

Disha PSs first-of-their-kind in country, CM says in House

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy on the floor of the House on Thursday said that in the first-of-their-kind initiatives by any State in the country, Andhra Pradesh had rolled out Disha Police Stations, special courts, and made Disha Act, which was sent of Centre's approval.

Disha Bill was brought in for speedy trial in cases of crime against women, where 18 special police stations, 13 fast-track courts are being set up across the State along with forensic labs. Disha App was downloaded by over 90 lakh women and saved women through SOS with police intervention. Law and Order has been strengthened prioritizing the crime against women for speedy action and equipped 18 vehicles for crime scene management. The investigation of serious crimes against the women was also brought down to 42 days and geo-tagged sexual offenders

Taking strict measures under the abolition of liquor, the State government has closed down belt shops and permit rooms and further



reduced the number of outlets. Earlier, the sale of IMFL was 34 lakh cases but now dropped to 21.22 lakh cases. Similarly, the sale of beer which was 17 lakh cases has now come down to 7 lakh cases, he added.

Earlier, initiating a short discussion on Women Empowerment, Women and Child Welfare Minister Taneti Vanitha said the State government had been implementing various flagship programmes to achieve women's empowerment. She explained in detail the schemes.

Nagari MLA RK Roja hailed the Chief Minister for the State government's welfare schemes and said 65 percent of the posts in municipal chairpersons and 53 percent in MPPs are reserved for women and it shows the commitment of the Chief Minister towards women empowerment. She said TDP Chief N Chandrababu Naidu has cheated the people of the state over the last 40 years and the people didn't trust Naidu and Lokesh though they campaigned vigorously in Kuppam

and added that they should confine themselves to Hyderabad.

MLAs KV Ushashri Charan, Vidadala Rajini, Viswasarayi Kalavathi, Dasari Sudha, Dr. Vundavalli Sridevi, K Sreedevi, Reddy Shanthi, Jonnalagadda Padmavati, Kottagulli Bhagya Lakshmi, and Dhana Lakshmi have listed out the welfare schemes implemented by the State government for women and lauded Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for his commitment towards women empowerment.

BJP to take part in Padayatra on Nov 21

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a significant political development in the State, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has decided to take part in the 'Nyaya Sthanam to Devasthanam' Maha Padayatra, being taken out by the Amaravati region farmers resenting the dividing of the capital city Amaravati.

BJP leaders said that BJP State president Somu Veerajulu informed the senior leaders about the decision to participate in Maha Padayatra.

BJP national general secretary Purandeswari, secretary Satyakumar, national executive member Kanna Lakshminarayana, State president Somu Veerajulu, MPs Sujana Chowdhury and CM Ramesh will participate in the padayatra on November 21 in Nellore and the BJP officials sent information about this.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his Tirupati visit found fault with the State BJP leaders for maintaining distance with the Maha Padayatra. He questioned the State BJP leaders why they did not take part in the padayatra. He expressed anger over the BJP state leaders for asking for an explanation from the leader who took part in the padayatra.

Amit Shah refused the arguments of GVL Narasimha Rao and Somu Veerajulu that the BJP's participation in the padayatra ultimately would benefit the TDP. "If you maintain distance, the TDP keeps on getting benefits. If you participate in the padayatra, the farmers will follow you. Keeping distance from the agitations and people is not good to the party", Amit Shah told the BJP leaders. He also directed the senior leaders to take the decisions after consulting national secretary Satyakumar, former State president Kanna Lakshminarayana and Sujana Chowdhury.



According to BJP senior leaders, Sujana Chowdhury played a significant role in convincing Amit Shah that the BJP should extend solidarity with the agitating Amaravati farmers and should take part in the Maha Padayatra. Sujana Chowdhury succeeded in persuading Amit Shah in this regard. In fact, Sujana Chowdhury has been maintaining distancing to the party programmes for the last few months as the decisions being taken by Sunil Deodhar, GVL Narasimha Rao and Somu Veerajulu did not go down well with him. Sujana Chowdhury felt unhappy and was hurt by comments made by Sunil Deodhar stating that BJP was not a parking place for the TDP. Amit Shah promised Sujana Chowdhury to discuss the issue

ing Amaravati farmers and should take part in the Maha Padayatra. Sujana Chowdhury succeeded in persuading Amit Shah in this regard.

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in the Tirupati meeting and discuss the matter.

Interestingly, AP Balijanadu convenor and the then BJP leader OV Ramana was suspended as he wrote many articles and essays in the print media in favour of Amaravati farmers' agitation.

Later, Velagapudi Gopala Krishna was also suspended from the BJP for slapping himself with his footwear in a meeting organised by the Amaravati farmers. Now, the BJP leaders were directed by Amit Shah to participate in the Maha Padayatra and extend solidarity with the Amaravati farmers.

Naidu walks to Assembly to protest against price rise

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP national president and Opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday went on foot to attend AP Legislative Assembly sessions that began on Thursday, in a show of protest against the 'anti-people' policies and rising prices under the Jaganmohan Reddy government.

Naidu led the TDP MLAs and MLCs in the foot march taken out to the House. The TDP members held placards and raised slogans, criticising the YSRCP regime for 'not providing' any relief to the common man from the abnormal price rise.

The TDP chief demanded that the AP government

should stop pursuing its adamant stand and start reducing the prices of petrol and diesel. The highest fuel prices have caused an unbearable rise in prices of essential commodities. The Chief Minister should take back the decision on collecting tax on garbage.

Chandrababu Naidu deplored that the common man was suffering greatly and leading miserable lives under the Jagan Mohan Reddy rule. The AP government was responsible for the highest power charges in the State when compared to all other states in the country, he said.

TDP MLAs K Atchannaaidu, Nimmla Ramanaaidu, Gorantla Butchajai Chowdhury and others took part in the foot

march. They held placards highlighting the YSRCP government's failures with regard to welfare, maintenance of roads, remunerative prices to farmers and so on. The TDP legislators lambasted the ruling party for its policy on the merger of the aided educational institutions.

The TDP members raised slogans against the 'drugs and mining' mafia and held the Jaganmohan Reddy regime solely responsible for the destruction going on in the State.

Earlier, Naidu and his party legislators garlanded the statue of NTR at Venkatapalem. The party cadres raised slogans against the 'chaotic and anarchic policies' of the ruling YSRCP.



YSRCP candidate Govardhana wins Penugonda ZPTC

PNS ■ ELURU

The ruling YSRCP won the Penugonda ZPTC for which the counting of votes was taken up on Thursday.

YSRCP candidate Poduru Govoradhana defeated TDP candidate by margin of 4,389. Meanwhile, out of the 14 MPTCs, the ruling YSRCP won 10 seats while the TDP won 3 and the Janasena won one seat.

The counting of votes concluded peacefully, police said.

'Be prepared to face Covid third wave'

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Chief Secretary Dr. Sameer Sharma has asked the Medical and Health Department to be prepared to face the third wave of Covid-19. "Armed with the experiences of fighting the first and second waves, the administration should gear up to face the third wave, if necessary," the Chief Secretary said.

A State-Level Steering

Committee meeting on Covid-19 vaccination was held on Thursday. While reviewing various activities, Sameer Sharma enquired about the ongoing vaccination programme and directed officials to procure all the necessary equipment and infrastructure to face the third wave.

The Chief Secretary enquired about the door-to-door survey to identify COVID patients and the

treatment being offered. During the meeting, he observed that Srikakulam, Vizianagaram and West Godavari districts lagged behind in vaccination and directed the officials to conduct special drives.

Medical and Health Department Principal Secretary Anil Kumar Singhal and Commissioner K. Bhaskar attended the meeting and detailed the progress of the vaccination drive.



Maharaja Alak Narayana Society for Arts and Science Trust (MANSAS)

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Demanding that the Maharaja College and School be continued as aided institutions, Student Federation of India (SFI) and the College Parents' Committee staged a protest in Vizianagaram on Thursday. In fact, responding to the govern-

ment call, the management has already given its consent and also surrendered the teachers to the government.

A large number of SFI activists, parents and other student organisations rushed to the college and demanded continue the institution with the government aid only. They

raised the slogan 'Our College-Our Right'.

The agitators tried to enter into the Maharaja Alak Narayana Society for Arts and Science Trust office. The police rushed to the spot and stopped the protesters. The police paid maximum effort to pacify them. However, the activists

managed to enter the Maharaja Alak Narayana Society for Arts and Science Trust office. To control the mob, the police resorted to mild lathi-charge and cleared the activists. The activists were shifted to various police stations and in the evening the police released them.

'Koti Deepotsavam' held at Dokiparru

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Koti Vattika Deepotsavam was held on Thursday to mark the Kartika Deepotsavam in Sri Bhoo Sametha Sri Venkateswaraswamy Temple at Dokiparru Mahakshetram in Gudlavalleru mandal of Krishna District.

The event was supervised by the founding trustees of the temple PV Krishna Reddy and Sudha Reddy couple, P Vira Reddy, Vijayalakshmi, Kommareddy Bapi Reddy, Vijaya Bhaskaramma couple, Sumalata, Prasanna and other family members, relatives, villagers, devotees especially women were present in large numbers.

Temple trustees Krishna Reddy and Sudha Reddy handed over the necessary puja material to the participants of the Koti Vattika Deepotsavam free of cost. Archana and special pujas were performed on Thursday morning at the Mahakshetram in honour of

Kartika Deepotsavam. According to the Vaikhanasa Bhagavatshastra at the Mahakshetram, Vedic scholars have organised the Koti Vattika Dipotsavam to mark the Karthika pournami in the month of Karthika.

The temple trustees organise daily, partial, monthly, half yearly and annual festivals at the Mahakshetram. On special days like Karthika Pournami and Varalakshmi Vratam, it has become a tradition for the welfare of the people in the country and the state, especially around Dokiparru.

In this pujas founder trustees and archakas pray to the God for the welfare and happiness of people. During the month of Kartika, Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu are specially worshipped.

Before the Koti Vattika Deepotsavam, the founding trustee of the temple, Sudhareddy launched the newly established Goshala. Sri VenkateswaraSwamy wakes up



with a morning service with cow's milk. In the same way the solitary service to Sri Venkateswara is also done with cow's milk.

The temple trustees provided the opportunity for the devotees to worship such a cow. From now on words, devotees will be able to perform Gau-seva at the Dokiparru Mahakshetram on every pournami. Goshala was started in the temple as the cow is the form of all deities.



Withdraw GOs on takeover of aided schools: Lokesh

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP national general secretary Nara Lokesh on Thursday slammed the YSRCP government for 'suppressing' the students' agitations instead of conceding their demand for withdrawal of the merger of aided educational institutions.

Nara Lokesh condemned the arrests of the student leaders for taking out a 'Chalo Assembly' protest. "We have already given a seven-day deadline. But the government did not respond. The present Chalo Assembly is our reply. We have knocked on the doors of the Assembly today. Soon, we will knock on the doors of

houses of the Chief Minister and his Ministers," he said.

Lokesh visited and sat in dharna in front of the Pedakurapadu police station demanding the unconditional release of the arrested students. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the student leaders were arrested around 9 am and put to severe inconvenience.

They were made to sit beside the toilets without food and were subjected to many humiliations. But, the Jagan regime should realise that the agitation would not stop till the Government withdrew its plans against aided colleges.

Jagan betrayed women: TDP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP State general secretary Panchumarti Anuradha on Thursday asserted that Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy had no moral right to talk about women's empowerment.

Anuradha asked how the Chief Minister could uplift women of the state when he could not do justice to his own sisters. Jaganmohan Reddy had spoken utter lies on the floor of the Legislative Assembly, she said and alleged that the CM's betrayals had made one sister run away to the neighbouring State while another sister was seeking justice in Delhi streets.

Addressing a press conference here, the TDP leader advised the

Chief Minister to first do some sincere justice to his own sisters before giving lectures on empowerment of other women. It was the previous TDP Government that had shown what it would be like to uplift and empower women in all sectors. The TDP had always put women on an equal footing with men in all areas of endeavour.

Anuradha recalled how NTR provided property rights to women so as to enable them not to lag behind men in any respect. By providing reservations in the local bodies, the women leaders were developed at every level. Former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu began the DWCR movement in order to ensure financial stability for women.

Advertisement for Ascendas Broadcasting featuring Telugu text and images of media equipment.

Heavy rain throws life out of gear in Tirupati

District administration declares a two-day holiday for schools, colleges

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Under the influence of the cyclone in the Bay of Bengal, heavy rain lashed the Chittoor district especially Tirupati on Thursday. It has been reported that rainfall of 8 to 12 cm was recorded. The low-lying areas were inundated, disrupting normal life.

The people kept had to keep indoors as floodwater from the Swarnamukhi River entered the villages. The vehicular movement came to a standstill. However, heavy vehicles, buses, and lorries piled on the highways. The city witnessed traffic jams due to flooding. Many areas such as Madhura Nagar, New Balaji Nagar, and TTD flats were submerged with rainwater and outflow from the Swarnamukhi River. Madhura Nagar Colony and Sundarayya Nagar colonies and houses were filled with rainwater above the knee length.

Meanwhile, the flights from Hyderabad and Delhi to Tirupati returned to the city airport. Air India flight from Delhi and Spicejet flight from Hyderabad returned to Hyderabad and Indigo flight from Hyderabad to Tirupati was redirected to Bangalore due to low visibility and floodwater on the runway.

Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanam (TTD) closed the footpath way and both the ghat roads were closed for pilgrims to the Tirumala hill temple because of the heavy rains and the roads were blocked with water and due to landslides. The temple area in Tirumala is fully surrounded by rainwater. The TTDs "Kartika Depotsavam" ritual was cancelled due to the heavy and continuous rainfall.

The people are facing difficulties with the heavy rain, resulting in roads being filled with rainwater. In some areas, CPI and CPM leaders protested against the civic authorities



standing in the water. They alleged that the corporation authorities failed to safeguard the people and their properties from the floods, drainages, and roads were blocked because of the inefficiency of the Town Planning department. The downpour gave respite for a couple of hours at 10 am. However, it started raining again, this time continuously. On the other hand, Swarnamukhi River, which passes through Chandragiri, Tirupati Rural, Renigunta,

Yerpedu, Thottambedu, and Srikalahasti mandals before entering Nellore, is flowing above the danger mark and the people in the villages are keeping indoors.

Meanwhile, the Mangalam road in the city is filled with rainwater up to knee-deep level.

The district administration and the police authorities are working hard to safeguard the people from heavy rain and announced a two-day holiday to schools and colleges in the

district. District Collector M Harinarayana requested the people not to come out of their homes unless it is extremely necessary.

Urban SP Venkatappala Naidu inspected the flood situation in the city with NDRF staff and requested the people not to let out children and elderly persons from their houses and asked the people to call 6309913960 police control room in case of emergency assistance.

Downpour wreaks havoc in Kadapa

PNS ■ KADAPA

Heavy rains under the influence of low pressure created havoc in Kadapa and Chittoor districts as crops in thousands of acres suffered damage. Kadapa city witnessed a deluge as all the thoroughfares, interior roads and lanes were inundated on Thursday. A clogged drainage system and heavy inflows to the Buggavanka rivulet worsened the situation.

All the reservoirs, canals, irrigation tanks and nalas were filled to the brim and breaches to tanks and canals were reported in various places. Many low-lying areas remained inundated. Normal life was thrown out of gear in the city and in many towns across the district.

Following heavy inflows to the Buggavanka rivulet, two crest gates were lifted to discharge 1660 cusecs of water downstream. The officials were directed to take precautionary measures downstream as the discharge of water was likely to increase. The worst-affected were the farmers as damage to crops was reported in thousands of acres. Official sources said that the paddy crop in thousands of acres that were ready for harvest was destroyed in Chennuru, Kazipet, Kamalapuram, Valluru, Pullampet, Porumamilla, Kalasapadu, Kashinayana, B.Koduru, Siddavaram and Nandaturu mandals. There was waist-deep water at SR Nagar forcing denizens to confine indoors.

Vijayanagar colony was under knee-deep water and water entered into several houses as well. RTC bus stand road, Bharat Nagar, Ambedkar Centre, Bhagyanagar colony, Ganjikunta colony, Mrutyanjaya kunta, Prakash Nagar, Nakash Street, Shastri Nagar and RTC RM office road in the city were inundated. A bullock cart was washed away in the floodwaters at Palempalli. However, the farmers escaped unhurt. A holiday was declared for



HEAVY RAIN ALERT

Officials directed to take safety measures

PNS ■ ONGOLE

all the educational institutions on Thursday and Friday in view of heavy rains. Damage was caused to horticulture crops including banana, onion, papaya, tomato, and turmeric in over 1,000 hectares. As per the preliminary assessment, crops worth Rs 139.28 crore were destroyed in the district due to heavy rains, officials said. However, the exact loss of crops could be assessed only after the flood water recedes, officials clarified. The river Penna is in spate due to heavy rains in the catchment areas and the Somasila project is also receiving heavy inflows. The vehicular traffic between Tadipatri and Kadapa was disrupted as Gandikota backwater submerged the road. The road connectivity to many villages was disrupted as the Kalleti project water overflowed on the road. The road connectivity to Siddareddygaripalli was also disrupted due to inundation. Several villages in Muttukuru panchayat were marooned. The Papagni river also is in spate due to heavy rains in the agency areas upstream. This is for the fifth time in the year that the river is receiving heavy inflows. The spiritual centre Sri

Gandhi Veeranjaneya Swamy Kshetram at Chakrayapet was also inundated. The authorities lifted the crest gates of the Pincha project to release 2,500 cusecs of water downstream while 3,000 cusecs of water were released from the Veligallu project. Official sources said that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy discussed the situation with the Collector. The Chief Minister held a review meeting with the Collector and other officials virtually and directed them to take all precautionary measures. He asked them to monitor the flood situation. The heavy rains devastated the Chittoor district as many low-lying areas were marooned. District Collector Harinarayana declared a holiday for all educational institutions on Thursday. The Alipini pathway had become unusable as rainwater overflowed. The TTD stopped allowing pilgrims to reach Tirumala through the pathway. Vehicular traffic was disrupted on Yerpedu-Sadashiv Puram, Srikalahasti-Papa Naidupet, Gudimallam-Srikalahasti, Panguru-Srikalahasti, and Venkatagiri highways. Traffic was banned on the road as a precautionary measure.

Prakasam District Collector Pravin Kumar has directed the officials to take all precautionary measures to avoid loss of life and property in the wake of the heavy rain under the influence of low pressure. The Collector inspected the cyclone shelter, village secretariat and Rythu Bharosa Kendra (RBK) at Karedu in Ulavapadu mandal on Thursday. He visited Kottapallepalem and Alagayapalem and talked to the fishermen. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that some of the mandals in the district had experienced heavy downpour. All precautionary measures should be taken to shift people to safer places. Wherever there was no cyclone shelter, the people should be shifted to the government schools. He asked the officials to accept the help of people's representatives. Kandukur Sub-Collector Aparajit Singh, DSP K Srinivasa Rao, MPDO Chenchamma, and Tahsildar Sanjiv Rao accompanied the Collector. Meanwhile, toll free control rooms were set up in the Collector's office to provide and take the information.

SHORT TAKES



Raghavulu, film actor Shivaji express solidarity with ryots

ONGOLE: CPI (M) Politburo member B V Raghavulu and film actor K Shivaji extended their solidarity with the Amaravati farmers who have been on maha padayatra for the last 18 days in protest against the dividing of the capital city. The farmers halted their padayatra on Thursday in the wake of the heavy rains at Guduru village. Mr. Shivaji met the farmers and extended his solidarity with them. Later talking to the media, he said that if the capital city Amaravati was constructed it would be a great asset to the future generation. He exhorted the farmers to continue their stir till the government consents to their demand. CPM leader B V Raghavulu predicted that the agitation of Amaravati farmers would achieve success. The CPM leader said that the majority of the people of the state want Amaravati to be the capital city of AP. He took strong exceptions to the comments of YSRCP leaders that only paid artists were participating in the maha padayatra. Former MLA Shivaram was among those who extended solidarity with the agitating farmers today.



Fervour marks Kartika Deepotsavam in Tirumala

TIRUPATI: Spiritual fervour marked the Kartika Deepotsavam festivities observed at the Tirumala temple on Thursday. The abode of Lord Venkateswara was illuminated with ghee-lit lamps in specially designed earthen clay pots called 'Mookullu' which were carried in a procession inside the hill temple by priests and officials led by the Jeeyar Swamis and TTD Officials on Thursday evening. Later, the temple complex, from the Mahadwaram to the sanctum sanctorum and sub-shrines, were lit up with ghee-lit lamps. TTD Board Member Prasanthi Reddy, additional EO AV Dharma Reddy and other officials took part.

NIA conducts searches in Kalyana Rao's house

PNS ■ ONGOLE

The officials of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted searches in the house of revolutionary writer G Kalyana Rao at Alakurapadu in Tanguturu mandal. A three-member NIA team conducted a thorough search in his house. Kalyana Rao is known as a Maoist sympathiser.

Police sources said here on Thursday that the NIA team belonged to Chhattisgarh state. The officials also inspected surrounding areas of the house. The Prakasam district police led by Additional SP Chowdeshwari extended necessary support to the NIA team. It was not known whether the NIA team had found incriminatory literature in the house.

One of the top Maoist leaders Akkiraju Haragopal alias Ramakrishna alias RK died of



ill-health a month ago. RK's wife Shirisha lives in Alakurapadu village. A few days ago, Shirisha and her close relative G Kalyana Rao organised a meeting on the occasion of RK's son Munna's death anniversary in the village. They were also planning to

release a book on Akkiraju Haragopal, namely 'Sayudha Santhi Swapnam'. When the police got a tip-off that the book was being printed in a press in Hyderabad, they raided the press and seized the copies of the book and other incriminatory literature.

Hyd police book Wasim Rizvi, his associates on Owaisi's complaint

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Police have booked former Uttar Pradesh Shia Wakf Board chairman Wasim Rizvi and his associates for allegedly creating hatred against Muslims and insulting Prophet Mohammed. On a complaint by AIMM chief and Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi, an FIR was registered at Kamatipura police station.

Rizvi and his associates have been booked under sections 153 A (Promoting enmity between different groups), 153 B (Imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration), 295-A (Deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) and others.



Dharna by SFI, AISF activists in Guntur

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The students affiliated with the SFI and AISF staged a dharna at the education department RJD office here on Thursday demanding the government to repeal the GOs 35, 42 and 50 and the police whisked them away to the police station.

A group of students squatted in front of the RJD office raising slogans holding placards demanding the government to repeal the GOs 35, 42 and 50. The police arrested and whisked them away to the police station.

The student union leaders alleged that 90 percent of the SC and ST students study at the aided colleges. The government is depriving higher education to the poor in the SC and ST by privatizing the aided institutions, he

slammed. The students are forced to pay 80 percent fees by privatizing the aided institutions, the student union leader lamented. The student leaders warned to give a call to seize the houses of ministers if the government did not withdraw the GOs.

Meanwhile, the police foiled the attempts of students to take out a Chalo Assembly rally here on Thursday. The police prevented the students from going to the Assembly from Naz centre. The police took student union leaders to preventive custody to foil the Chalo Assembly agitation.

The police arrested and forcibly took them to Lalapet police station. A heated argument took place between the students and the police which led to jostling between them.

YSRCP wins 11 MPTCs; TDP 2, 1 ZPTC

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The ruling YSRCP won nine MPTC seats and the TDP two MPTCs and one ZPTC in the by-elections for which the counting of votes was taken up on Thursday.

Out of the 11 MPTCs, the YSRCP has won 9 seats while

the Opposition TDP has won only two MPTC seats.

The only solace to the TDP, which has been tasting a series of defeats in the elections, is the victory of Savalyapuram ZPTC and two MPTCs in the capital city Amaravati region.

The TDP's victory in the capital region in ZPTC and two

MPTCs reflected the people's resentment of the government's proposal of shifting the capital city to Visakhapatnam, TDP leaders claimed. Like rubbing salt on the wound, the TDP won ZPTC in the ruling party MLA Bolla Brahmanaidu's constituency Vinukonda. Talking to the media, former

MLA Shrevana Kumar said that TDP ZPTC candidate Para Hymavathi won the election as the people of the area voted for the TDP despite being lured by the YSRCP.

The TDP leaders thanked the voters for electing TDP candidates in the ZPTC and MPTC elections.

Prakasam police to use laser gun to monitor speed of vehicles

PNS ■ ONGOLE

The Prakasam district police will soon use the laser speed gun to monitor the speed and reckless driving of vehicles on highways, in an effort to minimise road accidents.

Superintendent of Police Malika Garg inspected the laser speed gun fixed on an interceptor vehicle deployed at the Chekurapadu bus stand on NH-216 to control the speed of vehicles on the roads as part of road accident prevention measures.

The vehicle crew explained to the SP the performance of the laser speed gun and other

aspects. The SP then conveyed various instructions to the officers and staff of the interceptor vehicle.

The SP said many road accidents took place due to over speeding of vehicles on the highways and hence the vehicles traveling at high speeds would be detected by the laser speed gun device. Cases would be registered besides slapping e-challan.

Similarly, the laser speed guns would be set up not only in the suburbs of Ongole town, but across the district. Special training would be given to five personnel in each sub-division and officers in the VR.

The top brass said laser speed guns would be installed at accident-prone areas such as sharp turning roads, construction sites, highways, major road junctions, and congested crossroads to control the speed of various vehicles and reduce accidents.

The SP advised motorists to abide by road safety rules, not to exceed speed limits, wear helmets and seat belts, avoid triple riding on two-wheelers, wear standard helmets, and not to drive vehicles under the influence of alcohol. She pointed out that the negligence of motorists can also pose a threat to others.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

Lost innocence

Returning to school after the COVID break has been tough, reveals a student survey

The country is beginning to understand the price its children have paid because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) national survey focuses primarily on student enrolment, access to learning material, digital divide among, and support for them at home. Enrolment has visibly increased in Government schools, across all age groups. The shift is from private schools where the cost of education is higher, the children feeling suddenly uprooted from friends and teachers. The dip in enrolment in private schools is discernible. The reasons could be the same for both: It could be that families have lost breadwinners, or parents have lost job(s), families have migrated to less expensive cities or villages or affordable private schools have shut down. The other glaring outcome of the survey is that students' dependence on private tuitions has gone up. Four out of every 10 children now have tuition at home. Thirdly, the digital divide among children from the rich and poor households is apparent. The lack of digital devices could hamper the children just entering the formal education system. The survey results appear credible as it has covered over 76,000 households in nearly 18,000 villages. ASER contacted 4,800-odd reopened schools and 2,400 schools that were still shut when the survey was conducted. What the survey could not have assessed are the learning outcomes and stress levels of children only now coming out of the forced COVID-19 quarantine.



Immediately after the world went into quarantine last year, the United Nations asked parents to watch out for the emotional problems of children and adolescents exacerbated by "family stress, social isolation, interruption of school and educational activity, and uncertainty for the future which occurred in critical moments of their emotional development". Smaller surveys in South India have found children returning to school after 18 months unable to catch up with their studies. Either they are easily distracted or their routines have completely changed, or they are tensed up by family stress. For months, these children have suffered various kinds of pandemic-related stress — isolation itself, school shutdown, reduced social life and physical activities, changes to routine, sleep difficulties, exposure to death and disharmony at home, excessive screen use, unhealthy diet, and many more. Children require set routines to preserve their health, but the lockdown changed all that. It also deprived their parents of their natural activities, forcing them to be home. The shared emotional bonding of the initial weeks of the lockdown gradually turned into a burden, with the parents having to manage their children 24x7, playing the role of teacher, friend, counselor and physical instructor. As the children gradually return to school, teachers will find them a much more sensitive lot, probably looking lost even. They will need time to get back to the daily routine they once knew. They will need a lot of handholding to overcome their lockdown problems, like anxiety and emotional and behavioural disorders.

PICTALK



Migrants are transported on the bed of a trailer in Jesus Carranza, in the Mexican State of Veracruz

PTI

Look lively

Fully jabbed people may now be more than the first-timers but the Govt mustn't sit on its laurels

It comes as an encouraging development that, for the first time in the country, the number of fully vaccinated individuals has surpassed the partially vaccinated eligible population. As of Tuesday night, of the 755.4 million people who have received at least one shot of the COVID-19 vaccine in India, 380.7 million people are double vaccinated and another 374.7 million have received only one shot, according to data from the CoWIN dashboard. The Health Ministry hails it as a "significant achievement". It indeed is promising, especially when the number of the country's fully-jabbed population has constantly stood lower than that of most western countries. However, at what cost did we achieve it, is the question. While the rising number of fully-jabbed individuals could be a relief, the administration of fewer first doses is worrisome. Data suggest that the number of second doses has consistently exceeded the first dose over the last few weeks across the country. Apparently, the "world's largest" vaccination drive has slackened after the mega celebration of the 100-crore vaccination milestone on October 21. India managed to administer roughly 14.46 crore doses over the last one month and the total number of vaccines administered stands at 114.46 crore as on November 18, as per the Health Ministry.



Though there are over 200 million doses available with the States, as Serum Institute of India chief Adar Poonawalla said, the country has for more than a month been lagging in reaching the unvaccinated. The Centre's recently launched 'Har Ghar Dastak' campaign to motivate people to shed vaccine hesitancy has yielded little results, as is visible from the fall in the number of first-dose receivers. The campaign needs to vigorously reach out to the unvaccinated and persuade them to get the job. Vaccinating the teenagers should also be a priority. A major chunk of the remaining uninoculated population is vaccine hesitant and is a threat to their family, society and, of course, to their own self. Therefore, the Government should focus on maxing out the vaccination drive instead of making pit stops to celebrate and gain political mileage. India still averages more than 10,000 COVID-19 cases a day, and this seemingly last mile of the journey should be taken up as a sprint rather than a leisurely jog if the Government intends to avoid a disastrous third wave.

The labyrinthine corridors to justice



PRAFULL GORADIA

For its part, the Government must ensure financial autonomy to the institution so that it can dispense justice independently and speedily, cutting the backlog

Chief Justice NV Ramana recently said that common litigants guided by resource- and energy-sapping litigations need quick justice. He had earlier said that the inadequately supported judiciary costs the country foreign investments and, therefore, economic growth. He has implored the Union Government to ensure financial autonomy for his institution. Such reforms would bring about different results, including improving the GDP and the general growth of the economy.

In the eyes of the common folk, the greatest judicial problem of India is delayed justice and the accumulation of an enormous backlog of cases. If Chief Justice Ramana can show a way of how a person of his stature can suggest ways and means of solving this gigantic problem, it would be better. If some success is met with in this direction, the country as well as the Government would be sympathetic.

For a common litigant, it is a matter of great surprise as to why the courts grant adjournments freely. As s/he sees it, they are penalised because most lawyers mark their fees even for the few seconds the adjournment is discussed. What is necessary is to make the court ask them to pay half the original court fee for every adjournment. This should, therefore, bring about another benefit that a busy lawyer can be avoided by a sensible client. He would select somebody to be his advocate who does not have to attend many cases, and in several courts of the country.

Another belief of a common litigant would be that appeals should be confined to a maximum of two courts above, preferably one. I have heard that tenancy cases that began in Mumbai's Small Causes Court eventually end up in the Supreme Court. Yet another thought would be, before commencing the final hearing, the judges should ask both sides how much time they would take; say, 30 minutes each. If one



of the advocates exceeds the 30-minute limit, be it so. But he must pay the cost for every extra minute he continues to argue. These measures should help distribute cases and litigation to advocates who can efficiently explain their clients' problems quickly enough rather than ramble.

We have often called ourselves a poor country, which means fewer assets and more people. If that be so, the same buildings can be used for a second shift. The current procedure is for the High Court to sit for five hours. They can instead begin at 8.30 am and carry on uninterrupted till 1.30 pm and retire for the day. The afternoon session can begin at 2 pm and carry on uninterrupted till 7 pm. The judges can be fixed, whether for the morning or afternoon session, and change only when the new roster comes out. There is no shortage of lawyers who are prepared to become judges or lawyers who are prepared to appear before them. To test their knowledge before appointment, there may be an all-India examination to test whether a person is eligible to



ANOTHER PROBLEM THAT PLAGUES INDIA'S JUDICIAL SYSTEM IS THE SHEER BACKLOG OF CASES THAT HAS ACCUMULATED IN ITS CORRIDORS. THE HIGH COURTS SHOULD BE PRESCRIBED THE LEVEL OF LITIGATION THEY CAN DEAL WITH

become a judge. The examination can have various levels, depending on the courts where the appointment is to be made.

Yet another problem that plagues India's judicial system is the sheer backlog of cases that has accumulated in its corridors. Similarly, the High Courts should also be prescribed the level of litigation they can deal with. This must apply to the lower courts as well. Incidentally, I have come across a Small Causes partnership case in Saurashtra reaching the apex court. Imagine the number of courts and judges the case has had to travel!

The other point that must strike the powers that be is that 70 per cent of the litigation in India involves various Governments. This reflects that a large number of citizens are denied justice unless they try the law courts which, in turn, shows that our laws are not clear and simple, and also open to bureaucratic interpretation with a variety of meanings. I do realise that quite a large number of obsolete laws have been scrapped lately. However, there would be a lot of operating laws that are

open to various interpretations. This is the reason for the incidence of voluminous litigation. Clearly, in order to catch up with time, not merely the courts but also the laws would need a change as well as an elimination of the redundant clauses in the various Acts. This would involve the Law Commission.

Another area in which time is wasted is the drafting of petitions and affidavits which are usually long, if not also in outdated language. As far back as in 1976, I had visited London in connection with the purchase of a tea company. The application for sanction to the Reserve Bank of India was drafted by the London lawyer as well as by our Kolkata solicitor. The one written by the overseas lawyer was a page and three lines whereas what came from Kolkata was over six longer pages and a few lines. When I returned to Kolkata, I asked the legal friend whether brevity was the soul of wit. He smiled in embarrassment.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

COMMUNITY KITCHENS AS THE SOLUTION

Sir — The Supreme Court has given the Union Government a piece of its mind over the avoidable and unjustified delay in framing a uniform policy to provide cooked food to hungry and destitute people through community kitchens and reminded it that the first and foremost duty of a welfare State is to provide food to people dying of hunger. Community kitchens can be easily set up across the country by allocating enough funds and using the State machinery and resources for transport of food grains and creation of storage space and recruitment of cooks and servers, provided there is the political commitment and will to feed the hungry.

India has the largest concentration of impoverished people in the world; it is home to as many as 196 million undernourished people, a disturbing fact that should galvanise the Government into making food security a reality for all. Implicit in the right to life is the right to food. Community kitchens are needed to ensure that no one has to sleep on an empty stomach. They should not be viewed as eyesores in 'New India'.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

TOO MUCH FOOD IS AN ISSUE, TOO

Sir — The tussle between Telangana and the Centre over 'purchase of parboiled rice' issue is avoidably going out of control as the days pass on. A common observation about the functioning of the current dispensation is that it does not assertively figure out issues at the budding stage but only allows micro-level leaders to issue contradictory statements one after another with no hope of solving issues but only boiling them in a hot pan. At the same time, it is also a fact that Telangana Chief Minister KCR has issued so many media statements over the last several months that the State would purchase each grain produced by the farmers at a respectable price and ensure that farmers do not suffer financial loss on account of their agricultural produce at any cost.

Now the Chief Minister stages a dharna (sit-in) demanding the Centre to

Let's not ruin Mother Nature



The Ministry of Jal Shakti on Tuesday, tweeted a truly beautiful picture of Umngot river in Meghalaya which looks incredibly serene. The Umngot river is so clean that one can easily see through its surface. It is one of the earth's cleanest rivers. However, a contrasting picture to one of the cleanest rivers on earth went viral last week. It was river Yamuna frothing with toxic foams caused by chemical pollution. These two con-

trasting images give us lessons that the way we ignore nature and way more we exploit it, we are digging our own graves. The picture of Umngot river on the other hand gives us a beautiful message that if we keep our rivers clean and pay enough attention to nature, it will give us back aplenty and make our lives much more healthy and peaceful.

Let us not forget that in our craving to make our lives better, we selfishly distort the face of mother nature without realising that our own lives and future are getting distorted. Let us also understand that rivers were born clean but we polluted them. One of the major causes of river pollution in India is the discharge of city and industrial waste into them. The Delhi Jal Board recently had to deploy people to sprinkle water in the Yamuna river to keep the filthy toxic froth away from its banks during Chhath Puja. If we don't start acting early, the future, too, will become as unclear as these rivers.

M Pradyu | Kannur

purchase all the parboiled rice produced by the farmers. In such a situation, it is the duty of the Centre to clarify in this matter by giving an official statement regarding its liability to purchase all the parboiled rice. The Centre should come clean without politics, if any.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao | Hyderabad

GURUPURAB'S GIFT BY THE CENTRE

Sir — The Centre's announcement to reopen the Kartarpur Sahib corridor has been widely welcomed by all the politicians across the political divide in Punjab even as its timing coincides with the auspicious Gurupurab falling on November 19. This will facilitate Indian Sikh pilgrims' visit to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Narowal, Pakistan, and help them pay obeisance to their first Sikh Guru Nanak Dev. Meanwhile, newly appointed Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi has also announced that his entire State Cabinet would also visit the shrine on November 18 as a part of the first delega-

tion to the historic corridor after 19-month closure following the COVID-19 outbreak. Recollecting his visit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah in this regard, CM Channi said that the reopening of the corridor has come across as the answer to the entire community's prayers. Those hailing the Centre's decision also include Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), regarded as Sikhs' mini-parliament, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) led by Sukhbir Singh Badal, former Union Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal among others. Interestingly, Pakistan had on October 2, 2020, also announced to unilaterally open the Kartarpur corridor but India did not reciprocate the gesture. To sum up, the Central Government's decision is seen as a Gurpurab gift to the nation's Sikhs.

Azhar A Khan | Rampur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

I shall be visiting Rezag La to pay my tributes to those brave Indian soldiers who fought a heroic battle there in 1962.



Defence Minister —Rajnath Singh

The Taliban's response to Islamic State-Khorasan Province's expansion appears to rely heavily on extrajudicial detentions and killings.



UN envoy —Deborah Lyons

This love for Jai Bhim is overwhelming. I've never witnessed this before! Heartfelt thanks for standing by us.



Actor —Suriya

VVS Laxman's ability to be committed made us select him as the head of the National Cricket Academy.



BCCI president —Sourav Ganguly

One thing that I will say about the current leadership is that it's forgotten the key lesson of inclusivity.



Congress leader —Shashi Tharoor



FIRST COLUMN INDIA'S CRUCIAL ROLE IN AFGHAN DIPLOMACY

The dialogue should be a stepping stone for India to emerge as a strong regional stabiliser



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

India recently hosted a "satisfactory" regional security dialogue of national security advisors from Iran, Russia and some central Asian states on the evolving Afghanistan issue. The meeting concluded with a joint declaration by the eight participating countries to tackle "terrorism" in all its forms including terror financing, preventing Afghanistan from being used as a terror training and breeding hub, collective action against "radicalisation, extremism and most importantly forming an "inclusive government in Afghanistan while being able to directly provide humanitarian aid to millions of Afghans facing a tough winter. One has to view Afghanistan via a gyroscope of the evolving global view. While the US and EU have chosen to exit the stage, they continue to remain key strategic partners for many affected countries in the region. They have decided to take a multilateral approach by engaging bilaterally with key partners on Afghanistan as well as finding complementary regional alliances. Russia wants to have a dominant role in the region given the security/military alliances it has with a host of Afghanistan neighbors, also its historical role with the current Taliban establishment. Russia or Soviet Union has had diplomatic relations with Afghanistan since the beginning of 20th



century and till date it can be said that the Russian database (military) of Afghan topography, trade routes, maps etc. could be better than what the Taliban has or will have. Russia also has shared interests of preserving peace within boundaries of several central Asian countries with whom Afghanistan has common borders and, in turn Russia has visa free travel. Russia in the new world order (after US withdrawal) knows it has to work through "acceptable" regional alliances which will provide it with the sanctity to be a key peacemaker. Russia's influence in the region including Afghanistan has been challenged in the past two decades with the rise of militaristic China, which chooses to work with Pakistan to advance its economic and security imperatives in Afghanistan. It would be worthwhile to remember that China and Pakistan had both been invited by India for the regional security dialogue, but they declined. Iran, another key member of the declaration, is worried about the spill over of the radical elements from the current Taliban dispensation within its boundaries. This spillover of terrorists and radical elements and now refugees of humanitarian crisis (famine, flood etc.) from Afghanistan is more worrying for the central Asian countries, which share borders with Afghanistan. This puts India in a unique position where it had, in the past, suddenly found itself out of the key regional influencing axis on Afghanistan. The regional dialogue ensured India getting back to multilateral forums and placing itself in the progressive diplomatic axis on Kabul, versus a limiting approach from Pakistan and China. The joint declaration with Russia, Iran and Central Asia should serve as an orientation map to Islamabad on the thinking within regional players. It clearly brings India's stated position on Afghanistan of forming a government which represents all sections of the society while protecting interests of the minorities and preventing any terror spillover. This also sends a long-awaited alert to China about its claim for unquestioned dominance in the region. The coming together of eight countries on Afghanistan should ring some alarm bells. Many of the central Asian countries have a disproportionate trade relation with China, where the latter pushes many of its covert military economic agenda under garb of aid with these nations. The dialogue should be treated as a stepping stone for India to emerge as a strong regional stabiliser.

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

Changes in RTI Act are need of the hour



SUBHASH CHANDRA AGRAWAL

India should be governed with the principle 'One Nation - One Rule' at least in respect of the Right to Information fees and its mode of payment

The Constitution-bench verdict dated November 13, 2019, of the Supreme Court declaring even the office of Chief Justice of India as public-authority under RTI Act has been welcomed, but may not serve the purpose till the Union government takes more corrective measures.

The remedy is that the government by notification may declare all public-private-partnerships, sports-bodies, cooperative-societies and other such bodies, public-authorities under the RTI Act. Land and Building Departments of central and state governments should study all cases of allotment of land or government-accommodations at subsidised rates or lease, and declare all these as public-authorities under the RTI Act.

However, effective steps should be taken to prevent misuse of the RTI Act, which will be a boon to genuine information-seekers by drastically reducing pendency at Information Commissions apart from saving man-hours and expenses for both the public-authorities and the petitioners.

Basic RTI fees should be uniform throughout the country.

Section 27 and 28 of the RTI Act give power to Competent Authorities and state-governments to draft their own rules which include fixing of RTI fees and mode of payment of RTI fees. Several Competent Authorities and states misused their power by having RTI fees as high as rupees 500, which in fact was aimed to discourage the RTI Act. Several states fixed RTI fees for filing First Appeals also. However Supreme Court in its verdict dated March 20, 2018 on a petition filed by Common Cause imposed a capping of Rs. 50 to be maximum RTI fees.

India should be governed with the principle "One Nation - One Rule" at least in respect of RTI fees and its mode of payment. Best is to club copying-charges of first twenty copied with basis RTI fees of Rs. 10 (for Central public-authorities) thus making Rs. 50 as uniform RTI fees throughout the country inclusive of charges of first twenty copied pages. That will largely prevent misuse of RTI Act just for sake of fun or publicity. There must not be any fees for filing First or Second Appeals. Such a system will not affect poor persons below poverty line (BPL category) because they are already exempted from paying RTI fees. However, to prevent big contractors and others misusing the provision by filing RTI applications under names of their workers of BPL category to get copying-charges in thousands of rupees waived off, persons under BPL category may be required to pay copying-charges for copied pages exceeding twenty.

There is a need to accept repeated CIC-recommendations for issue of RTI stamps. Handling the cost of a postal-order of value Rs. 10 costs the postal-department about Rs. 50 with cost of handling of postal-orders by a public-authority and bank-



THERE HAS TO BE UNIFORMITY IN WEBSITES FOR FILING ONLINE RTI APPLICATIONS. THIS HAS TO BECOME NECESSARY FOR STATES LIKE ODISHA THAT HAVE MADE ONLINE FILING OF RTI APPLICATIONS A MOCKERY WHERE IT IS COMPULSORY TO DOWNLOAD THE ONLINE APPLICATION AND THEN SEND IT BY POST TO THE DEPARTMENT CONCERNED

(The writer is RTI consultant holding the Guinness World record for most letters published in newspapers. The views expressed are personal.)



clearing even extra. The best remedy to overcome the situation is to accept frequent CIC-verdicts and administrative-request of CIC by postal-department to issue special RTI stamps (like earlier stamps for payment of licence-fees of radios and TV sets) in denominations of Rs. 2, 10 and 50 which will save crores of rupees annually to public-exchequers in using postal-orders as mode of payment of RTI fees. These RTI stamps should be conveniently available at all post-offices and counters of public-authorities and other convenient sale-points.

This will tackle the situation where public-authorities like National Green Tribunal (NGT) refuse acceptance of RTI fees in cash with nearby post office at Baroda House not selling postal orders thus putting RTI applicants in big difficulty.

The provision of sending post-free RTI applications should be extended to all 160,000-odd post-offices. Post-free RTI applications addressed to central public-authorities should be extended to all about 160,000 post-offices rather than just about 4,500 post offices presently. It is not difficult because every post-office however small it may be, daily sends post-bag to Head Post Office with registered post, cash and unsold revenue-articles. This post-bag can carry post-free RTI applications received at the post-office.

The provision of auto-emailing of RTI responses must be there on RTI applications filed on-line. The portal for filing on-line RTI applications should be modified so that RTI responses and orders of First Appellate Authorities may also be auto-emailed rather than RTI applicants required to go to portal for

viewing of RTI responses. SMS-alerts about emailing of RTI responses can also be there. Rather it will be still more advantageous for users of the RTI Act if RTI responses may be e-mailed on email IDs provided on RTI applications filed through hard copies.

The order of the Punjab and Haryana High Court to make ID proof compulsory with every RTI application, First Appeal and petitions before Information Commissions must be implemented. The Department of Personnel and Training should issue a circular in tune with para 23 of verdict dated November 2, 2012, in the matter-Fruit and Vegetable Union versus Unknown (CWP 4787 of 2011) which requires ID proof compulsory to be attached with every RTI application, First Appeal and Second Appeal or complaint filed with Information Commissions. Already the aspect has been adopted in Odisha. Those who do not want to disclose their identity can file RTI applications through post-box hired at some post-office.

There has to be uniformity in websites for filing online RTI applications necessary. Only websites uniformly designed by National Informatics Centre should be mandatorily for all states. This has become necessary for state like Odisha that has made online filing of RTI applications a mockery when it is compulsory to download online-filled RTI application and then send it by post to the concerned department. If such is the case, then there is no utility of having a useless portal for filing online RTI applications. Furthermore option-list for payment does not include even all the public-sector banks. Website designed for DoPT

is an ideal one, and should be compulsorily followed by all states.

Public-authorities are being misled by private firms to train officers for the RTI Act. Some organisation named Institute-Of-Public-Administration IPA has been sending letters to all public-authorities coming under purview of the RTI Act regarding holding paid two-day workshop on charging rupees heavily to the tune of Rs. 20,000 for local public authorities and Rs. 40,000 for outside-participant with spouse. Drafting of invitation-letters looks like that of some government-authorized body like Indian-Institute-Of-Public-Administration IIPA. Many public-authorities confusing the letter as if sent from a government-authorized have been sending participants to attend RTI-workshop at cost of public-exchequer. The DoPT, Central Information Commission CIC and Indian Institute of Public Administration IIPA should immediately take cognizance of the matter to prevent such tactics to mint money by private bodies.

The Delhi Right To Information Act, 2001, needs immediate repeal after a High Court order. This is in reference to order dated August 8, 2018 in WPC 8278 of where the court said that "the Right To Information Act, 2005 would now override the Delhi Right To Information Act, 2001 as it would occupy the entire legislative field". The DRTI Act has lost all relevance with RTI Act in existence, and only a very few applications are now being filed under DRTI Act, with most officers of Delhi Government being totally unaware about provisions of DRTI Act. All such acts legislated by individual states, before RTI Act 2005 came into existence.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE 'LADKI HU, LAD SAKTI HU' SLOGAN TOSSED BY PRIYANKA GANDHI MEANS THAT THERE IS A BOY AT HOME WHO CAN'T FIGHT.
—UNION MINISTER SMRITI IRANI



BEING A WOMAN, SMRITI'S COMMENT IS WRONG. INSTEAD, SHE SHOULD ENCOURAGE WOMEN BY SAYING THAT THEY CAN FIGHT FOR THEMSELVES.
—CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY PRIYANKA GANDHI

Robotic surgeries can redefine healthcare infrastructure

A country like India will benefit from the inclusion of robotic surgeries on a mass scale as it will lower the infection rate and ensure faster recovery

The medical world has witnessed rapid changes in the Medtech category. In the times of COVID-19, medical manpower scarcity became a challenge, and to keep non-COVID operations going on, the Medtech industry improvised and innovated, ensuring uninterrupted medical services.

A few months into the lockdown, hospitals increasingly moved towards robot-assisted surgeries to deal with huge backlogs. Though robotic surgery is indeed one of the great technological success stories of present times, it has not been used extensively because it is cost-prohibitive. With increased research in the usage of robotics for surgeries, the entire landscape of the healthcare system is chang-



SUDHIR PREM SRIVASTAVA

ing. After the first patient was operated on in 1998 using a surgical robot, more than a million robotic surgeries have been completed successfully in the last 20 years with a continuous evolution in technology.

With a humble beginning in the middle of the twentieth century, the robotic surgery field has seen great success to date but still, a lot needs to be done to bring it to the reach of the masses. Currently, there are close to 79 robotic surgical systems present in India that are not being used to their full potential. The reason is these systems are far too expensive and take years to master, due to which very few surgeons get trained to operate these robotic systems and, much of the world is still waiting to benefit from this technology.



According to recent data, there is one doctor for every 1,445 Indians which is lower than the WHO's prescribed norm of one doctor for 1,000 people. Also, India ranks lowest in availability of hospital beds per 1000 people. The global average is 3.4 beds per thousand people whereas India stands far behind with 0.7 beds. Shortage of healthcare professionals, bad connectivity and, limited medical sup-

plies are additional problems.

In the present scenario, robotic surgeries are more beneficial compared to traditional surgery, as it needs smaller incisions, which means less pain and scarring, leading to less time spent in the hospital and quicker recovery time, which is a boon for the Indian healthcare system. Also, it will put less pressure on the healthcare professional as robotic surgery brings enhanced precision, flexibility, control, and vision. It also allows the surgeon to perform very delicate or complex surgical procedures that may have been very difficult or even impossible without the aid of the robot.

A country like India will be benefited from the inclusion of robotic surgeries on a

mass scale as it will lower the infection rate and faster recovery. The tier 2 cities will also get doctors equipped with the knowledge and precision available only in metros and tier 1 cities. More hospitals will be able to handle complicated and life-threatening surgeries. It will bring a revolution in the medical field where both patients and surgeons will look forward to an improved life expectancy.

Robotic technology is currently expensive for wider adoption across all types of healthcare settings, its adaptability specifically concerning robotic assistants in surgery is still to reach the masses. The hope is that next-generation surgical robots would be economical and will bridge the gap, which can be made avail-

able for more people and benefit the world in the long run. Around 140 companies and research institutions are working on various robotic systems. The focus is on how to keep it cost-effective. If the procedures are economical and the maintenance contracts are affordable, more patients will get the benefit. Keeping this vision in mind, we are all set to launch the first Made in India robotic surgical system SSI Mantra by the end of this year.

Robotic-assisted surgeries have made significant contributions to the Indian healthcare industry, and the market is expected to reach ₹2,600 crore by 2024 at a CAGR of 19.8 per cent, as per a report by Research and Markets. Based on the findings of a

symposium last year, almost 50 per cent of all surgeries in India will be robot-assisted by 2025.

Robotic surgical systems will play a critical role in training young medical professionals to become more efficient future surgeons. It will make the surgeries more precise and less complicated. Tier 2 and tier 3 hospitals will also be able to provide procedures at par with big-city hospitals.

There is a long way to go in creating awareness about the benefits of robotic surgery. Acceptance of robotic surgery needs to increase significantly, along with the cost-effectiveness. The transition from conventional surgery to robotic surgery will be complete only when accessibility and affordability are chalked out and planned accordingly.

Sebi tweaks 'fit & proper person' rule

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi has tweaked the criteria for determining 'fit and proper person', according to a notification issued on Wednesday.

India received USD 87 bn in 2021: World Bank

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India, the world's largest recipient of remittances, received USD 87 billion in 2021 with the United States being the biggest source, accounting for over 20 per cent of these funds, according to the World Bank.



The World Bank report stated. Remittances to low- and middle-income countries are projected to have grown a strong 7.3 per cent to reach USD 589 billion in 2021, the bank said.

Rupee rises 4 paise to end at 74.24 against US dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee erased most of its initial gains to settle 4 paise higher at 74.24 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, as some pullback in crude oil prices and a weak greenback in the overseas market supported the local unit.

Sensex sinks for third day; IT, auto stocks weigh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Equity benchmarks buckled under selling pressure for the third session on the trot on Thursday as bearish global cues and a disappointing market debut for Paytm unnerved investors.



the country's largest initial share sale, was subscribed 1.89 times last week. 'Weak listing of India's largest IPO and soft global market amid rising inflation woes impacted domestic sentiment.

GMR emerges winner for airport development

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

GMR Airports Limited (GAL), a subsidiary of GMR Infrastructure Limited, on Thursday said it won a bid for the development and operation of Kualanamu International Airport in Medan, Indonesia.

The project scope includes operation, development and expansion of the airport over a period of 25 years. Kualanamu International Airport is an operating Airport with healthy cash flows.

Make India a thought-leader, Minister tells start-ups, industry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The magnitude of digitisation across sectors, including banking, has necessitated a sharper focus on cybersecurity, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Thursday exhorting start-ups, industry and academia to address rising complexities and challenges on a bigger scale to position India as a thought-leader and market leader in cyber safety.



then the trust, which is the bedrock of the entire financial system, will be eroded'. The minister was speaking at an event to felicitate winners of the Cyber Security Grand Challenge, a contest focused on strengthening the cybersecurity capabilities of the country, and the development of new solutions.

Musk sells more shares than he needs to pay current tax bills

PNS ■ DETROIT

Elon Musk is selling more Tesla shares than he needs to pay current tax obligations, and experts say he's either converting part of his fortune from stock to cash, or he's saving for bigger tax bills that will come due next year.



Paytm shares tumble 27% during day trade

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Paytm, the biggest IPO in India so far debuted the secondary market on a weaker note as compared to our expectations of a flat listing, Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart Ltd, said.

Money Matters

Uber hits its 100th milestone with launch in Warangal city

Hyderabad: Uber has begun serving riders and drivers in Warangal in Telangana, marking the company's expansion to 100 cities across India. Initially, it has made a range of auto and car products available on its platform in the city.

Google Pay to roll out speech to text feature

Google Pay on Thursday said it will launch a 'speech to text' feature that allows users to use voice as an input to add account numbers into the app to initiate a payment.

Govt should reduce and rationalise GST

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government should reduce the GST rates applicable on the food processing industry and also rationalise the rates applicable between packaged branded and non-branded food products in the segment, industry body ASSOCHAM has demanded.

Apple investing significantly in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Apple is investing significantly in India to expand its presence in the country, and supports around one million jobs in the country across its workforce, apps and supplier partners, the company's Vice-President (Product Operations) Priya Balasubramaniam said on Thursday.

India needs \$10.1 tn investment to achieve net zero goal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India will require a total investment of USD 10.1 trillion to achieve net-zero emissions by 2070, while the nation could face a shortfall of USD 3.5 trillion, a study by CEEW Centre for Energy Finance (CEEW-CEF) said.

India from our employees, to the fast-growing iOS app economy, to our work with supplier partners. The App Store is filled with incredible apps developed in India, while our App Accelerator in Bengaluru provides guidance to thousands of iOS developers," she added.



ALI FAZAL to star in filmmaker Arati Kadav's futuristic space film

Actor Ali Fazal on Thursday unveiled the first look of his futuristic space film, to be directed by filmmaker Arati Kadav.

Fazal took to Instagram and shared a picture in which he was seen dressed seemingly as an astronaut.

The actor said the as-yet-untitled project will be something he has not dabbled in before and he is keen to see how the audience receives it.

"It was more like an experiment to try and pull this off in some very unlikely conditions too, but that's a surprise for all for later. We tried to fit a large concept into these frames. I do hope people like it because if they do, we will go five steps

further into the unknown and start churning out the rest of this film — yes there might be versions left to showcase," the 35-year-old actor said in a statement.

Kadav made her feature directorial debut with the 2020 Netflix sci-fi film *Cargo*, starring Shweta Tripathi and Vikrant Massey. She has also directed short film *55km/sec*, which featured Richa Chadha and Mrinal Dutt.

Fazal most recently seen in Netflix anthology *Ray*, which was based on the works of iconic filmmaker Satyajit Ray.

He is currently shooting for filmmaker Vishal Bharadwaj's directorial *Khufiya* and also waiting for the release of his Hollywood movie *Death on the Nile*.

Singers Camila Cabello and Shawn Mendes have announced their break-up after dating for over two years, saying they will "continue to be best friends".

The *Senorita* collaborators informed fans about the split in a joint statement they shared on their respective Instagram Stories on Wednesday evening.

"Hey guys, we've decided to end our romantic relationship but our love for another as humans is stronger than ever," the statement began.

"We started our relationship as best friends and will

continue to be best friends. We so appreciate your support from the beginning and moving forward. Camila and Shawn," they added.

The development comes two weeks after the former couple dressed up in matching folklorico outfits in honour of the Day of the Dead on Halloween.

In a recent interview to *Glamour* magazine, Cabello (24) revealed she and Mendes (23) even began seeking counselling in an effort to improve their relationship.

The duo had been first linked in July 2019.

Camila Cabello, Shawn Mendes break up



Shah Rukh Khan by Inder Chahal ft. Rubina Dilaik elevates romance

India's favourite music label, Desi Music Factory brings a cute love story in the form of a song titled *Shah Rukh Khan*. Sung by Inder Chahal, featuring Rubina Dilaik, written by Babbu and with music by Sharry Nexus, *Shah Rukh Khan* is an adorable love song about a girl who seeks time and attention from her boyfriend. The song releases amid the curiosity created by its title and its posters that garnered a huge buzz.

Singer Inder Chahal says, "I thank everyone at Desi Music Factory for being amazing at presenting music to listeners. Collaborating with the label for such a special song felt great. I had a memorable time creating the song and shooting for it. I'm super excited that it's out now."

Rubina Dilaik says, "*Shah Rukh Khan* creates a very romantic atmosphere and it was great fun being part of it. The song has been brilliantly written in way that it's relatable to the listeners of today and Inder has put his heart into the song. It is a love song and a lament put together. I'm thrilled about the response it will get."

Anshul Garg, Founder and CEO of Desi Music Factory says, "Punjabi Pop has been the dominant Indian flavour of the music that's travelling globally. Keeping that in mind, I am overjoyed to share *Shah Rukh Khan* with our listeners. It's rewarding to have music composers who understand what it takes for a song to strike a chord worldwide. We bring you a song that is memorable and a surefire repeat listen."

Shah Rukh Khan is now available on Desi Music Factory's sister YouTube channel Play DMF.



Sidharth to lead Dharma Productions' action franchise

Shershaah star Sidharth Malhotra is set to headline Dharma Productions' first action film franchise *Yodha*, the makers announced Thursday.

The movie will be helmed by debutant director duo Pushkar Ojha and Sagar Ambre and produced by Karan Johar for Dharma and Shashank Khaitan under his newly-minted banner Mentor Disciple Films.

Dharma Productions unveiled the first look of *Yodha*, featuring Malhotra in an intense avatar, on social media.

Conquered the peaks, now it's time for the sky! Presenting #Yodha, starring Sidharth Malhotra and directed by our new talented duo — Sagar Ambre and Pushkar

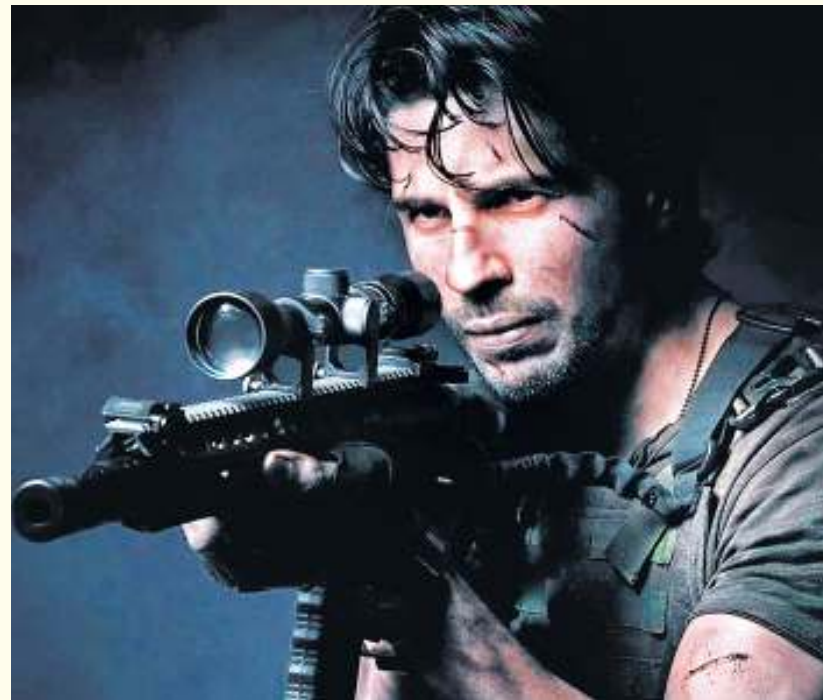
Ojha, the tweet read. Johar said Malhotra, who was praised for his performance as Kargil War hero Captain Vikram Batra in Dharma's *Shershaah*, will be "back with power in the first of the action franchise" by the production house.

The filmmaker also announced the release date of the movie.

"Landing in cinemas near you on 11th November, 2022," he wrote in a tweet.

In the past, Malhotra and Dharma have collaborated on numerous films, including his debut *Student of the Year*, *Hasee Toh Phasee*, and *Kapoor & Sons*.

Yodha will reportedly also star Disha Patani and Raashi Khanna.

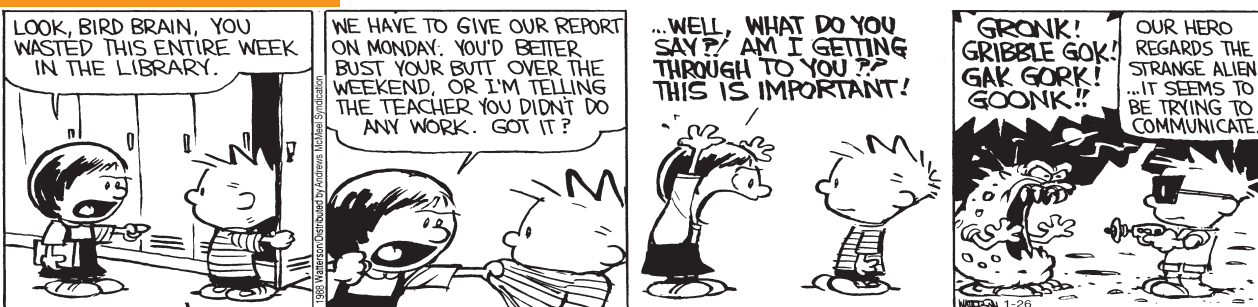


FUN

ARCHIE



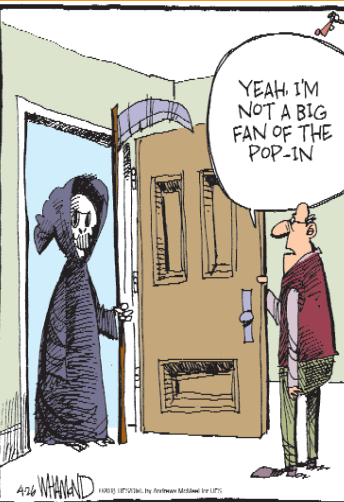
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



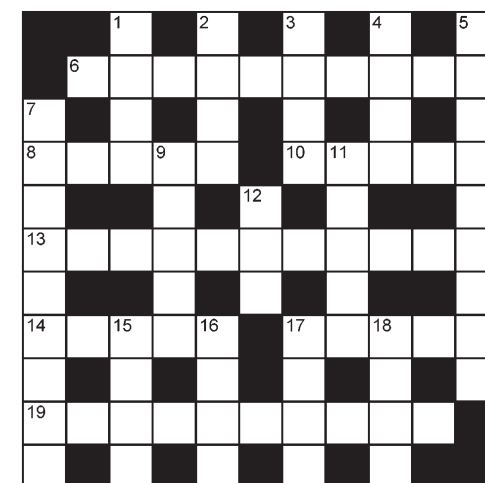
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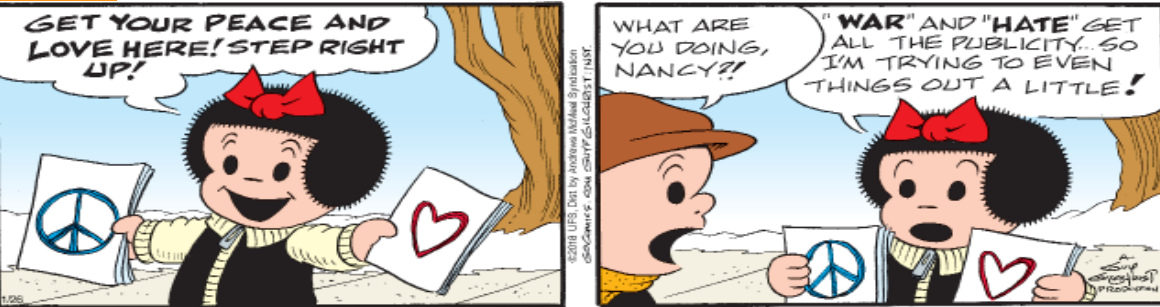
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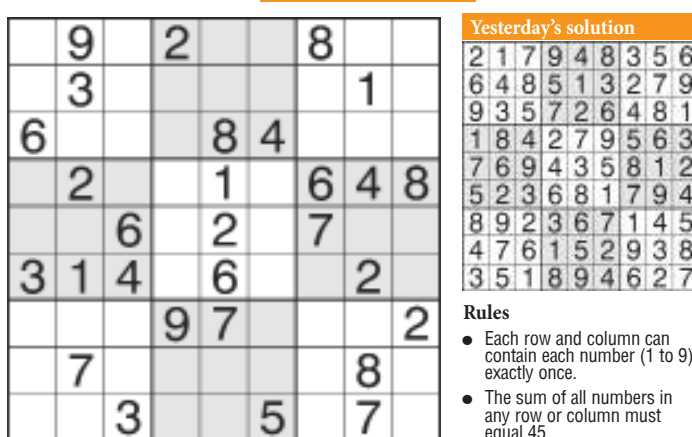
CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

- Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once.
- The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

- ACROSS**
- Speed up
 - Elephant tusk material
 - Leather belt
 - Performer
 - Keep your money in this
 - Large group of singers
 - Avalanches
- DOWN**
- The upper part of your leg
 - Pig pen
 - Ladder step
 - Compass direction
 - Small bed for a baby
 - Finished



GINGER MEGGS





MARD KO BHI DARD HOTA HAI!



BHUVAN BAM SAYS A MAN CRYING ISN'T AN ABSURD ANOMALY

"In my latest poem, I am trying to express my remorse at the helplessness of many men, bridled silently by regressive expectations that make it difficult for men to acknowledge their sorrows. It does get difficult for men to express their feelings. The ceaseless demand to toughen up and man up has harmed men more than we realise."



A MODERN AGE MAN IS TECH-SAVVY AND WOKE ACCORDING TO CELEBRITY PHOTOGRAPHER ESHAAN GIRRI

"I had to make my own sacrifices to get to where I am today, had to put my ego aside. Adapted to my current profession so quickly! I am a modern age man who grew with the changing times, I am tech-savvy, and woke. We can be all — the stay-at-home dad, the caregiver son, the happily married, the emotional man, etc."



ANKUSH RE-DEFINING BEAUTY FOR MEN

"On the representation of men in the industry, I believe that support for male bloggers is conditional. Even now, the spotlight is mostly on cis-gendered men who do minimal makeup, like me. But so many men are doing different things, and they're still not accepted and supported enough. I do it for myself but I also put it out there so that a young boy can watch it and feel better about himself."

'MARD KO DARD HUA', ROARS RRR RAPPER BLAAZE

"It broke my heart and almost broke my spirit too when I lost my father to a heart attack even before my first CD with AR Rahman was out for the world to see! He had to, unfortunately, go to heaven only to make my life work out in an unimaginable way and that is a price I've never been able to repay. He watched my struggles and pain but I couldn't share with him my fortune and fame. Mard ko dard hua! A real man can express and confess, a real man never has to try to impress, a real man is a reflection of his youth, a real man can be heard even in solitude, a real man has no excuses but only reasons and for a real man is one who is ever-growing with every changing season."



DIRECTOR KARUNA KUMAR IS AGAINST 'MACHISMO!'

"Post my tenth class, I haven't been into studies so much, I was instead struggling to find a means in Chennai city. At the age of fifteen, I was working for a hotel & today I am 44 years old with a credible directorial career but after a hell lot of struggles. There was a time after my marriage, I was in a bad financial crisis. My wife and I had to begin our own travel business in which we were cheated, cheated to an extent that we lost more than ten thousand rupees and that night we cried inconsolably. Men become a muse for ridicule when they cry, this redundant cultural hardwiring should break according to me. As a man, I know how to hide my emotions but it's still developing inside me, I am only human. I faced so many rejections in this Telugu industry as a storyteller and dialogues like 'Mard ko dard nahi hota' perpetuate the very wrong idea of being a man."



It's International Men's Day today. There is a view that men are from Mars and women are from Venus. The stigma around men's emotions arises from generic statements like men should remain 'strong' in the face of pain too, boys don't cry, don't be a girl, men should not be hurt easily, man seeking help means he is weak and many more. This International Men's Day, *The Pioneer's* SHIKHA DUGGAL brings you a special feature on the same, as we speak to some of the renowned personalities from the glam world. During our interactions, one certitude remained constant that made us feel *mard ko bhi dard hota hai*. And, then there are all kinds of men in this world. However, we wanted to know who is a modern-age man though? Are there specific ingredients for a quintessential man? Let's find out!

NATYAM ACTOR ROHIT BEHAL'S WAY OF BEING MORE MASCULINE IS....

"I enjoy bike rides, give me my bike and I'll travel non-stop. There was a moment in my life where I was undergoing constant back pain due to my guilty pleasure that is bike riding. As a guy, at times especially when you're shooting we become hesitant of showcasing our grief to the world. An 'asli mard' can also be vulnerable, and why not? As a man I am not afraid to express, to cry, I am as compassionate as a woman would be and have acceptance of my vulnerabilities. Getting a backbone doesn't associate courage or toughness with being a man."



Your sleep pattern can reduce your chances of fatherhood!

Quite shocking right? But that's the fact. Infertility issues have risen to a large extent in both men and women. There is a significant rise in male infertility in India. Lifestyle factors have become the major reason for a decrease in fertility. With many men taking up night shift jobs, their sleep cycle and circadian rhythm have taken a hit. Sleep plays a major role when it comes to fertility. There has been a terrible shift in the sleep-wake cycle which has also led to obesity, decreased physical activity, and many other disorders.

A proper sleep pattern is very essential for one's good health. But due to globalization and technological advancements, the percentage of men pursuing night shift jobs has increased. Working at odd hours has resulted in an erratic lifestyle such as eating late at night, consuming junk foods, and also leading a sedentary life. But not many

know that lack of sleep or irregular sleep pattern can impact men's fertility potential. Testosterone hormone is produced during sleep and when there is not enough sleep, there is a decrease in the production of testosterone. Lower levels of this hormone can reduce one's sex drive. It also affects sperm quality. Sleeping late

is also associated with smoking and drinking as well which can negatively affect sperm count. Too much sleep or too little sleep can affect fertility. Seven to eight hours of sleep is a must not only for maintaining good health but also to have better fertility," says Dr Raghuvver Karne, Consultant Andrologist, Oasis Fertility.



TIPS TO IMPROVE FERTILITY:

- ❑ If you are planning your fatherhood journey, avoid night shifts
- ❑ Try to get into a sleep routine. (sleeping and waking up at the same time daily)
- ❑ Reduce your intake of caffeine
- ❑ Make exercise part of your daily routine
- ❑ Take right care of mental health
- ❑ Eat foods rich in antioxidants (berries, pumpkin, cauliflower, nuts)
- ❑ Have a check on your weight
- ❑ Reduce intake of alcohol
- ❑ Get adequate Vitamin D
- ❑ Quit smoking

"If you have problems in your parenthood journey, consult a male fertility specialist. Lifestyle modifications can go a long way in improving fertility. Many advanced treatment options like micro-TESA, micro varicocele, TESA, PESA etc. are also available that can help you in overcoming infertility and achieving your fatherhood dream," concludes the doctor.



'DRISHYAM 2 will make you sit on the edge of your seat'

K RAMYA SREE

Victory Venkatesh is all set to woo his fans with *Drishyam 2*, releasing on November 25 on Amazon Prime. *Drishyam 2*, the Telugu remake of Malayalam hit with the same name starring Mohanlal in the lead, is helmed by Jeethu Joseph and is produced by Daggubati Suresh Babu, Rajkumar Sethupathy, and Antony Perumbavoor.

The film, a thriller, features an ensemble cast of actors including Meena, Kruthika, Esther Anil along with Sampath Raj and Poorna in pivotal roles.

Ahead of the film's release, we caught up with *Venky Mama* to chat about the film, his role, and everything in detail.

Just like its prequel, *Drishyam 2* will see Ram Babu going to any extent to save his family.

Venkatesh who is happy to play Rambabu for the second time says the story of *Drishyam 2* is much more refined and better than the first part.

Taking us through the film's plot, Venkatesh reveals, "When everything seems to be going fine, an investigation on the case begins after six years. This movie will make everyone sit on the edge of their seat. This time, Rambabu doesn't even share

with his family what he is going to do next. All he knows is to protect his family."

The *Venky Mama* actor says no changes have been made to the original script and it is retained as is, except for adding four new scenes.

When asked how feels about his films being released on OTT, with *Narappa* too releasing on an OTT platform recently, the actor is clear that his responsibility is only to make a movie, and not worry about its release platform, as the audience will watch a movie based on its content and not the platform. "I don't think releasing movies on OTT is a bad thing. We need to respect our circumstances. My mantra is 'Did you make a movie? Has it been released? And that's it' All that matters is if the audience enjoyed the movie or not. My fans get a little hurt but about my movies releasing on OTT, but they know they will see me in theaters with my next projects."

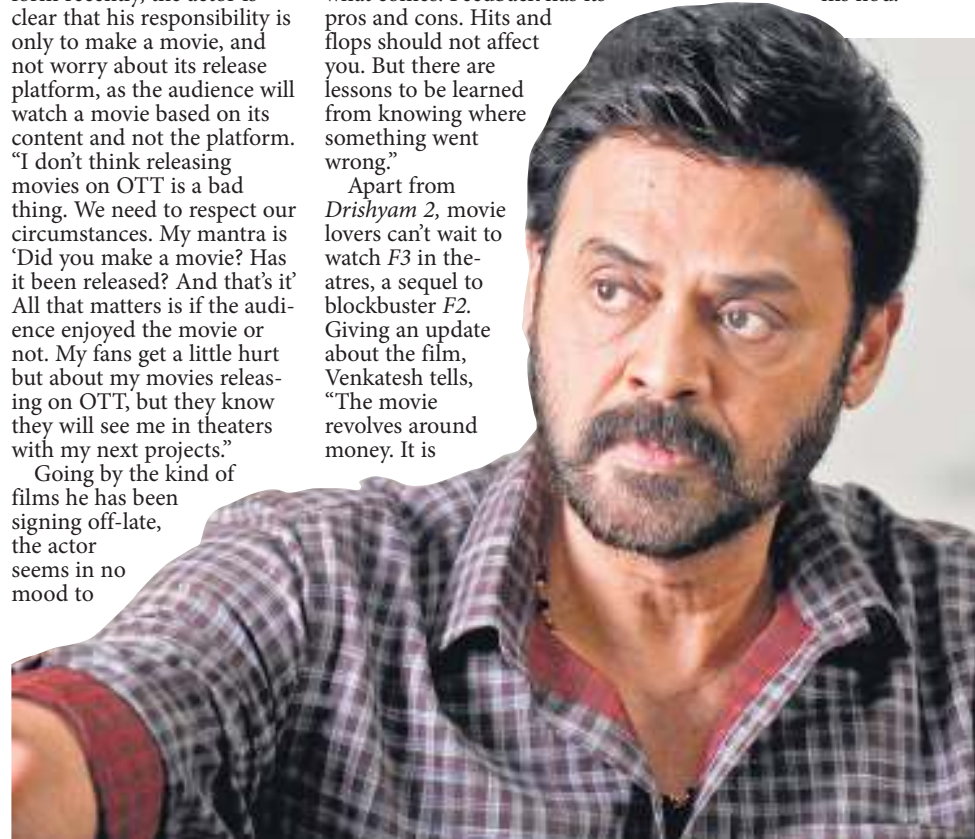
Going by the kind of films he has been signing off-late, the actor seems in no mood to

explore genres. He says, "I'm going to make movies that everyone can sit down and enjoy with their families. I am making films with new directors. I never think about my image. As luck would have it, I came into this industry and the audience loved my work and they are still showering immense love on me, for which I am grateful. Expect nothing. Receive what comes. Feedback has its pros and cons. Hits and flops should not affect you. But there are lessons to be learned from knowing where something went wrong."

Apart from *Drishyam 2*, movie lovers can't wait to watch *F3* in the- atres, a sequel to blockbuster *F2*. Giving an update about the film, Venkatesh tells, "The movie revolves around money. It is

something everyone needs right now. So it will surely connect with every audience. The shooting is almost over and it is likely to hit big screens the coming summer."

On the other hand, the actor says, he is doing a movie for Netflix with Rana, for which he already started shooting. There are two other projects in the pipeline for which the actor is yet to give his nod.



Balayya's next in US backdrop

Balakrishna's new film with director Gopichand Malineni was launched recently. Shruti Haasan came on board to play the female lead in this film bankrolled by Mythri Movie Makers. While the regular shoot is expected to begin in early 2022, we hear that the key portion of this film will be shot in America, like his many other films.

Apparently, Balayya will be seen in a dual-shaded role in the film. Just like his previous film *Krack*, Gopichand has written this film's script based on real incidents.

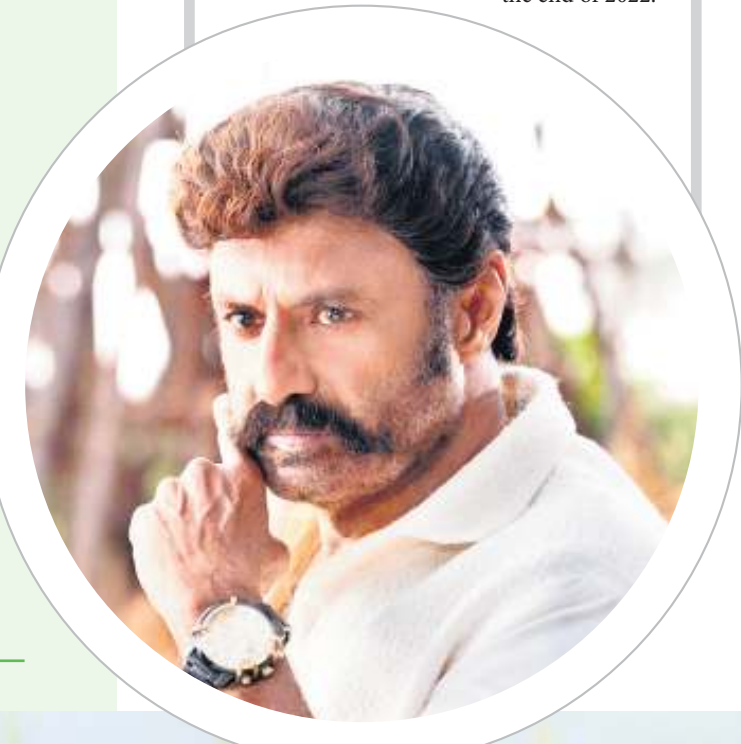
Further details about the film's schedules will be revealed soon. Thaman is composing the music of this movie. Rishi Punjabi is cranking the camera and Navin Nooli is handling the editing. Sai Madhav Burra is penning the dialogues. This untitled film is aiming for a release towards the end of 2022.

Nayanthara comes on board *Godfather*

Megastar Chiranjeevi's 153rd film *Godfather* directed by Mohan Raja and produced by Konidela Productions is progressing at a fast pace. Chiranjeevi will be seen in a powerful role in the movie tipped to be a high intense political action drama.

Meanwhile, the makers on the occasion of Nayanthara's birthday on Thursday, have officially announced that she is confirmed to play a significant role in the movie. Chiranjeevi and Nayanthara had previously collaborated for *Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy* and enthralled one and all with their chemistry.

Master cinematographer Nirav Shah is handling the camera, while the in-form music director SS Thaman is rendering tunes for the film. Suresh Selvarajan — the art director for many Bollywood Blockbusters — is taking care of the artwork of this film.



Shyam Singha Roy trailer: Nani steals the show

Natural Star Nani's magnum opus *Shyam Singha Roy* being helmed by director Rahul Sankrityan and produced on a massive scale by Venkat Boyanapalli under Niharika Entertainments as Production No 1, is one of the highly-anticipated movies of Nani as his last film failed to impress many. Much to the delight of movie buffs, the makers have unveiled the teaser of the film on Thursday.

Shyam Singha Roy teaser begins with a woman's voice who expresses powerlessness in the land where those who are considered gods behave like demons. When they are waiting for someone powerful enough, *Shyam Singha Roy* comes to fight for them. The teaser shows the pathetic

life of Devadas and the rude manners of the rich.

Shyam Singha Roy is not just a revolutionary writer who is protesting against this religious practise, but is also a powerful man who has the courage to take on rich and influential people.

Sai Pallavi is seen dancing at a temple. There was a glimpse of Krithi Shetty and an intimate moment between Nani and Krithi Shetty too was shown in the teaser.

Nani steals the show with his incredible portrayal of a revolutionary Bengali guy. He utters dialogue in the Bengali language in typical Bengali slang.

Madonna Sebastian is the other heroine in the film that has an original story by Satyadev Janga. Naveen Nooli is the editor, while National Award winner Kruti Mahesh

and Yash master choreographed songs of the film.

Rahul Ravindran, Murali Sharma, and Abhinav Gomatam will be seen in important roles in the film.

To be high on VFX, *Shyam Singha Roy* will be arriving in theatres in all south languages — Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Malayalam on December 24.

Akkineni Nagarjuna and director Kalyan Krishna Kurasala's *Soggade Chinni Nayana* sequel *Bangarraju*, is making huge noise ever since the makers announced the project officially. Along with Nagarjuna, Ramya Krishna, the sequel will also see Naga Chaitanya, Krithi Shetty pairing up for the first time.

On Thursday, Naga Chaitanya revealed the first look of his love interest in the film — Krithi Shetty. The actress will be playing Naga Lakshmi in *Bangarraju*.

"#Bangarraju is coming soon... ladies first :-) introducing @IamKrithiShetty as our Nagalakshmi.. Here's the first look @iamnagarjuna @IamKrithiShetty @kalyankrishna_k @AnnapurnaStdios @ZeeStudios," tweeted Naga Chaitanya.

Krithi Shetty looks super cool and pretty as a village belle in the first look poster where she is seen waving her hand as a sign of victory. Going by the first look poster, Krithi Shetty has got a meaty role in the film. The film's new shooting schedule commenced recently in Mysore where some important scenes are being canned with the entire cast taking part in it.

Bangarraju is billed to be a wholesome entertainer laced with a good dose of romance, emotions, and other commercial ingredients.

Preity Zinta gives birth to twins



It's a day of celebration for our teenage crush Preity Zinta and her hubby Gene Goodenough! The cinema actress gave birth to twins named 'Jai' and 'Gia' via surrogacy. Preity and her husband are extremely happy at the moment. Preity has confirmed the same by sharing a post on their Instagram. Sharing a photo of herself and her husband, Preity Zinta wrote: "Hi everyone, I wanted to share our amazing news with all of you today. Gene and I are overjoyed and our hearts are filled with so much gratitude and with so much love as we welcome our twins Jai Zinta Goodenough and Gia Zinta Goodenough into our family. We are very excited about this new phase in our lives." Preity Zinta also thanked the doctors and their surrogates for being part of this incredible journey. Today morning the couple's announcement about their twins Jai and Gia has left their fans surprised, as well as overwhelmed. Our heartiest congratulations to the new parents!

Krithi Shetty as a village belle

