

ANALYSIS 7

WORLD PHILOSOPHY DAY:
MUST BE A GOOD REASON

MONEY 8

EQUITIES SETTLE
IN THE GREEN

SPORTS 11

ON DEBUT, IYER SHOWS THE
WAY AS INDIA SCORE 258/4

VIJAYAWADA, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

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SRIKANTH ISN'T LIKE
ANY CONVENTIONAL
VILLAIN IN AKHANDA

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INDIA ELECTED TO UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE PANEL FOR 4-YEAR TERM

India was on Thursday elected to the World Heritage Committee of the UN's cultural organisation for a four-year term, a week after being re-elected to the UNESCO Executive Board. "Happy to announce that India has won the seat on the World Heritage Committee from the Asia Pacific region. I thank all our supporters for leading us to this historic win", MoS (External Affairs) Meena-kashi Lekhi said in a tweet on Thursday. The Committee is responsible for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention, defines the use of the World Heritage Fund and allocates financial assistance upon requests from States parties.

SIDHU THREATENS INDEFINITE FAST OVER STF REPORT ON DRUG MENACE

Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu on Thursday threatened to go on an indefinite fast if the State government does not make public the SIT report on the drug menace. Sidhu also questioned the state government over the steps taken for ensuring justice in desecration cases. "If the Punjab government does not make (STF) report public, then Sidhu will proceed on fast unto death," he said taking on his own government. "Thousands of youth got destroyed due to drugs, mothers lost their sons. There is no court order which bars making the report public. Who stops you from making the report public," Sidhu asked.

DELHI'S AIR QUALITY TURNS 'SEVERE'; MAXIMUM TEMPERATURE 27.8°C

The maximum temperature in Delhi settled one notch above the normal at 27.8 degrees Celsius on Thursday, while the city's air quality index (AQI) turned 'severe' from 'very poor' in the morning. The weather department has predicted 'shallow fog' for the next four days. It was a cold Thursday morning in Delhi as it recorded a minimum temperature of 9.7 degrees Celsius, two notches below the season's average, the IMD said. At 402, the AQI was recorded in the 'severe' category at 7 pm on Thursday, according to the real-time data of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). The AQI recorded at 9 am was 390.

DECLARED ABSCONDER, IPS OFFICER APPEARS BEFORE MUMBAI POLICE

Former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh, declared an absconder by a court, arrived in the city on Thursday and was questioned by crime branch officials in an extortion case registered against him. Singh, who flew in here from Chandigarh, arrived at the office of the unit 11 of the Mumbai police's crime branch in Kandivali after 11 am. He left at around 6.15 in the evening, seven hours later. The IPS officer, who is still Director General of Home Guards in Maharashtra, arrived and left in an official car. The crime branch questioned him in connection with an alleged extortion case.

Assembly passes Tax Bills, rationalises VAT on liquor

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The State Assembly on Thursday passed by voice vote the Andhra Pradesh Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and the Andhra Pradesh Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which were tabled by Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath.

Speaking on the occasion, the Finance Minister said under the Andhra Pradesh Value Added Tax Act, 2005, liquor for human consumption is taxed presently at rates ranging from 130pc to 190 pc and added that the Telangana has reduced the VAT rate to a flat 70 pc on all categories of liquor for human consumption during 2016.

The Minister said in order to bring about parity in levy of VAT with the neighboring States, it has been decided to rationalise the rates of VAT on various categories of liquor for human consumption in



the State and hence brought in Andhra Pradesh Value Added Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2021 to reduce the VAT rates on alcoholic beverages.

Referring to the Andhra Pradesh Goods and Services Tax

(Amendment) Bill, 2021, the Finance Minister said Goods and Services Tax provides for levy and collection of taxes on intra-state supply of goods and services by the State government and the amendments are being made for checking

tax evasion or to reduce the compliance burden of the tax payers.

The Minister said the amendments to the Andhra Pradesh Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017, are to amend Section 7 of the Act, to ensure levy of tax on activities or transactions involving supply of goods or services by any person, other than an individual, to its members or constituents or vice-versa, for cash, deferred payment or other valuable consideration.

The Minister said the bill intends to amend section 16 of the act to provide that input tax credit on invoice or debit note may be availed only when the details of such invoice or debit note has been furnished by the supplier in the statement of outward supplies and such details have been communicated to the recipient of such invoice or debit note.

2

AP nets record profits on increased sale of liquor

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Opposition parties in Andhra Pradesh castigated the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy government's liquor policy even as the latter on Thursday boasted of record sales and profits in the last three years.

The government said the liquor money would be used for some of its major freebie schemes and amended a law to enable this.

The government, however, claimed consumption of liquor in Andhra Pradesh fell by 37 per cent and beer by 77 per cent.

In the first eight months of this calendar year, the state government which is now the sole wholesaler and retailer of liquor earned a record profit of Rs 12,005.56 crore out of a total revenue of Rs 14,375.23 crore.

In 2020, the Covid-19 lockdown notwithstanding, the government earned a profit of Rs 13,435.65 crore from a total revenue of Rs 16,979.44 crore.



In 2019, the gross revenue was Rs 17,625.78 and profit Rs 12,541.74 crore, the government informed the state Legislative Assembly.

(Given the current trend in sales, the profit on liquor is expected to cross at least Rs 18,000 crore this calendar year, according to official sources).

The liquor sale issue was raised

through a question by Telugu Desam Party members Anagani Satya Prasad and others (who boycotted the ongoing session on a protest), who sought to know by when would the YSR Congress government implement liquor prohibition in the state in accordance with its assurance to the people.

2

Central teams to assess flood damage in AP

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Two teams of central government officials will tour three flood-battered districts in Andhra Pradesh from Friday to assess the damages.

Citing preliminary estimates, the state government pegged the damages caused by the devastation at Rs 6,054.29 crore.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, in a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, sought an interim grant of Rs 1,000 crore for flood relief and restoration works.

According to the State Disaster

Management Authority Commissioner K Kanna Babu, two Central teams headed by Advisor (NDMA) in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, Kunal Satyarthi, would tour Chittoor district on Friday.

While one team would continue its tour of Chittoor, another team would go round Kadapa district, which saw a major devastation caused by the Annamayya project, on Saturday.

The two teams would tour SPS Nellore district on Sunday, the SDMA Commissioner said.



Neighbouring country-linked black income detected in raids

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department has detected huge unaccounted income after it raided some Indian companies and their associates, being controlled by a neighbouring country, in Delhi, Maharashtra and Gujarat, the CBDT said on Thursday.

The searches were carried out on November 16 on at least 20 premises in Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Gandhidham in Gujarat and in Delhi. Those searched are engaged in the business of chemicals, ball bearings, machinery parts, and injection moulding machinery. The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said in a statement that Rs 66 lakh cash was seized while bank accounts holding about Rs 28 crore funds have been put under restraint.

2

Vax drive in AP to be completed by March 2022

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The entire targeted population (18-plus age group) of 3.95 crore in the state would be fully covered under the Covid-19 vaccination programme by the end of March 2022, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy said here on Thursday.

So far, 3,41,53,000 people (87 per cent) were administered the first dose of coronavirus vaccine while 2.39 crore (61 per cent) took the second dose as well, the Chief Minister told the state Assembly.

Winding up a short discussion on Health, the Chief Minister said 100 per cent of the targeted population would be administered the Covid-19 vaccine first dose by the end of December this year.

Unfortunately, vaccine is not in our hands. We can administer only as many doses as the Centre gives us. Still, we could so far inoculate 87 per cent of the population, Reddy said.

He said the state government so far spent Rs 3,648.11 crore on Covid-19 care, including Rs 1,215



crore granted by the Centre.

The CM said his government valued human life.

To protect every life by making medicare accessible to every poor person, we have taken many steps in the last two and a half years. Ninety-five per cent of the state population that has an annual income of up to Rs 5 lakh is covered under the Aarogya Sri health insurance scheme, which is expanded to cover 2,446 medical procedures, Reddy said.

He noted that about Rs 4,000

191 community health centres are being transformed with better amenities in conformity with the national standards.

Doctors and para-medical staff were being recruited.

We are spending Rs 16,250 crore on all this. Besides, we are also establishing 16 new teaching hospitals, ushering in a great revolution, Reddy noted.

This would make super-specialty medical services available in each of the 25 parliamentary constituencies in the state.

The Chief Minister said the government was also encouraging private players to set up super-specialty hospitals in all district headquarters. We will give land and support them in every way if they come forward to set up the facilities at a cost of Rs 100 crore each, he added.

Earlier, making a detailed statement in the House, Deputy Chief Minister (Health) A K K Srinivas (Nani) said a sum of Rs 13,830 crore has been earmarked in the current year's budget for health care, which was a 21.11 per cent hike over last year.

2

Revolutionary steps taken in health sector, says CM

3

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Kartik & Krishna Paksha

Tithi : Saptami 05:42

Nakshatram : Ashlesha 20:36

Time to Avoid

Rahukalam : 10:40 am - 12:03 pm

Yamagandam : 2:49 pm - 4:12 pm

Variyam : 8:34 am - 10:17 am

Gulika : 7:54 am - 9:17 am

Amritakalam : 6:53 pm - 8:36 pm

Abhijit Muhurtham : 11:41 am - 12:25 pm

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Thunderstorm

Temp: 32 °C

Humidity: 67%

Sunrise: 6:20 am

Sunset: 05:28 pm

Updated NOVEMBER 25, 2021 5:00 PM

CPI writes to PM against bank privatisation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

CPI general secretary D Raja has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging that the government is planning to introduce the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021 in the ensuing Winter Session of Parliament to enable the privatisation of public sector banks.

In the letter, Raja has said the public sector banks act as catalysts



in the economic development of the nation in general and for the underprivileged sections of the society in

particular and privatisation would "jeopardise their interests". "During the pandemic period, it is the public sector banks which have been giving uninterrupted customer services. We therefore are of the view that privatisation of public sector banks will jeopardise the interests of the common people and backward regions of the country.

2

Sewage water from State pollutes Bay of Bengal

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Though expert committees and the Pollution Control Board have stressed the need for immediately arresting the flow of polluted water into the Bay of Bengal, the government has not initiated steps at least to control the sea pollution. Across the coastline of the State, except a very few places, all the urban, semi-urban and rural areas release untreated sewage water into the Bay of Bengal causing massive pollution. Sea bath lovers here have complained of various skin infections.

Andhra Pradesh has a 975-km-long coastline. Thousands of villages, towns and municipalities



located close to the shores release the sewage water directly into the sea. In the absence of sewage treatment plants, industrial and agricul-

ture effluents are also discharged into the Bay of Bengal.

In fact, the government has constituted several committees to study

the issue and find a solution. It also received several reports suggesting that sewage water treatment plants should be constructed in a phased manner, giving priority to municipalities and corporations. Some of the civic bodies have even started construction of sewage water treatment plants, but their number is too low when considering the quantity of the sewage water being released into the sea. "It is true that untreated sewage water is discharged into the Bay of Bengal. The government has already directed major civic bodies to construct wastewater treatment plants on a priority basis.

2

Param Bir 'destroyed' mobile of Kasab, says ex-ACP of Mumbai

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Retired Assistant Police Commissioner Samsher Khan Pathan has claimed former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh "destroyed" a mobile phone seized from the 26/11 terror attack

convict Mohammed Ajmal Kasab. Pathan had submitted a written complaint to the Mumbai Police Commissioner in July and asked him to investigate the entire matter and take necessary action against Singh.

Though Pathan's complaint was submitted four months ago, it was

widely circulated on social media on Thursday, the day when Singh appeared before the Mumbai crime branch to record statement in an extortion case registered at Goregaon police station against him.

2

Chiru welcomes online ticketing

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

While there has not been much response from the Telugu film fraternity especially from the A-listers on the AP Assembly passing the contentious AP Cinemas (Regulation) (Amendment) Bill 2021 popularly called Cinemas Bill, Tollywood's senior actor K Chiranjeevi welcomed the move.



However, he also appealed to Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy to increase the movie ticket rates as revised and fixed in other states. The Cinemas Bill had turned a bone of contention between a section of Telugu industry that supports Jana Sena chief and actor Pawan Kalyan and the YSRCP government.

2

V-P bats for reforms in UN Security Council, other key global bodies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday emphasised the need for reforms in the UN Security Council and other key international organisations so as to make them reflective of contemporary realities and capable of dealing with challenges.

Addressing the first plenary session of the 13th ASEM Summit virtually, he said the world is witnessing and grappling with rapid economic, technological and security challenges, and the current multilateral system has fallen short in providing an effective response to these challenges.

He also underlined that reformed multilateralism is the driving principle that India has pursued for a purposeful



reform of existing global institutional structures.

The two-day summit is being hosted by Cambodia in the virtual format and is themed 'Strengthening Multilateralism for Shared Growth'.

The Indian delegation at

ASEM-13 was led by the vice president, who will also be addressing the retreat session of the summit on Friday.

Observing that without peace, development suffers, Naidu highlighted that lack of development and stifled economic progress create fertile

ground for violence and instability. Therefore, he called for efforts towards promoting economic activity and enhancing the livelihood security and suggested that it will go a long way in the recovery of nations adversely affected by COVID-19 pandemic.

Stressing the need to mitigate the causes of persistent insecurity at a global level, the vice president highlighted the need for reforms in the international structure responsible for maintaining global peace and security.

Opining that the multitude of challenges of today's dynamic and interdependent world cannot be addressed with outdated systems, Naidu expressed an urgent need to re-imagine international cooperation and expand its ambition further.

It is the lack of a coordinated global response that has exposed the vulnerabilities and weaknesses of the multilateral system as it stands today, he said.

The vice president also said the pandemic has exposed the fault lines from unreliable global supply chains to inequitable vaccine distribution, further underlining the need for global solidarity and strengthened multilateralism.

Noting that the re-imagined post pandemic world will make profoundly different demands from the multilateral system, he highlighted four important areas for international economic cooperation namely, resilient and reliable supply chains, health security, digital for development, and green and sustainable recovery.

Jagan releases booklet on SOP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy released a booklet on the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure)-SC, ST Act Model Contingency Plan, brought out by Social Welfare Department at his chamber in Legislative Assembly here on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said the booklet with complete details of the implementation of SC, ST Prevention of Atrocities Act will be more helpful and directed the officials to monitor the cases booked under this Act regularly and added to clear the pending cases.

The SOP booklet has the details of topics including taking steps to ensure justice for SCs and STs within a

specified timeframe, eliminating administrative problems related to them and eradicating atrocities.

The Chief Minister also launched a website with complete details related to social justice, safety and development of SCs and STs. The State Government has taken measures to ensure the victims to file a complaint online if they don't get justice.

Deputy Chief Minister Pamula Pushpa Sreevani, Home Minister Mekathoti Sucharitha, Ministers Taneti Vanitha, Pinepi Vishwarup, Adimulapu Suresh, MP Nandigam Suresh, SC, ST MLAs and MLCs, Social Welfare Principal Secretary K Sunitha, Tribal Welfare Secretary Kanthilal Dande, and other officials were present.

Assembly passes Tax Bills, rationalises VAT on liquor

Continued from Page 1

He said another amendment is to amend Section 35 and Section 44 of the act so as to remove the mandatory requirement of getting annual accounts audited and the reconciliation statement submitted by specified professional and to remove the mandatory requirement of furnishing a reconciliation statement duly audited by specified professional and to provide for filing of the annual return on self-certification basis.

The Minister said the bill amends Section 50 (charge interest on net cash liability retrospectively) and that amendment of Section 74 to make seizure and confiscation of goods and conveyances in transit a separate proceeding from the recovery of tax.

Woman biker on a mission reaches Vijayawada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A woman biker Jai Bharathi from Hyderabad, who is on a mission to encourage women to pick up driving skills and remove roadblocks within the ecosystem to increase their job prospects in transportation businesses, reached Vijayawada on Thursday.

A UK-based charity Shell Foundation and the UK Government in association with Moving Women Social Initiatives Foundation (MOWO) launched 'Moving Boundaries', a campaign to encourage women to pick up driving skills and remove roadblocks within the ecosystem to increase their job prospects in transportation businesses including as taxi and e-rickshaw drivers or as delivery agents for e-commerce companies.

Under this campaign, Jai Bharathi, founder of MOWO is touring India on her motorbike from October 11 for a period of over 40 days and covering over 20 cities to create awareness and encourage women to learn driving to increase their job opportunities.

On Thursday Bharathi reached Vijayawada on the current leg of her tour. Starting from Hyderabad, she has covered Bangalore, Chennai, Kochi, Goa, Pune, Mumbai, Surat, Ahmedabad, Udaipur, Jaipur, Amritsar, Srinagar, Chandigarh, New Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad, Patna, Guwahati, Kolkata, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar and Vizag among others.

The campaign seeks to promote awareness on the importance of women acquiring the power of driving and travelling safely to expand their horizons in

all aspects of their lives. The focus is on enabling women to not only learn driving but also own electric vehicles to generate income which in turn can also reduce carbon emissions from transport.

Commenting on 'Moving Boundaries', Jai Bharathi, said, "Women all over the world face restrictions on their mobility. They are unable to travel long distance to acquire decent education or take up jobs which involve complex or unsafe commute which results in a restricted pool of job opportunities. I am very excited to take on this 40-day journey on my motorbike across the country to meet women from all strata and hold workshops to make driving an aspirational and achievable employment choice for them. Creating a safe environment

where women have access to reliable transportation and they can drive their own vehicles to earn a living is a great way to increase employment opportunities for women in a sector which has predominantly been male-centric."

As part of the campaign, a WhatsApp-based chatbot has been rolled out for women who would like to learn to drive a two or three-wheeled vehicle or apply for a job as a taxi, auto, or delivery rider. Any interested person can express their interest by dropping "Hi" on the WhatsApp number +91 8885916606 and the chatbot will connect them to nearby partner organisations like Even Cargo which offer training and employment opportunities to women. The chat support is available in multiple languages.

Chiru welcomes online ticketing

Continued from Page 1

According to the new Bill, besides introducing an online movie ticket booking system, only four shows will be allowed to be played and ticket rates will be the same without any difference between small and big budget movies.

There will not be additional shows in theatres for movies and also benefit shows aimed at collecting high ticket rates by so-called big cinemas.

The government's proposal to bring in the current Cinemas Bill had ignited enough political sparks for a few days. A battery of representatives of Telugu film industry had met the I & PR minister Perni Venkataramaih (Nani) on this issue.

The Cinema Bill proposes to introduce a new online movie ticket booking system replacing the current theatre booking system. While the government in the past argued that a new online system will help the moviegoer enhance the experience, check black marketing of the tickets and evasion of taxes to the government Pawan Kalyan accused the new system was targeted at him and his movies.

Chiranjeevi on Thursday took to Twitter and appreciated Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy government's move to introduce an online ticket booking system which has been a long-pending demand from Telugu film industry heads.

"Industry will be

immensely benefited if the government takes a decision on the ticket rates, which were reduced in the past. It is essential to increase the ticket rates for the survival of the cinema theatres and the livelihood of thousands of people who are dependent on the cinema industry. GST on various products and services was being collected uniformly in all the states across the country. So, it is appropriate that the cinema ticket prices in the theatres in Andhra Pradesh, too, should be in tune with the cinema tickets in other states," Chiranjeevi tweeted.

He urged the Chief Minister to rethink movie ticket rates and the Telugu film industry can survive if such support is given by the government.

CPI writes to PM against bank privatisation

Continued from Page 1

"We are opposed to any such retrograde move. We request you to revisit the decision of privatisation of PSBs and to withdraw the proposed Bill in the interest of the common people and nation," the Communist Party of India (CPI) leader said.

He also said the only issue being confronted with the PSBs is that of huge Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) in which, he claimed, the major share is that of big corporates. "Successive governments have taken initia-

tives such as Debt Recovery Tribunals, SARFESI Act, IBC etc., but they have not yielded the desired results and therefore, ultimately banks were forced to write off those loans, resulting into huge losses, the veteran Communist leader said.

"This shows that it is not the nationalisation of banks, which has failed but it is the wilful default of the corporates and big business houses, which have dragged the banks into this crisis. Time and again public sector banks have been used to bail out ailing private sector ones...", Raja said on Thursday.

Sewage water from State ...

Continued from Page 1

However, due to poor drainage systems and lack of funds, the civic bodies have failed to implement it.

Thousands of crores are needed to construct sewage treatment plants across the 975-km-long coastal belt, which the government cannot afford at present. However, the government is trying to construct plants at least in the major civic bodies," a senior Municipal Administration official said.

At present, 17 STPs are under construction across the coastal belt and more are coming up, the official said.

Meanwhile, the Panchayat Raj Department expressed helplessness to construct the plants due to the lack of funds. Many major panchayats are located on the coastal belt. Due to poor drainage systems and lack of enough staff and funds, the polluted water is still flowing into the blue sea.

"The majority of the villages, even major panchayats, do not have a good drainage system. Construction of the sewage treatment plant alone wouldn't solve the problem. Pumping sewage from the entire village to the plant is a massive task, for which huge funds are needed. The government is already in a serious financial crisis and in no position to take responsibility for such a task," a senior IAS officer said.

CBI seeks Interpol help to arrest 'Punch Prabhakar'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

It appears that the noose is tightening around USA-based doctor C Prabhakar Reddy who is popularly known as Punch Prabhakar. CBI is believed to have sought Interpol's help to arrest controversial YouTuber, Dr. C Prabhakar Reddy from the USA.

CBI had filed an affidavit in the High Court on the status of the investigation into a case registered against a few individuals for derogatory posts on the judiciary in social media.

While the CBI had filed the affidavit on November 23, the content in it came out on Thursday.

It is learnt that CBI in the affidavit had said that it is preparing to issue a non-bailable arrest warrant against Dr Prabhakar who lives in the US and uploads videos on his YouTube channel Punch Prabhakar.

The CBI is learnt to have said a letter was written to Interpol on November 9, asking for its help in arresting the accused. Discussions were on with Interpol on getting him arrested. Negotiations were also held with YouTube representatives on November 15 on the removal of contemptuous videos from the site, the CBI said.

CBI had registered a case on November 11 last year against 16 accused and taken over the investigation of 12 FIRs from AP CID in pursuance of the orders of High Court of Andhra Pradesh in Writ Petition No. 9166 of 2020.

Recently CBI has filed six more charge sheets separately against the accused in an ongoing investigation of a case related to making derogatory posts on social media against Judges and the Judiciary including some of the Court verdicts delivered by Judges of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh.

These accused were arrested by CBI on October 22 from different places in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The said accused are presently in judicial custody. During the investigation, CBI had earlier arrested five accused and also filed five separate charge sheets against them. With this, 11 separate charge sheets have been filed against all the eleven accused arrested by CBI so far in the case. The investigation against one more accused is in progress towards gathering evidence against him. His YouTube channel has also been blocked. Moreover, Warrants of Arrest have been taken by CBI in the names of two of the accused who are abroad from the Competent Courts in India and the process for arresting them has been initiated through diplomatic channels.

CBI gathered information about the accused who are abroad by issuing Blue Notice through Interpol.

The action was also initiated by CBI after it had registered this case to get objectionable posts removed from the social media platforms, public domains and a lot of such posts/accounts were removed from the internet.

Param Bir 'destroyed' mobile of Kasab, says ex-ACP of Mumbai

Continued from Page 1

Singh was removed from the post of Mumbai police chief in March this year and he was succeeded by senior IPS officer Hemant Nagrale.

Pathan, in the complaint, has said the then-senior inspector of the DB Marg police station, N R Mali, had informed him that they had recovered a mobile phone from Kasab and the device was handed over to a constable identified only as Kamble. He alleged that Singh, who was then-DIG (Anti-Terrorism Squad),

took the mobile phone from the constable. Singh should have handed the phone over to Ramesh Mahale, the investigating officer of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack case, but he "destroyed the vital piece of evidence", Pathan claimed in the complaint. Singh was unavailable for comment.

Kasab was captured alive during the terror strike at multiple sites in Mumbai 13 years ago. After a trial and confirmation of his death sentence by the Supreme Court, he was hanged in November 2012.

KRMB asks AP, TS to stop power generation forthwith

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Krishna River Management Board (KRMB), in a letter to the governments of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, on Thursday asked both the States to stop power generation at Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar projects.

According to sources, in the letter, the KRMB found fault with both the States for generating power without any need. This resulted in 55,996 tmc ft of Krishna waters draining out into the sea, the KRMB letter said.



Due to power generation, the water storage level at Srisailem fell to 94,910 tmc ft, the letter stated. KRMB made it clear in its letter to both the States to stop power genera-

tion immediately.

It may be recalled that the Telangana government didn't allow a KRMB team to visit Srisailem and Nagarjuna Sagar power projects.

shell companies.

"These dummy directors were either the employees/drivers of the professional firm or they were persons of no means."

"On questioning, they admitted that they were not aware of the activities of these companies and that they had been signing on documents according to the instructions of the key functionaries," it said. The statement said the firm was also instrumental in

assisting the foreign nationals by providing its addresses for banking and other regulatory requirements.

"One of such companies trading in chemicals was found to be routing the claim of purchases through Marshall Island, a low tax jurisdiction."

"The company actually purchased items worth Rs 56 crore from a neighbouring country but the same has been billed from Marshall

Island," it said.

However, it added, payment for such purchases has been made into the bank account of the Marshall Island-based company which is held in the neighbouring country.

The CBDT said the Indian company was also involved in taking 'non-genuine purchase bills to reduce its tax liability and also paid unaccounted cash for purchase of land in India.'

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹200
Without Skin	₹220
Broiler at Farm	₹108

EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	448
HYDERABAD	444
VISAKHAPATNAM	402
RETAIL PRICE (IN VIZAG)	₹4.48

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Revolutionary steps taken in health sector, says CM

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Asserting that many revolutionary steps have been taken in the health sector, Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy has said that his government values human lives, so top-class medical services are being made available to the poor since two-and-a-half years and effectively fought against Covid-19.

Listing out various initiatives taken up by the government in the last two-and-a-half years, the Chief Minister stated that the scope of YSR Aarogyasri was widened by increasing the income limit to Rs 5 lakh, covering 95 percent of the State population, and offering super specialty services from over 130 empanelled hospitals in cities like Hyderabad, Chennai, and Bangalore. "Although the previous government tried to restrain the expenditures and left unpaid bills of Rs 680 crore to the network hospitals, we have cleared all those arrears and even included expensive surgeries like bone-marrow transplantation, heart transplant, cochlear implants under Aarogyasri. In the last 29 months, almost Rs 4000 crore was spent on Aarogyasri and brought 2466 procedures under the scheme.

He said that 16 new teaching hospitals are being set up in the State besides revamping the existing 11 medical colleges, ensuring that every par-

liamentary constituency has one teaching hospital, one nursing college, and a 500 bedded super-specialty hospital. Even the tribal areas like Paderu will have a teaching hospital and five other ITDAs are going to have super specialty medical services. Besides these, the State government is taking measures to strengthen the health sector from village level by developing 10,032 YSR Village Clinics, 560 Urban Health Clinics, 1321 PHCs, 52 Area Hospitals, 191 CHCs at a cost of Rs 16,255 crore.

The Chief Minister stated that the government is revamping all government hospitals across the State and equipping them with best infrastructure, along with WHO and GMP standard medicines. He said that steps are being taken to strengthen the private institutions in the health sector by inviting them to set up super-specialty hospitals in the State and allocate 50 percent beds to Aarogyasri, as government would provide land and offer complete support.

For the first time ever, the State has brought in YSR Aarogya Asara, paying up to Rs 5,000 to patients who had undergone surgery to support them during recovery period and further providing monthly pensions ranging from Rs 3000- Rs 10000 to people suffering from chronic ailments. Since the inception of the government, recruits for 9712

posts have been made in addition to 15,000 ANMs at the secretariat level and soon 14,788 posts will be filled by February 2022. He stated that the government lays special focus on kids and strives to bring three exclusive hospitals for children to avail advanced treatments and specialty services in addition to the one in Tirupati.

The Chief Minister said that the government has been rolling out the family doctor concept by appointing two doctors in each PHC, who would be visiting villages and offering medical services through 104 vehicles. Besides these, the government also initiated the YSR Kanti Velugu scheme providing free treatment for eye problems. So far, 66 lakh school students have been screened, 1.58 lakh children were provided with free eyewear and 300 children underwent surgeries. Similarly, 14.28 lakh adults were also screened, and provided 7.83 lakh glasses, and performed surgeries on 1.13 lakh people.

Speaking on Covid-19, the Chief Minister said that the State has tackled the pandemic effectively and conducted tests on over 3.02 crore people. The State made rapid strides in developing infrastructure and facilities in controlling the pandemic from zero labs to setting up 19 labs that function round the clock. He said that Andhra Pradesh is the only

State to include Covid and post Covid treatments under Aarogyasri and also the first State that came forward to take care of the children who lost their parents due to Covid by depositing Rs 10 lakh for each child.

In regard to vaccination, the Chief Minister affirmed that 100 percent vaccination for all those above 18 years will be completed by March 2022, and so far 3.4 crore have been administered with single-dose and 2.39 crore people have completed two-dose vaccination. The government had spent Rs 3648 crore on Covid treatment alone to lessen the burden on the public.

Earlier, Initiating a short discussion on the Health sector, Minister Alla Kali Krishna Srinivas (Nani) said that the State government had taken public health care to the next level with revolutionary measures right from the YSR Aarogyasri scheme to effectively contain Covid-19 in the State. He explained in detail various welfare schemes, government measures that are being taken for strengthening the health care system in Andhra Pradesh.

Further, MLAs Chitti Phalguni, Silpa Kishore Reddy, Gopireddy Srinivas Reddy shared their views on the health care system in the State and lauded the Chief Minister for his commitment towards health sector.



BC leaders thank Chief Minister

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A delegation of BC Unions met Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy at the Legislative Assembly here on Thursday and thanked him for passing a resolution in the

Assembly to urge the Government of India for conducting BC Census while holding the General Census for 2021.

Minister for BC Welfare Ch Venugopala Krishna, MLCs Janga Krishnamurthy, R

Ramesh Yadav, MLA Jogi Ramesh, APCO Chairman Ch Venkata Naga Mohan Rao, State BC Welfare Association president Keshava Sankara Rao, working president T Anjaneyulu, treasurer Kanna Mastaru, State BC Employees'

Union president P Hanumanta Rao, BC Youth State president K Kranti Kumar, and presidents of Anantapur and Guntur District BC Association Ramesh and Ranganath were among those who met the Chief Minister.

Kodali comes down heavily on Naidu

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

State Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Minister Kodali Srivenkateswara Rao (Nani) has said that it was Chandrababu who dragged his wife into politics.

Speaking at the Assembly media point on Thursday, Minister Kodali Nani said heavy rains and floods in Rayalaseema districts had claimed many lives. Some villages were submerged and the public was severely affected. The Chief Minister immediately responded and held reviews on flood damages and hardships with state and local authorities. From here, the Chief Minister conducts daily village-wise reviews with the authorities to ensure that flood relief operations are not hampered anywhere. It also directed the government to provide immediate assistance of Rs 95,000 to the homeless families, Rs 1.75 lakh (Rs 1.75 lakh), a total of Rs 2 lakh 80 lakh, as well as Rs 5,200 to those whose houses were partially damaged and to provide them with basic necessities.

"We are giving Rs 5,500 to those who have washed their luggage in their homes. We are actively carrying out relief



activities. The Chief Minister is regularly reviewing with officials and local legislators on fresh water facility and power supply restoration programmes. The Chief Minister will visit the families of the victims and the affected farmers after the weather recedes and the victims recover. However, despite the age of opposition leader Chandrababu, he has not yet come to his senses. He is doing sympathetic politics in the flood-affected areas by making lame and blind excuses that the YSRCP legislators have said something while the assembly sessions are being held here. He does not even tell his wife what to do," he added.

Nani further said, "Chandrababu Naidu did not

listen to the Assembly witness who said that neither we nor any other member mentioned his name. There must be some reason to do politics. NTR's family members also know that Chandrababu Naidu is a big villain. If there is anyone who can even drag his wife to the road for his political needs, it is Chandrababu Naidu alone. If the cow is grazes in the field, the calf also does the same. NTR's daughter, Chandrababu wife's name was not mentioned anywhere in the Assembly. Chandrababu brought his wife's name into the picture just to make a living politically. This is a very vicious act. She is unfortunate to have such a husband and son. During his visit to Kadapa and Chittoor districts, Chandrababu, as Leader of the Opposition, said that if there were any problems, the government should bring them to his notice and demand that they be resolved. "But, I do not know what Naidu saw and did in the flood-affected areas. When everything was washed away in the floods and the people are in trouble, Naidu was shamelessly mentioning the issue of his wife there for political gain. "If 40 people are dead and their loved ones are crying

because they have no home to stay or food to eat, go to them and cry. If they're in trouble, is there a need for your non-sense? If there are any problems, it would be better to inform the government through the media. As the Leader of the Opposition it would be good to talk to the officials there to resolve the issues.

"From Sonia Gandhi who harassed Jaganmohan Reddy to your son Pappu, you have seen what the whole situation has been like. In the end, you got 23 seats and Kuppam lost in the municipal elections too. We saw what happened when your son contested in Mangalagiri. We saw what happened to Errannaidu and Shankara Rao," he said.

YS Rajasekhara Reddy died on the way to Rachchabanda because he thought people were more important, Kodali Nani said and added that 10 years after the death of the YSR, it still lingers in the hearts of the people.

He said Naidu has publicity madness so he will do anything if TV cameras appear. He also dragged his wife into the street. He is making fun of his wife. All this, because he wants publicity.

CI killed in hit-and-run incident

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Inspector of III Town police station, K Eswara Rao, died on the spot when an unidentified vehicle hit the police patrolling vehicle in which he was travelling in the wee hours of Thursday. Patrolling car driver Santosh sustained severe injuries and is undergoing treatment. His condition is said to be critical.

The inspector, after finishing his night patrolling duty was returning home on the National Highway. When the car reached the Yendada Junction, an unidentified vehicle hit the vehicle.

According to the police, the incident took place at about 3.45 am.

The police started searching for the vehicle by examining the nearest CC footage on the National Highway.

Commissioner of Police M.K.Sinha and all the senior officials and police personnel have expressed their shock and sadness over the incident.

Yanamala slams govt for online sale of cinema tickets

PNS ■ AMARAVATI



TDP politburo member Yanamala Ramakrishnu on Thursday strongly objected to the YSRCP government's decision for the online sale of cinema tickets, thereby interfering with the commercial business of the theatres.

Ramakrishnu asked what moral right the Jaganmohan Reddy regime had to talk about the increased financial burden of cinema tickets on the public. The ruling YSRCP was shedding crocodile tears, saying cinema tickets were being sold at double rates at present. What would the government say about the overall price rise that was afflicting people?

In a statement here, the TDP leader demanded the YSRCP to explain why it was silent on the increased rates of petrol, diesel, cement, liquor and sand in AP. What was the mystery behind the Jaganmohan Reddy regime interfering with the cinema ticket rates? With each passing day, new bankrupt policies were being brought to punish

the AP people for giving a huge mandate to the YSRCP. Ramakrishnu deplored that a hopeless situation was prevailing where Andhra Pradesh was depending on liquor income for implementing its welfare schemes. It was shameful that Amma Vodi, Cheyuta and Aasara welfare schemes were handed over to the Beverages Corporation by enacting a law. The Jagan Government's policy seemed to be that a father should mandatorily drink if his children had to get an education.

The TDP leader said there would be no wonder that the Government, which linked Amma Vodi with liquor sales today, would link ganja sales with fee reimbursement and scholarships of students in the future. On the other hand, the

AP people suffered huge financial losses because of the thoughtless policy on 3 Capitals. The State had lost lakhs of crores worth property besides suffering a huge dent in revenues and job creation.

Ramakrishnu termed it as a diversionary measure on the part of the YSRCP to pass a resolution in the Assembly for the BC census. In 2014 itself, the TDP passed such a resolution and sent it to the Centre. Also, the TDP regime passed resolutions for 33.33 percent reservations for BCs in the Parliament and Assembly and also 25 percent of the Central budget for BC sub plans.

The TDP leader accused the YSRCP government of resorting to the diversion of the 15th Finance Commission funds in an unconstitutional and unethical manner. Already, the panchayats were suffering greatly because of a lack of funds. The powers of the panchayat officers and elected representatives were put in the hands of grama volunteers. The harassment of panchayats without giving funds was condemnable.

IOCL to sponsor redevelopment at Indira Gandhi Zoological Park

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Visakhapatnam, has come forward to sponsor the redevelopment works at Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (IGZP) as part of its CER (Corporate Environmental Responsibility) activity, spending Rs. 1.88 crore. A meeting of IOCL and IGZP representatives was held at Bioscope hall at IGZP on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Sanjay Kumar, Executive Director, IOCL, expressed happiness over associating with IGZP, which is the third largest zoo park in India. "As the IOCL mascot is rhinoceros, the collaboration with the IGZP gives us immense pleasure to contribute towards the development of rhino night house enclosure," he added.

Later, an official letter was handed over to Dr.Nandani Salaria, Curator, IGZP. The



redevelopment works would cover animal welfare, visitor amenities, conservation education and outreach activities such as night house for Himalayan black bear, additional night house to striped hyena and rhinoceros, seating benches, landscaping, public toilets, bioscope

upgradation and installation of dustbins, the Curator explained.

D.S.Rao, Chief General Manager, IOCL; Anant Shankar, Assistant Curator-I; P.Rammohan Rao, Conservator of Forests, other zoo officials and IOCL officials were present.

KONDAPALLI CIVIC CHIEF POLL HC adjourns hearing to Nov 29

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Suspense over the election of chairperson and vice-chairpersons of Kondapalli municipality is expected to continue for a few more days as the High Court that has been hearing multiple petitions on the election has adjourned the hearing to November 29 (Monday).

It was only on Wednesday that the poll authorities had conducted the election and submitted the result to the High Court in a sealed cover. The High Court, in its interim order a few days ago, instructed the election to be held on November 24 and the result should be submitted to it in a sealed cover.

Meanwhile, objecting to Nani's vote, YSRCP MLA Vasantha Krishna Prasad moved the lunch-motion petition in the High Court on Wednesday. The High Court had listed the petition for hearing on Thursday. On Thursday, the High Court bench posted the case hearing



to Monday.

Out of the 29 members of the municipality, TDP and the YSRCP won 14 seats each and another seat went to an independent candidate Karipikonda Sri Lakshmi. However, the independent candidate, originally a TDP rebel, formally joined the TDP.

With the YSRCP MLA from Mylavaram Vasantha Krishna Prasad's ex officio vote, the total votes of YSRCP went to 15 in the municipal council. On Tuesday, YSRCP members raised certain objections due to which election could

not be held. Later, Kesineni Nani got the High Court approval to vote in the Kondapalli municipality as an ex officio member which has helped TDP to secure 16 votes, one vote more than YSRCP.

With the help of local MP Kesineni Nani's vote, TDP members Chennuboyina Chitti Babu was elected as the chairman, Chuttukuduru Srinivasa Rao and Karipikonda Sri Lakshmi were elected as vice-chairpersons. However, the election result has been withheld following the High Court's instructions.

Naidu blames floods on poor maintenance of projects

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP supremo Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday held the YSRCP government's 'negligence, unpreparedness and arrogance' responsible for the massive devastation and loss of life in the Rayalaseema-Nellore floods.

Naidu demanded a 'judicial inquiry' into the human error behind improper maintenance of projects and tanks that wreaked havoc in local habitations. Even a week after the floods, the government failed to restore normalcy in the inundated areas. Six villages in the Kadapa district were still marooned and cut off from the rest of the areas.

Addressing a press conference, the TDP chief said a thorough probe should be held into the poor quality works in the Annamayya, Pincha, Kalyani and other projects. The Thummalagunta tank was wrongfully converted into a cricket stadium. So, floods from upper water bodies had no natural outlet and eventually rampaged MR Palli, Autonagar and such areas, he said.

Naidu asked why the government failed to give confidence to the family of Subba Rao who was washed away in flood at Lakshmiapuram circle. His wife was bedridden now

and nobody was there to retrieve his body. Annamayya project gates could not be lifted as they got stuck.

No funds were given in the past two and half years to repair and maintain the gates. No effort was made to pump out floodwater from the Rayalacheruvu tank.

The TDP chief strongly objected to the manner in which the AP government just sought Central funds without spending required funds immediately on relief and restoration. It was shameful just Rs. 4 Cr was released initially. The State Government should have released and taken up works of at least Rs 100 crore and then claim for Central share under calamity relief funds.

Chandrababu Naidu said the 'inexperience' of the YSRCP regime became a curse for the AP people. The state has not released the minimum required funds but has sought Rs 1,000 crore from the Centre.

It has put estimated losses at Rs 6,000 crore without taking up required relief activities at the field level. Even helicopters, which should be used for dumping food and relief material in inundated areas, were being misused for personal visits and photo sessions.



Visakha Steel Plant wins three awards for excellence

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited-Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (RINL-VSP) has won one "Par Excellence" award and two "Excellence" awards at the International Convention on Quality Control Circles (ICQCC-2021), organized by "Quality Circle Forum of India (QCFI)", being held at Hyderabad.

QC team "Prerana" of SMS department consisting of

Ch.Babu Rao, M. Sailesh, M.Durga Prasad, G.Srinivasa Rao and T.Prasad presented their case study on "cleaning arrangement for scrubber gas channel" and bagged "Par Excellence" award.

The QC team "Niyantaran" of RS and RS department and consisting of S Venkateswarulu, J.Satya Kumar, A Atchuta Ramaiah, V.Bhogeswara Rao and K Srinivasa Rao presented a case study on "setting device modification" and

bagged "Excellence" award.

Another QC team "Pragati" of I and DC department consisting of T Ramakrishna, Dipankar Dey, A Govinda Rao, S Srinivasarao and M Vasu presented their case study on "development of four stroke four-cylinder internal combustion engine prototype" and bagged "Excellence" award.

Atul Bhatt, CMD, RINL-VSP congratulated all the winners for bringing laurels to the company.



Police create new proforma to receive phone missing complaints

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam District Superintendent of Police Malika Garg has created a new proforma to receive complaints regarding lost phones. A procedure has been specially designed to find lost phones after it was observed that people faced certain difficulties in giving complaints at the police stations.

Special measures have been taken to enable the police to receive such complaints immediately and start an investigation. If people lose their mobile phones, they should immediately go to the police station, fill up a form and hand it over at the reception counter. The complainant will be given an acknowledgment receipt.

The SP will then thoroughly investigate the complaint and send the details to the IT core team. Mobile phones can be traced using various applications by the IT core team. The SP said it would help the victims to get their phones back as well as increase the public trust in the Police Department. "The Prakasam police would always take the lead in providing better services to the people," she added.

The SP said people could lodge genuine complaints at the police stations concerned or in the WhatsApp number 9121102266.

Prakasam SP calls for visible policing

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam District Superintendent of Police Malika Garg has directed the police officers to adopt effective road safety measures for the prevention of road accidents and conduct visible policing to control crimes.

The SP conducted annual inspections in Kandukur Town Police Station and the Sub-Divisional Office on Thursday. She met with the staff and enquired about their duties.

All staff were ordered to stay in the area where the police station is located. The SP told them to inform her promptly if they have any problem regarding duty. She enquired about station management, checked the reception counter, case property, analysed the investigation of reported grave and non-grave cases and missing cases, and told officers to give more focus to pending cases and complete the investigation expeditiously.

Malika Garg inspected police station records, case CD files and gave various instructions to the officers regarding their proper maintenance. The SIs were directed to take strong measures to eradicate



the illicit liquor menace and take immediate action on the Spandana, dial 100 and Disha calls to resolve the public grievances.

The SP personally inspected the process of registering cases from filing the FIR to filing the final charge sheet in the CCTNS. She suggested that when property offences were committed, the latitude and longitude of the place should be embedded in

Google Maps so that if similar crimes were committed, it would be possible to find out where they took place, investigate and make it possible to detect crimes.

The SP told police to thoroughly look into the sheets of rowdy-sheeters, suspects and old offenders within the police station, conduct counselling for the active rowdy-sheeters and set up continuous special surveillance on them.

The SP told the staff to adopt effective road safety measures for the prevention of road accidents and conduct visible policing and friendly policing to educate the local people on drug abuse, Disha app and road safety rules. She asked them to visit schools and colleges and conduct awareness programmes to create awareness among the youth about the ill-effects of drugs on their future.

Collector asks officials to clear files expeditiously

PNS ■ ELURU

District Collector Kartikeya Mishra has directed the officials to clear all the files and resolve the applications submitted seeking ration cards on the same day.

The Collector held a review meeting with the RDOs and Tahsildars on various works being taken up by the revenue department here on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that 22A applications should be forwarded to the RDOs within 10 days. The RDOs should forward them to the Collector's office by five days.

The applications pertaining to the ration cards should be cleared on a day to day basis. No application, seeking ration card, should be kept pending, he directed.

Kartikeya Mishra asked the officials to acquire lands for the allocation of house sites by 90



days and send the proposals in this regard. He asked the officials to appeal to people at villages to donate land for the construction of PHCs and BMCUs.

If no one comes forward to donate land, take steps to acquire the land, he told them.

The Collector directed the officials to dispose of the application received during the special summary revision by the end of the month. Joint Collector Himanshu Shukla, Dr. B R Ambedkar and DRO David Raju were among those who were present.

SCR to operate trains between Kacheguda and Kakinada town

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In order to clear the extra rush, South Central Railway will run a one way special train between Kacheguda and Kakinada Town.

Train number 07749 (from Kacheguda to Kakinada Town) will operate on Friday, November 26. Departing from the originating station at 9 pm, the train will reach its destination at 10:50 am, on the next day.

Enroute, this train will stop at Malkajigiri, Nalgonda, Miryalaguda, Nadikudi, Guntur, Vijayawada, Guduvada, Kaikalur, Akividu, Bhimavaram Town, Tanuku, Nidadavolu, Rajahmundry and Samalkot stations. It will consist of AC II tier, AC III tier and sleeper class and second seating coaches.

Police officers demand arrest of Ayyannapatrudu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Police Officers Association (APPOA) has protested against the derogatory and inciting remarks of former minister and Telugu Desam Party leader Ch. Ayyannapatrudu and demanded his arrest.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, AP Police Officers Association city president M. Somaiah and state general secretary M. D. Mastan Rao alleged that Ayyannapatrudu made derogatory and objectionable comments against police officers. He said that APPOA vehemently condemned his inciting comments.

APPOA also demanded the arrest of Ayyannapatrudu for giving a call to revolt against the police. The APPOA lead-

ers demanded that Ayyannapatrudu tender an unconditional apology for the comments. They recalled that Ayyannapatrudu had earlier made some derogatory comments against Home Minister Mekathoti Sucharita.

"The police extended price-less services during the recent floods and a constable died during rescue operations. CI Eeshwara Rao died in a road accident on Thursday in Visakhapatnam while discharging his duties," they said.

"The comments of Ayyannapatrudu that the police should be stripped off and beaten up expose his inefficiency and lack of knowledge. The voters in his constituency taught him a lesson," the APPOA leaders said. APPOA state vice-president R. Raghuram was also present.

Four gangs of mobile thieves busted; 9 arrested

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The sleuths of Commissioner's Task Force (South, East) teams apprehended four gangs, comprising of nine persons, for their involvement in pick pocketing and theft of mobile phones by diverting attention.

The officials seized 92 mobile phones and two autorickshaws, all worth Rs 12 lakhs from them.

The police officials detected 19 cases with the arrest of the nine accused persons identified as Md. Mahmood Ali, 24, Md.



Khan, 22, Amer Khan, 28, Md. Mohsin, 30, Md. Moosa, 22, Md. Abdul Haji, 20, Md. Rafeeq, 23, Md. Mansoor, 45, Md. Dastagiri, 48. The modus operandi of the first gang is to hire a rental pas-

senger auto and commit the theft of mobile phones from single passenger, by diverting the mind of passenger.

While the second gang is involved in pick pocketing and

theft of cell phones from the auto drivers by diverting their attention.

The third gang of offenders commit theft of cell phones by entering into the houses dur-

ing nights and sell them for low prices. The fourth gang also follows similar modus operandi to steal mobile phones from public and passengers in autos.

Basing on credible information, the Task Force teams along with local police simultaneously conducted raids and apprehended the accused.

The arrested accused and seized property were handed over to SHO of Kanchanbagh, Chandrayanagutta, Dabeerpura and Afzalgunj Police Station for further action.



Realtors asked to follow norms for layout approvals

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Municipal Commissioner Challa Anuradha has asked realtors to follow the guidelines and norms to get approvals for their layouts. She inspected a layout at Takkellapadu bypass road along with the town planning officers on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, she said that adequate space for basic amenities like drains

should be left in the private layouts. "Approvals will not be given if norms and conditions are violated. The private realtors should strictly follow the norms to get approvals for their layouts," she said. The purchasers of plots should enquire about the approval of layouts before payment is made, she said. City planners Himabindu, T. P. S. Sravanthi and other officials accompanied her.

'Land grabbing by YSRCP leaders led to catastrophe'

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Jana Sena Party (JSP) political affairs committee chairman Nadendla Manohar has alleged that the ruling party leaders' land grabbing led to the catastrophe and wondered at the indiscriminate illegal layouts.

Manohar visited some of the flood-affected areas including Peruru, Tummalagunta, Avilala Cheruvu and surrounding areas

on Thursday. He interacted with the villagers and knew the enormity and fury of the downpour and floods.

He saw the real estate mafia usurping Peruru irrigation tank catchment area. He wondered at the illegal layouts. The locals informed Manohar that the illegal layouts were taking place with the patronage of YSRCP local leaders. The villagers told Manohar that the

Tummalagunta tank was grabbed by the ruling party leaders and a road was constructed across the tank. They also encroached 60 acres of the Tummalagunta tank, inhibiting the water flow.

Janasena party leader Dr. Pasupuleti Hari Prasad, Pedapudi Vijay Kumar, Kalyanam Shiva Srinivas and Kiran Royal were among who accompanied Nadendla Manohar.



Five arrested with 1,820 kg marijuana worth Rs 3 crore

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

In one of the biggest drug busts during recent times, the Special Operations' Team (SOT), LB Nagar zone along with the Abdullahpurmet Police on Thursday, apprehended five inter-state drug peddlers and seized 1,820 kilograms of marijuana and other materials, all worth Rs 3 crore from their possession.

The arrested persons have been identified as Sanjay Balaji Kale, 30, Abhiman Kalyan Pawar, 49, Sanjay Chowgule, 45, Bharat Kolappa Yewle, 37 and Shek Rahidul, 27. The main accused, Sanjay Laxman Shinde, 26, is absconding, said the police.

"Shinde, Kale and Pawar are relatives whereas Chowgule and Yewle are their close friends, all residents of Maharashtra. The five were running a ganja transportation racket from the Sileru agency area of Andhra Pradesh to Maharashtra via Hyderabad. Rahidul, a native of West Bengal residing in the Sileru Agency area, helped the



five by driving the vehicles that transported the contraband and was paid for his role," said Mahesh Bhagwat, Rachakonda Police Commissioner.

According to their plan, about a week ago, Shinde gave an order for ganja weighing 2,000 kilos to his source from the Sileru agency area. Rahidul then took the lorry loaded with black soil bags and parked it at a remote place in the forest of Sileru agency area. Shinde's source then took the lorry and loaded 182 packets of ganja, each weighing 10 kg, underneath the black soil bags and parked the lorry at the same place. Rahidul then took the lorry and began his journey to Maharashtra via

Hyderabad. The substance was purchased at Rs 8,000 per kg and was sold for Rs 15,000 per kg, said the police.

Meanwhile, on Laxman's instructions, the rest of the accused came to Hyderabad in a car and were waiting at the Panthangi Toll plaza, Choutuppal. When Rahidul arrived in the lorry, the four in the car then led him by piloting the lorry from ahead. However, based on a tip off, police officials apprehended the accused.

Officials seized marijuana weighing 1,820 kilograms, a lorry, a car, Rs 41,000 cash and seven mobile phones from their possession, all worth Rs 3,07,93,000.

Man gets 2-yr jail term for chit fund scam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A local court at LB Nagar on Thursday, convicted an accused person who cheated the public to the tune of Rs 2.5 crores.

According to the police, the accused person, Maram Bhanumurthy, 35, a resident of Neredmet, gathered a good reputation among the public and collected money for his chit fund business. After collecting approximately Rs 2.5 crore, used the money for his personal luxuries and then fled away.

Collector asks housing scheme beneficiaries to go for OTS

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam District Collector Pravin Kumar has appealed to the Jagananna Sampoorna Gruha Haku beneficiaries to avail of the One-Time Settlement (OTS) to get complete rights on their house.

The Collector inspected the village secretariats of Veerabhadrapuram in Yerragondapalem mandal, Chapalamadugu in Pullalacheruvu mandal, Rajupalem in Tripurantakam mandal and RHK in Chapalamadugu village on Thursday. The Collector participated in the awareness rally on the Jagananna Sampoorna Gruha Haku

organised in Chapalamadugu village.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the government had introduced the One-Time Settlement with an aim to provide complete rights to the beneficiaries of the scheme. The beneficiaries of Jagananna Sampoorna Gruha Haku should pay the money which they had taken from the government to construct houses under One Time Settlement.

Pravin Kumar said that in Prakasam district, 2.85 lakh people had taken loans to construct houses and they could avail of the OTS. He said a large number of the beneficiaries had come for-

ward to settle their loans under OTS.

"The OTS mela will be organised on November 27, during which 30,000 beneficiaries will repay their loan amounts under the OTS," he said. The Collector asked the officials to take steps to ensure that more number of beneficiaries make use of the opportunity.

The registration process for availing of OTS would be carried out at secretariats on December 21. There is no need to pay stamp duty for the registration, the Collector said. The Collector handed over the documents to those who paid money under the OTS scheme.



Man held for swindling boss

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A 28-year-old was arrested by the CCS police for stealing a smartphone from his employer and using the merchant applications in the device to swindle money from bank accounts. Officials said that he siphoned Rs 2.05 lakh in several transactions.

The accused, Ranjeet Kumar, a native of Eluru, was working with the victim as a caretaker, during which he helped him in setting up a PhonePe account and noticed the login credentials, said the police.

INDIA CORNER

Delhi govt forms Yamuna Cell for cleaning of Yamuna river

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday announced the formation of a Yamuna Cleaning Cell (YCC) to expedite inter-departmental decision making and execution of projects for cleaning the heavily polluted Yamuna river in the city. The Cell, to be headed by the chief executive officer of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), will have representatives of all the departments concerned, he said. "In order to expedite inter-departmental decision making and execution, we formed a Yamuna Cleaning Cell (YCC) today, headed by CEO, DJB and representatives of all concerned depts. This will expedite Yamuna cleaning process," Kejriwal tweeted. Last week the Delhi chief minister announced a six-point action plan to clean Yamuna, expecting the work will be completed by February 2025. The action plan includes new sewer treatment plants and raising the capacity of the existing ones, sewer connection of slum clusters and rehabilitation of old sewer systems.



EC to hold international webinar on inclusive participation of voters

The Election Commission will host an international webinar on Friday on inclusive participation of voters where election management bodies will showcase best practices adopted to enhance electoral participation of women, persons with disabilities and senior citizens. The event is being held to mark the completion of two years of chairmanship of the Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) by the EC. Nearly 100 delegates from 24 countries across the world and four international organisations – International IDEA, International Foundation of Electoral Systems (IFES), Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB) and European Centre for Elections – are going to participate in the webinar, the EC said in a statement. Nearly 20 diplomats are also scheduled to attend the webinar. Session I will be co-chaired by Chief Election Commissioner of India Sushil Chandra along with Mohammad Irfan Abdool Rahman, Electoral Commissioner of Mauritius and K M Nurul Huda, Chief Election Commissioner of Bangladesh.



Modi era has demolished legacy of cut, commission, corruption: Naqvi

The 'Modi era' has demolished the legacy of "cut, commission and corruption" rampant during the Congress-led regimes at the Centre, Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said on Thursday. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime has created confidence among the common people and fear among the corrupt and mafia, the minister told PTI here. The Modi era is a period of Iqbal (authority), Insaaf (justice) and Imaan (integrity) where inclusive development, security and prosperity of the country are top priorities, Naqvi said. The BJP-led government has ended the "caucus of corruption" from the power corridors of Delhi, he said. Some political parties considered secularism as their political proprietorship, but for the BJP secularism is a Constitutional and moral commitment, he said. The "pseudo secular syndicate" misused secularism as a vote capturing tool, he said, without naming the Congress.



NEET-PG

Centre tells SC it will revisit Rs 8 lakh annual income limit for EWS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Thursday told the Supreme Court that it has taken a considered decision to revisit the limit of rupees eight lakh annual income fixed for determining the Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) category for reservation in NEET admissions for Post-Graduate medical courses.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud, Surya Kant, and Vikram Nath was informed by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that a committee will be constituted to determine the criteria for EWS and it would take four weeks.

Mehta said that NEET (PG) counselling would stand postponed for a further four weeks as per assurance earlier given to the court.

The top court was hearing a batch of pleas filed by Students challenging the Centre and Medical Counselling Committee (MCC) July 29 notice providing 27 per cent reservation for Other Backward Class (OBC) and 10 per cent for EWS category in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET-PG) admissions for medical courses for the current academic year.

Justice Kant said that the EWS quota is a very enabling



and progressive kind of reservation and all States should support the Centre in its endeavour.

The bench said that the only question is that determination of the category should be in a scientific manner and it appreciates that the Centre has taken a decision to revisit the criteria earlier fixed.

Senior advocate Arvind Datar, appearing for petitioners (students), said since a lot of time has passed and Centre should push back implementation of the EWS quota for the next academic year and the current year counselling should be allowed to go on.

The bench agreed with the submission of Datar and asked Mehta whether it could push the implementation of the constitutional amendment for the

next academic year and allow the counselling to go on for the current academic year.

Mehta said that the government has taken a decision to implement the 103rd constitutional amendment from the current academic year and pushing back would not be appropriate.

He said that if the determination is done earlier than four weeks then it will inform the court.

The bench told Datar that four weeks is not unreasonable and it doesn't want to push the government to do it earlier otherwise the criteria would be fixed in an unsentient and haphazard manner.

Advocate Shashank Ratnoo, appearing on behalf of some OBC candidates, requested that the application of reserva-

tion to OBC students should not be deferred as the Centre is planning to revisit the EWS criteria.

The bench said that it has not said anything about OBC students and is not disposing of the petition.

It then recorded the submission of Mehta and posted the matter for further hearing on January 6.

On October 21, the top court asked the Centre whether it would like to revisit the limit of rupees eight lakh annual income fixed for determining the EWS category for reservation in NEET PG admissions.

The top court had clarified that it is not embarking into the policy domain but is only trying to ascertain whether constitutional principles have adhered or not.

It was annoyed as no affidavits were filed by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Department of Personnel and Training (DOPT) and formulated questions to be answered by the Centre in a week.

It had asked the Centre whether any exercise was undertaken before fixing a limit of Rs 8 lakh annual income for determining the EWS category and whether Major Gen (retd) SR Sinho

commission report of 2010 was considered before ascertaining the criteria?

Major Gen (retd) SR Sinho commission was constituted by the UPA government in 2010 and has recommended welfare measures for the EWS category including reservation to them.

The Centre had said that the commission's report was one of the basis for determining the criteria but after that several deliberations were held and other factors were also taken into account.

It had asked the Centre to respond to a question that since the income limit of determining the creamy layer in OBC category and EWS is the same Rs 8 lakh, whether it would be arbitrary to provide a similar income limit for EWS and OBC. The bench said that as per the explanation in the 103rd constitution amendment says that criteria for EWS will be notified by the state governments, then how can the Centre notify a uniform EWS criterion for the whole of the country. On October 7, the top court had posed searching questions to the Centre on its decision to fix a limit of rupees eight lakh annual income for determining the EWS category for reservation in NEET admissions.

PM lays foundation stone for Noida International Airport

PNS ■ JEWAR

Taking a swipe at previous governments, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said Uttar Pradesh was kept in deprivation and darkness earlier but it is now getting what it always deserved and is making its mark internationally under a "double-engine" BJP rule.

After laying the foundation stone for the Noida International Airport at Jewar in Uttar Pradesh, which would be one of the largest aerodromes in Asia, Modi highlighted the development activities in the poll-bound state and said the new airport will help the state become an export-centre whereby even MSMEs will have easier access to overseas markets.

He said the Noida International Airport, slated to be completed by 2024, will become the logistics gateway for North India.

He asserted that infrastructure is "not politics for us but part of national policy".

"We are making sure that the projects do not get stuck, do not keep hanging.."

we try to ensure that the infrastructure work is completed within the stipulated time," Modi said.

In an apparent dig at the Opposition, Modi said some political parties in the country have always kept their self-interest paramount.

"The thinking of these people is self-interest, their own development and that of their family," Modi said.

"Whereas, we follow the spirit of Nation First... Sabka Saath - Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas - Sabka Prayas is our mantra," Modi said.

He said that for the first time in seven decades, Uttar Pradesh has started getting what it has always deserved.

"With the efforts of the double engine government, today



'PM wanted Asia's biggest airport in UP'

NOIDA: Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Thursday said it was Prime Minister Narendra Modi's direction that Asia's biggest airport has to be built in Uttar Pradesh, as he joined the foundation-laying ceremony for the Noida International Airport. Scindia said the airport, located in Jewar in Gautam Buddha Nagar district in western Uttar Pradesh, will bring investments worth Rs 34,000 crore and the first phase of the Greenfield project is expected to be completed in 2024 with a capacity of 1.2 crore passengers annually. "By the last phase of development, the Noida International Airport will even surpass Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport and become India's leading airport," Scindia told the gathering.

Yogi says UP on track for growth

NOIDA: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday said the country has to decide if the sweetness of sugarcane will grow or the followers of Pakistan founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah will cause mischief in the state, in a veiled attack on the Samajwadi Party (SP). Adityanath trained his guns at the opposition as he joined the foundation-laying ceremony for the Noida International Airport in the Jewar area of Gautam Buddha Nagar in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said the state is moving on the path of development and highlighted various efforts of the government. The BJP leader also thanked the over 7,000 farmers who gave consent for the acquisition of their land for the airport without any controversy. "Some people had tried to add bitterness in the sugarcane region (western parts) of Uttar Pradesh with a series of riots.

Delhi Assembly panel summons Kangana

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Assembly's Peace and Harmony Committee has summoned Bollywood actor Kangana Ranaut on December 6 over her alleged hateful posts on social media, panel chairperson Raghav Chadha said on Thursday.

The committee issued the notice summoning Ranaut after complaints cited an alleged offensive and derogatory Instagram story posted by her, said a statement from the panel.

The complaints claimed that Ranaut, in her story, labelled the Sikh community 'Khalistani terrorists', it said.

"As per the complaints, the content of such stories has gravely hurt the religious sentiments of the Sikh community and has caused apprehensions in their mind regarding their safety as well as life and liberty," the statement said.

Further, according to the



complainants, the stories were published by Ranaut on her Instagram account, @kanganaranaut, which has a massive reach and is being followed by around 80 lakh people worldwide.

It illustrates the instances which hurt the religious sentiments of the Sikh community and have a tendency to "disturb" the peace and harmony of the society, it said.

Raj Guv seeks clarity on constitutional status of CM's new advisers

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra has asked the chief secretary to clarify the constitutional status of six advisers to the chief minister following allegations by the opposition that the appointments were unconstitutional.

The governor has forwarded the memorandum submitted by Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore to the chief secretary seeking a clarification on the constitutional status of these recent appointments, Raj Bhavan sources said on Thursday.

Rathore alleged that the posts to which appointments were made by the government were unconstitutional as they are offices of profit.

He had alleged that the state government was trying to appoint MLAs as advisers to the chief minister and as par-



liamentary secretaries, in numbers exceeding the set constitutional limit, to appease the disgruntled legislators who were deprived of ministerial berths.

The BJP leader said the state government had already given offices of profit to six MLAs by appointing them as advisers to the chief minister on par with the rank of a cabinet minister or minister of state (MoS) and that there were plans to appoint a dozen parliamentary secretaries,

again, on par with the ranks of a cabinet minister and MoS.

Rathore's memorandum comes in the backdrop of expansion of the Gehlot cabinet in which several Congress and independent MLAs, who were expecting ministerial berths, were not accommodated. These legislators will be adjusted through political appointments such as parliamentary secretaries and advisers, sources had said on Sunday, when 15 new ministers were sworn in.

"The number of ministers in the government can be up to 15 per cent of the total assembly seats according to the Constitution and it (state government) is trying to please the dissatisfied MLAs by giving them offices of profit by appointing them as advisers and parliamentary secretaries, which is illegal and unconstitutional," Rathore's letter read.

'Potent platform' INS Vela commissioned

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Adding teeth to India's naval prowess, the Navy on Thursday commissioned submarine INS Vela here, with the Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh calling it a 'potent platform' with an ability to undertake the entire spectrum of submarine operations.

This is the fourth of the six submarines the Indian Navy is inducting under the Kalvari class submarine Project 75.

This is also the second major induction in the Indian Navy in less than a week. On November 21, the navy commissioned warship INS Visakhapatnam.

Speaking at the event of commissioning the submarine, the Navy chief said Project 75 will transform Indian Navy's



war-fighting in the underwater domain in the years to come.

"INS Vela is a potent platform with an ability to undertake the entire spectrum of submarine operations. And given today's dynamic and complex security situation, Vela's capability and fire power

will play a crucial role in Navy's ability to protect, promote and preserve India's maritime interest across the seascape of the Indian Ocean Region while acting as a clear deterrent to our adversaries," Singh said.

The Scorpene class submarines are being built in

India by the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) Mumbai, in collaboration with M/s Naval Group, France.

Three submarines under Project 75 - INS Kalvari, INS Khanderi, INS Karanj - have already been commissioned.

INS Vela would form a part of the Western Naval Command's Submarine fleet and would be another potent part of its arsenal, the Navy said.

rew of the erstwhile 'Vela', a Russian origin Foxtrok class submarine, which was decommissioned in 2009, were also present amongst the guests on this occasion.

These Scorpene submarines are extremely potent platforms, and they have advanced stealth features and are also equipped with both long range guided

torpedoes as well as anti-ship missiles, it added.

These submarines have a state-of-the-art SONAR and sensor suite permitting outstanding operational capabilities. They also have an advanced Permanent Magnetic Synchronous motor (PER-MASYN) as its propulsion motor.

INS Vela is fitted with advanced weapons and sensors. All of these are integrated into the Submarine Tactical Integrated Combat System known as SUBTICS, the Navy said.

Once a target is classified, the submarine may choose to engage it using either her sea skimming missiles also known as Flying Fish or heavy weight wire - guided torpedoes, it added.

Issue fresh summons to Isha Foundation: HC

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Upholding the powers of the Tamil Nadu Commission for Protection of Child Rights to initiate proceedings on its own against Isha Foundation in Coimbatore, the Madras High Court has directed it to approach the Commission with its defence materials, afresh. Justice S M Subramaniam gave the direction recently while disposing of a writ petition from the Foundation, represented by its administrator, in Velliangiri in Coimbatore.

'Modi govt pro-farmers, but industry-friendly'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Describing the Modi government as pro-poor, pro-farmers and industry-friendly, Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Thursday said the Centre intends to bring reforms in chemicals and petrochemicals sector to boost domestic manufacturing and attract investments.

Mandaviya, who is also Union Health and Family Welfare Minister, asked the industry to become environment-friendly by reducing pollution and minimising hazardous chemicals.



The minister was addressing a conference organised jointly by the Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals and industry body FICCI.

Clean up!

The parties that select candidates with criminal records should face the possibility of deregistration

The judiciary, the executive and the legislature agree that politics has to be decriminalised. Where they disagree is on the extent of decriminalisation. The judiciary asks the latter to amend existing laws to permanently ban convicted persons from contesting elections. The executive is unwilling to take that step. The process of decriminalising politics, as a result, is held to ransom by the lack of unanimity among the pillars of democracy. The Supreme Court on Wednesday raised the issue once again, asking whether the Government was amenable to amending the law. There was no clear response from the Government. The row finds resonance at a time when assembly elections are due in several States including Uttar Pradesh that has the largest number of criminal cases pending against sitting and former legislators. Over 1,300 such cases are being heard in 63 specially constituted courts. Many of the cases have been dragging on for years. At the national level, the Association for Democratic Rights informs us, 363 MPs and MLAs have declared criminal cases against them. The cases, in which charges have been framed, have been pending anywhere between five and seven years. There are over a score MPs with 43 cases between them, and over 100 MLAs with 315 cases, pending for 10 years or more. There are over 170 cases where the punishment is a life term. It is not known how many sitting members did not disclose any cases against them.



The question is, should one go the whole hog to decriminalise politics. As of date, legislators convicted of a crime and given a minimum of two years imprisonment stand disqualified. A landmark judgment of the Supreme Court also said they cannot contest elections for six years after their release. Out of the hundreds of legislators who face thousands of cases against them, only 11 have been disqualified so far. That is a poor conviction rate by any standard. The well-known reason for this is that cases drag on, or are dragged on, for years and the accused persons contest polls during the pendency. The Supreme Court also raised the question of whether a person should be disqualified from membership in a legislative body on the mere framing of criminal charges against them, but a five-judge bench ruled it could not disqualify them at that stage. Instead, it asked the Government to bring in such a law. The Government, which is against the recommendation, evades a clear stand on the principle of decriminalisation. Politics cannot be decriminalised by mere disqualification for a certain time. The disqualification has to be permanent upon conviction in heinous criminal cases. Where charges are framed, the courts must dispose of them within a specified time so that the accused face automatic, permanent disqualification upon conviction. Political parties which select candidates with criminal antecedents should face the possibility of derecognition or deregistration. Will the cat bell itself?

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PICTALK



Devotees cover the Yamuna with *sarees* during Chunari Manorath festival, in Mathura

PTI

Water woes

There's a pressing need to nationalise rivers in the subcontinent before we perish

Early this week, when the shutters of Aliyar Dam in Tamil Nadu were raised, there was a major protest demonstration by the people of Palakkad in Kerala. The water level in Kannadipuzha flowing from Tamil Nadu to Kerala rose to an alarming level and put the lives of thousands of people staying along the banks of the river in danger. The proactive media in both the States conveniently blacked out the report. The shutters of Aliyar Dam were opened by the Tamil Nadu Government to save the lives of its people along this river. The concern of the TN Government to save the lives of its people from the impending disaster is understandable. But the DMK Government should show the same concern for the lives of more than four million people in Kerala who stay along the banks of Mullaperiyar Dam which may burst any time once the water level in this largest and oldest gravity dam in the country crosses the 138-ft mark. As pointed out by this newspaper in a report, the Mullaperiyar Dam is a water bomb ticking by the second and the possibility of a major disaster stares the people of four Kerala districts in the face. The 140-year-old dam has outlived its utility and age has caught up with it.



It is time to decommission this dam and build a new one, as suggested by the Kerala Government. But, strangely, Tamil Nadu vehemently opposes this idea. Geologists have warned time and again that the region around Mullaperiyar Dam is "pregnant with earthquakes". While Tamil Nadu turns a blind eye towards this warning, the State's politicians are highly critical of the Centre's move to build the Indian Neutrino Observatory in the region and cite studies by geologists to oppose the proposed research laboratory. Aren't these double standards exposing Tamil Nadu's 'Heads I win, Tails You Lose' attitude? Tamil Nadu's opposition to the Karnataka Government's move to build the Mekedatu Dam across the Cauvery river is the same. Karnataka has the right to build a dam on its own land and there are no laws restraining it. The Mullaperiyar Dam agreement has inherent weaknesses in it. The Union Government and the Supreme Court should not take recourse in the apology that "though laws are there, public resentment has to be taken into consideration". It is time rivers in the subcontinent are nationalised and people — irrespective of region, religion, caste and community — get justice equally.

Supranationalism will hold us back

Marxism believes the nation-State to be an exploitative instrument of capitalists, just as Islam believes it to be the death of its faith



PRAFULL GORADIA

The recent war of words, law and politics began when Aryan Khan, the son of Bollywood actor Shahrukh Khan, was arrested and kept behind bars for some weeks. The Left-Liberals vociferously alleged that that this happened because he is Muslim, forgetting that he is half Hindu. This controversy grew louder and worse when Indian bowler Mohammed Shami gave away a few runs to Pakistani batters in the recent T20 World Cup. I feel this is a baseless allegation; and I am neither Liberal nor Left. To make matters worse, Pakistani Home Minister Sheikh Rasheed declared "Indian Muslims share our sentiment", which can mean that they are all Muslims first and Indian or Pakistani later.

At Etawah in Uttar Pradesh, the State's former CM, Akhilesh Yadav has compared Pakistan's founder MA Jinnah to Nehru, Sardar Patel and even Gandhi. "They had all combined to win independence", said Akhilesh. UP CM Yogi Adityanath has taken strong objection to such comparisons, but no Muslim appears to have contradicted Akhilesh. There are innumerable such instances around the Muslim identity. The late Syed Shahabuddin repeatedly advocated the importance of Muslim identity above most issues. His pet expression was "Muslim Indian"; he refused to ever say "Indian Muslim". Clearly, he meant that the pan-Islamic loyalty supersedes national identity.

The recent example of the Pakistani winners of the recent T20 cricket match emphasising that their triumph was that of Islam, and not merely of Pakistan, is by no means an isolated one. Some years ago, when Wasim Akram was the captain of a Pakistani team that lost a match to Bangladesh, Akram said he did not mind as Pakistan had lost to a "Muslim brother". This clearly meant that the *ummah* is far higher than the nation.

This Islamic supra-nationalism is unpopular as was the Jewish sentiment of "Jew first, and German, British or French later." The origin of supra-nationalism is probably a Judaic phenomenon. Jews were captured by the



Egyptians to work as labourers to build stone upon stone. It was clear that there was no Pharaonic intention to ever release them. The Jews felt cursed, miserable and hopeless. When their Prophet Moses, with Herculean difficulty, released them and led them to Israel, they could only think of God and overlooked any State or country. Ironically, they did not have either for centuries until the British helped them after World War II, in 1948.

Supra-nationalism has often been described as transnationalism, whereby a citizen's loyalty to his country is superseded by an allegiance beyond the borders to say, an empire, religion or something higher. In some ways, it is a suzerainty over and above sovereignty. A Jew's supreme allegiance is to Judaism and not to a country. Even after the nation called Israel was attained in 1948, for a Jew, Jehovah commands a higher loyalty. Chaim Weizmann, the leading figure in the movement for establishing a separate homeland for the Jews and Israel's first president, illustrated the point by saying, "There are no British or French Jews; there are Jews in Britain and France".

It is telling that the acclaimed poet Mohammad Iqbal who wrote 'Sare jahan se

achha, hindustan hamara' came back from Europe, turned supra-nationalist and remained so. Yet, he did not become a total separatist unlike Jinnah. In all probability, many a Muslim is similarly confused and is a prisoner of his feeling. Except the rich families, there is nowhere they can be welcome. Where then is there a place for supra-nationalist feelings? Have they, more particularly, not thought of what happened to the Jews in Germany and elsewhere?

The fourth Abrahamic sibling, Marxism too, is supra-national in nature. Marxists, in adherence to their supra-national nature and thinking, have destroyed their native countries. Does that mean that Muslims, who are also supra-national, would end up being destructive of their countries? Well, without the country of nature, their countries become poor. Their ethos does not encourage production or a productive culture. This has been explained most eloquently by Prof. Timur Kuran, who has proved how Islamic laws have held back the Muslim *ummah* in economic progress.

In sharp contrast, the Jews, who are also supra-national are believed to have the Midas touch. Their priority is the pursuit of wealth and successfully so. But Jews were unpopu-

lar in Europe, because they were suspected of caring more for themselves than for their countries.

The Marxists are another community of supra-nations without any faith in any god. In fact, they deny god and call religion "the opium of the masses". The objective of the communists is to unite the workers of the world. Their enemies were the rich or what they called the bourgeoisie, whose overthrow is necessary to what Marxists believe will be transfer of power to industrial workers or the proletariat. In a vicarious way, Marxists became enemies of even the small farmers by collectivising or taking over their farms. In the end, the Marxist ruined entire countries, as their history proves it.

In the pursuit of its supra-national ideology, Marxism also believes that the individual nation does not matter much. In fact, Marxism believes the nation-state to be an exploitative instrument of capitalists, just as Islam believes the nation-state to be the death of its faith.

(This is part of an ongoing series on Indian Partition.

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

SUPRANATIONALISM HAS OFTEN BEEN DESCRIBED AS TRANSNATIONALISM, WHEREBY A CITIZEN'S LOYALTY TO HIS COUNTRY IS SUPERSEDED BY AN ALLEGIANCE BEYOND THE BORDERS; TO SAY AN EMPIRE, RELIGION OR SOMETHING HIGHER

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NEED TO KEEP A CHECK ON POPULATION

Sir — The damage done due to excessive population growth is long-lasting. Let us not forget that the scars of the Emergency are still with us. Men used to be part of family planning initiatives but after they were forced to sterilise, they continued to remain completely out of family planning programmes even today. The Government now mostly works with woman and child health programmes. Mistakes of that era are not what new Governments with a robust electoral mandate would like to repeat.

Therefore, it is time to ask some of the prejudiced voices within the Government and the ruling parties not to venture into terrain they may not fully understand. Family planning programs benefit not only parents and children but also the society and nation by keeping the number of new births under control. A controlled population growth will allow sustainable distribution of resources among the already vast population of India. This would also help ensure that basic amenities are provided to every citizen of the country and natural resources, which are already depleting, do not get exhausted too early.

MR Jayanthi | Mumbai

A MOTHER'S BATTLE FOR HER BABY

Sir — A real-life story in God's own country Kerala has captured the imagination of the public. It was a powerful human drama involving a myriad of human instincts and emotions unfolding before our eyes. It revolved around the central theme of a mother's spirited fight to get back her child given in adoption by her parents without her consent. The pain of separation from her baby for more than a year was deeply moving and ennobling. The suspense and uncertainty ended with the DNA test results confirming that Anupama S Chandran and her partner Ajith Kumar are the baby's biological parents. The proof of parenthood provided by the paternity and maternity tests put an end to the legal wrangles and settled the matter once and for all.

Anupama's parents did wrong by forcibly taking away the baby (amount-

Jewar airport: New possibilities



The construction of the much awaited Noida International Airport, also called the Jewar International Airport, will bring new avenues for development not only in Uttar Pradesh but in Delhi and in the entire NCR region. Presently, the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGI) is the only primary international airport serving Delhi and its surroundings which usually remains very busy, hence this new airport will help decongest the IGI airport. The Noida International Airport will be a state-of-the-art modern air-

ing to abduction) and handing him over to the Kerala State Council for Child Welfare just three days after birth on the utterly specious ground that the new arrival was out of wedlock. Nature or biology has not ordained wedlock for procreation. The relationship between mother and baby is special in the truest sense of the word. In this day and age we should be able to do without moral prudery and puritanism.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

GIVE EMPLOYMENT, NOT JUST FREE FOOD

Sir — The announcement of extension of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana till March next year is welcome. The announcement is apparently backed by political will ahead of the Assembly elections in various States. This decision to support poor Indians is absolutely appreciable. There are poor families in the country who still can't cope up with the economic upheaval of COVID-19. The Government data indicates that it is the

port and the largest in Asia and the fourth largest in the world with six runways.

Worldwide, all major metro cities have more than one airport. London has six. New York has three and Washington has three airports. Hence, the much awaited new Jewar airport is a welcome development for the entire region. The project is expected to finish up by 2024 and create employment and attract investment. The project will significantly boost commerce, connectivity and tourism which will bring new avenues of job opportunities for thousands of people during the construction and operation of the airport. The airport will also help exporters from Western Uttar Pradesh as it will directly connect major centers of export with international markets. It will have an integrated multi-modal cargo hub also. The project is indeed a step forward but we took a lot of time in taking this step. Now the Government must strive to complete the project well within the scheduled timeline.

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bangalore

fifth phase of the PMGKAY, which aims to serve food to 80 crore families in the country by March 2022. The Government must be appreciated for their constant support to the poor.

However, it is also worth noting that the distribution of free food has its limits. One day it has to be stopped. It is, therefore, essential to ensure employment to the youth of this country rather than only ensuring their food needs. If the daughters and sons of a family get employment opportunities equivalent to their skills and potential, it will itself ensure their well being and healthy sustenance. The Government must prepare employment alternatives to make citizens meet their ends by themselves rather than providing free food. This is a crucial matter and it should not be taken up by the Central and State Governments.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

I have got four months as CM, but I will do four years' work. Neither do I sleep, nor do I let officers sleep.



Punjab Chief Minister —Charanjit Singh Channi



A coalition Government should resign if a party chooses to leave the Government.

Swedish Prime Minister —Magdalena Andersson

I've always wanted a family and children. I realised that adoption was a way to marry both these things.



Actor —Swara Bhasker



This is very selfish from a bowler's point of view; I want the best gloveman behind the stumps. In my eyes, that's Tim Paine.

Australia spinner —Nathan Lyon

You can mean anything by 'Khela Hobe', but it cannot be a provocation. It has been instrumental in our victory.



TMC leader —Saayoni Ghosh

AIPEF demands withdrawal of Electricity Bill

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The All India Power Engineers Federation (AIPEF) has demanded the withdrawal of Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2021 and suggested that the Pre Legislative Consultation Policy should be adopted before introducing the Bill in Parliament.

Further, AIPEF has sought Prime Minister's intervention in light of the listing of Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2021, in the coming winter session of Parliament beginning from November 29, 2021. AIPEF Chairman Shailendra Dubey has sent a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi requesting him to intervene in the matter and direct authorities to ensure adoption of Pre Legislative Consultation Policy (PLCP) before introducing the Bill in Parliament, a statement said.

Equities settle in the green

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's key equity indices — S&P BSE Sensex and NSE Nifty50 — closed in the green on Thursday.

The barometer 30-scrip Sensex closed at 58,795 points, up by 454 points or 0.78 per cent. Similarly, the broader 50-scrip Nifty closed the day at 17,536 points, up by 121 points or 0.70 per cent.

Shares of Reliance Industries, Divi's Laboratories, ITC, Infosys, and Tata Consumers were the top gainers during the session, NSE data showed. As per the information available on the NSE website, stocks of these companies closed 6.36 per cent, 2.4 per cent, 1.78 per cent, 1.56 per cent and 1.34 per cent higher, respectively.

Reliance Industries' shares rose sharply backed by its decision to restructure, repurpose the company's gasification assets, said Hem Securities.

The top losers during the session were Maruti, Britannia,



Indusind Bank, IOC, and Hindustan Unilever, data showed.

Notably, after a slump in share prices on exchange debut, One97 Communications-owned Paytm has been consistently rising for the third

consecutive day and closed at Rs 1,785, up 1.86 per cent from the previous close.

Besides, the newly listed Latent View Analytics hit the 20 per cent upper circuit for the second consecutive sessions and closed at Rs 701.9 per

share. "The Nifty has immediate support at 17,350 levels while resistance at 17,650 levels. On the other hand, Bank nifty has support at 37,000-36,650 levels and resistance at 38,000 levels," said Sachin Gupta, AVP Research.

Govt sets up committee for stable gas price for power units: Oil Secy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has set up a committee to work out measures need to make natural gas available to power plants at "reasonably stable prices", Oil Secretary Tarun Kapoor said on Thursday.

India has 24,900 megawatts of gas-based power generation capacity. But of this, 14,305 MW is stranded due to the non-availability of reasonably priced gas.

"We have set up a committee to look to see how we can make natural gas available to the power sector at a reasonably stable price," he said at ET Energyworld Gas Conclave.

Without giving details of the panel or its report, he said power plants want fuel at "fairly stable" price as the electricity they produce is priced at uniform or almost static rates. "If the price of natural gas goes up, power generators cannot



increase the price of electricity they produce," he said. "So we are looking at ways and means of how we can increase the penetration of natural gas in the power sector." The average domestic gas supplied to gas-based power plants is just over 25 million metric standard cubic meters per day (mmscmd), which is 70 per cent short of the allocation or the requirement.

While gas-based power

plants act as balancers in the grid, making available gas to power plants is part of a larger plan to increase the share of environment-friendly fuel in India's primary energy basket to 15 per cent by 2030 from the current 6.7 per cent, Kapoor said.

Natural gas as a fuel is convenient to use and can be easily transported through pipelines. It is cleaner than several other fossil fuels.

MONEY MATTERS

RE starts local assembly unit, CKD facility in Thai

Mid-sized motorcycle maker Royal Enfield on Thursday said it has started local assembly unit and CKD (completely knocked down) facility in Thailand. This is the company's third local assembly unit after Argentina, and Colombia in Latin America. The unit in Thailand, besides catering to the local market, will act as a distribution hub for all other countries in South-East Asia, including Indonesia and Vietnam, the company said in a statement. "To begin with, the facility will start local assembly of the Himalayan, Interceptor 650 and Continental GT 650 models, starting this month," the company said. Commenting on the new assembly unit, Royal Enfield Executive Director, B Govindarajan said, "With a strategic view to grow the business and cater to increasing demand we have been pursuing our plans to set up local assembly units in priority markets beginning with Argentina in 2020 and then Colombia earlier this year."



MG Motor India adopts wind-solar hybrid energy

MG Motor India has collaborated with CleanMax to become the first passenger car company to adopt wind-solar hybrid energy, a statement said on Thursday. Under the collaboration, Clean Max Enviro Energy Solutions (CleanMax) will supply 4.85 MW of wind-solar hybrid

power to MG Motor's manufacturing facility in Halol. "With this partnership, MG will abate approximately 2 lakh MT of CO2 over 15 years which is equal to planting more than 13 lakh trees," the statement said. The carmaker has been at the forefront of promoting EV adoption in India with the launch of India's first Pure Electric Internet SUV — MG ZS EV, it stated. CleanMax is the first renewable energy company to set up a wind-solar hybrid power park in Gujarat to sell clean energy to private consumers and corporates. It plans to expand to 150 MW by 2022. MG's Halol facility is expected to begin drawing power in February 2022 from CleanMax's hybrid park in Rajkot and will continue to do so for 15 years.

JSW Energy board approves reorganisation of green biz

The board of JSW Energy has approved reorganisation of green (renewable) and grey (thermal) businesses, the company said on Thursday. As a result of this re-organisation, all the existing and upcoming renewable energy businesses will be housed under 'JSW Energy Neo Limited', a wholly-owned subsidiary of the company, JSW Energy said. This is in line with the announcement made by the company on 30th July 2021 stating that the board had approved the evaluation of re-organisation of Green and Grey businesses, it stated. This move will help the company in building and streamlining its renewable portfolio and setting up a holding structure which is efficient for fund-raising and unlocking value for shareholders, it stated. In May 2021, JSW Hydro Energy had issued green bonds of USD 707 million, which was the largest hydro green bond issuance in Asia.



'Diversity in any organisation works only with inclusion'

Diversity in any organisation drives many benefits like innovation and growth but it works only when there is an inclusive culture, Unilever COO Nitin Paranjpe said on Thursday. Diversity works with inclusion, and Unilever wants to be a beacon in this area as "we believe it will be a driver of business growth for us", Paranjpe said in his inaugural keynote address at the CII HR Conclave. "Diversity drives many benefits, drives innovation, drives growth, there are plenty of studies which have documented this. But diversity only works in the presence of inclusive culture. Diversity in the absence of inclusion does not work," he said. Everyone in Unilever's leadership team goes through inclusion training, he noted. "We get coaching in terms of what works and what does not work and what we need to do to create this culture," said Paranjpe. Unilever is committed to the diversity agenda, not just internally in terms of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or disability, but also externally. "We have committed that we will spend 2 billion Euro (annually) with diverse suppliers," he said in his virtual address.

his inaugural keynote address at the CII HR Conclave. "Diversity drives many benefits, drives innovation, drives growth, there are plenty of studies which have documented this. But diversity only works in the presence of inclusive culture. Diversity in the absence of inclusion does not work," he said. Everyone in Unilever's leadership team goes through inclusion training, he noted. "We get coaching in terms of what works and what does not work and what we need to do to create this culture," said Paranjpe. Unilever is committed to the diversity agenda, not just internally in terms of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or disability, but also externally. "We have committed that we will spend 2 billion Euro (annually) with diverse suppliers," he said in his virtual address.

COMMUNITY KITCHEN SCHEME

Centre forms group of food secys to discuss framework

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Affirming the need to set up simple and transparent community kitchens for the needy not covered under PDS, Union Food Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday announced setting up of a group of state food secretaries to deliberate on the framework of a new scheme.

A decision in this regard was taken during a meeting with state food ministers here in the national capital.

The meeting was convened following a direction from the Supreme Court, which directed the Centre to come up with a model community kitchen scheme agreeable to states within three weeks' time.

While announcing setting up of a group of state food secretaries to deliberate on the framework of such scheme, Goyal said, "A community kitchen scheme needs to be prepared -- which is simple, transparent and in the benefit of people." A community kitchen needs to be built on



four pillars of quality, hygiene, reliability and spirit of service, he said and added, "It will help us realize the goal that no one sleeps hungry."

The community kitchen will be of the community, run by the community and for the welfare of the community, an official statement quoted the minister having said in the meeting.

Goyal further said, "We should have empathy towards the poor of the country and should ensure collective resolve to run successful and transparent food programmes

to ensure proper nutrition to children."

The next meeting at the officers level will be held on November 29 to deliberate on the framework proposal.

The apex court direction to the Centre came over a writ petition filed regarding establishing community kitchens across the country, formulation of a requisite scheme to provide food to the needy persons and create a national food grid for persons beyond the scope of the public distribution system (PDS) to fight against hunger and malnutrition.

BIS discusses regulation of toy industry

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-run Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) on Thursday deliberated on significance of regulation in toy sector while highlighting efforts made to set quality standards for toys sold across the country.

Safety aspects and testing of toys were discussed in the webinar organised by the BIS as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' initiative to celebrate 75 years of the country's independence, an official statement said.

That apart, the role of design and play in developing toys, cognitive value of toys in developing learning skills of various age group of children were discussed in the webinar.

Toy manufacturers, industry bodies like FICCI, TAITMA as well as National Institute of Design, testing laboratories among others participated in the discussion.

Demand, vax rate drive positive outlook for corporates: Moody's

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Moody's Investors Service on Thursday said India's rising vaccination rate, low interest rates and higher public spending drive the positive outlook for corporate sector.

Moody's projects India's economic growth will rebound strongly, with GDP expanding 9.3 per cent in the current fiscal ending March 2022, followed by 7.9 per cent in fiscal 2023.

In a report, Moody's said credit fundamentals are favorable for India's companies on a sustained economic recovery and earnings of rated companies will rise on strong consumer demand and high commodity prices.

India's rising vaccination rate, stabilizing consumer confidence, low interest rates and higher public spending underpin positive credit fundamentals for non-financial companies, it said. "India's steady progress on inoculation against



the coronavirus will support a sustained recovery in economic activity. Consumer demand, spending and manufacturing activity are recovering following the easing of pandemic restrictions. These trends, including high commodity prices, will propel significant growth in rated companies' EBITDA over the next 12-18 months," Moody's Analyst Sweta Patodia said.

Growing government spending on infrastructure will support demand for steel and cement. Meanwhile, rising

consumption, India's push for domestic manufacturing and benign funding conditions will support new investments.

However, if new waves of infections were to occur, it could trigger fresh lockdowns and erode consumer sentiment. Such a scenario will dampen economic activity and consumer demand, potentially leading to subdued EBITDA (taxes, depreciation, and amortization) growth of less than 15-20 per cent for Indian companies over the next 12-18 months, Moody's said.

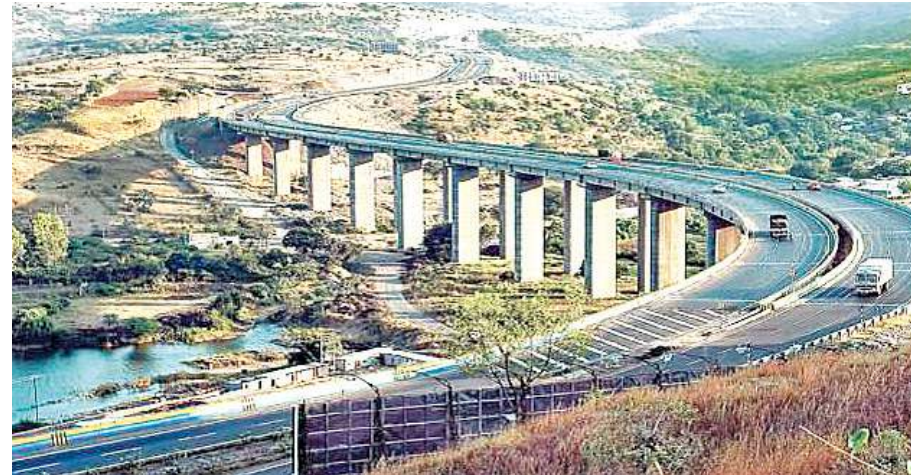
Govt identifies 101 projects under PM Gati Shakti

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has identified 101 projects under the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan to enhance port connectivity with consumption and production centres, union minister Sarbananda Sonowal said on Thursday.

Addressing an event organised by industry body CII virtually, the Ports, Shipping and Waterways minister further said as many as 111 waterways, spread over 24 states in the country, have been declared as national waterways.

"Lowering logistic costs is critical for India. Our government is taking several steps to



strengthen the logistic ecosystem across the country.

"The Ports, Shipping and Waterways ministry has identified 101 projects under the PM Gati Shakti National

Master Plan to enhance port connectivity with consumption and production centres," he said. Sonowal said, the government's infrastructure plans like Sagarmala, Bharatmala project (that aims to lay a grid of highways pan-India), Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC), are at various stages of implementation.

Under the Sagarmala project, the ministry provides financial support to state governments for port infrastructure development and skill development programmes.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi last month launched the PM Gati Shakti national master plan for multi-modal connectivity to



Investment via P-notes hit 43-month high in Oct

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Investments in Indian capital through participatory notes (P-notes) rose to Rs 1.02 lakh crore till October-end, making it the highest level in 43 months.

P-notes are issued by registered FPIs to overseas investors who wish to be a part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly. They, however, need to go through a due diligence process. According to Securities and Exchange Board

of India data, the value of P-note investments in Indian markets -- equity, debt, and hybrid securities -- was at Rs 1,02,553 crore by October end. This was the highest level since March 2018, when P-notes had invested to the tune of Rs 1,06,403 crore.

Abhay Agarwal, Founder and Fund Manager, Piper Serica, a Sebi-registered PMS, said that the overall investment via P notes increased by more than Rs 5,000 crore in October to hit a new high of Rs 1.02 lakh crore.

Govt identifies 101 projects under PM Gati Shakti

reduce logistic costs. The minister said, the Jawaharlal Nehru Port (JNPT) is ready to connect with other Indian ports.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on October 13, had launched the Rs 100 lakh crore national master plan for multi-modal connectivity to develop infrastructure to reduce logistic costs and boost the economy. Sonowal said, the country's maritime sector plays a crucial role in its overall trade and growth.

"Our efforts in the past couple of years have started bringing results... the investment in ports have increased over the last five years," he said.

People who look down upon mass films are fooling themselves: Milap Zaveri



Director Milap Zaveri says he has sensed disdain from a section of audience towards commercial films often dubbed as ‘masala’ entertainers even though every industry in the world ultimately relies on such movies to keep the commerce alive.

Since 2018, Zaveri has helmed three action movies, starting with *Satyameva Jayate*, *Marjaavaan* and his latest, *Satyameva Jayate 2*, which released on Thursday. While the first two projects didn't receive favourable reviews, they minted good money at the box office.

According to the filmmaker, massy films are up lapped by audience, both Indian and international.

“I have seen that condensation in a section of people, but those who look down upon mass films are fooling themselves. This is exactly what India, the world, wants to watch. If you look around, only commercial masala films work. Netflix's *Red Notice*, *6 Underground* are such thunderous hits.

“Marvel (superhero) films too are mass entertainment. They made one *Eternals* that is esoteric and intellectual and it is their weakest box office grosser. So it is not limited to Bollywood, it is everywhere, from streaming platforms to Hollywood, everyone needs these commercial films,” Zaveri told PTI in an interview.

The director recalled that National Award winner Manoj Bajpayee had once said how starring in commercial films like *Baaghi 2* or *Satyameva Jayate* eventually helps him make movies like *Gali Guleiyan* and *Bhonsle*, which are relatively smaller in scale.

The money earned by these big-ticket films, he said, empowers other filmmakers to experiment with content.

“This (massy) cinema can never go away. If we don't make the films we do and get the money rolling in the industry, we won't be able to experiment. Other filmmakers won't get a chance to make something else that they want to. You need commerce to sustain an industry. This year, from *Master* to *Sooryavanshi*, it has been proven that people want to see only this on the big screen,” Zaveri added.

Satyameva Jayate 2 features actor John Abraham in a triple role — playing twin brothers and their father.

The filmmaker said having Abraham play three characters in the film was an organic decision, which not only made sense on paper but also upped the film's commercial quotient by “three times.”

Abraham was originally supposed to be starring in a double role.

“But when I was writing the father's character, I realised his was the strongest role. So I told John that I can't take this to any other actor because it is the best role in the film. He immediately agreed. The amount of bashing critics will give me for two Johns, they will also do for three. But maybe the audience will clap and cheer thrice as much,” he added.

Produced by T-Series and Emmay Entertainment, the film also stars Divya Khosla Kumar.

Varun Dhawan's *Bhediya* to release in theatres on Nov 25

Bollywood star Varun Dhawan-starrer *Bhediya* is set to arrive in cinema halls on November 25 next year, the makers announced on Thursday.

The horror-comedy is directed by Bala helmer Amar Kaushik from a script by Niren Bhatt, best known for penning *Asur* and the long-running TV show *Tarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashma*.

The makers of *Bhediya* unveiled the first look of the film along with the new release date via social media.

“Let's meet on this date next year with #Bhediya Starring @Varun_dvn & @kritisanon, releasing on 25th November, 2022 in cinemas worldwide! #Bhediya-FirstLook,” read the caption of the poster which saw Dhawan in an intense *avatar*.

The film, which commenced shooting in Arunachal Pradesh's Ziro town in March this year, was previously scheduled for a release on April 14, 2022.

Hollywood's premier effects studio Mr X, part of Technicolor Creative Studios, has boarded the project which is touted as “an exquisite visual effects film”. The studio is known for its stellar creature and environment work in the Oscar-nominated film *Love and Monsters* as well as the Emmy-winning series *Vikings*. Talking about this collaboration, Vijan said the team is thrilled to have teamed up with Mr. X for *Bhediya*.

Mr. X has been a pioneer in the industry, having created some of the most spell-binding visual masterpieces of recent movie history. Ever since we conceptualised *Bhediya*, we knew our film needed the expertise of Mr. X to weave that epic scale, Vijan, known for backing films like *Badlapur* and *Hindi Medium* said in a statement.

Director Kaushik described *Bhediya* as a film with awe-inspiring imagery. The makers had earlier released the teaser of the film, which shows a man converting into a wolf, leading to speculations that *Bhediya* is a werewolf film.

Kriti Sanon, Abhishek Banerjee, Deepak Dobriyal and Paalin Kabak also round out the cast of the film.

Bhediya is presented by Jio Studios and Vijan's Maddock Films.



‘There’s a hidden filmmaker in Hrithik’

many actors are, and he looks at a broad perspective of the film, so when you do a 2 hero film with him it's a joy because he's not looking at himself at all he's only strengthening around him

Director Siddharth Anand opened up about working with actor Hrithik Roshan and what makes him the best out there.

During an IFFI 2021 interaction, Sidharth said: “He (Hrithik) is a complete hero. There's nothing else that actually a director can ask for from an actor that Hrithik can't give you. I think you have to actually challenge yourself and come up with something time and again, every hour on the set that you can utilise his potential.”

“Which I think none of us have yet been able to do and it's a challenge for all of us.”

He added: “It's really exciting and motivating to be with him and in one of my earlier interviews I have said that I'd always aspired to become a filmmaker that Hrithik Roshan would do a film with, that I can just work with him or even just bounce off my ideas by him and get his feedback.”

“Because there's a hidden filmmaker in him which not that will directly uplift the film.”

Siddharth feels Hrithik puts himself last which he thinks “is a great joy to be working with someone like that.”


Hrithik Roshan opened up on working with Siddharth again for *Fighter*, he said: “Yes its extremely exciting and more so, because I think coming back on a set where Sid (Siddharth Anand) has seen me be a certain good in *War* which kind of drives me to know that this anxiety that is building, is because the good has already been done, it has to be better.”

He added: “Personally, I think that is my responsibility, because I don't want to disappoint my director who has had the faith in me to cast me in a film like this and its scarier because its very hard to impress him now. Because I have done everything I could have but what more am I going to pull out of my pocket, that's something that I'm going to spend some nights thinking about.”


Touted as India's First ariel action franchise, *Fighter* will see Hrithik collaborating with actress Deepika Padukone on screen for the first time ever.

FUN


ARCHIE




CALVIN AND HOBBS




GARFIELD



REALITY CHECK




SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD

	1	2	3	4	5
6					
7					
8		9		10	11
			12		
13					
14		15	16		18
19					

NANCY



SUDOKU

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Yesterday's solution

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

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.

GINGER MEGGS



ACROSS

6 A maker of horseshoes

8 Wanders

10 Office tables

13 He wrote the play "Romeo and Juliet"

14 Gets closer to

17 Go by bike

19 Somewhere to go out to for a meal

9 Manufacturer

11 The other side in a war

12 Something left after a fire

15 As well

16 Male deer

17 Be concerned

18 Metal containers for drink, food

DOWN

1 This bites a dog


2 Divisions in a play

3 Second-hand

4 Comes first in a race

5 Spoke very quietly

7 People in jail



SOLUTION

L	E	T	T	E	R	S		
K	I	S	S					
A	U	C	T	I	O	N		
W	E	E	B	W	D			
A	M	E	T	O	R	S		
I	P	P	V	I	T			
T	U	R	T	L	E			
R	O	T						
R	U	D	E					

SCORCHING THE RACING TRACK



K RAMYA SREE

Although racing is always considered a man's sport, why should boys have all the fun? Gender roles are blurring and soon may become obsolete. A man can cook, and a woman can ride a bike. In the grander scheme of things, there still is a lot of work to do. But the change has already begun.

Defying all odds is Lani Zena Fernandez, who became the only woman racer in the 18 finalists of the Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup.

A psychologist working as a part-time social media analyst and a full-time racer, Lani wears a lot of helmets. Starting with go-karting at the age of 5, the 24-year-old has dabbled in radio jockeying, painting, and calligraphy before taking up motorcycle racing as a full-time passion. It took her 15 years to realise her true

calling. She has been a regular on the track ever since. Hailing from Pondicherry, Lani loves to take her motorcycles on long rides. Ahead of the race, *The Pioneer* got in touch with Lani, who spoke at length about her passions and how it is to be the only woman on the racing ground, competing over a dozen men and more.

"A racer is what I always wanted to be since I was five years old." This statement by Lani proves her passion for racing and bikes. "I got into racing in my final year of under-graduation, when I was 21, through a one-make championship, and things started spicing up after my third race which was my first podium finish. It gave me the much-needed confidence and made me believe in myself. I was kind of yearning for an opportunity. So, after the final year of my under-graduation, I took up racing quite seriously. I was also pursuing my masters at the same time, so once I completed my masters, I moved to Chennai to take up racing full time under the guidance of Mr. Hanif, who had trained me and made me realise my potential," shares the young

racer.

Her journey, she mentions, is no less than a roller coaster ride, with ups, downs, adrenaline rushes, a lot of waiting, and peak moments, which she believes makes life more interesting and prepares one for the better. "I've come a long way from where I started as a racer and as a person as well. I've grown together with the sport and that's something I'm happy and proud about, however, there's a long way to go. And opportunities like Royal Enfield Continental GT Cup has added to the encouragement," adds Lani, whose ultimate goal is to win the World Racing Championship.

Right now, the young racer is focussing on preparing herself for the Asian Championships as a racer.

But is it to race with 19 other men on the track? She answers, "I have raced before with the boys and competed at the top, so this isn't new but it's exciting. The competition is tough and I enjoy it as it certainly enhances my skills and makes me learn a lot. The tougher it gets, the sweeter are the rewards."

The racer, who believes there's something that you can learn from everyone, takes inspiration from a lot of people in her day-to-day life which got her here. "If I've to look up to someone as an idol that'd be Marc

Marquez and Ayrton Senna," says she on who inspires her the most.

The racer's journey is that now many people take inspiration from her in Pondicherry, her native city. "Pondicherry is a small town, not many had an exposure about racing, but now people can recognise the sport and a lot of people have approached me and enquired about joining racing. The most amazing part is that now we have a few riders from Pondicherry as well, and I see a lot of young girls who've got into racing which makes me happy to see the sport growing. I hope to inspire and guide a lot more," concludes Lani.



Mini-stroke: What should we do

Stroke is one of the most common disorders these days, which can affect anyone of any age causing sudden death and permanent disability.

Dr. Murali Chekuri — Consultant Neurology, Manipal Hospitals, Vijayawada, tells *The Pioneer*, blockage or rupture of blood vessels in the brain tissue results in stroke. "When brain tissues get deprived of oxygen and nutrients, it leads to brain death. Around two million neurons are lost following a stroke. This kind of emergency calls for immediate attention and quick treatment in order to prevent further complications," shares the doc.

Often referred to as a mini-stroke, transient ischemic attack (TIA) is a low-level interruption of blood supply in a part of the brain, spinal cord, or retina lasting for an hour or less. This does not harm the brain cells or cause permanent disability but is an early warning of an impending full-blown stroke in the future. And a person who has a TIA is 9.5 times more likely to have a stroke, he says.

The American Stroke Association has been consistently striving to create awareness and help prevent stroke among people.

Over the years, they came up with FAST, an acronym coined to detect stroke and treat it immediately. It refers to:

- Face: To check the smile of a person if it is even or drooping.
- Arms: To see if there is weakness or numbness in the arms where a person cannot move the arms or it drops.

- Speech: To detect slurred speech or difficulty in speaking.
 - Time: To contact a hospital or medical assistance immediately.
- Symptoms of TIA are very similar to that of a regular stroke. In addition to FAST, there are other symptoms that indicate an impending TIA. These are:
- Blurred vision or blindness in one or both the eyes.
 - Loss of balance of the body.

- Paralysis on one side of the body.
 - Sudden headache or dizziness, along with nausea or altered consciousness.
- There are also a few risk factors that lead to stroke. These risk factors are directly related to the imbalance in blood flow where the chances of a narrowing or rupturing of blood vessels are high.
- It happens because of:**
- Uncontrolled hypertension,

especially with a stressful lifestyle.

- Diabetes at an uncontrolled state.
 - Smoking.
 - Overweight or obesity due to various reasons.
 - Heavy consumption of alcohol.
 - Cardiovascular complications like heart failure, cardiac arrest, and heart infections.
 - Family history of stroke always increases the probability; men are prone to inherit it more than women.
 - Imbalance in hormones due to contraceptives, and hormone therapies, among others.
- Hence, this chronic dysfunction can be addressed in various ways. There is a different methodology that specialists and interventional radiologists frequently take recourse to in order to decrease the danger of strokes or transient ischemic assaults.

The side-effects of a mini-stroke can endure as momentarily as one moment. By definition, mini-strokes keep going for less than 24 hours. Lifestyle changes can prove to be important to decrease the danger of future mini-strokes or strokes. Prescriptions and other clinical intercessions may not be sufficient.

- Lifestyle changes include:**
- Working out.
 - Maintaining an ideal body weight.
 - Eating more organic or healthy food.
 - Decreasing the intake of sugar and sugar-based food sources.
 - Getting sufficient rest.
 - Handling pressure and stress in the right way.
 - Working towards controlling other ailments, including diabetes, hypertension, and elevated cholesterol.



Indian fans have been my loudest supporters: AP Dhillon

Indo-Canadian singing sensation Amritpal Singh Dhillon, aka AP Dhillon is here in India to make your week hip and happening. The singer, who recently performed in Gurgaon, has reached the city for a special performance for the Hyderabadis.

Dhillon will be performing live in Hyderabad tonight at Prism Club, where fans will witness the singing prowess of AP Dhillon as he shares the stage along with his fellow artists Gurinder Gill, G Minxr and Shinda Kahlon at BoAt presents Supermoon ft AP Dhillon — The Takeover Tour.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, AP Dhillon says he was humbled as he returned to India to perform live for his fans for the first time. "Indian fans across the country and the world have been my loudest supporters and have helped our music find its rightful place on a global stage. It is now time for the fans to finally experience the music live and I can't wait to get there," he shares.



Promoting ancient dance forms

Ahe Parampara Foundation in collaboration with LifeCykul Digital Platform on Thursday announced the launch of Parampara Dance League, which will feature 2 leagues, Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam. It is a league where the ancient art of "Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam" meets on an ultra-modern platform LifeCykul. The competition will take place on LifeCykul Digital Platform.

The Parampara Dance league is open for participation now, and the first round

jury results will be announced on December 17. The grand finale will be a physical event and will be held at Sri Seetha Rama Chandra Swamy Temple, Ammapalli, during the third week of January 2022. The competition will carry prize money from Rs 10,000 to Rs 50,000 and will be given away during the physical event.

Parampara Dance League will be an annual event starting from this year, with an aim to promote Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam worldwide. This competition allows people all over the world to experience this beautiful traditional art form in all its

glory, to encourage dancers to take it as a profession and keep the art alive for future generations.

Making the announcement the creators of Parampara Dance League, Shashi Reddy and Dr Srinagi B Rao, says, "This league will provide a near real-time stage for artists of all ages and performance levels. What we like is to empower the artists, to not only engage in this art, but also have interactions to help grow the art through conversations, idea exchanges, and positive reinforcements to empower the entire community of Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam artists."



Srikanth isn't like any conventional villain in *Akhanda*

K RAMYA SREE

Nandamuri Balakrishna, director Boyapati Sreenu's outing *Akhanda* is gearing up for a grand release on December 2, and Balayya Babu's fans can't wait to watch their hero on big screens as the actor will be seen as an aghora in this film, whose music is scored by SS Thaman. This fantasy action film will see Srikanth playing an interesting role. Playing a villain is no new to actor Srikanth. The actor who plays an antagonist in this film said he donned a villain's hat early in his career and tasted success. "In my entire career, I played many charac-

ters. Boyapati once told me not to take up any role. He asked me to be choosy. During *Sarainodu*, in which I was given a soft character, Boyapati asked me if I would play a villain. I said 'I came from there, so why not'. After many years, he approached me with *Akhanda*. Villains in Boyapati films are given strong characters," said Srikanth on how he came on board this project. The actor said he received several calls praising the actor's look when the first look poster was released. The actor is confident that the audience will like his appearance. He says the audience will see him in a new avatar. The *Pellam Chebite* Vinali star earlier

shared screen space with Balakrishna in *Sriramarajyam*. He said, "People saw me as Lakshmana in *Sriramarajyam*. In *Akhanda*, people will see me as Ravana. Balakrishna *garu* insisted my character remained powerful. While we were on sets, the actor always told me that I would be flooded with offers after the release of *Akhanda*, but he wanted me to be choosy about what I pick." Srikanth, known for family dramas, says he will be giving a subtle performance as a villain in *Akhanda*, unlike a conventional villain. About the movie, Srikanth says, "Industry and audience have certain expectations when

Boyapati and Balakrishna are coming together. This film will not disappoint them. Sentiment plays a major role in this film. I can say *Akhanda* is a high voltage movie, which educates people on how to behave with nature." Having played multiple roles, donning hero's hat is what Srikanth likes the most. "If you want to make a movie like this, it has to be Boyapati *garu*. When I was listening to the story, I could imagine how the film is going to be on screens. Balakrishna and I worked hard for nine days in the mining area for a fight. Having said that, I think I'm better as a hero," laughs the actor.

Ghani out of Christmas race?

This Christmas will see many big releases including Allu Arjun's *Pushpa*. In the race is Varun Tej's *Ghani* for which the actor underwent major physical transformation. The makers of the film earlier announced that the film will be released on December 24. However, with Nani's *Shyam Singha Roy* also slated for the release on the same date, we hear that *Ghani* is opting to be out of the Christmas race. However, no official

confirmation regarding the same has been made. Rumours are that the makers locked plan to release the film in March 2022. *Ghani* starring Saiee Manjrekar is directed by debutant Kiran Korrapati. Jagapathi Babu, Suniel Shetty, Upendra, Naveen Chandra, Nadiya, Naresh, Tanikella Bharani will don important roles in the film whose music is scored by Thaman.



RRR run time likely to cross 3 hours

With every passing week, expectations on *RRR* is on the rise among the audience, as it is one of the highly-anticipated films of Indian cinema. SS Rajamouli's directorial venture

RRR starring Young Tiger Jr NTR and Ram Charan will hit big screens on January 7. We have earlier reported that the makers of the film locked the run time less than 3 hours. But the latest

reports suggest that the makers have locked 3 hours 7 minutes runtime for now. *RRR*, which is being bankrolled by DVV Danayya, has Alia Bhatt, Ajay Devgn, Shriya Saran playing key roles.

Sonu Sood comes to aid Shiva Shankar master

Popular dancer-choreographer Shiva Shankar master is undergoing treatment for Covid and his condition is said to be critical. The actor's son reached out for financial aid to support his ailing father. Responding to the request, actor and philanthropist Sonu Sood promised to bear the expenses of the 72-year-old's treatment. An appeal for help was tweeted by Vamsi Kaka, a PR consultant for the south film industry, who wrote: "Noted choreographer Shivashankar Master affected with COVID-19 and now in



critical condition. Due to expensive treatment the family is unable to pay the bills. Please help." He included the contact details for K Sivasankar's son Ajay Krishna. A response came from Sonu Sood a few hours later: "I am already in touch with the family. Will try my best to save his life." K Sivasankar is noted for his work in the south

film industry. His choreographing credits include films like Magadheera, for which he won the National Award for Best Choreography, *Vishwa Thulasi*, *Thiruda Thirudi* and the first *Baahubali* film. Sivasankar Master has also appeared in several films as an actor including *Varalaru* which he both acted in and choreographed.

Republic's credit goes to Sai Tej: Deva Katta

Republic, which will see Sai Tej as an Army officer will be streaming on Zee 5 from today. The film, a cult classic political drama written and directed by Deva Katta, and produced by JB Entertainments and Zee Studios, also stars Aishwarya Rajesh, Jagapathi Babu and Ramya Krishna in key roles. The film explores the role of government officials, the political executive, and the people in a democratic system. Ahead of its streaming, director Deva Katta at an event thanked ZEE5 for promoting the movie in a big way. The director, who created an identity for himself with *Prasthanam* film, told the media, "After *Prasthanam*, I was confused about my next.

I made *Republic* to voice our opinions. Tej and I were intent on respecting the audience. And we received respect in return. We are very proud. *Rudra Veena* is a landmark film in Chiranjeevi *garu*'s career. I want *Republic* to attain that status. I comprehensively analysed the political system to do the movie. My team and I have done a detailed analysis of *Republic* to help the audience understand every scene, dialogue and shot. On ZEE5, our movie will stream as two versions. One is just the movie. The other one will be with the director's commentary. If you select the second option, you will listen to our voice." Talking about Sai Tej, Deva Katta said, "I happened to narrate a story to Tej after the release

of *Supreme*. It was a mass masala flick. Another story was in the backdrop of sports. He didn't do it because he was already doing *Winner* by then. He is like my brother. He is an emotional and honest person. Before I narrated *Republic*, I told Tej that we are not living in a real democracy. I was apprehensive about whether he will accept the climax. But after listening to it, he asked me not to change the climax. When actors were avoiding me after I delivered flops, he was stubborn about working with me. When I used to work on the dialogues of *Baahubali*, Tej would spend time with me at my place. A lot of credit for *Republic* goes to him."

