and institution," he said. The CJ said more than 50 countries have specific provisions on fundamental duties in

their constitutions. Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, Justice Bobde said the exercise of rights depends on one's sense of duty and "real rights are a result of performance of duty".

The CJ also referred to "incredible technological advancement" and said now the entire world was interconnected and a small change in one corner of the world can result in changes in different parts of the world. "Judiciaries all

over the world are dealing with this kind of change, what might be called a rights revolution, a technological revolution and a demographic revolution. Our decisions no longer impact only those who live in our jurisdiction but also those who live in other jurisdictions, some far away," he said. Wishing success to the first such conference organised by the Indian Supreme Court in which judges from over 20 countries are taking part, he said this would offer opportunities to judges "to exchange ideas and gain knowledge from each other on many aspects of gender justice, right to privacy, populism, environment and sustainable development."

MAN KILLS MOTHER-IN-LAW AS WIFE TERMINATES PREGNANCY

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A man allegedly shot his mother-in-law dead suspecting that she was behind his wife's decision to terminate her pregnancy twice, police said on Saturday.

The woman was killed in Munka on February 14 while she was returning home from a private hospital in Paschim Vihar where she worked as a nurse, they said.

Her son-in-law, Pankaj, and his two accomplices Ujjawal

Dabas and Ajit allegedly sprayed bullets at the woman while she was in an e-rickshaw. She suffered five bullet injuries and died on the spot, police said. Dabas was arrested in Ladpur village on Wednesday, while Ajit and Pankaj are absconding, they said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) PS Kushwah said Dabas was arrested on the basis of a tip-off. One pistol and nine cartridges were recovered from his possession, the DCP said.



SHORT READS



Dilip Buildcon executes EPC agreement with AAI

NEW DELHI: Dilip Buildcon on Saturday said it has executed an EPC (engineering, procurement and construction) agreement for construction of a new greenfield airport at Rajkot in Gujarat. "...the company has executed an EPC agreement with the Airport Authority of India for an EPC project in the state of Gujarat," Dilip Buildcon said in a BSE filing. The project cost is Rs 570.06 crore and completion period is 30 months, it added.



Migsun to invest Rs 55 cr to build hospital in Ghaziabad

NEW DELHI: Realty firm Migsun Group on Saturday said it is entering the health segment by building a hospital in Ghaziabad at an investment of Rs 55 crore. The multi-specialty hospital is under construction at Raj Nagar Extension in Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh. The structure work of the proposed hospital is almost complete and the project will be operational this year, the company said in a statement. Migsun Group MD Yash Miglani said, "Ghaziabad has a dearth of quality hospitals that offer quality treatment at a reasonable cost." "Spread across 1.75 acres, the upcoming hospital will have 250 beds and have multiple specialties. It is likely to entail an investment of Rs 55 crore, which includes land cost as well," the statement said. Migsun is currently developing more than 10 projects. The company, earlier named Mahaluxmi Group, has built several residential and commercial projects in Ghaziabad.

CEA: INDIA NEEDS PRO-BIZ, NOT PRO-CRONY POLICIES

PNS ■ MUMBAI

India has some distance to go in fully shifting from pro-crony to pro-business policies, Chief Economic Adviser Krishnamurthy Subramanian said on Saturday.

It will be the pro-business policies that will enable the "invisible hands of the market" and also take the country to the goal of USD 5 trillion GDP, he added.

"Pro-business policies are those that enable fair competition in the country. We have some distance to go in terms of enabling that fully. Pro-crony policies on the other hand just help incumbents and that is something that we have to stay away from in enabling the invisible hands of the market," he said at an alumni conference of his alma mater IIT-Kanpur here.

Indian policymaking has been criticised for favouring crony capitalists in the initial decades after Independence, till the country shifted gears by adopting liberalisation in 1991.

Subramanian said after the CAG's report on telecom spectrum allocations came out in 2011, investor returns from "connected companies", a euphemism for crony firms, have been very low as compared to the broader indices.



The problem with cronyism is that it is not better business models and processes which drive the growth, he said, adding that we should always aim for "creative destruction" where the incumbents are challenged.

The problem with cronyism is that it is not better business models and processes which drive the growth, he said, adding that we should always aim for "creative destruction" where the incumbents are challenged.

In a critique of the dominant policy choices in the initial decades after Independence, Subramanian said "the trust with socialism did not deliver the trust with destiny", referring to first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's famous speech when India attained freedom.

He also made a strong case for not depending only on recent work in economics to

make policy choices and neglecting age-old texts like the Arthashastra.

"Scholarly work isn't something that was written in the last 100 years but dates back millennia," he said.

The Arthashastra stresses on ethical ways of creating wealth, he said, adding that we need to focus on creating trust in the markets as well.

If governance standards have to be increased in the country, there has to be a greater focus on disclosing related-party transactions, the CEA said. The comments come in the wake of frauds like the one at non-bank lender DHFL.

The Union Budget's thrust

on 'Assemble in India' should not be seen as substitute to the government's flagship 'Make in India' programme, but as a complementary aspect which will act as a precursor to other goals, he said.

On the focus on 'Assemble in India', Subramanian cited the case of Suzuki's entry into the country in 1980s and the developments in the auto sector since then to illustrate that simple assembly of parts to make a car is a precursor to manufacturing and also intellectual property creation.

Pointing out to the recently released Economic Survey, he said over four crore well-paying jobs can be created in the country by 2025 by focusing on assembling for the world, and the same can go up to eight crore by 2030.

Asked about the Budget's thrust on imposing tariffs on certain sectors and how it has been criticised as being protectionist by some, Subramanian said we need to make a distinction between duties that are imposed on finished products against those on raw materials or intermediate goods which hurt exports.

"We need to move towards far more open trade policies on intermediate goods and raw materials to enable exports," he told reporters.

PM-KISAN: Centre pays Rs 50,850 crore to farmers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Saturday said it has disbursed Rs 50,850 crore to farmers so far under its landmark scheme PM-KISAN, enabling them to meet farm input cost and household expenses.

The agriculture ministry shared the progress made under the scheme, ahead of its first anniversary on February 24.

The PM-KISAN was formally launched on February 24 last year by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Under the scheme, the Centre transfers an amount of Rs 6,000 per year, in three equal instalments, directly into the bank accounts of the farmers, subject to certain exclusion criteria relating to higher income status.

"February 24, 2020 is the 1st anniversary of starting of a new Central Sector Scheme, namely, the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)," an official statement said.

The scheme was launched to provide income support to all landholding farmers' families across the country and enable them to meet expenses related to agriculture as well as domestic needs, it added.

"The Central Government has already released more than



The scheme is effective from December 2018. The cut-off date for identification of beneficiaries with regard to their eligibility was February 1, 2019. The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiaries rests with the state /UT governments

Rs 50,850 crores till now," the ministry said.

Total number of beneficiaries covered under the scheme is about 14 crore, based on estimates of the Agriculture Census 2015-16.

As on February 20 this year, 8.46 crores farmer families have been given the benefits.

The scheme is effective from December 2018. The cut-off date for identification of beneficiaries with regard to their eligibility was February 1,

2019. The entire responsibility of identification of beneficiaries rests with the state /UT governments.

The scheme initially provided income support to all small and marginal farmers' families across the country, holding cultivable land up to 2 hectares.

However, its ambit was later expanded to cover all farmer families in the country irrespective of the size of their land holdings.

Fox and NBC Universal in talks to acquire streaming platforms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Media groups Fox Corp and NBC Universal are looking to buy ad-supported streaming platforms meant to lure customers who don't want to spend money on subscriptions, the Wall Street Journal reported Friday.

Fox, the Murdoch-family controlled media group which owns the Fox News Channel, has said it would be willing to shell out some USD 500 million for Tubi, a streaming platform which airs mostly older movies and TV shows, the report said.

A tie-up could help expand the footprint of Fox, which last year sold much of its film and television assets to Disney but retained its broadcast television network in the deal.

Tubi, sometimes called the "free Netflix," claims to have



A tie-up could help expand the footprint of Fox, which last year sold much of its film and television assets to Disney but retained its broadcast television network in the deal.

some 25 million users and recently announced an expansion into Europe.

It already operates in the United States, Canada and Australia.

NBCUniversal, a subsidiary of Comcast, is meanwhile engaged in what the WSJ called advanced talks with Vudu, a Walmart-owned, ad-supported service that allows users to rent and buy movies or watch them online via a free streaming platform.

NBCUniversal already has plans to launch a new streaming television service called Peacock in April, which can be accessed both ad-free or with ads at different payment tiers.

The potential Fox and NBCUniversal acquisitions come as internet platforms and entertainment groups are launching streaming and on-demand services as part of a larger trend to attract viewers who are veering away from traditional television.

'Howdy, Modi!' team hopes 'Namaste Trump' will help improve US-India ties

PNS ■ HOUSTON

The maiden visit of US President Donald Trump to India next week will provide an opportunity to improve the bilateral relationship, strengthen the strategic ties and deepen commitment to an open Indo-Pacific, according to the team behind the historic "Howdy, Modi!" event here last September.

President Trump will pay a state visit to India on February 24 and 25 at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The US President will be accompanied by a high-level delegation including First Lady Melania Trump, the President's daughter Ivanka Trump, son-in-law Jared Kushner and a galaxy of top American officials.

In Ahmedabad on Monday, Trump will address the "Namaste Trump" event jointly with Prime Minister Modi at the newly built Motera cricket stadium, the world's largest.

In September, Trump and Modi shared a stage in Houston at a massive rally of



Indian-Americans called "Howdy, Modi!". In India, they will share a stage for "Namaste Trump," which roughly translates as "Hello Trump."

Hundreds of thousands of people are expected to greet Trump in Ahmedabad for a road show leading to the rally at the huge stadium with a

capacity to accommodate 110,000 spectators.

The "Howdy, Modi!" team would like to extend its best wishes to the organisers of the "Namaste Trump" event in Ahmedabad.

"We know the level of hard work that the Namaste Trump event organisers must be putting in for their summit on February 24th, and we look forward to seeing the results of their labour in a few days," Juglal Malani, convener of the "Howdy, Modi!" community summit in Houston, Texas, said in a statement.

It was at the "Howdy, Modi!" summit on September 22, 2019 with a packed crowd in attendance that Prime Minister Modi invited President Trump to visit India, the statement noted.

Yet to finalise trade deal with India: US

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

The United States on Friday said it was unlikely that a trade deal would be inked with India during President Donald Trump's upcoming visit to the country, saying that concerns that led to India's removal from the Generalized System of Preferences persisted.

"The concerns that led to the revocation, suspension of India's Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) access remains a concern for us. And to remind, it was really the failure of the Indian government to provide equitable and reasonable access to its markets in numerous sectors," a senior administration official told reporters during a conference call.



There have been talks about India and the United States agreeing on a trade package as a precursor to a major trade deal.

Trump and First Lady Melania Trump are scheduled to travel to Ahmedabad, Agra and New Delhi on February 24 and 25. There have been talks about India and the United States agreeing on a trade package as a precursor to a major trade deal.

US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, who has

been negotiating a trade deal with India, is not travelling with Trump on the India trip. In fact, he had cancelled his earlier trip to India as well.

"We continue to talk to our Indian colleagues about addressing these market access barriers. Our trade teams, led by the USTR, have been in touch with their counterparts

over the past several weeks. That engagement will continue," the official said. "The trade and economic relationship with India is critically important to the United States, and I think also access to the United States market is critical to the Indian government. We do want to make sure that we get this balance right. We want to address a bunch -- a lot of concerns, and we're not quite there yet," the official said in response to a question. The high-powered American delegation led by Trump will likely have discussion with Prime Minister Narendra Modi about these concerns and continue the discussion beyond this visit, said the senior administration official.

Bloomberg smashes campaign spending record

PNS ■ WASHINGTON

Presidential hopeful Michael Bloomberg, the multi-billionaire former mayor of New York, has shattered the record for campaign advertising, spending a staggering \$364.3 million and counting, an ad tracker said Friday.

The unprecedented amount recently surpassed the previous record spending by Barack Obama's campaign during his entire 2012 re-election effort, Advertising Analytics reported.

"Bloomberg surpassed Obama's 2012 spending record of \$338.3M, making him the highest spending candidate of all time," the non-partisan group said in a newsletter.

The figures include only those for traditional broadcast advertising on television and radio.

Bloomberg, seeking the Democratic Party nomination, is also far ahead in digital advertising, and spent \$14.5 million on Facebook and Google ads alone last week -- more than 10 times all his Democratic competitors combined.

The overall amount does not include spending by outside groups not formally connected to political parties, but which spend heavily during election season in

support of -- or opposition to -- specific candidates.

In the 2016 cycle, spending by super PACs (political action committees) and other groups that can spend unlimited funds but are barred from coordinating with campaigns topped \$1.4 billion, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

Bloomberg's spending may be in its early stages, given that just two of the 50 US states have voted in the race to determine who faces President Donald Trump in November -- and he didn't formally compete in either of them.



Bharti Infratel board to meet on Feb 24 post DoT's nod for merger

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bharti Infratel on Saturday said its board will meet on February 24 to chart out the future course of action following the telecom department's approval for merger with Indus Towers.

The combination of Bharti Infratel and Indus Towers will create a pan-India tower company with over 163,000 towers, operating across all 22 telecom service areas. The combined entity will be the largest tower company in the world outside China.

"...FDI approval for merger of Indus Towers with Bharti Infratel has been received late evening yesterday," Bharti Infratel said in a regulatory fil-



Indus Towers, would change its name to Indus Towers Ltd and will continue to be listed on Indian stock exchanges.

The timely completion of the tower deal was critical for the companies, since it would allow Bharti and Vodafone Idea in offloading stake and raising funds.

The development comes at a time when Vodafone Idea is confronted with total AGR dues of over Rs 53,000 crore. Of this, it has paid only Rs 3,500 crore in two tranches earlier this week.

In all, as many as 15 entities owe the government Rs 1.47 lakh crore -- Rs 92,642 crore in unpaid licence fee and another Rs 55,054 crore in outstanding spectrum usage charges.

'VIVAD SE VISHWAS' SCHEME

Cases in arbitration abroad eligible: I-T Dept

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Income tax cases being arbitrated abroad will be eligible to be taken up under the proposed 'Vivad se Vishwas' scheme to settle disputes between the taxman and the taxpayer, the department said on Saturday.

The I-T department issued advertisements in leading dailies saying the scheme was a "golden opportunity... to settle income tax disputes", bridge the trust deficit in cases of disputes and minimise tax-related litigation.

The public message spells out the main features of the scheme proposed by Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech on February 1, like the

The I-T department issued advertisements in leading dailies saying the scheme was a "golden opportunity... to settle income tax disputes", bridge the trust deficit in cases of disputes and minimise tax-related litigation.



eligibility, disputes covered and payment terms.

Under the eligibility head, the department said appeals and writs filed on or before January 31 this year will be

allowed to be taken up under the scheme.

Other eligibilities are: Orders for which time for filing appeal has not expired on January 31; cases pending before dispute resolution panel (DRP) or where the DRP issued direction on or before January 31, 2020 but no order has been passed; cases where assessee filed revision and in raid cases where disputed tax is less than Rs 5 crore in a year.

It added that disputes where the payment has already been made shall also be eligible; appeals or writs filed by taxpayers or the department and cases in arbitration in India or abroad.

The scheme, it said in the advertisement, will cover all disputes related to tax, penalty, interest, fee, tax deducted at source (TDS) or tax collected at source (TCS).

Talking about the payment of taxes under the scheme, it said for remittances made on or before March 31, 100 per cent of the disputed tax is to be paid (125 per cent in search cases) and if appeal relates only to disputed penalty or interest or fee then 25 per cent of the disputed penalty or interest or fee is to be paid.



Biocon gets 3 USFDA observations

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

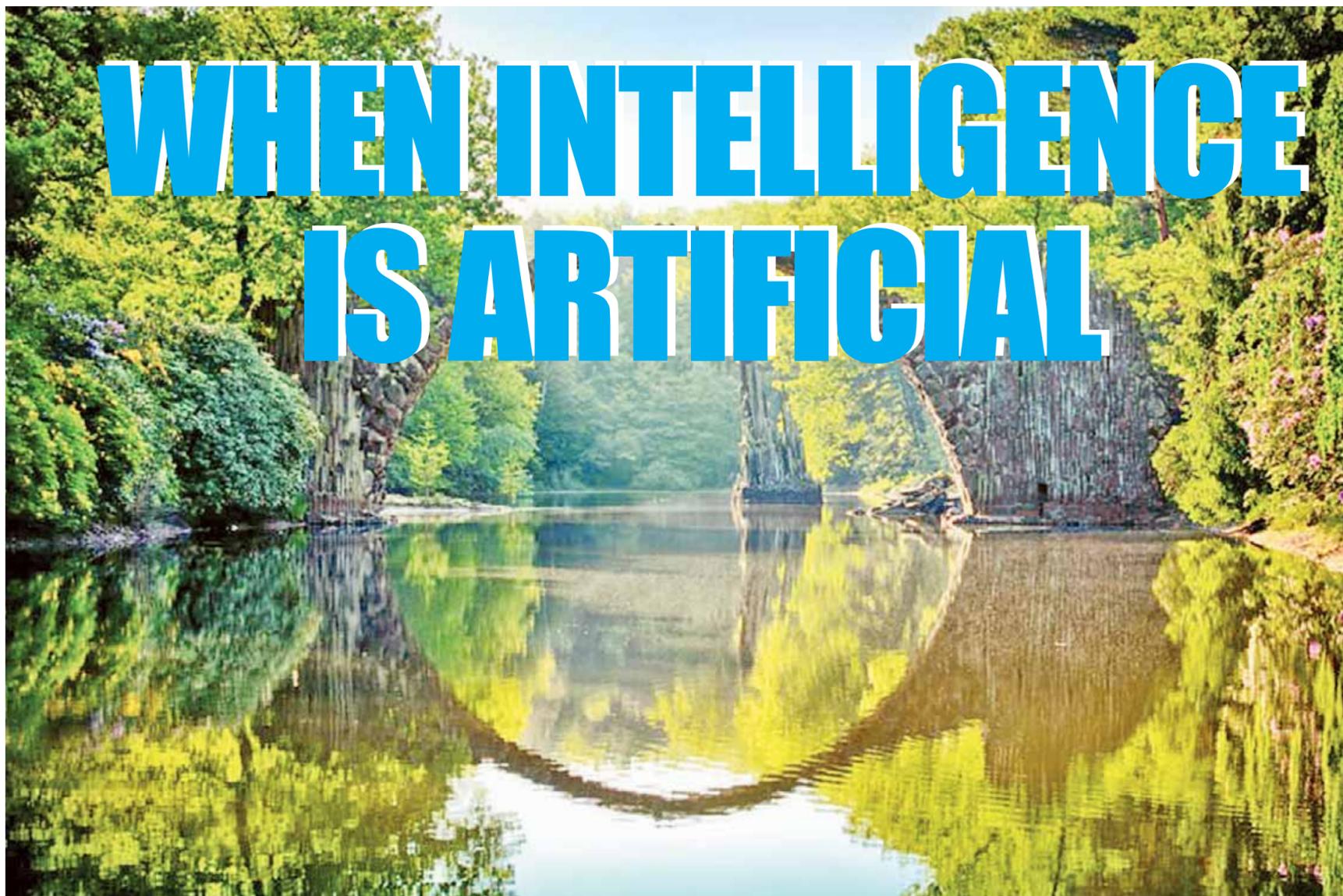
Biocon on Saturday said it has received three observations from the US health regulator following inspection of its insulin manufacturing facility in Malaysia. The US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) had conducted a pre-approval inspection of Biocon's subsidiary Biocon Sdn Bhd's manufacturing facility in Malaysia for Insulin Gargline between February 10 and 21.

"At the conclusion of the inspection, the agency issued a Form 483 with three observations which we believe are procedural in nature," a Biocon spokesperson said in a regulatory filing. As per the USFDA, Form 483 is issued to firm management at the conclusion of an inspection when investigators have observed any conditions that in their judgment may constitute violations of the Food Drug and Cosmetic Act and related Acts.

"We will respond to the FDA with an appropriate Corrective and Preventive Action Plan (CAPA) and we are confident of addressing these observations expeditiously," the company added.

The FDA has set a target action date for its Insulin Gargline application in June 2020, it said. "We believe the outcome of this inspection does not in any way impact the commercialisation plans of Insulin Gargline in the US. Biocon Biologics is committed to global standards of quality and compliance," the spokesperson said.

In its 11th edition, TEDxGateway has hosted exceptional speakers who are slowly but surely changing the healthcare sector. **SHALINI SAKSENA** catches up with researchers who talk about how they have carved a niche for themselves



WHEN INTELLIGENCE IS ARTIFICIAL

Creating a buzz at age 13

Rishab Jain (15)
Scientist and Inventor

He is a freshman in school at Portland, Oregon, US. He does a lot of science related activities and research on pancreatic cancer in the medical field and the application of applying artificial intelligence (AI) to medical treatment of pancreatic cancer. When he is not doing research, he is busy participating in science bowl — a buzzer-based competition for those who want to increase their knowledge, especially in Biology. A big part of his free time is spent in track and field running cross-country. Meet 15-year-old Rishab Jain, a scientist and an innovator who has invented the Pancreatic Cancer Deep Learning System (PCDLS), an AI tool that improves radiation treatment in cancer. He aspires to become a surgeon and hopes to cure pancreatic cancer one day.

He tells you that despite his busy school schedule and the time spent on research for pancreatic cancer, he does manage to find time for himself to pursue what he loves — running. "I was 13 when I found out about this cancer, after passing of a family friend from pancreatic cancer. I was intrigued and found out the survival rate and got to know that this cancer is extremely deadly and survival rate is very low. This is because it takes time to pinpoint the area of the cancer," Jain says.

His system of AI that uses deep learning is a technique that offers an abstract way of looking inside and identifying patterns in the data. But he used another technique with deep learning — convolutional neural network. This network, he tells you has the ability to look at images and identify patterns inside. "What I did was the data that I had of MRI and CT scan of abdominal area. Within the thousands of different pictures of the abdomen, I had different images of the organs including pancreas. I used my tool to predict where the pancreas is positioned which is extremely hard to find for the untrained eye. My goal was to improve the accuracy for radio therapy by segmenting the



pancreas which can sometimes take a long time for a radiologist to do," Jain explains.

Another benefit of his deep learning system is its real-time application. Rather than pinpointing the pancreas from the images and then moving on for treatment, if there is an AI tool — PCDLS — can locate pancreas within a couple of seconds. "It is all about the execution of the programme running the command. When we take the CT and MRI images, it becomes fast to locate the pancreas," Jain says. He tells you that his tool is about early detection of this type of cancer.

"At present, pancreatic cancer treatment involves generic cancer treatment. Radiation therapy is a treatment that uses high doses of targeted energy to kill cancer cells and shrink the tumours. The problem in treating pancreatic cancer lies in its late detection — last stage. At this point, all one can do is shrink the tumour and if the patient is lucky, they can successfully remove the tumour," Jain says.

Not only this, Jain is also named as

America's Top Young Scientist for his path breaking innovation to improve radiotherapy. A competition he entered when he was 13. "After I came up with the solution using AI for pancreatic cancer that began after a lot of reading and doing a lot of research I realised that it was something that can be used in the future and have a big impact after I got some success, I entered a competition — 3M Young Scientists Challenge. The great thing about this that they pick out the top ideas from the US that are presented and provide support like mentorship. The primary reason to enter the competition was if I was selected it would allow me to better my tool and I could look for a bigger expansion. After I was selected, I spent that summer improving on the accuracy of the tool. I got more data, I fined tuned it. It was then that my idea became a reality," Jain says.

When he speaks at platforms like TedxGateway, the reaction of the people is centered more on his age. "When people see a young person talking while it can be a source of big inspiration, people may doubt it at first. I believe no matter what the age, anybody can make a difference. It just needs one idea that a person has to be passionate about and have the goal to complete it. With the right mindset and opportunity, it is possible to achieve that goal," Jain says.

According to him the best overall invention has been the Internet that provided the biggest platform for everything. Just the creation of connecting multiple computers has made so many things possible today.

"In the medical world, I would say the CT technology that has had ginormous impact. When it was invented by Sir Godfrey Hounsfield invented back in 1967, it opened a lot of doors and possibilities for all kinds of treatments not just cancer," Jain says.

His future is set. He would like to continue to work on his research. His latest project today involves working on whether they can improve on the treatment of the cancer — to solve the gap that exists today.

CAD gets a brand new voice

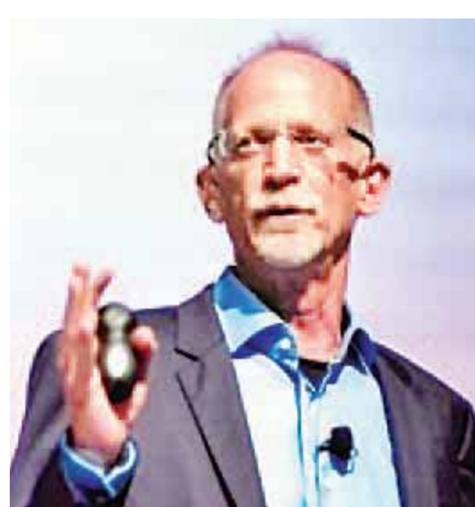
Yuval Mor (54)
AI Technologist and Disruptor

What if someone were to tell you that your voice is enough to detect several diseases including coronary artery diseases (CAD)? Most people would not believe it or would term it as fake news. However, the truth is that Beyond Verbal is doing just this.

Yuval Mor, CEO of Beyond Verbal, tells you that what his company uses the tone of voice of the people in order to be able to identify different health conditions. "It comes under what we call vocal biomarker — the area of voice to detect various diseases," Mor says.

The journey began with the analysis of emotions from the voice. "We all know that we can understand what people are feeling just by listening to them. As part of this analysis, our scientists did an experiment. He found that group of people he was evaluating had reading dyslexia. Because of this, their analysis of their emotions was incorrect. The scientist came up with an idea that maybe there is something in the voice of the people that gives their health condition. This led to our research in many different areas like mental health, heart conditions, lung and breathing conditions and many more," Mor explains.

The good part is that order to get the voice, there is no need for any complicated device to record the voice. All one needs to do is record the voice on your smartphone. Yes, you read that right. One can record the voice on any regular mobile that



allows voice recording and one is good to go. All one has to do is record your voice; there are not set words needed, nor does one have to speak in a particular tone or pitch. All one has to do is record the voice — like the tone one uses while talking to another person over the phone.

"After the call is recorded, one can send it to a central control analysis where experts use machine learning and AI in order to find specific indications in the voice that could indicate health conditions," Mor explains.

"Since we are speaking over the mobile all the time, we can see a pattern when there are deviations. We use regular voice recorded over a regular mobile. The success rate when it comes to detection of coronary artery disease using a single voice analysis stands at 86-87 per

The success rate of detecting coronary artery disease using a single voice analysis stands at 86-87%. All one would have to do is send a recorded voice to central control analysis where experts use machine learning and AI to find specific indications in the voice that could indicate health conditions

cent level of accuracy. The idea is not to scare people to rush to the hospital, it is a tool to let them know that there is something wrong and that needs to be addressed in the near future. And to also increase the person's awareness level when the information is sent to their doctor who can then decide to go for further testing; the tool is not for emergency care; it is a monitoring device," Mor tells you.

The advantage, he tells you are amazing. Just imagine, we are using the voice all the time and mobiles. This way one's mobile or smart home device can be a personal bodyguard when it comes to health. The device that has been collecting voice recording over time gives information if there is significant deviation in the voice. All this is becoming part of tele-medicine or

remote healthcare. The idea is that one doesn't really have to go physically to a hospital but a lot of interaction can happen remotely using sensory, in this case voice sensory.

Mor tells you that the future will be about using all kind of devices that people will have in their homes or at their disposal. Some of these will be connected to the smartphones like we are already seeing in terms of wearables that are available in the market today to check our BO and even heart rate. "Some devices would be more dedicated and connect to a software that would be running of the mobile to collect the vitals but using the voice to say monitor oxygen saturations. It is no longer the future, the future is here, we are living it and using it when we buy a smart watch," Mor says.

Back to Nature innovations by a reluctant Master of science

Oded Shoseyov (63)
Nano biotechnologist

He was born to a family in the vineyard business for more than 130 years. Twenty years back, he established the Estate Boutique winery near Jerusalem in one of the oldest grape growing regions in the world from the time of King Solomon. In High School, he was a terrible student. Nevertheless, his parents always told him that he had potential and so he never gave up.

"After three-and-a-half years of service in the Israel Defence Force, I decided that I would like to go to university and study Agriculture so that I could go back to the vineyard and help my father. I had to struggle a lot to get accepted to the university because I had very low grades from High School. My appli-

cation to the Faculty of Agriculture of Hebrew University was rejected. Thanks to the intuition of the Dean of Chemistry Professor Lena Bend-Dor, I was accepted on condition to do an undergraduate course in Chemistry at The Hebrew University where I really shined. I met Professor Ben Ami Bravdo who invited me to join his laboratory. The day I entered his lab, I knew that this is my destiny," Oded Shoseyov tells you.

His research in plant molecular biology, protein engineering and nano biotechnology is creating super-performing materials that could change the way we build our future products.

Over the years, Oded has established 14 companies and asking him to talk about a particular one doesn't come easy. "You are asking me to pick my favourite child. But I will do

my best. CollPlant is a company that produces human collagen from tobacco plants. Collagen is a special protein that builds up tissues and organs in our body. Medical implants like bone substitutes and heart valve leaflets are made of collagen extracted from pigs, cows and human cadavers which are not safe because they harbour viruses. At the Hebrew University, my laboratory cloned all the five genes from humans that are responsible for making collagen in our body, and by genetic engineering introduced all the five human genes into a tobacco plant," Oded explains.

He says that tobacco plants produce human collagen through their leaves. "We grow the tobacco plants in greenhouses, harvest the leaves, extract and purify the human collagen. This collagen is safer because plants do not harbour



human pathogens. From this, we make different medical implants for wound healing and tendon repair that are already used in clinics in Europe and Israel.

"Our latest achievement and source of pride is the new version of collagen that can be 3D-printed. We are now engaged with United Therapeutics, a US Pharma company and 3D Systems, a US 3D printing company in an ambitious project to print for the first time a fully functional living human lung. This is only the first in printing of future organs," Oded tells you.

Another company is Biobetter Ltd whose mission is to make biologic drugs affordable. He tells you that antibodies are large and complex proteins which are central in our immune system.

"They help our body to overcome infection and cancer. In the

last decade, biologic drugs and specifically humanised antibodies became extremely effective drugs for Rheumatoid Arthritis, cancer and more. One major problem remain. Biologic drugs are produced by mammalian cell culture which is very expensive.

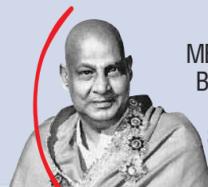
"We cloned the genes of Adalimumab (drug for rheumatoid Arthritis) and by genetic engineering introduced it into tobacco plant. We introduced several more genes into the plant to modify the sugar content of the Adalimumab to make it more human. We can produce the biologic drug in a greenhouse at a cost of lettuce. Our goal is to make it affordable — bring down the cost to less than \$1 a day as opposed to \$100 a day at present," he adds.

His breakthrough was finding genes that are at the heart of a mechanism in plants that accelerates its

growth. This discovery was later translated to transgenic eucalyptus trees that grow faster in the forest and enable production of timber and pulp for paper in a significantly shorter period of time.

According to him, over billions of years of evolution, Nature made amazing materials and systems. "I will mention only a few: Resilin which enables cat fleas to jump 100-200 times their height and the amazing computational powers of our brain. Overabundance of these super performers around us are encoded by their DNA," says Oded who is in India as a TEDxGateway speaker.

When he is not busy in his laboratory, he and his children are busy skiing and looking for new resorts to explore all over the world. He also enjoys mountain biking, running and music.



MEDITATION IS PAINFUL IN THE BEGINNING BUT IT BESTOWS IMMORTAL BLISS AND SUPREME JOY IN THE END — SWAMI SIVANANDA

YOUR WEEK AHEAD

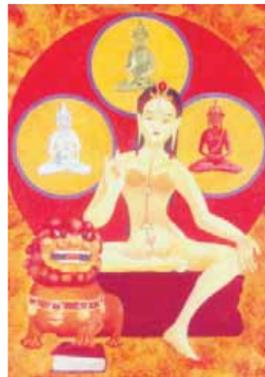
MADHU KOTIYA



ARIES March 21-April 19

Bring positive changes in your lifestyle, and make efforts to improve your health situation. You need to exercise under an expert or go for nutritional education to make sure that you are eating better. Outdoor activities will draw your attention. At work, you will receive admiration from superiors and colleagues. The working environment will be friendly, cohesive and that would increase your efficiency. Promotion/hike in salary is indicated. Work on improving your knowledge and skills. On the personal front, you are strong, courageous and confident. At home, your domineering attitude could irritate others, and you may find yourself alone. This is the time to tame your tongue and bring compassion and concern for the loved one.

Lucky number 6
Lucky colour Purple
Lucky day Friday



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Your physical strength is beyond comparison this week and you must be aware of it. Some of you may embark on an overseas trip or may get an opportunity to work, study, or live overseas for an extended period of time. You will encounter new experiences and welcoming hosts who will support you unconditionally. Overall, this is a good week. On the career front, an enhanced status, promotion or designation is on the cards. You can take important decisions related to your career as you are in a very sound and grounded position. The abundance of energy and self-confidence will give you a boost to move ahead. On the personal front, you may meet a romantic person. A good news is expected to come your way. Be open to exploring your feelings.

Lucky number 13
Lucky colour Brown
Lucky day Saturday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

You will enjoy good health and vitality this week. Those who are dealing with a serious illness, a new health modality or a healer will prove helpful. Stay positive and expect the best. It is important to share your spiritual understandings with others. Your life will improve immensely if you reach out. Career-wise, learn to delegate responsibilities, especially if you are overloaded with work. A dilemma at the workplace will demand action or decision. Analyse all available information before you arrive at a conclusion. In love, you are likely to question whether you and your long-term partner should stay together. You may choose to go your separate ways. Singles, this may be the time when you finally commit to settling down.

Lucky number 17
Lucky colour Grey
Lucky day Saturday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

Your health will be very good. You will feel exceptionally well and upbeat about your future. You need to consider ways to maintain your good health. You will enjoy peace, joy, and prosperity this week and would be filled with positive energy. Those who have recovered from a serious ailment must follow their routine consultation. On the career front, you need to watch out for any cheating. Make sure you are doing things the right way, and then you will have nothing to worry about, even if someone is out to get you. In the matters of heart, you are not very vocal about your feelings. If you love someone, express it. Your introvert and individual personality is definitely not helping you get closer to someone you love. Trust your instincts.

Lucky number 19
Lucky colour White
Lucky day Tuesday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You need time and quiet to connect with your soul and energies around. Health, vitality and inner vibrancy will fill you with energy and inspiration. Creative ideas will occupy your mind. Career-wise, there could be a moment which begs you to bring about some desirable changes. Those of you who are not satisfied with the current job, switching to a new job is likely. Good news: the job you find will be better than the previous one. Transfer to a desired place or changing locations are a possibility. On the personal front, you may come across an analytical mind. Make sure not to get pulled into silly debates. Do not ignore your loved ones. Take time out for them and show your concern. Let the heart speak louder than the mind.

Lucky number 11
Lucky colour Beige
Lucky day Sunday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

Let go of the past and any wrongs that you perceive were done to you, mainly if you are dealing with chronic medical issues. Letting go of your need to be right will go a long way towards helping you to feel better. Think positively. You may find yourself exploring ideas and spiritual directions that you never thought would appeal to you. Career-wise, you may be inspired to start a new creative project, take up an art class, or even dance. You see new potential in allowing your creativity to flow. To those looking for a job, a suitable job offer matching with your profile may surprise you. For those in a committed relationship, it is best to handle situations in a traditional way. Those feeling suspicious about their partner, make a point to talk about it even if it is difficult.

Lucky number 12
Lucky colour Peach
Lucky day Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

You will enjoy happiness, good health and worldly pleasures. You tend to be enthusiastic. Carefully weigh and consider what others ask of you. You might consider taking a long holiday. Some of you may travel abroad. Some may even choose to stay at home in order to rejuvenate yourself. Practicing yoga, meditation, cosmic healing or learning new interests is on the cards. Professionally, things are good. Don't take your initial success for granted. Enjoy what you have for the moment. Business is lucrative. On the relationship front, you need to analyse whether you are being realistic in love. Don't spend too much time in self-pity or wishing your life away. Put your anger in check.

Lucky number 15
Lucky colour Sky Blue
Lucky day Thursday



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Work towards good health and vitality. Plan your routine. Those of you who like to dwell in solitude, it would be a good idea to reach out to others. At work, good news is indicated. You will get the benefits from the choices that you make. An 'out-of-the-blue' opportunity may arise. Your company may send you on a foreign assignment. This is a good time for those in the export and import business. You have the potential to crack the most difficult competitive exam and face the interview with confidence, if you have applied for a job. On the love front, those who are committed, you may find your workload or that of your partner interfering with the relationship. Make time and space for the relationship, regardless of your jobs, otherwise, things will suffer.

Lucky number 20
Lucky colour Mauve
Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

You are a quiet and keen observer this week. Your perception about life will change sensing the positivity around. You will feel healthier than ever. Things will move along well, and hope will emanate – with good cause. Avoid obsession/passion this week. On the career front, you want your time and space. Take rest to emerge from those difficult times, perhaps the trauma of losing your job or financial and health worries. Stress and conflict with your colleagues will overpower you. This is not the time to make decisions, particularly when you are at your vulnerable most. In love, happiness and compassion is on the cards. The start of a new relationship, be it a friendship or a romance will bring a smile to your face.

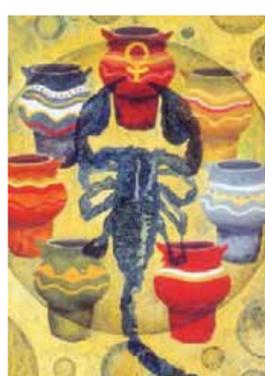
Lucky number 2
Lucky colour Pink
Lucky day Sunday



CANCER June 21-July 22

This is the time for self-improvement. Be creative in your work and avoid stress. Follow a good diet and take adequate rest. Tensions of the past would ease off. Listen to your body and work accordingly. The spiritual journey proves to heal this week. Career-wise, this is a very good time to start planning long term, even if you are very young. Plan to work methodically. An intriguing business opportunity will come along this week. The investments you made in the past will fetch you good returns, and with interest. In love, confusion will prevail. Think calmly and carefully about what your deal-breakers are in a relationship. Be honest with yourself first, and then be honest with your beloved.

Lucky number 8
Lucky colour Magenta
Lucky day Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

With your experience and maturity, you will be able to take charge of your life. Instead of being innovative, you need to adapt to the existing set of beliefs and systems that are already in place. Any new theory or fashionable trends will not work for you this week. On the career front, a foreign assignment may come up. There's a good chance that you are working far too hard for recognition and money. This is the time to remind yourself of your real value. In relationship, messages of love and affection will come your way. You will feel pampered and wish to rejuvenate yourself this week. Those who are single, a new suitor with whom you have a lot in common, and who is also very adventuresome, may enter your life. Exciting times ahead.

Lucky number 18
Lucky colour Silver
Lucky day Wednesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Do not run away from reality. It does not suit your personality. If dealing with a health issue, you need to look for another healthcare practitioner. Look for treatment outside your purview. Plan a vacation to natural surroundings to rejuvenate yourself. Avoid stress. On the career front, share your responsibilities as you may feel overstressed. Share your thoughts with your friends. Reflecting upon the past will help you prepare for the next phase. Review your past experiences and mark your learnings. All the pieces of the puzzle of your life are finally coming together. On the personal front, true love, balanced partnership, commitment, and all good things that most of us hope for in love and relationship, are yours to savour!

Lucky number 14
Lucky colour Green
Lucky day Thursday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 9873283331

Lord Shiva: Existence personified

ASTROTURF
BHARAT BHUSHAN PADMADEO



as would a bull moving at a constant pace mean. While pulling a cart, the bull moves unprovoked at a constant pace and would not stop in the way till it reaches a place designated for being fed and taking rest. After a while, the bull again takes the journey forward, and then finally reverts back to its normal place of abode after completing the voyage. The manifest world too, after being on the run for a specified time, reverts back to the primal source to acquire a restful state, when it gets recharged once again. Following which, out of the seeds of life withdrawn into primal-source, fresh creation cycle takes off.

Mount Kailasa, is one of the high peaks in the Himalayan range to which lot of perennial rivers are sourced, including the Ganges. It, thus, is closest to the cosmic world, simultaneously having all round view of life down below. Lord Shiva, with lunar crescent over the head, read together with his place of abode, the Himalayan range having in store perennial rivers, is symbolic of eternity, infinity.

The presence of lunar crescent symbolises the convergence of all nature driven forces. For, Moon's luminosity is drawn out of the light extended by the Sun, as well as all the planets and stars up above in the cosmos. But before all light

drawn thus, flows down the line, Moon does its own stamping by turning them into an amiable form. Moon, thus, symbolises convergence of all nature driven energy streams.

With the play of Damru, the equilibrated state of the primal source gets shaken, when the primal sound note O? comes into play. Now going is the scientific perception, once there is entropy (disorder), it multiplies in geometric progression. So, it happened following excitation of O? sound. In the process, first came into play Energy-trinity — Sata, Rajasa, and Tamasa. Trident, it may kindly be noted is symbolic of Lord Shiva's creative power — the three phalanges of the trident branching out of the base rod imply three dimensions of energies emanating from a singularity. The random mutation of the three that followed, led to multitude of differentiated energy streams. The harmony and symphony of these differentiated energy streams that followed, led to all creations, first up above in the cosmos.

The writer is an astrologer, vastu consultant and spiritual counsellor. Write to him at G-102, Bharat Nagar, New Friends Colony, New Delhi-110 025
Tel: 91-11-49848475/9818037273
Email: bharatbhushanpadmadeo@gmail.com

the pioneer agenda

FROM THE INSIDE

The most important lesson I've learned in this business is how to say no. I have said no to a lot of temptations, and I am glad I did
— Penelope Cruz



Mughal prince with a heart

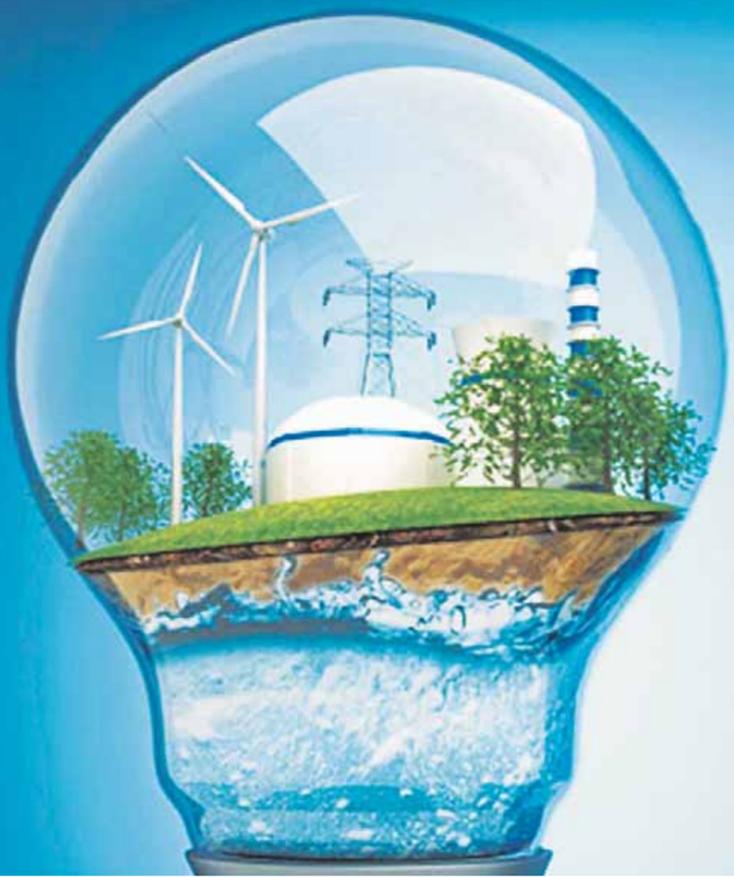
Avik Chanda's book offers a view on the life and times of Dara Shukoh, the designated heir of Shah Jahan



Snacking kids the right way

There's a recipe for every kid. While some can be prepared in minutes, some can be part of your Sunday meal-prep

INDIA'S QUEST FOR ENERGY SECURITY



Energy security has been significant to the economic transformation, global prosperity and well-being of the human kind. Energy security will continue to be detrimental to the existing life and much more crucial to the developing countries than the developed world. The world's demand for energy grew by 95% in the last 40 years and the future demand, estimated to be more than 90%, to be because of huge growth in demand from India and China. These resources are finite, and the direct links between energy supply and economic growth have pushed the issue of energy security at the core of the policy debate with a considerable impact on the geopolitics.

India, one of the fastest growing major economies, is also the fastest growing energy consumer in the world. And set to become the most populous nation, it is not well endowed with energy reserves. India has mammoth task of meeting its economic and social developmental goals, and lift its millions of people out of poverty. The country has no option but to strive for sustained growth rate of 8-10% to achieve this. India's economy in all likely will continue to supersede the growth rate of all other major economies in the world in the foreseeable future. The demand for energy in the coming years will accelerate further as India embarks on manufacturing through Modi Government's much vaulted 'Make in India' programme, developmental projects and access to electricity to all. Consequently, energy security has emerged as one of the salient policy issues over the past decade and a half, and the successive Indian governments have emphasised on addressing the impending energy crisis challenges.

In the past, India's energy security has been narrow in its approach, mainly aimed at managing supply. But over the past two decades, India's energy security policy has evolved and approach is much more inclusive which takes into account the political, economic, social and environmental issues and concerns under which the energy security policy is being pursued today internationally. India's quest for energy security can be seen under the framework of four 'A's: availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability, which is to make energy accessible to all the sections and sectors at an affordable price in a socially and politically acceptable carbon-controlled environment.

India's more than 50% of energy needs is derived from domestic stocks of coal, mainly for the electricity. Coal shall remain India's most important energy source and critical to its growth for the decades ahead. However, the percentage of coal in India's energy mix

will decline in the future. India, with 17% of the world's population, has just 0.8% of the world's known oil and natural gas resources. Today, oil accounts for 36% of the country's primary energy use. This figure is set to rise both in absolute and in percentage terms. India's domestic production is not sufficient to meet its demand. As a result, India already imports 80% of its crude oil needs. Without new and substantial domestic discoveries, imports will continue to increase. By contrast, natural gas currently provides only 8% of India's primary energy supply, and most of that gas comes from domestic sources, onshore and offshore. But the position is likely to change drastically as India plans towards the world average for the use of natural gas.

To promote oil and gas production at domestic level, the Indian Government has been taking several steps which range from encouraging the Indian companies to increase their domestic activities and widening its engagement with multinational companies, broadening opportunities for them to participate in oil and gas exploration in India. Also, to stimulate the investments and development in the exploration of hydrocarbon sources of energy, some of the steps have focussed on regulatory changes, a transparent gas pricing policy and redevelopment of uneconomical assets. The domestic efforts have also seen a concerted focus on exploring various alternative sources of energy which are infinite, renewable and environment-friendly. The government has given a massive push in this regard in the energy production through solar energy, wind power, hydroelectricity power, and biomass, and nuclear energy.

At the domestic level, the challenges are puzzling and often at odds such as increasing energy access, building a smart system for drawing investment in energy infrastructure and pricing of energy to facilitate the economic and environmental competence. Unlike the past policy of self-reliance, India's energy policy has shifted to position itself to address its new dependence on international markets, diversify its sources of energy abroad, look for alternative sources of energy, and increase its domestic production which continues to be in line with its earlier commitment to self-sufficiency. India's domestic exploration and production push is not very promising. As a result, India continues to rely on the foreign sources for its energy needs especially for petroleum.

Since increased domestic production alone will not be sufficient to meet the projected needs for either oil, gas or coal, India is also expanding its efforts abroad. Eventually, this has made energy security one of the top foreign policy

priorities. Despite the Indian government's emphasis on domestic production of coal and efforts to diversify the sources of energy, the demand for imported coal is likely to continue. India's energy demand, both for consumer and industry, cannot be done in the near future without the help of imported coal. There is no substantial proof that India can address its energy demand without the use of imported coal to supplement its domestic supply. For example, the energy security has been an important aspect of India-Australia relationship in which import of Australian high calorific value coal remains crucial.

Subsequently, energy security has emerged as one of the top foreign policy priorities of the Modi Government. This becomes significant as Modi Government embarks to make India a manufacturing hub through its much vaulted 'Make in India' initiatives. Energy security's primacy in Modi government's foreign policy is reflected in his record number of high-profile foreign visits during which he has been cutting energy deals with energy rich countries.

India's energy security pursuit becomes more challenging with the growing concerns of global climate change and political instability in the energy rich regions of the world. India has been relying mainly on coal and petroleum for its energy sources. India's move towards renewable energy sources will not be sufficient for its mounting energy demand. India has to look towards an energy sources with less carbon emission and provide base load power. In this context, gas and nuclear energy figure significant. Gas is less carbon emitting source of energy. India's gas utilisation is far below the world average. Modi government has also given priority to enhance the gas utilisation and move towards gas based economy. India is planning to set up gas pipelines for import of gas from its neighbouring nations. A number of gas pipelines are proposed and are in the construction phase. Majority of them involve intense geopolitics as some of the proposed gas pipelines will pass through Pakistan and China.

Since the two-thirds of India's oil imports come from one single region, that is, the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries, India is following in the footsteps of other major oil-importing economies and making significant efforts to obtain supplies from sources outside the Gulf. In addition, the possibility of disruption from unseen political instability, religious extremism, terrorism, and threats to supply lines have pushed India to look for new hydrocarbon destinations abroad.

India has taken steps to diversify its hydrocarbon exploration in the regions

of Latin America, Africa, Caspian Basin, Russia and in the waters of Indo-Pacific region.

Problems of diversification of energy sources for India arises from the political volatility, geopolitics of these regions and above all it puts India in the direct competition with China particularly in the Non-Middle Eastern and Non-Gulf region as the new destination of energy source which further sparks a geopolitical competition and adds more complexities to an existing competitive and often conflicting India-China relationship.

Nuclear energy has the potential to become an important source of India's energy mix given its economic affordability in the long run and environment friendly. Currently, nuclear energy makes up around 3% of India's energy mix and has the potential to become 20 to 25% of India's energy mix by 2050. The lack of enriched uranium, light water reactors, and advanced technology hampered India's nuclear energy capability. But after the conclusion of India-US nuclear agreement, India's nuclear apartheid ended and unchained India from the technology denial regimes of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Act of 1978 which came in the wake of India's first atomic test in 1974. The nuclear deal was aimed to help India to meet its looming energy crisis by enabling it to access to safeguarded nuclear fuel, advanced light water reactors and civilian nuclear technology.

The India-US nuclear deal pushed the energy security to the core of India's foreign policy. After the India-US civilian nuclear deal, India has sealed the civilian nuclear agreements with a number of countries including France, Russia, Canada, Australia, Japan and the UK. Given India's non-signatory status of Nuclear-Non-Proliferation Treaty, for any country dealing with India in nuclear energy and technology trade becomes an issue of a mutual trust and confidence which required delicate diplomacy from India. Though aimed to address India's energy security, the US-India nuclear deal was viewed by China as part of the United States' grand strategy to contain the growing power and influence of China in Asia. As a result, the Chinese and Pakistani lobbying along with 'Nuclear Ayatollahs' put a concerted lobbying effort to block the nuclear deal at Capitol Hill, though failed. The India-China energy geopolitics resurfaced during India's bid to membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) recently. China used its clout and prerogatives to block India's case for the inclusion in the NSG. The nuclear energy is significant for India's efforts to shift to an environmentally friendly energy sources and alternate sources of energy sources.

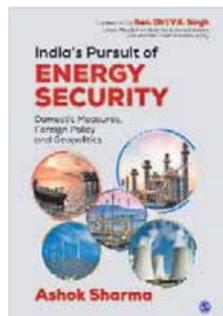
India's push towards renewable

energy has been remarkable which is reflected in Modi Government's schemes to give a boost to renewable energy sources. But even the renewable energy sources are not free from the competitive geopolitical environment. India-China energy geo-politics is also reflected in renewable energy space. Renewable energy's geographic and technical characteristics are fundamentally different from those of coal, oil and natural gas. Though still in the formative stage, international norms are being built towards the renewable energy, and India-China energy geopolitics will enter this new energy space as both are striving to influence the renewable energy space. The inevitability of renewable energy is undeniable and countries are gearing up for an increased share in their energy mix. Those that dominate the markets in these new technologies will likely have the most influence over the development patterns of the future. As other major powers find themselves in climate denial, China and India both are moving to use and exploit the global renewable energy space, though China is ahead.

India is emerging as a new normative player in the renewable energy regime. Prime Minister Modi has pursued unwavering commitment to energy security by constructing 175 GW of renewable capacity by 2022 and India is committed to its unflinching commitment to combat global warming irrespective of what happens in the rest of the world. Prime Minister Modi being awarded the "Champion of Earth" by the UN Secretary General in 2018 is additional power to India's growing normative leadership in this new energy source regime that translates into geopolitics as it helps India to enhance its image internationally.

India's energy policy is being pursued in a much more inclusive manner in its domestic and international settings to address its fast-growing energy demand in a competitive geo-political environment. India energy exploration abroad in the new regions is putting in direct competition with with China. Unlike the US-Soviet Union energy geopolitics, the India-China energy competition has been mostly confined to the commercial and diplomatic level tussles, though both remain vulnerable to conflicts which may get aggravated due to their competitive and conflicting relations and the emerging strategic geometry in the Indo-Pacific region.

— Dr Ashok Sharma is a Visiting Fellow at the University of New South Wales at the Australian Defence Force Academy and the author of the book 'India's Pursuit of Energy Security: Domestic Measures, Foreign Policy and Geopolitics' (Sage Publications, 2019)



ENERGY SECURITY HAS EMERGED AS ONE OF THE TOP FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES OF THE MODI GOVERNMENT. THIS BECOMES SIGNIFICANT AS MODI GOVERNMENT EMBARKS TO MAKE INDIA A MANUFACTURING HUB THROUGH ITS MUCH VAULTED 'MAKE IN INDIA' INITIATIVES. ENERGY SECURITY'S PRIMACY IN MODI GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY IS REFLECTED IN HIS RECORD NUMBER OF HIGH-PROFILE FOREIGN VISITS DURING WHICH HE HAS BEEN CUTTING ENERGY DEALS WITH ENERGY RICH COUNTRIES





THE CHIEF REASON FOR GOING TO SCHOOL IS TO GET THE IMPRESSION FIXED FOR LIFE THAT THERE IS A BOOK SIDE FOR EVERYTHING
— ROBERT FROST

Avik Chanda's book, *Dara Shukoh: The Man Who would be King*, is an ideal read, not only for aspiring historians but also for those interested in Indian history, writes KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

MUGHAL PRINCE WITH A HEART

A frequently heard complaint from a section of Indian historians is that vested interests have played havoc with the sub-continent's history, traditions and culture. If one goes through the history books taught in the Indian schools and universities, it will be found that those lamenting over the tampering of India's history are not exaggerating. Some sections of the country's valuable history have been suppressed from the new generation, especially from those who were born after 1950.

How many among those who were born after 1950 are familiar with the great Maratha ruler Shivaji, the valiant fighter Tantia Tope, the great social reformer Mahatma Phule, the all time great of the 19th century South India by name Chattampi Swamikal and his colleague Sree Narayana Guru?

We cannot put the entire blame for distorting history upon previous regimes alone. It is a strategy deployed since time immemorial to misinterpret historical facts by groups with vested interests. "History is written by victors," Sir Winston Churchill, former British Prime Minister who is known for his erudition and knowledge had said. In modern times, it was proved by the British colonialists. The best example is Louis Mountbatten's decision to destroy even the last vestiges of victory symbols of the Japanese army from Singapore and Malaysia.

"After re-taking Singapore, Mountbatten's (who was the Supreme Commander, South East Asia during Second World War) first act was to order the demolition of the war memorial honouring slain heroes of the Indian National Army. The INA War Memorial at Singapore to commemorate the "Unknown Warrior" was started on July 8, 1945 at Esplanade Park. It was razed to the ground by Mountbatten's allied troops when they reoccupied the city.



Demolishing memorials, war memorials and other revered symbols of defeated people is habitual Christian triumphalism as is desecrating the tombs of the rulers of conquered people," writes Radha Rajan, one of the highly respected thinkers of our times.

Most Indians are not really serious about learning history. They are not even bothered about recent history as can be seen by the attitude of the new generation towards the dark days of emergency declared by the former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975.

I was shocked to see the larger than life flex boards with pictures of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara greeting the delegates of Indian Science Congress

during the 2009 Indian Science Congress held at Thiruvananthapuram. There were no pictures of Sir C V Raman, Prof J C Bose, S N Bose and the likes who took Indian science to new heights. But for ISRO, which co-sponsored the event, there would not have been a single picture of that prince of Indian Space Science, Vikram Sarabhai.

This is not the case with science alone. How many among our new historians are familiar with the works of the great Acharya Ramesh Chandra Majumdar, whose seminal work the eleven-volume *History and Culture of Indian People* preserve and protect the great history of this great nation from getting tampered by the evil designs of

people following imported and outdated ideologies?

Dara Shukoh, son of Shah Jahan, was the unsung hero of the Mughal Dynasty. Dara, the eldest son of Shah Jahan lived only up to the age of 44 years but left indelible marks in the history of the sub continent.

What makes him dear to the people in Mughal empire was his tolerance towards other religions and humane nature, unlike his younger brother Aurangzeb, who went on to become the Mughal ruler presiding over the kingdom till the ripe age of 89!

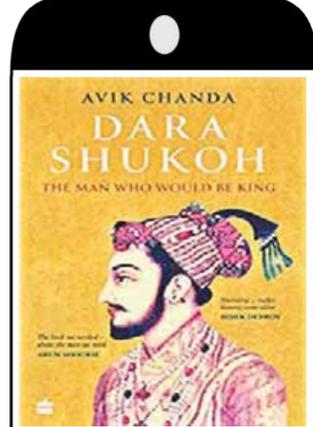
Aurangzeb was known for his hatred towards Hindus and went on demolishing and destroying the

Sanatana Dharma and its symbols like temples, ashrams and monasteries. Though the secularists tried to portray him as a philanthropist by hiring the services of Audrey Truschke to come out with a volume by name *Aurangzeb: The Man and Myth*, it fell all flat as she could not counter the eye witness accounts of Francois Bernier (a European physician and traveller in Shah Jahan's court) and Niccolao Manucci (a military strategist for Dara, who continued to work with Aurangzeb after the fall of the former).

Dara in his brief tenure as prince had got the Vedas and Upanishads translated into Persian and French and this itself speak volumes about his compassion for anything that originated in the sub continent. Who in India would have heard about Bernier and Manucci if it had not been for S L Bhyrappa who in his famous work *Aavaran* told the readers about the official eye witness accounts of these two Europeans?

Avik Chanda, a business advisor with degrees from Delhi School of Economics, has taken from where Bhyrappa left. Chanda's book "*Dara Shukoh: The Man Who Would Be King*" is a refreshing experience. Chanda gives the readers a bird's eye view on the life and time of Shukoh, the designated heir of Shah Jahan. Even as a young prince, Shukoh wanted the common man to know more about the Islamic saints and for that he opted words instead of swords unlike Aurangzeb and Tipu Sultan. "What Dara was striving for was not linguistic and literary brilliance but a tone of simplicity, an idiom that would induce faith in the reader who was a common man," writes Chanda (Page 51). Thus was born *Safinat-ul-Aulia*, an account of the lives of over 400 saints!

The account of Dara Shukoh once again underlines the fact that the Muslim invaders who occupied the thrones in New Delhi and elsewhere in the subcontinent chose this land only to



DARA SHUKOH: THE MAN WHO WOULD BE KING
Avik Chanda
HarperCollins, ₹699

loot and proselytise. The Sufi saints were Islamic evangelists who went ahead with their mission by singing about love and preaching the message of anarchy. Despite the fact that he belonged to the Mughal dynasty, Dara had some civility in his heart unlike his forefather Babar or sibling Aurangzeb. Those who are out to paint Aurangzeb with divinity may need more self styled historians like Audrey Truschke because we have writers like Avik Chanda for digging out the truth.

Dara Shukoh: The Man Who would be King is an ideal work not only for aspiring historians but for general readers interested in Indian history.



Proxy You wouldn't want to miss VISITING this bar!

K RAMYA SREE
HYDERABAD

It may look like your average neighborhood restaurant and bar, but a stroll through the entrance of this newly-opened bar in the city will give a completely different experience altogether. The wooden seats, the shacks on the side, the drums hanging from the ceiling are all a treat to your eyes!

Located in Kothaguda, a few metres from Shilparamam in Hitec City, this place is sure to turn into a weekend haunt for all the techies working in the vicinity, at least that's what the Managing Director of Proxy, Aman Chainani hopes for.

When you wander in, one will immediately be greeted by the friendly staff and incredible aroma of home-made cocktails and a pleasant atmosphere with an open roof seating area. Mind you, it's not just for those who want to enjoy nature while drinking, but also for those who want to party hard and dance to the high-octane beats belted out by the DJ.

The theme of the restaurant is definitely not run-of-the-mill. Aman says, "Our idea was to play around the crockery, combinations in cocktails and the food, thereby giving a modern touch to traditional food."

The presentation of the food is true to his words. The onion rings presented on the table looked like they came straight from the farm. The Gongura cream served alongside just enhances the taste. Even the chicken

kebab is presented on hanging seek, as if they are being cooked in a matka.

The presentation of the cocktails was no less. The management has chosen to play around with the crockery and serves liquor in classy glasses that you get lost just admiring its shape.

The food goes with any drink and my personal favourite was the chicken pakora and chicken ghee roast. The chicken pakora were like mini bombs bursting in one's mouth with the Hyderabadi spices adding to the flavour. The ghee roast had just enough ghee which ensures one

doesn't have to work out twice as much to burn those calories. One bite makes it melt in your mouth, leaving you wanting for more.

The highlight of the menu

however was the making of Urban Bhel Puri. It is made right in front of you on your table. Yes, you read it right. The Tandoori Paneer momos, however, were a slight disap-

pointment as they seemed out of place with the rest of the menu. The cocktails are a must try as this include a variety of craft liquor, or as they call them, Craftails.

According to a cocktail expert there, they use fresh blended juice for all their cocktails. Be it beetroot or pineapple, fresh fruits are used to give an essence of freshness to the drink. Beefeater, made of beetroot juice and in house nut liqueur, rosemary blaster, Kaffir lime infused vodka with lemongrass extract and fresh pineapple juice with tropical bitter and galangal fizz remain top favourites.

Desserts are no less. When one orders the chocolate garden,

don't be surprised when you get a garden for yourself.

The dish had chocolate syrup with chocolate brownie crumbles, some fruits and an overload of chocolates.

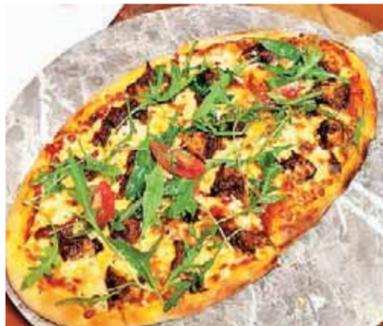
This place is not just perfect for post-work hangouts, but is ideal even for spending a cozy night with your loved one. If peace is what you seek, sit in the open lounge. If you want music and want to de-stress by dancing, then get to the bar inside where you have live bands and DJs performing.

Price for two:
Approx Rs 1500

THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE MENU HOWEVER WAS THE MAKING OF URBAN BHEL PURI. IT IS MADE RIGHT IN FRONT OF YOU ON YOUR TABLE. THE COCKTAILS ARE A MUST TRY AS THIS INCLUDE A VARIETY OF CRAFT LIQUOR, OR AS THEY CALL THEM, CRAFTAILS



Chocolate garden



Pizza

Chicken ghee roast, onion rings and chicken pakora



What snack to make for a kid coming back from school is a stressful thought for every mother as every kid has their own like and dislike towards food. Making snacks especially when kids are coming back home with a bunch of friends can get hectic for you. But worry not, there's a recipe for every kid. While some can be prepared in minutes, some can be part of your Sunday meal-prep.

So, here are some after-school snacks that even the pickiest of eaters will love. Chef: Tata Sky Cooking expert Chef Nita Mehta.

—IANS

Snacking kids the right way

MINI CORN BUNS

What you need

Mini buns: 12; Oil: 2 tbsp mixed with 1 1/2 tsp salt, red chilli flakes
Onion finely chopped: 1; Chopped celery: 2 tbsp
Red capsicum cubed: 1; Chopped zucchini: 1 1/2 cups
Frozen corn: 1 1/2 cups; Chopped coriander: 1 tbsp
Mayonnaise: 3 tbsp, Mustard sauce: 1 tbsp, Chili garlic paste: 1 tsp, Grated cheese: 4 tbsp, Oregano: 1 tsp, Red chili flakes: 1 tsp.

How to make

- Hollow buns. Mix 2 tbsp oil with a pinch of salt and red chili flakes. Brush the outside and inside of each bun with this oil. Keep aside.
- Heat 2 tbsp oil. Add onion and celery cook till soft. Add red capsicum. Zucchini and corn. Mix well. Add coriander, salt, pepper and keep aside.
- Mix mayonnaise with mustard, chili garlic paste, grated cheese. Oregano and chili flakes.
 - Add vegetables to mayonnaise mix and check salt. Stuff in the buns.
 - To serve, heat a flat pan and place the stuffed buns on it. Reduce heat and cover and cook for 4-5 min. Serve hot.

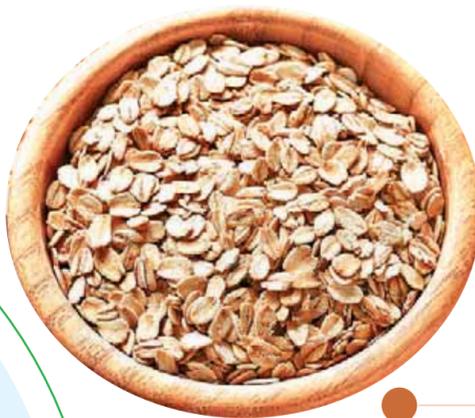
OAT CUTLETS

WHAT YOU NEED:

Potatoes boiled and grated: 2; Oats: 1 1/2 cups
Grated cauliflower: 1 1/2 cups
Grated carrot: 1 1/2 cups; Boiled peas: 1 1/2 cups
Chopped coriander leaves: 1/2 cup
Raisins: 1 tsp; Salt: 1 tsp or to taste
Pepper, garam masala, chaat masala: 1 1/12 tsp each
FOR TOPPING
Sesame seeds: 1 1/2 tbsp; Suji: 1 1/2 tbsp

HOW TO MAKE:

- Mix all ingredients with boiled grated potatoes. Mash well to bind.
- Make 6 balls of the above mixture. Flatten each ball and give it a heart shape.
- Spread the topping mix on a plate. Press both sides of each cutlet in it.
- Pan fry cutlets in 1-2 tbsp oil in a pan.



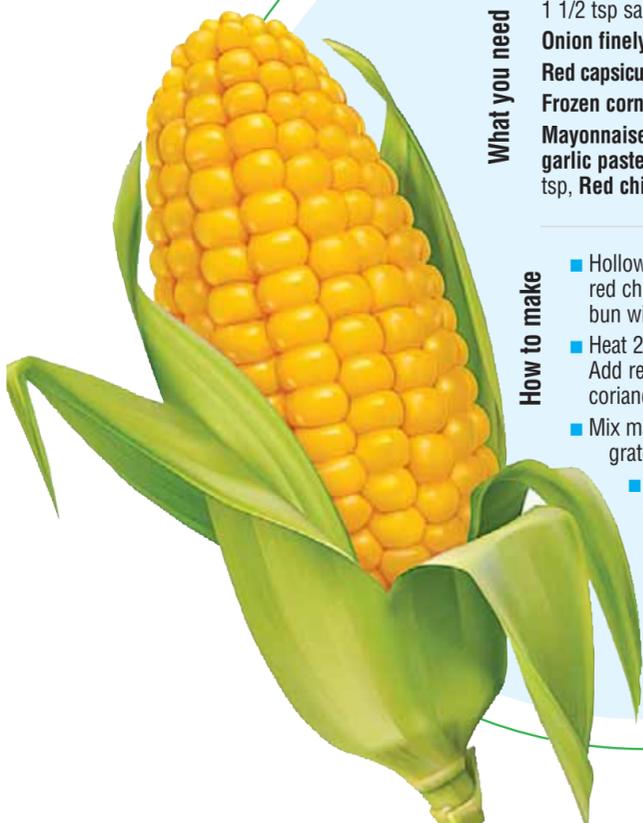
KALA CHANNA LOLLIPOPS

WHAT YOU NEED:

Black Chickpea (Kala channa): 1 1/2 cups (soak, pressure cook with 1 cup water for 20 min after the whistle)
Potatoes: 2 small sized (boiled and grated)
Grated carrot: 1 1/2 cups; Chopped mint: 2 tbsp
Bread: 2 slices; Tomato ketchup: 1 tsp
Red chilli powder: 1 1/2 tsp; Salt: 1 tsp
Chat masala: 1 tsp; Channa masala: 2 tsp
Corn flour: 2-3 tbsp

HOW TO MAKE:

- Break bread into pieces and put in a mixer. Grind to get fresh bread crumbs.
- Grind the channas to a paste adding little water.
- Mix channa paste, boiled potatoes, grated carrot, mint, bread crumbs, ketchup, salt, chat masala, red chilli powder and channa masala.
- Make balls and insert a stick in each.
- Flatten the ball on the stick. Coat lightly with corn flour. Refrigerate for 30 min.
- Shallow-fry in a pan, till golden along with the stick. Serve with ketchup



Getting people to go

Oh Baby!



On the sets of *Oh Baby!*

Breaking almost every stereotype, Nandini Reddy has emerged as one of the most sought-after directors following the success of *Oh Baby* released last year. She is known for her 'feel good' films that one wouldn't mind watching over and over.

From *Ala Modalaindi* to *Oh Baby!*, Nandini has always delivered one-of-its-kind movies. From being put down before the release of *Ala Modalaindi* to becoming 'a brand', Nandini's journey has not always been a bed of roses, she tells **THE PIONEER**, in a no-holds-barred conversation with **K RAMYA SREE**.

Pakka Hyderabadi...

I was born and brought up in Marredpally and studied in St Ann's High School. We later shifted to Sindhi Colony, most of my childhood years were spent in Secunderabad. I have a lot of fond memories of Marredpally. Since my parents — Bharath. V. Reddy and Roopa Reddy — got divorced when I was very young, I grew up at my maternal grandparents' house and I am a *pakka* Hyderabadi.

Love for Amar Chitra Kathas...

As a child I would love reading books and was a huge fan of Amar Chitra Katha. I love reading any printed material. My mom would buy me *Amar Chitra Kathas* on my birthday and I would wait for my birthday only to read those books. I still have them. My *mamamma* used to read a lot and is a very well educated man. He was also a foodie, so food and books were my favourite as a child and he influenced me a lot. Although I was very mischievous, I would study well. I was quite active and outgoing and used to take part in sports, dramas, theatre and whatnot.

Ice creams were distributed on my b'day

Like any other kid, I never liked milk and used to pour it in the washbasin when no one was looking. My mom used to run an ice cream parlour. When I was in Class 2 my mother asked me to invite some of my friends to the parlour. I was my class representative and was very protective about my class. So I told my teacher that my mother invited my friends and I have to take all 55 students to the parlour. She panicked and called up my principal who then called my mother. My mother then said that wasn't my intention and sent 55 cups of ice cream to the school. On my birthdays, I would bring ice cream instead of chocolates to school and my entire class used to wait for it.



With brother Uttam

Sitting in the fridge...

When I was around 4 years old, I was feeling very hot in the afternoon. So when my grandparents were asleep I sat in the fridge with my legs sticking out. When they saw me there, I got the scolding of my life (laughs).

Getting ready was never my fancy...

There are a few reasons for me being the way I am. I have curly hair and it takes a lot of time to comb and tie it. I feel one should not spend so much time on their hair. I always used to want to go and play outside and was always impatient. So I would cut off my hair and my mother would thrash me whenever I got a haircut. It was the same for years. Later on, I started wearing jeans, track pants and t-shirts often because I used to play a lot and those were very comfortable. For me, the effort needed to dress up was pointless. It never caught my fancy. Dressing up for me was to look neat and comfortable. For me that came from my dad. I remember my mom telling me that my dad wore old shoes on their wedding as he felt new shoes will bite his feet and he would be uncomfortable.

Not made for a bureaucratic job...

When I joined JNU, I went with the intention of cracking my IPS exams. But during my time there I understood that I was not made for a bureaucratic life. I gave it a lot of thought and decided not to give the exam. I returned to Hyderabad and wanted to get into advertising as I write well. At that point some-

one introduced me to Gangaraju Gunnam garu and I worked with him on a children's film. I didn't know what I was doing or what I have to do. Somewhere I gelled with him and a lot of things clicked for us. I think that was the best thing that could've happened to me as at that point. I didn't know that there were very few women technicians in the industry. It was a great set of people I worked with then. I gradually fit in. By the end of that film I realised that this was what I wanted to do.

It was Gangaraju garu who convinced my mom...

When I told my mom that I want to get into industry, she was worried. Our family is full of academicians, so there was a lot of criticism within the family itself. She met Gangaraju garu and he told her that I can do it. He gave her the confidence and she extended her support and has been supporting me ever since. From there on it was a lengthy journey till I made my first film.

Never expected blockbuster status...

After *Ala Modalaindi* was completed, first persons to tell me the film would work were our music directors Kalyan Koduri and Sagar. Gradually, I started getting positive vibes. Until then I had no hopes. Later, Rana saw the film and loved it and I showed it to my school and college friends, who liked it. I never expected the film to become a blockbuster. My life changed completely in 24 hours. All theatres ran full and I remember watching it in the

theatre and saw hundreds of people laughing like crazy. It was an overwhelming and emotional moment.

Jabardast is my biggest guru...

I made *Jabardast* not listening to my gut. I knew something was wrong. I just didn't want a controversy for my second film. After *Ala*, I pitched *Kalyanavaibhagame* to Sam and Shaurya but somehow I was pushed to do *Jabardast*, letting go of my own story. I feel I should've backed out then and told directors that I didn't want to do it. But the fear of success stopped me. Now I don't make decisions out of fear. I don't want to give in to fear. *Jabardast* is my greatest guru. It taught me a lot. With *Ala Modalaindi*, overnight you were on a pedestal, and after the next film, on the ground. I didn't understand people's anger then until I saw *Shaandaar*, the next film of Vikas Bahl who had directed *Queen*. I was very disappointed with him. I then realised this is what people and my fans would have felt after watching *Jabardast*.

Learnt to chill from Puri Raghavendra garu...

I learnt a lot from Puri Jagannadh garu and Raghavendra garu. They both are very cool and easygoing. Whenever I see them work I always tell I'm going to be like you. When a director is happy on the set, everyone else is in a good mood. I want my shoots to be memorable. I found a way of coping with work stress, so I don't shout or get angry on sets. I'm very chilled out.

An Oscar moment...

After *Ala...*, Singeetam Srinivasa Rao garu, Kaikala Satyanarayana garu and Bhagyaraju garu, who are my idols called me. I couldn't believe it. They are people whom I saw growing up. They giving me a call was an Oscar moment for me. I saw a 75-year-old woman watching *Ala Modalaindi* in a theatre and it was very gratifying. I relived that moment with *Oh Baby*. An elderly man from Vijayawada called me to thank me for making the film.



With mother Roopa

Mother's attitude helped me...

There was six-year period during which I was pitching scripts for *Ala Modalaindi*. I felt like quitting every day. I wouldn't have money when I went out with friends who were already settled. But my mom's positive attitude and support kept me going.

When food coma hit me...

One day, my uncle took my brother, Uttam Reddy and me for buffet lunch when his friend was visiting from the US. The 10-year-old foodie I was, did not know when to stop and I possibly overate. We went to Salar Jung Museum after lunch and food coma hit me as I was falling on all statues. My uncle called my mom and asked her to come pick me up as it was very embarrassing for him. (laughs)



On *Ala Modalaindi* sets

Making Ala Modalaindi was traumatic...

Ala Modalaindi was a struggle. It was traumatic and every day was a battle. The film would be held up sometimes. I don't remember the number of people who have watched the film and called it crap. Every single person would say that the film was crap except my actors, music director and my writer. Rohini garu was a big support then and it was a traumatic phase for me. The film was almost shelved. But my executive producer explained the math to the producer and cajoled him not to shelve it.

Studying in JNU changed my life...

As a kid, I always wanted to be a doctor. I studied BiPC in Inter, but the prospect of studying for years to become a doctor was too much for me. I also started playing cricket at the same time. After my Inter I was looking for colleges that had a good ground and zeroed in on Women's College, Koti. I took economics, political science and public administration. I thought it would be interesting. After that I wanted to explore myself and joined JNU and did my masters in International Politics. JNU changed my life entirely. Everything was new to me and places like JNU change your thinking, your perspective of things and your approach towards life. That's where I actually grew in life.



With friends from JNU

Will soon do an action film...

I don't want to do only rom-coms. I will be switching genres shortly and will explore action films soon. I don't want to do what everyone is doing. Will I do a mass film? Well, if I find something quirky in it, I will.

Wish dad was alive...

Between the age of 18 and 22, I lost five people in my family who were my pillars of strength — my dad, my *mamamma* and my grandparents. It was one of the most emotional periods of my life. I wish my grandparents and dad were alive today to see what I have achieved. My dad was the one person who said I should do what I wished in life. He always said "Do what you love". He said if you want to be a cobbler, do it because you love shoes. If you love making shoes, you will make one of the best pairs in the world and money will automatically come to you. I think he would've been quite proud to see what I'm doing now. I miss the fact that they were not there to see my first film.



With father Bharath

RAPID FIRE:

Describe yourself in 3 words: Foodie, Traveller and Storyteller

What are you most inspired by: Life

Favourite beverage: I love water and I'm one of those bizarre people who loves water

3 am friend from industry: Rohini

What does creativity mean to you: Putting a spin on something nobody could've thought of

Celebrity Crush: Prabhas, Farhan Akhtar

What do you do to relax: Read, music and hang out with friends

Guilty pleasure: Food, especially Sushi

If not direction what would you be doing: I would either be a deep sea diver or a wild life photographer

Travel blogger

Weirdest thing a fan has ever done to you: My fans are mostly kids (laughs). But my director friends sent me pictures of their kids watching *Oh Baby!* non-stop and they are going nuts.

How do you deal with anger: I sleep

What do you hate the most in another person: Being lied to

How do you start your day: Big mug of water and a newspaper. I need the newspaper

City you wish to visit: Japan, Prague

Worst subject in school: Math

Favourite film: *Maya Bazaar*

Favourite holiday destination: Bhutan, where I went for my recent vacation.