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TALIBAN: SANCTIONS AND RECOGNITION

MONEY 8

COOKING GAS PRICE MAY BE HIKED NEXT WEEK; FUEL RATES UP AGAIN

SPORTS 11

ENGLAND CRUSH BANGLADESH BY EIGHT WICKETS

VIJAYAWADA, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2021; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



CHIRANJEEVI'S
BHOLAA SHANKAR
ON A ROLL

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NIA RAIDS IN SEVEN DISTRICTS OVER JEI TERROR FUNDING CASE IN J&K

The NIA on Wednesday conducted searches at 17 locations in seven districts of Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the Jamaat-e-Islami terror funding case, an official of the agency said. The raids were carried out in Anantnag, Kulgam, Ganderbal, Bandipora and Budgam districts in the Kashmir division and Kishtwar and Jammu districts in the Jammu division, a spokesperson of the NIA said. "Searches conducted today included the premises of office bearers and members of the JeI and various incriminating documents and electronic devices were seized," the NIA said.

CENTRE LAUNCHES KRISHI UDAN 2.0 TO BOOST TRANSPORT OF AGRI-PRODUCTS

The Ministry of Civil Aviation on Wednesday launched Krishi Udan 2.0 scheme under which cargo-related infrastructure will be built in airports of north-east, hilly and tribal regions to assist farmers in transporting agriculture products. The scheme, launched by the Centre in September 2020, waived airport charges such as parking charges and terminal navigational landing charges on select Indian airports for air cargo operators if the agricultural cargo is over 50 percent of the total chargeable weight carried. Full waiver would be granted at select airports even if the cargo is less than 50 per cent.

GOVT ASKS MINISTRIES, DEPARTMENTS TO CLEAR AI DUES, BUY TICKETS IN CASH

The Centre on Wednesday asked Ministries and departments to clear dues of debt-laden Air India immediately and henceforth purchase tickets only in cash. The government earlier this month decided to sell Air India to Talace Pvt Ltd, a unit of the Tata group, for Rs 18,000 crore. The Department of Expenditure, under the Finance Ministry, in a 2009 order, had said that in cases of air travel (both domestic and international), including LTC where the Government of India bears the cost of air passage, the officials may travel only by Air India.

INDIA SUCCESSFULLY TEST FIRES AGNI-5 MISSILE FROM ODISHA COAST

India successfully test fired a surface-to-surface ballistic missile, Agni-5, from APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast here on Wednesday, according to a defence statement. The missile, which uses a three-stage solid fuelled engine, is capable of striking targets at ranges up to 5,000 kilometres with a very high degree of accuracy, they said. The successful test of Agni-5 is in line with India's stated policy to have credible minimum deterrence that underpins the commitment to No First Use, the statement said. The missile launching was carried out approximately at 7.50 pm.

SUPREME COURT FORMS PEGASUS PROBE PANEL

'State can't get free pass...'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Supreme Court judge Justice Raju Varadarajulu Raveendran, who has been entrusted with the task to oversee probe into alleged use of Pegasus spyware for surveillance of various people, has been part of benches which heard major cases such as row over quota for OBC in central universities, the 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts and the Krishna-Godavari basin dispute over natural gas.

A bench headed by CJI NV Ramana appointed a three-member panel of cyber experts to probe the allegations and gave the task of monitoring the inquiry into the politically sensitive case to Justice Raveendran.

"Justice R V Raveendran, former Judge, Supreme Court of India will oversee the functioning of the Committee with respect to the methodology to be adopted, procedure to be followed, enquiry and investigation that is carried out and preparation of the report," the

CJI said in the order on pleas seeking independent probe into the allegations of snooping on Indian citizens by use of Israeli firm NSO's spyware Pegasus.

Justice Raveendran was born on October 15, 1946 and enrolled as an advocate in March, 1968.

He was appointed as a permanent Judge of the Karnataka High Court on February 22, 1993 and was appointed as Chief Justice of Madhya Pradesh High Court on July 8, 2004.

He was appointed Judge of the Supreme Court on September 9, 2005 and retired on October 15, 2011.

Justice Raveendran also headed the News Broadcasting Standards Authority (NBSA) as its chairperson in 2013.

People have reasonable expectation of privacy, says SC

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said that people live in the era of "information revolution" where their entire lives are stored in the cloud or in a digital dossier and members of a civilized democratic society have a reasonable expectation of privacy.

The apex court, which appointed a three-member expert panel to probe the alleged use of Israeli spyware Pegasus for surveillance of certain people in India, said it must be recognised that while technology is a useful tool for improving lives of people, it can also be used to breach that "sacred private space" of a person.

A bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana said that every citizen of the country ought to be protected against violations of privacy and it is this expectation which "enables us to exercise our choices, liberties, and freedom". "The right to privacy is directly infringed when there is surveillance or spying done on an individual, either by the State or by any external agency," said the bench, also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli.



Vijayasai dubs Naidu a 'terrorist'

■ Says 'terror outfit' TDP out to destabilise Jagan govt

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP National General Secretary and leader of its Parliamentary Party V Vijayasai Reddy has dubbed opposition leader N Chandrababu Naidu a 'terrorist' and alleged that the Telugu Desam Party, a 'terrorist organisation', was out to destabilise the Jaganmohan Reddy government in Andhra Pradesh.

As soon as Chandrababu Naidu wound up his Delhi tour, Vijayasai Reddy came down heavily on the TDP chief for urging the President to invoke Article 356 and impose President's rule in Andhra Pradesh on the specious ground that the law and order situation had collapsed, turning the state into dangerous zone.

Speaking to media persons at Andhra Bhawan in New Delhi on Wednesday, the Member of Parliament called Naidu "the most selfish leader in India" and maintained that the TDP chief had visited the national capital only to protect his self interests and not

with the interests of the state in his mind.

Terming TDP leaders as 'anti-social elements', the MP said Chandrababu Naidu and Nara Lokesh had been conspiring to destabilize the government. He said that Naidu had come to Delhi only to mitigate the problems that had cropped up due to the mistakes committed by him. Naidu had visited Delhi many times previously, including when he backstabbed NT Rama Rao and when he was caught in 'vote for note case', only to protect his personal interests.

Vijayasai Reddy said Naidu had been justifying the filthy and foul comments of leaders and spokespersons of TDP against Chief Minister Y S Jaganmohan Reddy, instead of condemning

them. The MP reminded that TDP had lost in all the elections since 2019, including the Assembly elections, local polls, MPTC, ZPTC elections and Municipal Corporation elections, which only reflected that TDP had lost the sympathy and confidence of the people of the state.

Vijayasai reminded that founder of TDP party N T Rama Rao had always opposed invoking Article 356. Naidu, by urging the President to invoke Article 356, had shown that he had no principles and pledged self-respect for his personal interests. He asked Naidu to spell out if he had informed the President of the filthy language used by TDP leaders against the Chief Minister and his 36-hour deeksha supporting those remarks.



State Cabinet to meet today

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The AP state cabinet meeting is scheduled to be held on Thursday. The Cabinet is expected to discuss several important matters and give its nod to proposals for legislative changes.

According to sources in the government, the cabinet is likely to give the green light to certain amendments proposed to the Endowments Act and the Cinematography Act.

It is also learnt the cabinet will ratify the state government's decision to amend laws so as to legitimise the appointment of special invitees to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Board. The Jumbo TTD Board, recently announced by the government, has run into legal hurdles with some people approaching the High Court and filing cases concerning the appointment of special invitees and the extent of their rights.

The government intends to amend the state Cinematography Act so that movie tickets could be sold online by a government agency.

The cabinet is also likely to discuss holding sessions of the state legislature sometime next month.

CBI files charge sheet against 4 persons in Viveka murder case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has filed a charge sheet against four persons in connection with the alleged murder of former Andhra Pradesh minister YS Vivekananda Reddy, officials said on Wednesday.

Reddy (68), who is the younger brother of former Andhra Pradesh chief minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy and uncle of sitting CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, was found dead at his residence in Kadappa on March 15, 2019.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a charge sheet against T Gangi Reddy, Yadati Sunil Yadav, Gajjala Umashankar Reddy and Shaik Dasthagiri before the judicial mag-



istrate of Pulivendula in Kadappa district of the state, the officials said.

"CBI had registered a case on July 9, 2020, on the orders of Hon'ble High Court of Andhra Pradesh and taken over the investigation of Cr. No. 84/2019, earlier registered at Police Station

CBI had registered a case on July 9, 2020, on the orders of Hon'ble High Court of Andhra Pradesh and taken over the investigation of Cr. No. 84/2019

Pulivendula, Kadappa (Andhra Pradesh)," CBI Spokesperson RC Joshi said.

During investigation, the CBI had arrested two of the four persons during August and September, and they are presently in judicial custody, he said, adding that the others are on bail.

"Further investigation in the case is continuing," Joshi said.

No question of alliance with TDP, says BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid reports of TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu exploring the possibility of an alliance with the BJP, the ruling party at the Centre on Wednesday said there is no question of alliance with the Andhra Pradesh based party, and that the state needs to get rid of both regional parties.

The BJP also launched a scathing attack on YSR Congress over alleged abduction of its leader, saying that the ruling party in Andhra Pradesh has been threatening people to ensure its victory in Badvel assembly bypoll.

Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, BJP leader G V L Narasimha Rao and

its national secretary and co-incharge of Andhra Pradesh, Sunil Deodhar said a party leader was abducted and forcefully inducted into the YSR Congress ahead of the assembly bypoll.

"This time, the YSR Congress leaders are following the Bengal model and threatening people along with government employees during the election campaign that if they do not vote for YSR Congress, they will not get the benefits of government schemes," Deodhar alleged.

Due to the corrupt government of Jaganmohan Reddy, the atmosphere in the state is against the government, he said.



OMBUDSMAN ROW SC tells Azhar, HCA Secretary to jointly sign cheques

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Wednesday directed former India skipper Mohd Azharuddin, who is the President of the Hyderabad Cricket Association, and its secretary to jointly sign cheques to ensure that the day-to-day functioning of HCA is not hampered for the time being.

Azharuddin and HCA secretary R Vijayanand and the factions led by them are opposed to each other over the appointment of former apex court judge Justice Deepak Verma as the ombudsman of the cricket body.

Andhra Pradesh is narcotics hub of India: Pawan Kalyan Page-3

YSRCP focus is on improved vote majority

SNV SUDHIR ■ VIJAYAWADA

It is curtains after almost a month-long high-octane campaigning by political parties for the bye-election to the Badvel Assembly segment that comes under the Kadapa district. The by-poll is slated to be held on October 30. As per the guidelines issued by the Election

Commission of India (ECI), campaigning for the bypoll concluded by 5-00 pm on Wednesday.

The main opposition party TDP and the Jana Sena stayed away from the by-poll. Although the Congress candidate and a few independents are in the fray, the main electoral battle is between YSRCP and BJP.

The by-poll to Badvel was necessitated by the sudden demise of sit-

ting MLA from the ruling YSRCP Dr Gunthoti Venkata Subbaiah in March.

Top leaders of the ruling YSRCP and the BJP took part in the campaigning. Noticeably, Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan stayed away. He did not canvass for ally BJP's candidate who is in the fray.

Pawan Kalyan had announced that his party would not field a can-

didate in Badvel by-poll and expressed solidarity with the wife of the deceased MLA, fielded by YSRCP. However, it was expected that Pawan Kalyan would campaign for the BJP candidate. BJP leaders claimed that Jana Sena workers had supported their candidate on the ground.

Rs 2,868.6-cr tourism projects in AP in 5 years

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a boost to the efforts of the state government to make Andhra Pradesh the best tourist destination, several companies are planning to make investments totaling Rs 2868.6 crore on various tourism projects in the state.

With at least Rs 250 crore investments on each project, there is potential to provide employment to 48,000 people in all. Further, 1,564 new rooms for tourists will be made available through these projects.

Several tourism-related projects, including seven star resorts by popular hospitality groups like Oberoi Hotels and Hyatt are lined up to be established in Andhra Pradesh. Details of these projects were elaborately discussed at the State Investment Promotion



Board (SIPB) meeting held on Wednesday. Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, who chaired the SIPB meeting, directed the officials to ensure that Andhra

Pradesh would become the prime destination in the tourism sector. During the meeting, held at the camp office here, the Chief Minister directed the authorities

that tourism projects should attract international tourists and said state-of-the-art facilities should be made available for them. He instructed the officials to complete the projects in time. The availability of modern facilities would help improve tourism, he said. Footfall of tourists from other countries would increase and people dependent directly or indirectly on the tourism sector would get better opportunities. The Chief Minister instructed the officials to focus on bringing London-I-type project in Visakhapatnam.

The companies interested in making investments in the state's tourism projects have stated that they would complete all the projects in five years.

TODAY
ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Ashwin & Krishna Paksha
Panchangam
Tithi : Sapthami 12:48
Nakshatram : Purnavasu 09:41
Time to Avoid : Time to Avoid (Bad time to start any important work)
Rahukalam : 1:25 pm - 2:51 pm
Yamagandam : 6:16 am - 7:42 am
Varjyam : 6:20 pm - 8:04 pm
Gulika : 9:08 am - 10:33 am
Good Time : (to start any important work)
Amritakalam : 7:02 am - 8:48 am
Abhijit Muhurtham : 11:36 am - 12:22 pm

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER
Forecast: Partly cloudy
Temp: 33/25
Humidity: 64%
Sunrise: 6:12 am
Sunset: 05:46 pm
Current Weather Conditions
Updated OCTOBER 27, 2021 5:00 PM

KCR, Jagan on a collision course

Recent events indicate possibility of a fresh round of hostility between CMs of Telugu States

SNCN ACHARYULU
HYDERABAD

Are the Chief Ministers of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh - K Chandrasekhar Rao and YS Jaganmohan Reddy respectively - on a collision course? Some recent political incidents indicate this, the most visible being YSRCP leaders joining the padayatra undertaken by Jagan's sister and YSR Telangana Party chief YS Sharmila.

Also on the list of incidents is KCR stating that some people in Andhra Pradesh have been requesting him to launch a unit of the TRS in that State and that the number of requests has increased after the Telangana government introduced the Dalit Bandhu scheme.

Incidentally, both the TRS and YSRCP have their official media houses. While the TRS media criticises the Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, the YSRCP media finds faults with the decisions and actions of KCRD. However, this criticism is never direct, but attrib-



uted to the people of either State.

It's a fact that Jagan initially was against the idea of his sister launching a political party in Telangana. However, Sharmila went against her brother's wishes and launched the YSRTP, leading to some uncomfortable moments between the siblings.

It's believed that over the months since the launch of the YSRTP, Jagan's anger has evaporated.

The fact that TTD Chairman and a key YSRCP leader YV Subba Reddy, as well as YSRCP MLA Alla Ramakrishna Reddy, who is considered very close to Jagan, met Sharmila during her padayatra, shows that the AP Chief Minister has gradually accepted his sister's decision to launch her own political party.

It may be mentioned here that the two Telugu States are involved in a bitter dispute

over sharing of water, and the Chief Ministers have criticised each other over their respective stand over irrigations projects. In this backdrop, YSRCP leaders meeting Sharmila has angered the TRS leadership. YSRCP leaders try to downplay YV Subba Reddy and Ramakrishna Reddy meeting Sharmila by saying that the former is a relative of the YS family and the latter a close associate and their meeting

was nothing but a courtesy call.

However, some TRS leaders see Jagan's hand behind Sharmila launching her own political party in Telangana.

Keeping this in view, KCR saying that he has been receiving requests to launch a unit of the TRS in Andhra Pradesh is being seen as a move to keep Jagan in check. It may be recalled that during the GHMC elections, TRS working president KT Rama Rao had said that the party is contemplating extending to AP and also changing the name of Telangana Rashtra Samithi as Telugu Rashtrala Samithi.

Reacting to KCR's statement on the possibility of launching the TRS in AP, Anil Kumar Yadav, the Irrigation Minister of Andhra Pradesh said that the YSRCP has no objection if this happens. Regarding welfare schemes, he said that the YSRCP government is implementing more schemes than the Telangana government. He also said that there was no need to implement Telangana government schemes in AP.

Will always support those who serve poor, says MEIL director

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Limited (MEIL) is at the forefront of providing much-needed assistance to ensure better medical services in rural areas, company director P Sudha Reddy has claimed. She said that MEIL is conducting various activities across the country. Sudha Reddy inaugurated the ventilators along with the dialysis unit set up at the Tamma Vinod Reddy's Sruthi Hospital in Pamaru, with financial support from MEIL, on Wednesday.

She visited the wards in the hospital and enquired about medical services. Speaking on the occasion, Sudha Reddy said that MEIL will always support those who serve the poor. MEIL spokesperson Kommareddy Bapireddy said



the medical profession is a gift given by God. "Physicians should treat poor families with moral values," he advised. Sruthi Hospital Managing Director Sruthi said that with the newly opened dialysis unit, patients would be treated under the Arogyasri

scheme. Dialysis services were launched three years after the hospital opened. She said their hospital launches new services every year on the occasion of the anniversary. Sudha Reddy was felicitated by the hospital management on the occasion.

Rs 2,868.6-cr tourism...

Continued from Page

Oberoi Hotels will set up resorts in Visakhapatnam, Tirupati, Gandikota, Horsley Hills, Pichukalanka in the name of Oberoi Vilas and the Hyatt group will start a star hotel and convention center at Shilpamam in Visakhapatnam.

Another hotel and service apartment will come up in Visakhapatnam named after Taj Varun Beach. Tunnel Aquarium and Sky Tower construction would come up in Visakhapatnam and Hyatt Palace Hotel in Vijayawada. Spiritual Tourism Center will be set up under the auspices of ISKCON Charities at Ganaganagiri Lakshminarasimhaswamy Temple at Penugonda in Anantapur district.

Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath, Tourism Minister Muttamsetti Srinivasa Rao, Agriculture Minister Kurasala Kannababu, Labour and Employment Minister Gummanuru Jayaram, Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma, Industries Special Chief Secretary Karikala Valaven, Tourism and Cultural Special Chief Secretary Rajat Bhargav, GAD Special Chief Secretary K Praveen Kumar and other senior officials were present.

AP housing...

Continued from Page

In the first phase, it would complete the construction of 15.60 sites by the end of December this year. The Central Government had sanctioned 1.12 crore houses under CMAY and Andhra Pradesh's share was 20 lakh houses in the scheme, Jain detailed.

The boom in housing activity was creating employment opportunities in society. All the government officers should work in a coordinated fashion to complete the task as per the government priority, he directed. He said that basic infrastructure facilities at the layouts could be created under the MGN-REGS in the rural and semi urban areas to help the beneficiaries.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹223
Without Skin	₹243
Broiler at Farm	₹121

EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	397
HYDERABAD	382
VISAKHAPATNAM	387
RETAIL PRICE	₹3.97

HC notice to Ramdev over 'misinformation' against allopathy

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Wednesday issued summons to Ramdev on a lawsuit by several doctors' associations for allegedly spreading misinformation against allopathy amid the COVID-19 pandemic, saying that the plea was not frivolous and a case for its institution was "definitely" made out.

Justice C Hari Shankar granted four weeks to Ramdev to file his response to the suit. The judge clarified that he was "not expressing any opinion" on the merits of the allegations in the plaint against the Yoga Guru and the issue of grant of any relief, interim or otherwise, shall be looked into subsequently.

"I have seen the video clips (of Ramdev). From the perusal of the video clips, your client is scorning the allopathic treatment protocol. He has literally gone to scorn at the prescription of steroids, people going to hospitals. From the perusal of the clips, there is definitely a case for the institution of the suit. They (plaintiffs) may have nothing for an injunction but the case is not frivolous," the judge told senior counsel Rajiv Nayar, appearing for Ramdev.

The senior lawyer said that while he had no objections to the issuance of summons in the matter, he opposed the allegations made in the case. "There are three parts to the suit - Coronal, defamation, and hesitancy against vaccination. The court may restrict notice to only defamation," Nayar urged the court.

People have reasonable expectation...

Continued from Page

"We live in the era of information revolution, where the entire lives of individuals are stored in the cloud or in a digital dossier. We must recognize that while technology is a useful tool for improving the lives of the people, at the same time, it can also be used to breach that sacred private space of an individual," the bench said in its 46-page order passed on a batch of pleas seeking independent probe into the alleged Pegasus snooping matter.

It said that privacy is not the "singular concern" of journalists or social activists. The bench said although declared to be inalienable, the right to privacy cannot be said to be absolute as the Constitution does not provide for such a right without reasonable restrictions.

"As with all the other fundamental rights, this court therefore must recognize that certain limitations exist when it comes to the right to privacy as well. However, any restrictions imposed must necessarily pass Constitutional scrutiny," it said. The apex court said it is cognizant of the State's interest to ensure that life and liberty is preserved and must balance the same.

It noted that in today's world, information gathered by the intelligence agencies through surveillance is essential for the fight against violence and terror. "To access this information, a need may arise to interfere with the right to privacy of an individual, provided it is carried out only when it is absolutely necessary for protecting national security/interest and is proportional. The considerations for usage of such alleged technology, ought to be evidence based," it said.

"In a democratic country governed by the rule of law, indiscriminate spying on individuals cannot be allowed except with sufficient statutory safeguards, by following the procedure established by law under the Constitution," the bench said. The pleas seeking independent probe are related to reports of alleged snooping by government agencies on eminent citizens, politicians and scribes by using Israeli firm NSO's spyware Pegasus.

'State can't get free pass...'

Continued from Page 1

He has been assigned many important roles post-retirement. Justice Raveendran was also part of Justice R M Lodha committee, which had recommended a slew of structural reforms in the Board of Control for Cricket in India.

The apex court in 2018 had directed the National Investigation Agency to probe a case of conversion and marriage of a Hindu woman to a Muslim man in Kerala under the supervision of Justice Raveendran. He has been part of benches which heard several high-profile cases like the OBC reservation in central universities, 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts case, and the Krishna-Godavari basin dispute over natural gas.

Justice Raveendran had recused from a bench, headed by the then CJI K G Balakrishnan, hearing the gas supply dispute between Reliance Natural Resources (RNRL) and Reliance Industries (RIL).

"...till these matters are finally heard by this Court, and with the consent of the parties, we deem it appropriate to direct both the President and the Secretary of the Hyderabad Cricket Association to jointly sign the cheques so that the day-to-day functioning of the Association is not hampered for the time being," the bench ordered. Earlier, the top court had expressed strong displeasure over the functioning of faction-ridden HCA and the row on the issue of appointment of the ombudsman and had said that it will order an inquiry into the whole issue by a former apex court or high court judge.

"Cricket has gone somewhere else and politics has taken precedence," the bench had said, adding "We will appoint some good people, some retired judges of the Supreme Court or the High Court to conduct an inquiry. Let both the groups (of HCA) go... They will have to go out of the management. This needs a CBI inquiry. They want to drag even the judiciary."

SC tells Azhar, HCA Secretary to jointly sign cheques...

Continued from Page

An order of a Hyderabad civil court to suspend the decision of the apex council of the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) to appoint Justice Verma as Ombudsman-cum-Ethics Officer of the HCA.

The top court, while fixing the pleas for hearing immediately after Diwali vacation, passed a consent order in meantime to ensure smooth functioning of the HCA.

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No question of alliance with...

Continued from Page 1

"The government of Andhra Pradesh is trying to replicate the Mamata Banerjee model of governance. The state government is supporting Christianity and conversions in the state," he said.

Asked about reports of Naidu exploring alliance with the BJP, Deodhar said there is no question of alliance with TDP. "There is no question of alliance with the TDP. BJP and Jan Sena will contest all forthcoming elections together. Our stand is that

Andhra Pradesh should get rid of both TDP and YSR Congress party," he said. It has been reported that Naidu, who was recently on a trip to the national capital, had expressed that he was exploring the possibility of alliance with the BJP so that "others do not exploit him".

TDP in alliance with the BJP and Jan Sena had contested 2014 general and assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh, but later parted ways with the BJP ahead of 2019 elections on the issue of special status for the state.

Southern Tourism, Culture Ministers' meet today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A two-day conference of Tourism and Culture Ministers of southern India is set to take place in Bengaluru starting Thursday, aiming to apprise various stakeholders about the projects and initiatives being taken by the Centre for the development of the region.

Union Minister for Tourism and Culture G Kishan Reddy and Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai are slated to address the event on October 28, officials said on Wednesday. The event is expected to be attended by the Union Ministers of State for Tourism, senior officials from various Central Ministries, State governments, Union Territory administrations, and media and industry stakeholders, they said.

The conference is taking place three months after the Ramappa temple at Palampet in Telangana's Warangal was conferred the tag of UNESCO World Heritage site.

The temple, a 13th century engineering marvel named after its architect, Ramappa, was proposed by the government as its only nomination for the UNESCO World Heritage site tag for the year 2019. A large number of iconic and historic heritage sites are located in southern region of India.

The country at present has 40 World Heritage Sites, both cultural and natural, spanning across the country. The states and UTs in the southern region are endowed with diverse tourist attractions and each State or UT has its own distinct features, the Ministry of Tourism said in a statement on the eve of the conference.

The two-day programme will have presentations by tourism, shipping, railways and environment ministries, Archaeological Survey of India, NITI Aayog to "apprise the participants about the various projects and initiatives being taken by the central govern-

ment for the development of the region," it said. The Ministry of Tourism said it is continuously working on different verticals like infrastructure development, promotion and publicity, skill development, to facilitate the development of overall tourism in the region. Representatives of state governments and UTs from the region will also be making presentations on the status of the tourism sector in their states and latest initiatives being taken by them for development of tourism.

During the sessions, discussion on heritage and cultural tourism initiatives, rail tourism, skill development, potential of cruise tourism in the southern region will also be held, officials said. The Ministry of Tourism promotes India as a holistic destination, including southern region states and UTs on various platforms, including digital, print and social media. Since April 2020, under 'Dekho

Apna Desh' campaign, the Ministry of Tourism is conducting webinars on various tourism products, including dedicated webinars on states and UTs of the southern region. The connectivity by air, rail and road to various destinations in the region is excellent and sought-after destinations by many, the officials said. The Ministry of Tourism has concentrated on the issues of skill development in tourism sector, and creating a pool of well-trained and professional tourist facilitators is essential for providing world-class services to the tourists, promotion and marketing for creating awareness about the destination in the domestic and international markets, they said.

"As the domestic tourism is showing a great surge in the last few months and as the borders will be open for international tourists soon, building confidence and trust of the tourists is extremely important," it said. In this connection, the Health

Ministry has already notified Covid-19 safety and hygiene protocols. The Ministry has put in place a System for Assessment, Awareness and Training in Hospitality Industry (SAATHI) to ensure compliance with Covid safety guidelines and to ensure safety and health of employees and customers, the Tourism Ministry said.

The Ministry of Tourism undertakes development of infrastructure at tourist destinations across the country under its infrastructure development schemes vis. Swadesh Darshan (SD) and PRASHAD (National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive), it added. In the Swadesh Darshan scheme, 76 projects have been sanctioned across India, which also includes projects from southern region states and UTs, the statement said.

Under the scheme, projects have been sanctioned in different themes such as Coastal Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Eco Circuit, Spiritual Circuit.

Government of Andhra Pradesh Directorate of Employment and Training, A.P. Vijayawada

Government of Andhra Pradesh Directorate of Employment and Training, A.P. Vijayawada
e-procurement Notification for Procurement of Tools, Machinery and Equipment for 15 Govt. ITIs under STRIVE Scheme
Tender No. E/1566/2021. Dated: 26.10.2021
The Department of Employment and Training invites e-tenders for the supply of Tools, Machinery and Equipment for 15 Govt. ITIs under Skills Strengthening for Industrial Value Enhancement (STRIVE) through e-procurement and visit <https://tender.apecprocurement.gov.in> and scheduled dates are given below: Schedule available date and time: 28/10/2021, at 11:00 hrs. Pre Bid meeting: 09/11/2021 at 11:00 hrs. Last date for submission of bids online: 17/11/2021, at 10:30 hrs. Pre-Qualification and Technical Bid opening: 22/11/2021, at 11:00 hrs. Price Bid Opening date: 30/11/2021, at 11:00 hrs. Reverse auction date: 30/11/2021, at 15:00 hrs.
GPRR.C.No.-1917/CLAD/IT/2021-22 DE 27.10.21 SDI - B. LAKSHYA VENI, DIRECTOR

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Andhra government plans to take over Dhulipalla's Trust

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government is planning to take over a Trust belonging to senior TDP leader Dhulipalla Narendra's family. The Jagan Mohan Reddy government has served a notice on Narendra asking him why it cannot take over the Dhulipalla Veeraiah Chowdary (DVC) Memorial Trust, established in the name of his late father, as several irregularities were found. Endowments Commissioner Hari Jawaharlal has issued a notice mentioning that the Trust could be taken over by the government under Section 6 (A) of the



Cooperative Societies Act. He asked Narendra to give his reply within seven days. The DVC Memorial Trust runs DVC Memorial Hospital, apart from various other ventures. According to Narendra, the hospital has been providing subsidised treatment to

the families of milk producers who have been supplying milk to Sangam Dairy. He claimed that even during the COVID pandemic, the Trust extended services to various sections of people and the hospital provided specialised treatment. The government is intentionally creating issues, he added. However, as of now there is no clarity as to what the allegations against the DVC Trust are and why the government is trying to take over the Trust. But the move may lead to yet another political feud in the state after the legal hassle in Sangam Dairy by Dhulipalla Narendra.

VIT-AP conducts awareness drive on 'right to vote'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

An awareness drive to aware people on the importance of voter cards and their right to vote was held in VIT-AP University on Wednesday. Deputy Tahsildar of Thullur Uppala Rajesh explained to students about the right to vote and the process to get voter ID through website, application and toll free number. Dr SV Kotareddy during his address informed the students on the importance of democracy in the country and explained to them the reason to vote. Dr CLV Sivakumar, Registrar, enlightened the gathering on election commission, importance of Voter ID and how to exercise voting right.

Amit Shah speaks to Naidu on developments in Andhra

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday spoke to Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief N. Chandrababu Naidu over phone about the recent developments in Andhra Pradesh. According to TDP sources, Shah called up the former Chief Minister as he could not give the appointment when the latter was in New Delhi due to his visit to Kashmir. Naidu is believed to have apprised Shah of the situation prevailing in Andhra Pradesh due to "state sponsored terrorism". Alleging that there is total breakdown of law and order, the TDP leader demanded imposition of the President's rule in the State. The TDP chief alleged that the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) attacked TDP offices and leaders in the state as the opposition party was raising its voice against drug trafficking. He told Shah that TDP leaders were being targeted with false cases. Interestingly, the informa-



tion about Amit Shah's phone call to Naidu came hours after YSRCP parliamentary party leader Vijay Sai Reddy claimed that Naidu was denied an appointment with the Union Home Minister. They advised Vijay Sai Reddy to introspect about the Chief Minister's failures instead of hurling needless abuses on Naidu. They said people of whole Andhra knew how Jagan Reddy was made to wait days together and yet could not get appointment of Amit Shah in the past. They also pointed out that the Chief Minister met the Prime Minister in the first week of October, 2020, and did not "dare" to seek the PM's appointment afterwards.

ELS Vijayawada division bags Lean Six Sigma Certification

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Electric Loco Shed (ELS) Vijayawada Division has added one more jewel in its crown by bagging Lean Six Sigma Certification and Green Belt training certification for its 20 supervisors. ELS Vijayawada has become the first loco shed in the entire SCR Zone to bag Lean Six Sigma implementation certification. Anexas Europe, an independent third party and globally recognised firm based in Bangalore, presented the Lean Six Sigma implementation certification to ELS Vijayawada for successfully implementing Sigma Six techniques with documented evidence of process improvements. As a part of Lean Six Sigma Certification, 20 senior section engineers of the shed were provided with Green Belt training and practical sessions for 15 days through online and field sessions.



ELS Vijayawada is currently maintaining 212 locos of both conventional and three phase, which are running all over the Indian Railways in various passenger and freight trains. Adoption of Lean Six Sigma practices in loco maintenance activities will help in reducing maintenance time, thereby increasing loco out-turn of shed. This would definitely have a positive impact on movement of coaching and goods trains across the division due to increased electric loco outturn. Shivendra Mohan, Divisional Railway Manager, Vijayawada, congratulated Ch Dinesh Reddy, Sr DEE, Electric Loco Shed, Vijayawada, and staff for successfully implementing the measures to increase the output and bagging the Sigma Six certification. He said that such certifications are testimony of their hard work and implementation of the best and quality practices on par with international standards.

TDP asks government to clarify on money cleared

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Jagan Mohan Reddy government should clarify on how much money has been deposited in the bank accounts of farmers in the latest Rythu Bharosa scheme installment, TDP State President K. Atchannaidu said here on Wednesday. He said the Chief Minister was filling the lives of farmers with darkness by launching a misinformation campaign in the name of welfare programmes. Rythu Bharosa was full of jugglery with figures and the government is shamelessly betraying farmers, he alleged. In a statement here, the TDP leader dared YSRCP leaders whether they had the guts to reveal how much money was released in yesterday's Rythu Bharosa installment. Is it not a fact that just Rs 30 crore was deposited in farm-



ers' accounts yesterday? But the government cheated the farmers saying that Rs 1,213 crore had been released. Even the claim of Rs 18,777 crore payments under Rythu Bharosa till now is a big lie, he said. Atchannaidu asserted that 60 per cent of the funds released for farmers' programmes were given by the Centre. The CM is spending hundreds of crores for personal publicity. The farmers are being put to trouble at a time when they are suffering due to lack of remunerative prices and rising costs of cultivation, he added.

AP veterinary students to observe Black Day today

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Students belonging to the Andhra Pradesh Veterinary Students and Graduates Association (APVSGA) of the NTR College of Veterinary Science located at Gannavaram would hold a Black Day protest on October 28 at their college along with two other veterinary colleges under the Sri Venkateswara Veterinary University. The students would hold a Black Day protest from 9 am to 12 noon, said APVSGA general secretary Dr P. Ramesh. Dr Ramesh said the protest is due to the induction of a large number of Animal Husbandry Assistants against

Counselling held for ganja addicts

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada City Police Commissioner B Srinivasulu has said that an anti-drug drive has been carried out by the police here for over one-and-a-half years. As part of the drive, the police identified about 560 ganja consumers. On Wednesday, the police task force conducted counselling for around 150 ganja addicts in the presence of their parents, said the Police Commissioner. "Counselling was given to the ganja consumers and the parents were directed to inform of any change in their children" he said.

Officials told to complete construction works soon

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner V Prasanna Venkatesh, along with MLC Sheikh Karimunnisa, 59th Division Corporator Mohammad Shahina Sultana and VMC officials, visited Singh Nagar and Daba Kotla Center to look into local issues on Wednesday. The people brought to the notice of the Commissioner that the construction of Gujjala Saraladevi Kalyana Mandapam and the community hall should be restarted and brought to the use of the public. They visited various places under the division and gave instructions to the officers on various pending issues. The Commissioner directed the

Engineering Department officials to prepare estimates to carry out necessary repair works of the Gujjala Saraladevi Kalyana Mandapam. He directed the authorities to take steps to set up a secretariat in four vacant shops at the Rythu Bazaar adjacent to the function hall in the area. Prasanna Venkatesh inspected the partially constructed primary health centre and community hall built using SC/ST funds in the division. He directed the Engineering Department staff to take measures to complete the construction work soon. Similarly, steps should be taken to develop the vacant space in the area as a park. EE J Srinivas, Estate Officer Dr A Sridhar and other VMC staff were present.



HEALTHY STEPS

A walkathon was organized by Happy Child Development & Rehabilitation centre to mark 'Occupational Therapy Day' that was flagged off by VMC Additional Commissioner (general) Dr J Aruna along with Dr S Ram Prasad on Wednesday at BRTS road.

Dayasagar assumes charge as Commissioner of Income Tax

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Mekathoti Dayasagar has assumed charge as the Commissioner of Income Tax (TDS), Vijayawada. Dayasagar belongs to the 1992 batch of the Indian Revenue Service. Senior officers and the staff called on him and extended a warm welcome.

As the Income Tax Commissioner, he would exercise the matters of TDS in Andhra Pradesh. He informed that his priorities include effective TDS tax administration, grievance-free tax administration, better taxpayer services to the tax deductors and prompt collection of due taxes and achievement of the targets.



Public, Opposition victimised for expressing opinions, says Lokesh

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP general secretary Nara Lokesh has lashed out at the YSRCP Government for targeting even senior citizens in the name of objectionable posts on social media. Lokesh said that alarmingly even the relatives of NRIs were being harassed for messages posted

by those living abroad. He said that Anantapur police are harassing 70-year-old Srinivasa Reddy in the Kadiri Assembly constituency. The police are threatening the elderly man just because his son living in Uganda had posted a message on social media, Lokesh said. In a statement here, Lokesh said that the senior citizen's

son criticised the way of functioning of Kadiri YSRCP MLA in his post. The police called the elderly man to the police station, and warned him for the message posted by his son, Lokesh said. From this it is clear that YSRCP leaders have turned the police into their pocket organisation, Lokesh said.

Researchers develop protocol to address vulnerabilities in EVs

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The researchers at the National Institute of Technology-Andhra Pradesh, working with an international team, have developed a protocol to address major security and privacy issues in dynamic charging of electric vehicles (EVs).



The institute worked with researchers from IIIT Hyderabad, IIIT Naya Raipur, Kyungpook National University (South Korea), and University of Wollongong (Australia), to develop the protocol. Electric vehicles are considered the future of transportation due to their low carbon footprint and low energy use. They provide clean mobility and reduce the environmental impact of conventional transportation. The International Energy Agency (IEA) predicts that by 2030, the worldwide fleet of EVs will reach 145 million. As more people choose EVs, the demand for charging

infrastructure would also grow. The research was led by Dr. Alavalapati Goutham Reddy, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, NIT-Andhra Pradesh. The research paper was co-authored by Raveendra Babu, research scholar at the NIT, along with Prof. Ashok Kumar Das of IIIT-Hyderabad, Dr. Ruhul Amin of IIIT-Naya Raipur, Prof. Young-Ho Park of Kyungpook National University and Prof. Willy Susilo of University of Wollongong. A group of interdisciplinary researchers led by Dr. Alavalapati Goutham Reddy and Prof. Ashok Kumar Das developed an authentication with key agreement protocol for EV dynamic charging infrastructure entities and published their findings in the reputed peer-reviewed journal IEEE Transactions on Vehicular Technology. These findings demonstrate that messages exchanged between EVs and dynamic charging infrastructure are secure, preventing attackers from tracking the vehicle and gaining any benefits.

Andhra Pradesh is narcotics hub of India: Pawan Kalyan

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Actor politician Pawan Kalyan on Wednesday alleged that Andhra Pradesh has become a narcotics hub of the nation with 'ganja' (marijuana) being supplied to various parts of the country from the State. The Jana Sena leader took to Twitter to claim that Andhra Pradesh has become a narcotics hub and is filled with many drug lords at every level. "Entire nation is getting affected due to willful inaction

of leaders who are in-charge of the present government," wrote Pawan Kalyan. "During my 'Porata Yatra' in 2018, which was meant to understand the socio-economic issues of people of the state, in the tribal areas of Andhra-Orissa border I had received numerous complaints about health, unem-



ployment, illegal mining and about ganja trade and its mafia," the actor tweeted. The Jana Sena leader posted alleged video clips of police officials of different States and cities to support his claims. "Andhra Pradesh -- 'Narcotics hub of the nation' supplies ganja to Pune, Mumbai and Maharashtra, too. The

Maharashtra Police have seized the ganja shipment, Pawan wrote with an alleged clip of a TV news channel's report about seizure of 312 kg of the contraband. "Hyderabad City-Police Commissioner' Sri Anjani Kumar, (IPS) giving out details about how narcotics are being transported from AP to the rest of the country," tweeted Jana Sena leader with a clip from the police official's press conference. He also posted the video

clip of Ranganath, Superintendent of Police of Nalgonda district of Telangana. The official revealed that the Andhra Orissa Border area is the source of ganja and from there it is supplied to various parts of the country. Pawan Kalyan posted a video clip of Bengaluru Police Commissioner Kamal Pant and also a TV report about Kerala police seizing huge amounts of ganja from Andhra Pradesh.

BADVEL BY-POLL

Hectic campaign ends on peaceful note

PNS ■ KADAPA

The campaign for the Badvel by-election came to an end Wednesday and all political parties concluded their campaign in the town.

The ruling YSRCP, the BJP and the Congress have fielded candidates in the by-poll.

YSRCP leaders, including Minister Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy, S B Amzadh Basha, Narayana Swamy and MP Y S Avinash Reddy, MLAs and other leaders took part in the campaign.

BJP State president Somu Veerraju, general secretary Vishnuvardhan Reddy, former minister Daggubati Purandeshwari, MPs C M Ramesh, T G Venkatesh and other senior leaders also participated in the campaign.

On the last day of the cam-



paign, BJP State president Somu Veerraju addressed gatherings at many places.

Addressing a meeting at Mamillapalle village in Gopavaram mandal on Wednesday he called upon people to vote for the BJP to drive away land grabbers from

the constituency.

He promised to distribute the land to the poor after confiscating encroached lands. "The voters in Badvel are going to script history by electing the BJP. BJP cadres will check the anarchy created by YSRCP," he said.

BJP general secretary Vishnuvardhan Reddy said the Union Government had allocated around Rs 70 crore for development projects in seven mandals and the Badvel municipality, but the state government did not allocate even Rs 6 crore.

He asked Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and MP Avinash Reddy what development projects they had carried out in Badvel town in the last two and a half years.

BJP MP T G Venkatesh who took part in the roadshow addressed the gathering. He asked why so many YSRCP leaders were taking part in the election campaign if they were confident about the development projects they had implemented.

MP C M Ramesh alleged that YSRCP leaders had threatened voters that they

would cancel welfare schemes if they did not vote for the YSRCP. YSRCP MLA Ambati Rambabu appealed to the voters to vote for Dasari Sudha.

Addressing a meeting he said that all sections of people are happy with the welfare schemes being implemented in the state. He alleged that the Congress had divided the state and the BJP had meted out injustice to AP.

Rambabu asked voters to reject both the Congress and the BJP. The Congress and the BJP would lose their deposits, he predicted.

Dr Dasari Sudha is the YSRCP candidate, Panatala Suresh is the BJP candidate and former MLA Kamalamma is the Congress candidate in the by-election.

The massive campaign for the by-election concluded on a peaceful note, police said.



CONSTRUCTION OF GOVT BUILDINGS

Collector tells officials to allocate alternative sites

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam Collector Pravin Kumar has directed the officials concerned to allocate alternative sites for the construction of government buildings.

The Collector held a meeting with the officials here on Wednesday and reviewed the on-going construction of government buildings. The works are linked with the MGNREGA scheme.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the government had taken up the construction of buildings for village secretariats and RHKs.

He said that some of the works were halted abruptly due to land dispute cases. He asked the officials to allocate other sites in such cases.

"If private individuals gave their lands for the construction of buildings, the same extent of land with the same value would be given to them at other places," he said.

"The state government has approved the construction of 871 village secretariats in the district, of which the work of 289 buildings has been completed and that of 209 buildings is in the final stage. As many as 129 buildings are

ready for the construction of the second floor," he informed.

The Collector said that the construction of 260 buildings hasn't even reached the foundation level. He asked the officials to expedite the construction process. He said that 149 digital libraries were sanctioned to the district, of which the construction of 137 buildings had begun. The construction of 12 buildings for digital libraries has not started due to land issues and technical problems, the Collector said. Panchayat Raj SE Kondaiah and other engineers were among those present.

Students protest withdrawal of support to aided schools

PNS ■ GUNTUR

A large number of students belonging to the Student Federation of India staged a dharna at the Potti Sri Ramulu statue at the Market Centre here on Wednesday protesting against the government's move to withdraw support to aided schools.

The students raised slogans against the government's move to withdraw support to aided schools. They snatched on the road and later formed a human chain. Following the students' protest, traffic on the busy road came to a halt resulting in a



large number of vehicles getting stranded.

The students were later taken away to the police sta-

tion. The students warned that they would intensify their protest if the government did not withdraw its decision.

APSRTC MD inspects bus station and depot

PNS ■ ONGOLE

APSRTC Managing Director Dwaraka Tirumala Rao inspected Singarayakonda bus station and Chirala bus depot on Wednesday. The APSRTC MD inspected Singarayakonda bus station along with RTC Zonal chairman Battula Supraja Ashok Kumar Reddy. He discussed with the officials the proposed construction of a shopping complex there.

The officials showed the layout to the MD and explained to him about the construction and the land. The MD inspected the land.



He made some suggestions to the officials on the construction of the shopping complex. MRO Jameerulla detailed the construction work, to which the RTC MD expressed dissatisfaction.

RTC Prakasham District Regional Manager Sudhakar, Kandukur DM and other officials accompanied him.

Provide banking services in remote areas: Collector

PNS ■ ELURU

District Collector Kartikeya Mishra has emphasised the need for taking banking services to remote areas and asked the bankers to extend loans to farmers liberally.

The Lead Bank, with the association of bankers, organised a 'Credit Outreach Campaign' programme here on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that nowadays financial transactions are carried out digitally in remote areas also and stressed the need for expanding banking services to

such areas. "Banking services should be strengthened in the rural areas so that villagers could avail of the facilities," he said. He asked the bankers to take steps to resolve the problems of farmers, depositors and clients at the earliest. The Collector said that bank correspondents were helping the farmers at the Rythu Bharosa Kendras in getting loans.

He said that loans worth Rs 152 crore were extended to the tenant farmers during the kharif season. So far, loans worth Rs 192 crore were sanctioned to farmers in the current financial year.

Government plans to develop 13 smart cities in AP: Minister

PNS ■ ELURU

State Deputy Chief Minister and Health Minister Alla Kalikrishna Srinivas on Wednesday said that the State government of Andhra Pradesh had decided to develop more smart cities as part of the Central government's Smart City programme.

Srinivas said that as many as 13 cities including Srikakulam, Vijayanagaram, Rajahmundry, Eluru, Vijayawada, Machilipatnam, Guntur, Ongole, Kurnool and Anantapur were selected to be



developed as smart cities.

The Minister participated in the oath-taking ceremony of Eluru Smart City chairperson Boddani Akhila Chandra here on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion, Srinivas said that the State government has decided to develop Eluru as a Smart city on the lines of the Swiss Challenge.

The deputy Chief Minister said that the State government aimed at augmenting basic amenities as per the growing population in the State.

The State government has focused on creating infrastructure to attract foreign investment in the state. The State is inviting foreign investment in Metro rail, highway expansion and sea port constructions.

Judiciary-executive friction normal: Ex-judge

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former judge of the Supreme Court Justice Jasti Chelameswar has said that there were a lot of judgments against the rule of law, leading to filing of appeal in the court. He was addressing the Andhra Wisdom Festival, jointly organised by the Andhra Arts Academy and the AP Editors Association, here on Wednesday.

Asserting that there would be friction between the judiciary and the executive, he reminded the statement of former Supreme Court Chief Justice Venkatchaliah that it would be a bad day if there

was cordial relationship between the judiciary and the executive.

The former Supreme Court judge said that it was common to misuse power. He said that the division of power between the executive, legislature and the judiciary was good for society. "It is an adjustment to avoid concentration of power in one hand," he said.

Nandamuri Lakshmi Parvati, Chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh Telugu and Sanskrit Academy, expressed concern over judicial activism and said that the judiciary was interfering in the activities of the executive.



Former CBI Joint Director V V Lakshminarayana said that all the three wings should

perform their duties perfectly for proper administration. Hero worship should not be

entertained at any cost. Referring to judicial activism, he said that judicial review was very important. However, any criticism should be taken positively. P Gautam Reddy, Chairman, AP Fibernet; Vijay Babu, former Information Commissioner; Ch Srinivas, Intellectuals Forum president; Yarlagadda Lakshmi Prasad, Official Language Commission chairman; and Narahariseti Sri Hari, former president, Bezawada Bar Association, were present. VVR Krishnam Raju, president of the AP Editors Association, presided over the meeting.

Lucky escape for 40 students

PNS ■ ELURU

As many as 40 students of a private school had a miraculous escape when the school bus veered off the road and halted after tilting towards an irrigation canal at Yerrampalli village in Lingapalem mandal on Wednesday.

Police said that about 40 students of Hayageeva School were going to school when the accident took place. The bus driver lost control of the vehicle due to brake failure resulting in the bus veering off the road.

All the students escaped unhurt. The students said that



they cautioned the driver to go slow as the road was in a bad condition, but he did not listen.

Dharmajugudem SI Maheshwara Rao registered a case.

Won't take over educational institutions forcibly: Minister

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Refuting the allegations of the Opposition and a section of media on aided schools, Education Minister Adimulapu Suresh clarified that the state government is not taking over any aided school forcibly and private educational institutions can take back the schools if they wanted to run them on their own.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday, the minister said the state government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, had constituted a committee to assess the performance of private aided schools and some decisions were taken based on the report of the committee for the development of educational institutions.

The minister said there



was no compulsion in handing over aided educational institutions to the government. The condition of most of the institutions is unsatisfactory without proper infra-

structure or staff, and thus the government has provided an opportunity to the managements. They can hand over the institutions and the government will manage them.

The Minister said the state government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, had constituted a committee to assess the performance of private aided schools and some decisions were taken based on the report of the committee for the development of educational institutions.

The minister added that the state government would take over such institutions only after the managements express their willingness for the same. They have to state that they don't need grants in aid, surrender the teachers to the government and accept to run the schools on their own.

The minister said more than 137 degree colleges have

responded positively, of which managements of seven colleges have agreed on paper that they are willing to give staff along with the properties of the colleges. As many as 124 colleges have accepted to surrender only staff, not the property and run them as private colleges.

He said out of 122 junior colleges, five have opted to

surrender properties along with staff, and 103 junior colleges opted to surrender only staff. He said 1,200 out of 1,988 schools have agreed on paper to surrender the staff and 88 schools have opted to surrender properties along with staff.

The minister said the Education Department has prepared a time table to map the students of schools that are going to close and the counselling on posting of surrendered teachers will be conducted by the end of the month.

The minister said that it was the TDP which didn't fill vacant posts in aided schools and was responsible for their poor condition. He also said that strict action would be taken against the schools which collect more fees than that fixed by the regulatory commission.

TDP leaders detained, activists protest on Rushikonda beach

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Many Telugu Desam Party leaders were kept under house arrest on Wednesday after the party gave a call to stage a protest against the construction of private buildings on the beach front near Haritha Resorts near Rushikonda Beach here.

The police arrested TDP leaders including Visakhapatnam East MLA Velagapudi Ramakrishna Babu and the State president of Telugu Nadu Students Federation, Pranav Gopal, at the M.V.P. Colony.

The police stopped the leaders from attending the protest. Tension prevailed

for some time as the TDP activists raised slogans against the police and the government. However, the police maintained vigil during the house arrest of the TDP leaders.

Meanwhile, a large number of TDP activists reached Rushikonda Beach and protested against the construction of private buildings on the beach front. They said the construction of private buildings would harm the environment and pose a danger to future generations.

The government should stop the construction of private buildings on the beach front, the TDP activists demanded.

INDIA CORNER

BJP MLA Krishna Kalyani joins TMC, fifth legislator to switch over

Raiganj's BJP MLA Krishna Kalyani joined the Trinamool Congress on Wednesday. Kalyani is the fifth BJP legislator in West Bengal to join the TMC after winning the assembly elections earlier this year, in a major setback to the opposition party. He is the former North Dinajpur district president of the TMC who joined the BJP ahead of the assembly elections and was fielded from Raiganj. Kalyan, who has been at odds for quite some time with former Union minister Debasree Choudhury over running the BJP's affairs in the North Dinajpur district, was welcomed to the TMC by its secretary-general and senior state minister Partha Chatterjee. "No self-respecting person can work freely in the BJP," Kalyani told reporters at the TMC headquarters here. He said he was also upset with the 'anti-people policies' of the Centre, which has not taken a single step to check spiralling fuel prices. "I was increasingly thinking that I cannot be a part of BJP anymore. If I had not spoken in favour of Mamata Banerjee's welfare policies before the assembly polls, I had made a mistake that I want to correct now," he said.



Covid: Karnataka govt issues fresh guidelines for international travellers

The Karnataka government has issued fresh travel guidelines and made negative RT-PCR report mandatory for those coming to the state from abroad, in view of the new super-spreader AY.4.2 Delta variant of COVID-19, which is spreading in some foreign countries. Releasing the guidelines for international arrivals, the government said the global trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic continues to decline with certain regional variations. It, however, noted that the need to monitor the continuously changing nature of virus and evolution of SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern must still remain in focus. The new guideline makes it mandatory for travellers to submit a self-declaration form regarding the authenticity of the COVID negative report on the online portal 'Air Suvidha' before the scheduled travel, since a fake report will be liable for criminal prosecution. "Uploading a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR report. This test should have been conducted within 72 hours prior to undertaking the journey," the travel advisory said.



NIA court convicts 10 people, acquits one in 2013 Patna serial blasts

A special NIA court on Wednesday convicted 10 persons in connection with the serial blasts that took place in 2013 at the venue here of a political rally of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was then the chief minister of Gujarat. Special NIA judge Gurdvir Mehrotra, who passed the order, also acquitted one of the accused for want of evidence. "The NIA had submitted charge-sheets against 11 people in the course of investigation. Of these, one was a minor and his case was referred to the juvenile justice board. The remaining were put on trial. "Today, all but one were convicted. The quantum of sentence will be pronounced on November 1," Special Public Prosecutor Lalan Prasad Singh, who appeared for the probe agency, told PTI-Bhaskar. Those who were pronounced guilty are Imtiaz Ansari, Mujibullah, Haider Ali, Firoz Aslam, Omar Ansari, Iftikhar, Ahmed Husain, Umair Siddiqui and Azharuddin. The court acquitted Fakhruddin, he added. The blasts had taken place at the Gandhi Maidan on October 27, 2013 when the BJP's 'Hunkar Rally' addressed by Modi, who had been declared the party's prime ministerial candidate, was underway.



India criticises China for new 'unilateral' land border law

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India on Wednesday hit out at China for its "unilateral" decision to bring about a new land border law and said it is a matter of concern as the legislation can have implications on the existing bilateral pacts on border management and on the overall boundary question.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said India expects that China will avoid undertaking action under the pretext of the law that could unilaterally alter the situation in the India-China border areas.

He said such a "unilateral move" will have no bearing on the arrangements that both sides have already reached earlier -- be it on the boundary question or for maintaining peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Last week, China's national legislature adopted the new law on the protection and exploitation of the land border areas, which could have bearing on Beijing's border dispute with India.



"China's unilateral decision to bring about a legislation which can have implication on our existing bilateral arrangements on border management as well as on the boundary question is of concern to us," Bagchi said.

He was replying to a media query on the matter.

"Such unilateral move will have no bearing on the arrangements that both sides have already reached earlier, whether it is on the boundary question or for maintaining peace and tranquillity along the LAC in India-China border areas," he said.

Xinhua news agency reported last week that the law, which becomes operational from January 1 next year, stipulates that "the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of China are sacred and inviolable."

"We have noted that China has passed a new 'Land Boundary Law' on October 23. The law states among other things that China abides by treaties concluded with or jointly acceded to by foreign countries on land boundary affairs," Bagchi said.

India will have whole of Kashmir someday: Western Air Command chief

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

A top Air Force officer on Wednesday said there was no plan "at the moment" to capture Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), but expressed the hope that someday India will have the "whole of Kashmir". Speaking to reporters at an event here to mark the 75th anniversary of the Indian troops' Budgam landing, Air Officer Commanding in Chief (AOC-in-C) of Western Air Command, Air Marshal Amit Dev, also said the people in PoK are not being treated very fairly by the Pakistanis. "All the activities which were carried out by the Indian Air Force and the Army (on October 27, 1947) resulted in ensuring the freedom of this part of Kashmir. I am sure that someday, the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir will also join this part of Kashmir and we will have the whole of Kashmir in years to come," he said. However, when asked if the force has any plans to capture the PoK, Air Marshal Dev

said there was no plan at the moment. "(The whole of) Kashmir is one, a nation is one. People on both sides have common attachments. Today or tomorrow, history is witness, that nations come together. We do not have a plan at the moment, but, God willing, it will always be there because people in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir are not being treated very fairly by the Pakistanis," he said. Indian troops had landed in Kashmir on October 27, 1947, a day after the then Maharaja Hari Singh signed the instrument of accession with India following the Pakistani tribal raids. The AOC-in-C of the Western Air Command said the IAF faces many challenges, but the basic one is of technology. "The rate of change of technology is so fast in the world today that we have to keep pace with that. If any nation which is to grow economically has to have a strong military, we must fulfil our obligation to the nation in the years to come...and we are always ready for the challenge," he said.

Extortion charges: NCB team recording Wankhede's statement

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The NCB's Deputy Director General (DDG)-northern region, Gyaneshwar Singh, on Wednesday said they have started recording the statement of the agency's Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede in connection with the departmental vigilance probe into allegations of extortion in the drugs-on-cruise case. A five-member vigilance probe team, which landed in Mumbai in the morning, has started its probe and collected some documents and recordings from the Narcotics Control Bureau's (NCB) office at Ballard Estate in south Mumbai, DDG Singh, who is heading the departmental vigilance probe into allegations of extortion, told media persons.

"All the material witnesses in the probe will be called to record their statements, I will not take name of any individual," Singh said. However, to queries from reporters, the official later said, "The statement of Wankhede is being recorded...it is a sensitive inquiry and it is not possible to share real-time information related to the probe, and we will not be able to share all the details."



Cruise drugs party organisers took nod from Centre, not Maha govt: Nawab Malik

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra minister and NCP leader Nawab Malik on Wednesday claimed the Cordelia cruise drugs party organisers had taken permission directly from the "director of shipping" at the Centre and not the state police or the state home department. Speaking to reporters here, Malik also claimed that a member of an international drugs mafia was present on the same cruise, and asked how come he was moving scot-free, while some others were arrested, following a raid on the ship earlier this month.

Malik also said if the Narcotics Control Bureau Mumbai zonal director Sameer Wankhede's birth certificate, which the minister had posted online to claim the official forged documents to secure job, turns out false, then he will resign from his ministerial post and retire as a politician. "I wonder why BJP leaders are getting uncomfortable when I am trying to expose Sameer Wankhede," he said. The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) raided the cruise ship off the Mumbai coast on October 2 during which drugs were allegedly seized.

Lalu hints at thaw with Cong

PNS ■ PATNA

RJD president Lalu Prasad on Wednesday hinted at a thaw between his party and the Congress, saying had a telephonic talk with Sonia Gandhi whom he asked to hold a meeting of "like-minded" parties which could join hands to take on the BJP. Prasad was talking to journalists before departing for election rallies in Tarapur and Kusheshwar Asthan assembly seats, where by-polls are scheduled for October 30.

"Sonia Gandhi enquired about my well-being. I told her I am fine," said the septuagenarian leader, underscoring his personal equation with the Congress president which has kept the RJD-Congress alliance afloat in the choppy waters of politics. "I also said that she is the leader of a party with an all-India presence and she should convene a meeting of all like-minded parties which are opposed to the BJP," said Prasad, whose party recently snubbed the Congress with its unilateral decision to contest by-polls to both the seats.



The Congress had reacted with uncharacteristic aggression, with the AICC in-charge of Bihar Bhakt Charan Das asserting that his party, which has fielded its own candidates for the two seats in the by-poll, will contest all 40 Lok Sabha seats in the next general elections.

Later, Prasad addressed the rally in Tarapur where huge crowds had turned up to catch a glimpse of the colourful leader who was addressing an election meeting after a gap of six years. Prasad claimed that the

RJD-led Grand Alliance had, in the assembly polls last year, fallen short of majority because of "beimaaani" (rigging) and that had he not been away in jail, serving sentences in the fodder scam, "they (pliant officials) would not have dared to do so".

He also seethed at Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, his arch rival, who had the previous day said that the RJD supremo "could get me killed", a sarcastic reference to the former CM's reputation for strong-arm tactics.

Latvian woman tourist murder: Oppn wants speedy trial

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The opposition Congress-led UDF in Kerala on Wednesday urged the Left government to hand over to a fast-track court and expedite trial in a case of rape and murder of a Latvian woman tourist at Kovalam beach resort here three years ago. A new special prosecutor should be appointed for this at the earliest and justice should be ensured to the deceased woman's family, demanded the Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly V D Satheesan in the state Assembly.

He brought the issue to the notice of the House through a submission. "The accused have received bail as the charge-sheet was not submitted within 90 days in the case. The trial is yet to be started even after three-and-a-half years after the crime," Satheesan told the Assembly.

Amarinder party once EC clears name

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Former Punjab chief minister Amarinder Singh on Wednesday said he will launch his new political party when the Election Commission clears the name and symbol, and claimed that many people from the Congress are in touch with him.

"I am forming a party. But I cannot tell you the name right now. When the Election Commission (EC) approves the name and symbol, only then I can tell you. Let us wait for the EC to approve," he said during his first press conference after resigning as the chief minister last month. He also said that he will



meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday to continue his efforts to resolve the issues of farmers who have been protesting against

the Centre's three new agriculture laws. Singh had resigned as the Punjab chief minister amid a bitter power tussle with

Punjab Congress chief Navjot Singh Sidhu.

Responding to a question, Singh claimed many people from the Congress are in touch with him and that they will come out in the open when the time comes. "Obviously many people are with us. We are waiting for the opportune moment. But I will not take their names as my supporters are already being harassed," he said.

Asked how many MLAs are in touch with him, the former CM said, "If Rahul Gandhi needs to have back-to-back meetings with Punjab Congress MLAs, what does it mean?"

MP claims flight narrowly avoided mishap

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

AAP MP Sanjay Singh claimed that a Vistara flight narrowly avoided accident while landing at the Bhubaneswar airport on Wednesday, following which Civil Aviation Minister

Jyotiraditya Scindia promised action. The flight UK785 departed from Delhi at 7 am and reached Odisha's capital city Bhubaneswar around 9 am on Wednesday.

The Rajya Sabha MP tweeted, "Today, Vistara flight's land-

ing in Bhubaneswar shook the soul of the passengers and it narrowly avoided an accident."

"Please take some other work from the pilot otherwise some major incident may happen. Vistara management and Civil Aviation Minister

Jyotiraditya Scindia sir, please take note," Singh added.

In response, Scindia stated on Twitter, "Sanjay ji, we will take appropriate steps after investigating this matter. Thank you for bringing the incident to notice."

Maha tribals launch indefinite protest

PNS ■ NAGPUR

Tribals in Etapalli taluka of Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district have begun an indefinite sit-in protest seeking cancellation of an iron ore mining project. The local tribals launched the protest on October 25 under the aegis of 'Surjagarh Paramparik Ilaka Gotul Samiti' against the iron ore mining project at Surjagarh, demanding cancellation of lease granted to a private company. Talking to PTI over phone, Ramdas Jarate, local leader and state committee member of Shetkari Kamgar Paksh,



said they have written to the Centre and the state government several times over the

years raising objection over the mining activities in Gadchiroli. The protesters alleged that

the lease given to Surjagarh mining project is in violation of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA Act), 1996 and the Forest Rights Act.

They also say that they were not taken into confidence before the mining lease was issued. "We want the agreements of Surjagarh and 20 other mining leases in Gadchiroli be cancelled," he said. Namdeo Usendi, former Congress MLA from Gadchiroli who is supporting the agitation, said the government cannot give lease without the approval of the gram sabha.

Noted Gandhian activist and founder of Ekta Parishad, Rajagopal P V, visited the agitation of the tribals on the first day. Talking to PTI, he said, "There is an increasing level of conflict in tribal areas, which can be exploited by other people. It is our responsibility to understand this conflict, we should intervene to reduce it..." "Employment is one thing, but protecting their lives, culture and resources is equally important. And that will happen only when laws are respected by the government as well as by the people," Rajagopal said.

'Indo-Pacific region witnessing day-to-day competition for influence'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy is working on "tailor-made" solutions to help friendly countries confront pressing challenges in the maritime domain with a broader aim to emerge as a preferred security partner and make a real contribution for an open and inclusive Indo-Pacific, Navy Chief Admiral Karambir Singh said on Wednesday.

Without naming China, he also talked about some states applying "land-centric" territorial mindsets in the basic idea of global commerce in the Indo-Pacific with an attempt to seek greater domination and control that has created challenges in global rules. In an address at a seminar,

Admiral Singh said there has been a "day-to-day" competition for influence in the Indo-Pacific that brings with it attendant and evolving challenges, noting that the rules of game are "constantly changing".

He said the Indian Navy has prioritised certain elements in its efforts to play a more constructive and stabilising role in the Indo-Pacific that including working towards developing collective maritime competence in the region.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

Right to marry

If same-sex couples can live together and adopt children, they can also marry

The Union Government is unlikely to support legal sanctions to same-sex marriages. Its stand in the Delhi High Court hearing a bunch of cases to approve such marriages is consistently against them. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta explained the Government's stand in the Court once again this week. He is clear that marriage is permissible only between a biological man and a biological woman as per the law. For him, a spouse means husband and wife, as in a heterosexual couple. In the same case this February, the Centre said marriage depends on "age-old customs, rituals, practices, cultural ethos and societal values". The Centre put forth four arguments. One, it is for the legislature, not judiciary, to enforce "social morality" based on "Indian ethos" that sanctions marriage. Two, marriage happens between two individuals and does not fall under an individual's domain of privacy. Three, marriage is a public recognition of a relationship and statutory rights and obligations are attached to it. The final argument is clinching: same-sex individuals living together is incomparable with the concept of "Indian family unit" which means husband, wife and child. The Centre insists that the marriage of same-sex individuals can neither be a fundamental right nor can the right to privacy be extended to it.



The Centre's argument draws strength from what the Supreme Court did not say in its landmark 2018 judgment in the Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India case. The Court struck down section 377 of the IPC that criminalised consensual sex between same-sex individuals. It said the Section "prohibits LGBT persons from expressing their sexual orientation and engaging in sexual conduct in private..." The Court decriminalised such consensual sex in 'private' but did not legalise 'public' actions like marriages between such couples. Legalising these marriages is a natural corollary to decriminalising sexual relations between same-sex individuals. Homosexuals, by extending the same logic, cannot be deprived of the reality of falling in love, getting married and living just like heterosexual couples. Denying them the right to marry is to stigmatise their relationships and that is a parochial and conservative approach in a world with fast-evolving social mores. Hitherto, Indian society lived by traditions that defined people's limits, behaviour and duties according to their gender. However, things have changed. The rights and choices of the individual matter more than gender. Glass ceilings are being broken by women and now by members of the LGBT community. Adoption of children is as legal as natural procreation. Live-in relationships may be considered immoral by some but that they are not an offence in the eye of law. If same-sex couples can live-in and adopt children, revolutionising the concept of "family", they can also marry. Society is made up of all kinds of individuals with exclusive rights to none. And no tradition is ever written in stone.

... (Continuation of the article text from the previous block)

How Air India fell short of the runway



PRAFULL GORADIA

People in Government seldom appreciate that overheads can bring down companies. That made Air India a treasure trove for too many employees

The plight of Air India would not have dipped so low had a 1983 advice given in a national daily been followed. The company might be Government owned but three or four, preferably six or seven or more financial institutions beginning with LIC, Unit Trust, IDBI and nationalised banks should have held Air India through share. They would be entitled to dividends, if any. The company would be a member of the stock exchanges as well as chambers of commerce. Their senior representatives would attend the shareholders' meetings et al.



The premier airline was a business and it should have been run as such and not like a zamindari. The acting zamindar was usually a joint secretary of the Government of India. He might have been a perfect bureaucrat but was likely to be wedded to the correct procedure and not oriented towards profit. He would have worried more about the audit than about results. That is not how a business is run. Companies owned and run by the Government are euphemistically called "public sector" without the realisation that it is an appendix of State capitalism. Where is the public as an owner, either direct or indirect?

was irksome enough for us. For European travellers, one can imagine, it would be anathema. If say, 20 per cent shareholding was also sold to the public, it would appear in public perception to be a company like any other. Industrial action would then be easier to take. For years Larsen & Toubro was 54 per cent financial institution held and yet ran like a private company and gave decent returns to its shareholders. It was only when Reliance Industries bought out some shares from some of the financial institutions that the 54 per cent came into public limelight.



YES, INDIA HAS A LARGE TRADING CLASS AND SMALL TO MEDIUM INDUSTRY RUNNERS. BUT FOR THE SIZE OF ITS ECONOMY AND THE DIMENSION OF ITS NEEDS, THERE ARE NOT MANY CANDIDATES AROUND

The joint secretary, being from a cadre, was obliged to upgrade passengers free of charge. I have once travelled to London business class with my family. Many of the seats in the aircraft were filled at the last minute, before departure, with odd persons with whom I did not enjoy travelling. Mind you, I am not a snob; I have brushed shoulders with all kinds in politics. These appeared to be mostly relatives or friends of trade union leaders who had been obliged so as to maintain industrial peace. In a Government, one had to do so; any effort to solve any case of industrial tension needed the blessings of senior officers, if not the Board of Directors. For officers, it was best to maintain good relations with trade union leaders, if necessary with soft peddling.

Another set of contributors to the sickness of Air India was the VIPs and ministers, whose recommendations had to be implemented. Whether the person was required or not, he or she generally had to be appointed. Whether he was qualified was rarely commented upon. People in Government seldom appreciate that overheads can bring down companies. That has made Air India a treasure house of too many employees, at least four times more than required.

To travel with such elements

VVIPs climbed even higher heights. As soon as UPA-I

came to power in 2004, a minister took off to Europe and bought a large number of aircraft. He repeated his performance soon thereafter by flying to the USA to acquire Boeing aircraft for Air India. The earlier lot of Airbus planes were for Indian Airlines. To top up his exploits, he had both the airlines amalgamated. No questions were really asked nor answered. The cost of borrowing drove the final nail on the coffin.

The bitter Air India experience need not forever condemn public money being invested in industry. For a simple reason, India does not have a sizable and sufficient number of industrialists to industrialise the economy. Any old trader is not a potential industrialist. Yes, India has a large trading class and small to medium industry runners. But setting up a large industry requires a longer vision, a modicum of integrity, the ability to build the project rapidly before inflation overruns the cost, and ultimately the ability to manage a large industry.

the liberal days of Indira Gandhi onwards, it was easy to borrow money from the bigger banks. Quite a few big, impressive houses, apparently successful, owe more they own. That is alright when a substantial part of the debt is from one's own shareholders and not from bankers. Hence, let the Government play its part as an indirect shareholder in a reputable house. Additionally, invite, induce and attract foreign houses but not in consumer products.

Let the foreign company suggest what they would like to manufacture. Thereafter, the Government can verify whether the particular product is required in India. If it is, let the foreign firm decide how much and what percentage it wishes to invest. Then a public issue could be launched. What does not get subscribed can be filled up by the institution or banks. If the foreign firms, to feel secure, request the institution to fill the gap between 51 per cent and what it invests, say 15 or 17 per cent, it should be done.

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

For the size of our economy and the dimension of India's needs, there are not many candidates around. In

PICTALK



Grey-headed Swamphens fight at a pond in Ghaziabad

PTI

Good lord!

Kejriwal is going all out to woo Hindu voters ahead of the UP Assembly polls early next year

After heartily wooing the minority community, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is now seeking the blessings of Lord Ram to make a mark, if not win, in the upcoming Uttar Pradesh election. A day after he visited Ayodhya for Ram Lalla darshan, the Delhi Government has added Ayodhya as one of the destinations in its popular free pilgrimage scheme, 'Mukhya Mantri Teerth Yatra Yojana'. By doing so, Kejriwal is taking on the BJP head-on and hopes to beat it in its own game. Under the scheme, the Delhi Government bears the expenses of about 77,000 pilgrims above the age of 60 every year. This scheme was frowned upon by the seculars for playing to and abetting religious sentiments. The Ram Mandir construction and resolution of the temple dispute by the court are likely to be a major



poll plank in Uttar Pradesh. Though the AAP has largely kept Hindu-related issues at an arm's distance, this move shows a paradigm shift in its strategy. Even earlier, Kejriwal has been criticised for not honouring his secular credentials. He was often called out for not doing enough in the recent Delhi riots and named the "B-team of the BJP" by his political opponents.

Though UP is still a few months away from elections, the stakes are so high that almost all parties, including the BJP, are not letting up their efforts. The AAP is enthused with its initial success in Punjab and Goa and has made forays into other States, too. Now betting big on UP, it formally kicked off its poll campaign in September this year. Right from the start, the AAP seems to be giving a clear message that it is not against the construction of the Ram temple. By doing so, it wants to reach out to the Hindu voters disgruntled with the BJP. To send a clear message to these voters, senior AAP leaders Manish Sisodia and Sanjay Singh had offered prayers at the Ram Janmabhoomi and Hanumangarhi shrines in the temple town before Kejriwal's visit. The AAP knows well that freebies work. So along with the endorsement for the Ram temple, it is also offering 300 units of electricity free of cost to all domestic consumers and promised to waive outstanding bills of 38 lakh families in UP if it wins the Assembly election. The AAP will contest all 403 seats in UP.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A FAIR PROBE INTO THE PEGASUS ISSUE

Sir — The apex court setting up an independent probe panel with a retired Supreme Court judge at the helm, to investigate into the Pegasus snooping affair in India is welcome. With this decision, it has apparently given utmost importance to the protection of fundamental rights of the individual, as the ultimate custodian of the Constitution. The Union Government has not come clear, when asked by the Court on the issue of Pegasus — an Israeli snooping software that was allegedly used to spy on political rivals. In this snooping affair, under the guise of threat to national security, the fundamental right to privacy of the citizen and right to freedom of the press are being seemingly subverted by the State or by some private entities, which is a dangerous sign for a healthy democracy. The Government has every right and duty to snoop into the activities of suspected terrorists or their supporters in a legally sanctioned manner. But it has no right to infringe upon the fundamental rights of citizens; overtly or covertly at its whims and fancies. Now the apex Court has settled the issue by reconfirming the primacy of fundamental rights and their place at high pedestal on the ladder of democracy.

DVG Sankararao | Vizianagaram

BIGOTRY DISGUISED AS SENTIMENTS

Sir — The celebrated filmmaker Prakash Jha had to face the wrath of the self-righteous group the Bajrang Dal, over the making of web series Ashram in Madhya Pradesh. This is not a healthy precedent to any civilised society and the nation. The attacks on film directors and writers over petty issues isn't a new phenomenon but a new trend in our country taken up by the pseudo champion of moral policing. The self-righteous group Bajrang Dal should have first registered the complaint to the administration over the objectionable materials and raised complaints on Ashram nomenclature per se, instead of resorting to hooliganism to grab the attention for a wrong reason.

The Captain wants a payback



Captain Amarinder Singh has declared that he is going to form a new political party and the Election Commission will soon clear its name and symbol. The Captain has announced that his party will contest on all the Assembly seats and will have seat adjustment with other like-minded parties. He is likely to meet Amit Shah on Thursday on the issue of farmers' agitation. He also informed that he has not met any farm leader and also confirmed that talks

are already going on between farm leaders and the Government and is hopeful of some concrete solution on the issue very soon. The former Punjab Chief Minister has been successful in conveying the message that he was deeply humiliated by the Congress high command; challenging that the grand old party will have to pay for it.

In UP, 40 per cent seats will be allotted to women (as per Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi) and today, Harish Rawat declared that the same formula may be adopted in Uttarakhnad. Apparently, it can not be denied that the same formula may be applied in Punjab also. Punjab has become a ground for personal and sentimental politics. Earlier, Navjot Singh Sidhu was acting like an 'unguided missile' and now the Captain appears to be a wounded and desperate lion who is moving ahead on the lines of revenge and payback.

Yash Pal Rathan | Jalandhar

It is meaningless they are now trying to object and interfere in the making of web series when it has already completed two seasons successfully. The veteran film director was caught in a bind of political fury and discourse for trying to mirror the true image of our society through his film. All this unnecessary ruckus created by the Bajrang Dal including the Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra, over nomenclature of fictional film is a dire attempt to look at the piece of an art with a parochial mindset and for a political mileage.

Janga Bahadur Sunuwar | Bagrakote

SHOWING SOLIDARITY THROUGH SPORTS

Sir — South Africa opener Quinton de Kock has triggered a needless controversy by refusing to take a "knee" before the start of the T20 World Cup game against West Indies. If De Kock's stance is an objection to the directive issued by Cricket South Africa (CSA), it could mean the end of his participation in the

World Cup, and possibly cost him his international career. Taking a knee has become a popular symbol to show solidarity with the 'Black Lives Matter' movement which gained momentum following the brutal killing of the African-American George Floyd by a white Minneapolis police officer.

It is part of a long history of players and athletes using sport as a platform to draw attention to the racial inequalities that communities experience. Systemic racism exists across the world and cricket is not immune to the scourge, as it commits itself to bring changes amid the BLM Foundation, whose mission is to eradicate white supremacy. Meanwhile, the situation which has now exploded at a World Cup, is an indictment of the leadership of CSA, which was racked by management issues over the last couple of years.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

I was fortunate that I got the chance to bow before Ram Lalla and I wish everyone must get this chance.



Delhi Chief Minister — Arvind Kejriwal

It isn't enough just to invest in our physical infrastructure — we also have to invest in our people.



US President — Joe Biden

While working on Toofaan, I realised there are no shortcuts when you want to portray a character like Aziz.



Actor — Farhan Akhtar

I've heard a lot of good things about the Pakistan Premier League from other players. It's something to consider in the future.



New Zealand skipper — Kane Williamson

We have decided to become the voice of youth and will organise the biggest rally of the country against unemployment.



RJD leader — Tejashwi Yadav



FIRST COLUMN COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND SKILL FRAMEWORK

Vocational courses and community colleges are a viable alternative to tertiary education



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

India does not have enough higher educational institutions to accommodate even half of its young population. When it comes to vocational training, only 10 per cent of the workforce in India is formally trained, compared to 96 per cent in Korea, 80 per cent in Japan and 68 per cent in the United Kingdom. There are two important issues which need to be addressed. First, there are not enough vocational education providers. Secondly, the current public perception of vocational courses is problematic; such courses are often seen as a refuge for those who have failed to make a mark in mainstream education. We have to change this perception by creating awareness about vocational education and providing career counseling at an early age in schools. India has an ambitious goal to train 500 million of its citizens by 2022 with skills and competencies for participation in the present and future labour market. Therefore, the viable alternative to formal tertiary education is Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Community Colleges which will directly contribute to skilled workforce and the nation's economy. We have to give due emphasis to the role of Community Colleges in implementing the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, through National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF). Although the concept of Community college has not been accepted by the educational system of India as such, it has created its own his-



tory in the last two decades. At present, there are more than 500 community colleges in the country. How are Indian Community colleges different from the two existing vocational systems — the two-year Industrial Technical Institutes and the three year Polytechnics? Both these programmes are skill and job-oriented and supply trained personnel to industries. Community colleges should have a clear mandate and agenda of its own which is to prepare the youth for the workforce in a year or two by giving them skill-oriented education along with some life skills.

There has to be some other motivating factor to attract students to Community Colleges. It is the responsibility of Community Colleges to identify such factors and project them as their Unique Selling Points. The difference lies in the fact that the collegiate level vocational education offers only apprenticeship training and vocationalization of first-degree level whereas Community colleges offer a range of multi-focused programmes in occupational and technical and in continuing education. The courses offered by the colleges are designed to meet the workforce needs of the regions in which the colleges are located. Another purpose of Community colleges is to offer "bridge" courses to complete higher certifications, ensure employability and competency of the individual trained, teach life skills and communication in English and provide training in personal, social, language, communication and creative skills. The role of Community Colleges in implementing NVEQF is crucial for the development of vocational education and skill development. NVEQF is a descriptive framework that organizes qualifications according to a series of levels of knowledge along with the skills. These levels are defined in terms of learning outcomes or competencies the learner must possess regardless of whether they were acquired through formal, non-formal or informal education and training. Given the framework of the NEP, having a strong emphasis on skill-based vocational education, the role of Community Colleges in implementing NSQF would be significant as it will follow a modular, credit-based system that keeps abreast of technological and other workforce changes.

(The writer is a senior journalist and Chairman, Panwar Group of Institutions, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The views expressed are personal.)

Taliban: Sanctions and recognition



RAKESH K SINGH

Given the reach and lethality of ISIS, the Taliban may not withstand pressure from the international terror group in the long run unless Al-Qaeda is roped in for countermeasure

The Taliban's outreach to the international community is driven mainly by the existential crisis the outfit is facing back home due to both the presence and lethality of the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) that holds the potential to challenge and overthrow the current regime in Kabul essentially supplanted by Pakistan's covert agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). The Taliban is seeking to first get the Interim Cabinet members' designated terrorist tag removed. At least 14 members of the Interim Cabinet are designated terrorists of the UN as well as the US sanctions lists. With such a designation, Taliban cabinet representatives cannot move around freely amid apprehension of fatal drone strikes against them. The Taliban is also vying for international recognition from the global community or at least as many countries as possible in the region and beyond.

Once recognized by the international community, the Taliban will be able to put across its viewpoints at various forums of the UN as also seeking funding assistance for its messed-up economy from the IMF and WB.

The Taliban will then also be able to negotiate military assistance from the UN member-states in the name of countering terrorism on Afghan soil by anti-Taliban groups like ISKP.

The Taliban is habituated to survive on illicit financing through extortion and garnering proceeds from sale of narcotics. The recognition of its regime will help Taliban in transforming the black economy into white money channels.

These factors have compelled the Taliban to pitch in for international recognition and portray itself as Taliban 2.0, radically dissimilar from the outfit's regime that ruled the roost in Afghanistan till 2001.

Notwithstanding the Taliban propaganda ruling out any threat from ISIS, the fact is that ISKP is a profound and dangerous competitor to Al Qaeda to whom the Taliban owes allegiance.

The Taliban is essentially a local terror group with influence being limited to Afghanistan and completely unlike the ISIS that has a cadre and funding base from multiple ethnicities and geographies.

In a worrying fact, the ISIS has some significant presence on the ground and has been able to inflict four major terror attacks on the Afghan soil post-takeover of Kabul by Taliban on August 15, including the deadly Kabul airport hit amid the then ongoing US troops' withdrawal and fatal attacks on Shia mosques in Kunduz and Kandahar.

With active connivance and assistance from the ISI, the Taliban has been able to deceive the international community in seizing power in Afghanistan in a swift advance and without any resistance either from the erstwhile Afghan National Defence Force or any militia.

But the Taliban cannot deal with the



THE TALIBAN HAVE BEEN MAINLY TRAINED IN PERPETRATING INSURGENCY BUT TACKLING INSURGENCY IS AN ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT BALLGAME. THE ISI MASTERMINDS DELIBERATELY KEPT THE OUTFIT AWAY FROM GAINING SUCH CRAFT

(The writer is a Special Correspondent, The Pioneer. The views expressed are personal.)



situation at the international level on its own after it has grabbed power in Kabul.

By engaging in multilateral meets like the Moscow format, the Taliban is buying time to gain international recognition and keep the anti-Taliban forces at a relative bay by participating in such overtures.

Taliban has been mainly trained in perpetrating insurgency but tackling insurgency is an altogether different ball game. The ISI masterminds have deliberately kept the outfit away from gaining such craft.

The Taliban apprehends that if ISIS continues with its bombing spree and spreads traction among the Afghan society and enlarges the area of influence, all the other anti-Taliban forces will rally under it to overthrow the current regime in Kabul.

Given the reach and lethality of ISIS, the Taliban may not withstand the pressure from the international terror group in the long run unless Al Qaeda is roped in for the countermeasure.

In this backdrop, the Taliban is left with two broad choices for survival—-one to get recognition for its regime in Kabul and subsequently get military assistance to counter ISIS or ally with Al Qaeda which can pool in its fighters from various countries to check ISIS or its Afghan affiliate ISKP.

In its bid to seek international recognition, the Taliban is also portraying that it does not want Al Qaeda fighters and this is the reason why it is seeking sanctity from the global comity of nations for its regime in Kabul.

For its international recogni-

tion project, the Taliban has fielded Anas Haqqani, the Home Minister of the interim government and Amir Khan Muttaqi, the Foreign Minister, for addressing the internal and external dimensions of the Afghan challenge.

While Haqqani is seeking to update the international community on the need to check dissidence in the Afghan society as well in the pockets on the Afghanistan-Pakistan region dominated by a large population of the Pakhtun ethnicity who could come in handy for taking refuge in the event of the international community or a group of countries deciding to decimate the Taliban to protect their own sovereign interests.

Haqqani is also tasked with the onus to keep Baloch insurgents in check so as to deny foreign agencies like the Mossad and Research and Analysis Wing the opportunity to carry out anti-terror action in Pakistan from Afghan soil.

Muttaqi is tasked to ensure external security by checking Iran from attacking Afghanistan through the ISIS or bombings by the Russians who see the turmoil in the war-ravaged country as a threat to their respective sovereign interests.

The Taliban leadership is also clear that it has reached the stage of forming an interim government with ISI help but is also aware of the need to balance between the ISI and the international community.

Taliban is further aware that despite being helped by the ISI to control Kabul, it cannot be seen as a puppet of Pakistan beyond a point as international recognition eludes the regime.

Despite its overtures and

pledge to form an inclusive government in line with the desire of the international community, Taliban has so far been getting help exclusively from China because of its strategic location and Pakistan's back-channel support in roping in Beijing to rescue the Taliban from the plethora of mess it is facing.

Now, the Taliban is aiming to have a direct communication with China to maximize the cooperation it is getting from Beijing and simultaneously sideline Pakistan to shed its image as an ISI puppet.

Fully aware of the Pakistani machinations in both Kabul and within Taliban, Russia did not invite the Pakistani pointsman Gulbuddin Hekmatyar heading the Hizb-e-Islami faction of Taliban for the Moscow format dialogue underway in the Russian capital. Hekmatyar has issued a statement that Moscow talks would fail as all sections of Afghan society have not been represented in the talks.

While 10 countries including India and China participated in the Moscow talks, none of the countries, not even China, is willing to grant recognition to the Taliban.

The Taliban was initially buoyant over the vast number of American equipment left behind by the allied forces but now it is realizing that these machines could threaten its existence if ISIS gets hold of them. The Taliban cannot use American weapons due to lack of training.

The complexity of the Afghan problem makes the situation in Afghanistan pregnant with all possibilities including bombing by the Russians or an onset of a Shia insurgency.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

I WILL BE FORMING A NEW PARTY. THE NAME AND THE SYMBOL WILL BE ANNOUNCED ONCE THE ELECTION COMMISSION CLEARS IT.
—FORMER PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER
CAPT AMARINDER SINGH



THE LAST TIME YOU FORMED YOUR OWN PARTY, YOU GARNERED ONLY 856 VOTES. THE PEOPLE OF PUNJAB ARE WAITING TO PUNISH YOU AGAIN.
—PUNJAB CONGRESS CHIEF
NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU

The need today: Localising solutions

An inclusive process of planning and programme deployment is the only way to ensure that the most vulnerable have access to benefits

When we met Rama Krishna, our heart was broken. His wife was in the hospital and he needed money for her treatment. Krishna and his family were enrolled for health benefits under the Building and Other Construction Workers (regulation of employment and conditions of service) Act, 1996. However, the paperwork he needed to avail the benefits was too cumbersome. He needed his Aadhaar card, hospital bills, proof of work, marriage certificate, details of any dependants and so much more. Finally, he could not convince his union leader to give him proof of his last salary slip. And thus, he could not avail the benefits. He needed the money immedi-



RWITIKA BHATTACHARYA | KRISHNA LAVU

(Bhattacharya is the CEO of Swaniti Initiative. Lavu is a Member of the Lok Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

ately for treatment. While we were able to help him out then, we wondered how many more Krishnas were out there. Krishna's situation pointed to a systemic issue where the willingness to want to deliver basic services remains but a top-down program design is becoming a hindrance in accessing these programs.

From loan waivers to scholarship for marginalized communities, there is no dearth of programs that serve vulnerable populations. However, with the programs being designed by those sitting in the State and national Capitals often means a disconnect to reality. The result is that these programs become hard to operationalize and ultimately do not yield intended benefits. Therefore, it is



critical to work with communities to develop solutions, provide local talent who can help design and deliver on problems and create a culture of bottom-up planning.

An inclusive process of planning and program deployment is the only way to ensure that the most vulnerable have access to benefits.

Consider for example the District Minerals Trust Fund that uses the cess of mining companies in to address com-

munity needs. Districts who have been adversely affected by mining have complete discretion on how they want to use resources for hyperlocal needs. In Ramgarh and Chattra, the administration conducted Gram Sabhas and local stakeholder meetings and recognized the need for more sustainable and high paying jobs than those offered by the mining industry.

Thus, rather than look for jobs with skills that might not be easily available, these districts brought in green and renewable opportunities like solarization of agriculture sector and created related jobs. The result is higher paying local jobs with sustainability. A culture of identifying local needs with the flexibility of using funds has allowed these

districts to create hyperlocal solutions. Rather than routing funding through schemes, there is significant merit in providing discretionary funds for districts as well.

Resources are often not enough. It is important to match them with personnel on the ground who can provide feedback about community condition. Andhra has designed the village volunteer program with similar intentions in mind. Every 100-200 households have a young person helping them with access to programs and benefits. When lockdown was affecting most of the country with no one being able to access banks, government offices, etc. village volunteers accessed this pressing gap and were mobilized to withdraw the cash and deliv-

er the amount to each household. The money became the lifeline for most families who continue to remain dependent on pensions and social welfare to ensure a functioning household. It is critical to have people within communities who can identify errors and work with the government to help overcome them. While in some situations local NGOs are stepping in to provide needed support, there needs to be systems and human capital to do so.

Finally, in order to ensure such a model comes into play, it is important to have a culture of appreciating the local opinion. The second wave of the covid pandemic highlighted the importance of letting communities decide the most appropriate response. In

the process, models emerged of how districts were able to mobilize resources and talent to bridge this gap. We saw districts with a strong agricultural belt being willing to keep mandis open over the weekend. Whereas others choosing to go in to complete lockdown. The diversity within India demands for each community to adopt to local needs. There needs to be a strategic shift toward providing much assistance and insights to districts.

Only when we empower our local administrations with the resources to take independent decisions can we design and implement effective solutions. Otherwise, the stories of more Rama Krishnas will continue to emerge, plagued by systemic issues.

Cooking gas price may be hiked next week; fuel rates up again

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cooking gas LPG prices may be hiked next week after under-recovery on the fuel widened to over Rs 100 per cylinder, sources said insisting that the rate hike, including the quantum of increase, is dependent on government permission.

If allowed, this will be the fifth increase in cooking gas rates across all categories — households using subsidised gas for cooking and heating purposes, non-subsidised fuel and industrial-sized gas.

LPG rates were last hiked by Rs 15 per cylinder on October 6, taking the total increase in rates since July to Rs 90 per 14.2-kg cylinder.

Sources with direct knowledge of the matter said state-owned oil marketing companies have not been allowed to align retail selling price with the cost, and no government subsidy has so far been approved to bridge the gap.



The under-recovery or losses on LPG sales have mounted to over Rs 100 per cylinder after international energy prices soared to multi-year high, they said.

While Saudi LPG rates have jumped by 60 per cent to USD 800 per tonne this month, international benchmark Brent crude oil is trading at USD 85.42 per barrel.

"LPG is still a controlled commodity. So, technically, the government can regulate the

retail selling price. But, when they do that the oil companies have to be compensated for the under-recovery (or losses) they incur on selling LPG at rates below the cost," one of the sources said.

The government last year eliminated subsidies on LPG by bringing retail prices at par with the cost through periodic hikes. But, unlike petrol and diesel, whose pricing has been decontrolled, the government has not official announced deregulation of LPG rates.

"So far, there is no indication that the compensation or subsidy will be restored as the gap between cost and retail price has widened," the source said.

In case the government is not willing to bear subsidy, retail prices have to increase, he said adding that the increases might be moderated to spare consumers of any steep burden.

Currently, cooking gas costs Rs 899.50 per cylinder in Delhi and Mumbai, and Rs 926 in Kolkata. This is the rate that domestic households — who are entitled to 12 cylinders of 14.2-kg each at subsidised rates, poor households that get free connections under the Ujjwala scheme and industrial users pay.

Meanwhile, after a two-day pause, petrol and diesel prices on Wednesday were again hiked by 35 paise per litre each, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. Petrol now costs Rs 107.94

a litre in Delhi and Rs 113.80 in Mumbai. Diesel is now priced at Rs 96.67 a litre in Delhi and Rs 104.75 in Mumbai.

While petrol has already hit the Rs 100-a-litre mark or more in all major cities of the country, diesel has touched that level in over one-and-a-half dozen states and UTs from Jammu & Kashmir to Tamil Nadu. Prices differ from state to state, depending on the incidence of local taxes.

Petrol price has been hiked on 22 occasions since September 28, when a three-week-long hiatus in rate revision ended. In all, prices have gone up by Rs 6.75 a litre.

Diesel rates have been increased by Rs 8.05 per litre in 24 hikes since September 24.

Prior to that, the petrol price was increased by Rs 11.44 a litre between May 4 and July 17. The diesel rate had gone up by Rs 9.14 per litre during this period.

MFIs shouldn't throw caution to wind for higher growth, says RBI

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Reserve Bank of India Deputy Governor M Rajeshwar Rao on Wednesday said while the central bank will foster growth in the microfinance (MFI) sector, the lenders in the space should not throw caution to the wind to achieve higher asset growth and returns.

MFIs should not try to mimic the strategies of mainstream finance, as those serving the microfinance borrowers have a greater need to balance the social objectives with their lending operations, he said.

"While chasing higher asset growth and returns, (MFI) lenders should not throw caution to the wind. Any slip-up through adverse action of MFIs may undo the tremendous progress achieved over the decades and the sector can ill-afford to do that," Rao said.

He was speaking at a conference organised by Sa-Dhan, a self-regulatory organisation for the microfinance sector.

The roots and origins of microfinance should not be forgotten and sacrificed at the



altar of bottom-line growth, he added.

There is no denying the fact that self-sufficiency and financial sustainability are the objectives that the lenders need to pursue, Rao stated.

"However, prioritization of profitability at the expense of social and welfare goals of micro finance may not be an optimal outcome. Lenders need to remain cognizant of the fact that the balance sheet growth should not be built by compromising on prudent conduct," he said.

The Deputy Governor said from the regulatory side, RBI would look to foster growth of

the sector, guided by the ultimate objective of financial inclusion and customer protection, while providing a level playing field.

He emphasized that MFIs should focus on understanding the needs of customers first and offer them an adequate level of support through appropriate financial products.

Since MFI customers have low levels of financial awareness and are too desperate to turn away any source of credit, they need to be treated with care and empathy and should not be considered as mere data points for investor presentations, he said.

Money Matters

Govt gets Rs 6,665 crore dividend from BPCL for FY21

The government has received a final dividend of Rs 6,665 crore from privatisation-bound Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) for the 2020-21 fiscal, DIPAM Secretary said on Wednesday. Govt received final dividend of Rs 6,665 crore from BPCL for the FY 2020-21. This includes special dividend on account of gains especially on sale of BPCL's stake in Numaligarh Refinery in March 2021. DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kantia Pandey tweeted, "In March, BPCL had sold its entire 61.5 per cent stake in Numaligarh Refinery in Assam to a consortium of Oil India Ltd and Engineers India and the Assam for Rs 9,876 crore."

Indian Overseas Bank Q2 profit jumps to Rs 376 cr

State-owned IOB on Wednesday posted a more than two-fold jump in net profit for the July-September quarter of this fiscal to Rs 376 crore compared to Rs 148 crore in the year-ago period. The bank also came out of the RBI's PCA framework during the reported period. Total income for the quarter ending September stood at Rs 5,376 crore as against Rs 5,431 crore a year ago, the bank said in a regulatory filing. On the asset front, the bank witnessed a good performance with the net NPA falling to 2.77 per cent of the net advances as of September 30, 2021, as against 4.30 per cent a year ago.

GST officers arrest 3 persons for running fake firms

GST officers have arrested three persons for running fake firms and evading GST of over Rs 48 crore, the Finance Ministry said on Wednesday. The Gurugram Zonal Unit of the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) has arrested three persons under the provisions of the GST Act on charges of running multiple fake firms on the strength of fake documents in two different cases. Two persons were arrested from Delhi on October 5 and 9, on charges of orchestrating a fake billing racket involving more than 20 fake firms where more than Rs 22 crore of fraudulent input tax credit was taken.

Rupee declines 7 paise to close at 75.03 against USD

The rupee weakened by 7 paise to end at 75.03 against the US currency on Wednesday, weighed down by a muted trend in domestic equities and strength of the American currency in the overseas market. The local currency opened at 75.02 and later witnessed a high of 74.90 and a low of 75.05 against the US dollar in the day trade. The local unit finally settled at 75.03 a dollar, down 7 paise over its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee had settled at 74.96 against the US dollar. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, declined by 1.08 per cent to USD 85.47 per barrel.

Bluesemi gets USD 69 mn commitment from GEM

Healthtech startup Bluesemi on Wednesday announced a USD 69 million funding commitment from Luxembourg-based GEM Global Yield, which will help it launch a new product. The company, which has products in preventive and connected healthtech, said it has signed an agreement with GEM for the fund infusion and the money will be provided as a "shared subscription facility for over a 36-month term following a public listing of Bluesemi's common stock". The firm will have the autonomy to determine the timing and maximum amount of drawdowns under this facility with no minimum obligation, a statement said.

Sensex drops 207 points; Nifty ends below 18,250

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark Sensex tumbled 207 points on Wednesday, weighed by losses in Axis Bank, Reliance Industries and Bajaj Finance amid a weak trend in global markets.

The 30-share index ended 206.93 points or 0.34 per cent lower at 61,143.33. Similarly, the NSE Nifty fell 57.45 points or 0.31 per cent to 18,210.95.

Axis Bank was the top loser in the Sensex pack, tanking over 6 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, HUL and Tata Steel.

On the other hand, Asian Pharms, Sun Pharma, Infosys, SBI and UltraTech Cement were among the gainers.

Markets traded on a lacklustre note, tracking mixed cues. Initially, weak Asian markets were weighing on the sentiments and mixed trend across sectors kept the participants guessing as the session pro-



gressed, said Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking. A sharp dip in select index majors from banking, metal and energy sectors pushed the benchmark lower in the final hour, he noted.

"Markets are closely watching earnings for cues and we'll see the reaction to the numbers of select index majors in early trade on Thursday. Besides, volatility is expected to remain

high due to the scheduled monthly derivatives expiry," Mishra added.

Elsewhere in Asia, bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul ended with losses.

Stock exchanges in Europe were also trading on a negative note in mid-session deals.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude slumped 1.09 per cent to USD 84.72 per barrel.

Persistent Q2 net up 58%, to hire over 3K freshers

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Mid-tier IT company Persistent Systems has reported a 58.6 per cent jump in the September quarter net profit to Rs 161.7 crore but said that managing the human resources is the biggest challenge ahead.

The Pune-based company posted a 34 per cent jump in the revenue to Rs 1,351.2 crore for the July-September period, which saw a massive increase in demand for software services. Its sequential revenue growth came at over 9 per cent for the second successive quarter.

Its operating profit margin came at 16.1 per cent, which executives explained was within the target band that it aspires. Persistent Systems CEO Sandeep Kalra said demand has been moving very strong from all of its verticals that ensured a broad-based growth during the quarter.

'Safeguard interests of automotive dealers'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Automobile dealers' body FADA on Wednesday sought legislation to specifically look into the OEM-dealer issues in the wake of several foreign companies shutting operations in the country, leaving their customers and dealers in the lurch.

The sudden exits adversely impact the interests of consumers who are often left with no avenues for after-sales services and with resale value of their vehicles nose-diving.

Ultimately, this casts an unfair burden on the dealers who have to step in to ensure that their relationships with consumers are not ruined, while also facing the endless barrage of consumer complaints due to the OEM's unilateral actions.

Stating their case for the Auto Dealers Protection Act in India, Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations of India (FADA) noted that automobile dealers in the country were predominantly small and medium



enterprises (SMEs) which are either family-owned businesses or partnerships firms and have significantly lower bargaining power in comparison to their OEMs which in-turn are large corporations.

The entrenched unethical and imbalanced power structures with OEMs have caused a great deal of anguish to automobile dealers as the existing laws are not adequate to protect their interests. India should also urgently consider the introduction of an Automobile Dealers Protection Act to make contracts more balanced and equitable, he added.

Google, MeitY partner to help Indian startups

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Google and MeitY Startup Hub on Wednesday said they have partnered to launch Appscale Academy to help Indian startups build high-quality apps.

MeitY Startup Hub is an initiative of the Ministry of Electronics and IT.

Appscale Academy will focus on helping local early to mid-stage startups build and scale a range of world-class apps across domains, including gaming, healthcare, fintech, edtech, social impact, and others, a statement said.

India, one of the fastest-growing app user countries in the world, is also home to a vibrant ecosystem of startups and developers that are not only impacting millions of people in the country through their solutions but also has the potential to drive global app innovations. Applications will be open till December 15, 2021, from which 100 startups

will be selected based on defined qualitative and quantitative parameters by a panel of industry experts, members of MeitY Startup Hub, and Google Play. The programme will also provide a special focus to the emerging startup ecosystem in tier II and III cities of India, aiming to provide them with the help needed to build scalable app solutions, the statement added.

"We are excited to see India's thriving startup ecosystem not only solve for India but also reach global audiences. At Google Play, we believe Indian startups and developers have the ability to set an example for the rest of the world to follow," Purnima Kochikar, Vice President of Google Play Partnerships, said.

She added that the partnership with the MeitY Startup Hub will help further tap into the tremendous potential of this ecosystem and help them build sustainable and scalable global businesses.

BPCL IN PACT WITH DELOITTE Digital transformation delivering impact

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Privatisation-bound Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) has picked Deloitte India to implement an ambitious digital transformation project that aims to enhance the customer experience across all touchpoints by providing a single view of products and services across business units.

"Project Anubhav" has been "well received by customers

and other stakeholders making an impact in the initial phase BPCL chose Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP (Deloitte India) as their technology partner for the project to help build, design and implement various customer-focused digital initiatives.

"These various initiatives will enable customers and other stakeholders to interact with each of BPCL's six business units of retail, industrial

and commercial (I&C), LPG, lubricants, gas, and aviation," it said. Initiated amid the Covid pandemic, the digital transformation is aimed at delivering a unified and coherent customer experience, bringing trust, convenience, and personalisation in the delivery of products and services across business units to customers.

"To attract, acquire, and retain customers, BPCL is

aiming to provide a unified, consistent and touchless self-service experience to its 8.5 crore families consuming cooking gas, over 10,000 I&C customers, and over 1.2 crore vehicle owners who tank up every day at BPCL's fuel stations," the statement said.

The oil and gas major would be able to understand trends and consumption patterns and drive customer solutions across business units.

Saudi to provide \$4.2 bln to Pak

PNS ■ ISLAMABAD

Saudi Arabia has agreed to provide \$4.2 billion worth of assistance to cash-strapped Pakistan to support its economy, it emerged on Wednesday after Prime Minister Imran Khan held talks with Saudi Prince Mohammad bin Salman in Riyadh this week.

CBDT expands Form 26AS info list

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The income tax department has expanded the list of high-value financial transactions which would be available to taxpayers in their form 26AS by including details of mutual fund (MF) purchases, foreign remittances, as well as information in ITRs of other taxpayers.

Form 26AS is an annual

consolidated tax statement that can be accessed from the income-tax website by taxpayers using their Permanent Account Number (PAN).

Additional information prescribed includes foreign remittance made by any person through an authorised dealer, breakup of the salary with deductions claimed by the employee, information in ITR of other taxpayers, inter-

est on Income Tax Refund, information published in Statement of Financial Transactions.

Also, off market transactions reported by depository/ registrar and transfer agent, information about dividend of mutual fund reported by RTA, and information about purchase of mutual fund reported by RTA too would be included in Form 26AS.

FPIs stock value soars by \$112 bn to \$667 bn in H1

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Amidst the continuing market rally, the value of the foreign portfolio investors' holdings in the domestic equities jumped by USD 112 billion to USD 667 billion between April 1 and September 30, 2021, even though they have been getting increasingly jittery about the highly stretched valuations, according to an American brokerage report.

The market has been on a song since the second half of 2020 after the pandemic scare shaved off around 23 per cent of the market in March 2020. But since then, the Sensex rallied to touch the 50,000-mark



on February 3, 60,000 level on September 25 and 61,000 on October 14. The BSE barometer touched the 62,000-mark on October 19, from under 25,000 points in March 2020. The value of the FPI hold-

ing had stood at USD 555 billion as of March 2021, which was a full USD 105 billion more than between September 2020 and March 2021.

As of June this year, the value of FII investment was

only USD 592 billion, which means that as the market rallied frenetically, their holding value jumped by USD 38 billion even though their net incremental investment was almost nil between this period.

In August, FPIs invested the lowest amount since February 2020 by pumping in only USD 281 million.

The valuation of FPI holdings rose to USD 667 billion as of end September, when they pumped in a healthy USD 1.8 billion. This flow took the overall inflows till September this year to USD 8.8 billion, which is the highest among all the emerging market peers so

far in 2021, according to Bank of America Securities India report on Wednesday.

Others markets continued to see massive outflows in September, with South Korea losing USD 25.5 billion and Taiwan shedding USD 16.7 billion. Only Brazil has positive inflows at USD 8.1 billion as of September, said the report. The authors of the report have warned of a tactical correction in the market as the valuations are very stretched. "With stretched valuations we expect a tactical correction in the market, even though earnings are likely to recover in Q2 as the economy opens," the report said.

Maruti Q2 net dips 66 pc to Rs 487 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The country's largest car-maker Maruti Suzuki India on Wednesday reported a 66 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 487 crore in the second quarter ended September 30, 2021, impacted by the ongoing semiconductor shortage and increase in commodity prices. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 1,420 crore in the second quarter of last fiscal, Maruti Suzuki India said in a statement.

Forget 'shaken, not stirred', this is hardcore

In the last quarter of over 25 years experience in his line of work, he felt an acute need to unravel the enigma surrounding spy-craft. Considering the fact that their work has forever been 'viewed' in various ways — the adventures of James Bond or Ethan Hunt, or demonizing by some as acts of exalted reprobates, author Prabhakar Aloka, whose debut book *Operation Haygreeva* (Penguin) recently hit the stands says that the authentic picture of spying as an instrument of providing security to common man is lost in these such descriptions.



ed to be at the cusp of forming a new government. As the Chief of the highly covert C3 unit of the Intelligence Bureau, Ravi Kumar leads a team of three novices from the academy guiding them through the tricks of the trade and his unorthodox methodology as they uncover a plot that is much larger and threatens the very fabric of the country's peace and stability.

Even as the Hindi film industry woke up to the existence of Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) a decade and a half back, the author smiles that the "proportion of truth and creative freedom varies from one narrator to the other", says Aloka who has served in counter-terror, counter-insurgency and anti-Naxalite theatres.

Maintaining that secrecy is an essential ingredient for unravelling deliberately hidden facts, Aloka adds that intelligence work consists of process and outcome.

"For sustained intelligence work, it is essential that the process remains under wraps and the outcome is not traced back to the agency. The outcome is achieved by the Police and other agencies. Indian Constitution mandates states to carry out Law and Order, and policing functions. Intelligence assists police forces in carrying out those functions," he says.

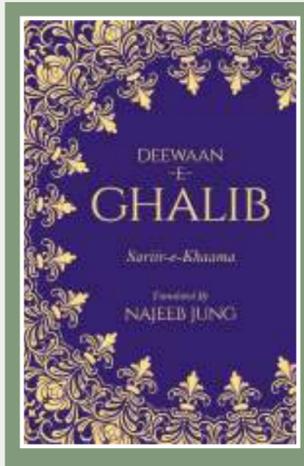
Talking about the eight episode OTT series planned on the book, the author says that it projects shows the triumph and turbulence a spy has to face in his mission.

"It attempts to project the psychological disruptions a spy has to undergo in maintaining his cover."

Mention that unlike the west, the spy genre has not really caught up with Indian publishers, and the author feels that it has not got its due universally despite being the oldest profession in the history of organised society.

"Spy work, in its myriad manifestation, has been used to defend the realm or the sovereign. Intelligence historians have pointed out that intelligence as an instrument of national and human security is a missing component in the historiography of nations and states. It is primarily considering the requirement of secrecy to protect processes. Evolution in warfare that has transformed the battleground from physical to cognitive space calls for opening up of the intelligence cycle without compromising the process. It High time that spy-work is included in historiography," he concludes.

— IANS



Ghalib's compassion, plurality is critical for our times: Najeeb Jung

This truly is the outcome of a lifetime of devotion to the work of Mirza Ghalib from the time Najeeb Jung's mother recited his poetry to him to the time his daughters helped him with the translation by finding the closest words to do justice to the original.

It's a journey that began when he was four years old but it was only in mid-2010 that the 70-year-old Jung, a former Lieutenant Governor of Delhi and former Vice Chancellor of Jamia Millia Islamia, found the right "Ustad" to guide him through the translation process. The outcome is *DEEWAN-E-GHALIB Sarir-e-Khaama* (Rekhta Books), a rendering in English of 235 of Ghalib's poems along with the originals in the Roman script.

"In these disturbed times, Ghalib's open discourse, his compassion and understanding, and his plurality assume huge importance. He demol-

ishes routinely held views on man, and his relationship with God, or the existence of heaven or hell, or man's allurements for heaven and his fear of hell, sin and goodness. For him truth was not the monopoly of any religion or dogma and the path to truth was open to all. To this end he is critical for our times," Jung told IANS.

"This is precisely why I have done this translation — a step to bring him closer to those who speak Urdu/Hindustani but their vocabulary is limited, or those who know English and wish to read and understand him," he added.

"As I recall, I was around 4-years-old when my late mother (Ammi) made me learn Ghalib. We also did a bit of Iqbal but Ghalib was her passion. So while my friends in class were reciting English nursery rhymes, I was spouting Ghalib — not that I understood the meanings!! I was a popular child in family gatherings for this. In fact, my mother often told a story how Maulana Azad, who was a family friend and we often visited his home at Edward Road, now renamed the Maulana Azad Road, would insist on listening to Ghalib being recited by a 4/5 year-old child," Jung said.

As time went by and school (St Columba's) gained

importance, Ghalib receded into the background "but Ammi and I continued reciting once in a while to each other. I kept reading the *Deewan* (in the original) whenever I could, having acquired many editions and prints over time".

In early 2000, he was at Oxford as a Visiting Fellow and had access to some outstanding libraries.

"I thought I had read enough and should try my hand at translating the Master for English speaking people or those who understood Urdu but did not have an adequate vocabulary. It did not take any time to realise I was not equipped for the task — neither was my vocabulary so good, nor did I fully comprehend the nuances and depth of his thought. I needed to read much more, and research the various "sharas" (commentaries) by other well know thinkers and writers and therefore to find the right Ustad. The big question was how to get THAT person," Jung elaborated.

As luck would have it, he came to the Jamia Millia Islamia in August 2009 and here began his search for the Ustad. His secretary, Zafar Hashmi, introduced him to Prof Khalid Mahmood who, at that time, was the Head of the Urdu department.

From mid-2010 to the end of 2016, every day they read Ghalib; re-read Ghalib, discussed the "ashaar" (nuances of the couplets), looked at commentaries and different interpretations, agreed and at times disagreed.

"By this time I felt ready to attempt a translation. The big question before me whether I should translate the whole *Deewan* or pick out the popular ghazals, already well known through films and popular ghazals sung by the greats like (K.L.) Saigal, Begum Akhtar, Jagjit Singh etc. and stick to translating them. I do not know why I decided to translate the entire *Deewan*."

"It has taken me four years to do this. It has been a back-breaking labour of love, a dream I have lived with. Sometimes, a couplet would not be difficult but some would be back-breaking," Jung elaborated.

He found it impossible to give true impression to this. So he would wake up at night and think over it, think on it during long walks, during long flights — and never be satisfied.

What eventually emerged was: Against whose playful writings can an image petition/For made of paper is the attire of each image.

There were more like this and hours were spent looking for words that would convey the most appropriate meaning to what Ghalib meant.

"I would seek out my daughters, discuss the couplet and more often than not, they came up with the right expression. It is difficult for a family to be with a husband or parent obsessed with a passion but play along with him with patience and fortitude. In fact for the latter half of 2020, we were all together in New York with everyone contributing to complete the

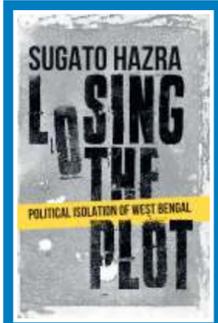
work. I guess every one of us wished to complete this work as soon as possible. Ten years was enough," Jung said. He also pointed out that Ghalib is multi-layered and that different meanings can be derived from the same couplet.

Has Ghalib received his due in India? "Well, despite Urdu not being widely read in India, and most people having inadequate vocabularies, Ghalib's ghazals have been sung manifold by the best in India. While it is near impossible to sing a ghazal in Qawali form, even that has happened. Masterpiece films have been made commencing from the 1940s when Saigal sahib played Ghalib, to Sohrab Modi's successful film in the early 1950s to the recent TV serial by Gulzar sahib — which will always remain a pure masterpiece bringing Ghalib into our homes," Jung said.

In 1969, the government celebrated Ghalib's death centenary with seminars, discussions and even a Mushaira at the Red Fort in Delhi. In addition, the Rekhta Foundation has brought him to the public and vast numbers of non-Urdu speaking people attend these recitations, and talks on him each year.

"So while the poetry may not be understood with its subtleties and nuances, Ghalib is most certainly heard, and admired by millions in India — and with time, his popularity grows," Jung concluded.

— IANS



Has West Bengal dug its own political grave?

Public policy analyst Sugato Hazra presents a comprehensive account of West Bengal's political history tracing the changing leadership, ideologies, and discourse from the birth of modern ideas and nationalism in the state which eventually spread

across India to what he contends is its steady movement away from the national mainstream in recent times. *Losing the Plot: Political Isolation of West Bengal* (Niyogi Books) delineates the political character of the state and its people, the dream of its early leaders, and the shattering of this in the course of

time. The author analyses in great detail the rift between Bengal's leadership and the rest of India since the days of nationalism. He explores West Bengal's regional political narrative and its continuing isolation from the national mainstream despite changes in government. The cultural, economic, and

social preponderance of West Bengal in the past, the author says, has given way to an unhappy decline because it has failed to engage with its politics in an effective manner.

But has West Bengal really lost the plot?

Eventually focusing on the outcome of the 2021

Assembly elections that saw the Trinamool Congress return for a third term in spite of the whistle-stop tours of the Narendra Modi-Amit Shah duo, Hazra ascribes this to the state opting for isolation from Hindi heartland politics to maintain its "distinct regional identity".

"In the final analysis,

Mamata Banerjee's personal popularity in heading the state was stronger than the visiting Modi-Shah duo who had a set narrative. The BJP could not sell its ambitious manifesto to the people who felt that the proverbial one bird in hand was better than the BJP's promised two in the bush. And finally, the age-old

antipathy of West Bengal towards the Hindi heartland narrative — an undercurrent that even Mahatma Gandhi had faced in his heydays — was too strong for Prime Minister Modi. Politically West Bengal has opted for isolation from Hindi heartland politics, thereby holding aloft its distinct regional identity," Hazra concludes. Is this premise valid, one wonders. Even so, the book is a valuable addition to the growing political literature in India.

FUN

ARCHIE



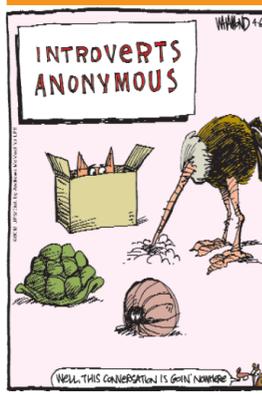
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



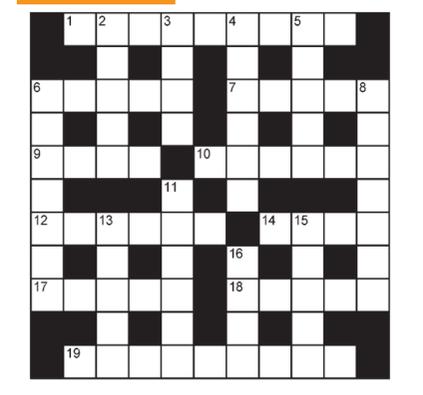
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

- ACROSS**
- Dirty and unhealthy air or water
 - More than is needed
 - Water covering land that is usually dry
 - A female relation
 - A symbol on playing cards
 - A passenger needs this
 - Famous singer or actor
 - Run after trying to catch
 - Sooner than expected
 - Squashed
- DOWN**
- Frequently
 - Jump over
 - A chewed sweet
 - Bad smell





a good friend to our children. We feel blessed and thankful to him for being part of our Manchikalalu family," they tell us.

They mention other people from different walks of life, including Praveen, Shiva, Mohan, and all the donors who were part of their incredible campaign: Each One Educate One. They thank them for coming forward and supporting the education fees of 35 kids for the academic year 2020 -2021.

On a concluding note they tell people to "Be kind, thoughtful, genuine, but most of all, be thankful".

With the main aim to guide orphaned, abandoned children become a functional part of society and citizens who given back to the country, the group of strong-willed people seem to not stop at anything.



Being the best engineer you can be

K RAMYA SREE

IT jobs are something that are considered to be most secured and high paying jobs in the industry. Every year, thousands of students graduate from engineering colleges, hoping to join a tech firm that will change their destiny. But to succeed in their profession, one needs to know their skills and hone new ones in order to become a leader in what they pursue. We have Gaurav Agarwal, Vice President & Global Lead at Avana, a Thought Leader and Strategist in Cloud and Digital Transformation with 26+ years of experience, talk about how software engineers must explore their profession more to make themselves more valuable to their workplace.

Software Engineers (SE) and developers, are in extreme demand. According to Gaurav, the key to becoming a more successful SE is to build two primary skills — Curiosity and Learning agility.

"Have the curiosity to learn new things, ask questions, find simple ways to solve complex problems, and most importantly, understand the perspective of customers and deliver customer value. Delivering a valuable, relevant product to a customer is the most crucial goal of any engineering team, irrespective of the size. So rather than focusing on the sophistication or how clever or per-



forming your code component is in the solution, the team should consider whether it adds value to the customer by fulfilling their needs. Remember, value can be created and added in each step of the product development and is not limited to the early planning stages," he advises.

On the other hand, learning agility, can keep an SE competitive in their domain.

The professional shares, "Because technology continues to evolve, organisations that accept new methods are the only ones that can stay competitive in their domain. Companies are looking for personnel who can demonstrate a high level of adaptability to change and learning. Every SE needs to rethink what learning and unlearning mean. Don't stick to one programming language; rotate your programming skill to emerging technologies and programming language. My advice to SEs is to establish a learning North Star and create a personal learning journey; manage your schedule to make time for learning."

With the increased adoption of the Public Cloud and the democratisation of AI/ML, the software industry is changing rapidly. Every piece of technology solution is connected to the cloud. If you want to be a core software engineer, you will need to get to the depth of Cloud Native development. Getting to the basics of software engineering with a strong technical foundation and Curiosity and learning agility skills will help you grow as a software engineer focused on the future. The future can be your if you are curious and ready to learn, unlearn and move forward with the right attitude.

"In addition to the technical and critical soft skills, in general, I always coach SE to take every opportunity to get involved with the company and contribute in ways that are inside and outside of your scope of work as discretionary effort creates additional learning opportunities for them and adds value to the organization — which never gets unnoticed," shares Gaurav on a concluding note.

RACHEL DAMMALA

FROM THE STREETS TO SOCIETY

Imagine a life without the three essentials: roti, kapda and makaan! And now imagine the plight of orphaned kids abandoned to live by themselves. The impact of no good guide, no nutritional food, and having to live in constant fear of danger, on a street kid's mind can get worse than one can imagine.

Thanks to a group of visionaries in the city, streets kids have a hope on their safety. One such NGO working for the welfare of orphan kids is Manchikalalu, literally means 'good dreams'. Their name itself says it all. This home for needy children has been operational since 2007, having saved and changed the lives of several youngsters.

The organisation constitutes a group of individuals from different backgrounds with a common passion to help the under privileged kids. They have been taking care of both educational and professional projects by providing shelter, food, education and medical care in a "homely atmosphere", all so the kids would have a better quality of life.

"We started the Manchikalalu organisation to see orphan children in the community as good citizens. Our vision is to see

children live with their freedom in a 'family environment'. We want to push them towards whatever field they want to settle in, and help them to achieve their goals. The organization was established with the idea that with little support, children make can be moulded to be good citizens of the society," shares P. Sarath Kumar, Founder and President of Manchikalalu, about the idea behind the organisation.

Sarath is a "children's man", who believes childhood is the most important phase of Jim's life. He has an overall experience of 25+ years working for the welfare of needy children. He passionately works with children and assists them to become successful citizens of the country. He has been

a father, a guide and a guardian for several children so far, and dedicated his life for a social cause.

Meet Bhavani, who has been a mother to many orphaned children. She too, has been involved in child welfare for over 25 years. A doting and lovable mother that she is, one can always go to her and open up on their feelings and she does miracles as a counselor of Manchikalalu.

Another member, Ramesh, has a long association with Manchikalalu. "He has been a brother and facilitator to our children working for them 24/7. He is very known and loved by the kids for his caring nature," we're told.

You'd be mistaken to think everything is decided for, and handed over to the kids to follow blindly. The

kids at the organisation are always counselled and motivated to choose their areas of interest.

They are now responsible for about 50 inmates who have no other place to go. They give them complete assistance to have a good life until they get settled in the society. Talking about their work, Sarath says, "Our support doesn't give them only means, but also works towards the enhancement of their ability and overall personality. Our wish is to give them an opportunity to realise their dreams through our motto "Street to Society."

The organisation mentions people like Vijaya Rama Raju who has been a strong support to them for many years. "He has been our Mentor, well-wisher, and a backbone to us. He is



is now used worldwide in the pre-operative assessment and follow-up of patients with breast cancer.

Treatment:

Successful treatment of breast cancer requires the elimination of all cancer cells whether at the primary site, extended to loco-regional areas, or metastasis to other regions of the body. Hence, multimodality treatment approaches are adopted involving surgery to eradicate the disease localised to the breast and/or axilla in early stages; radiation therapy to eradicate the micro-metastatic disease in early stages; systemic therapy (chemotherapy, hormonal therapy, targeted drugs, and immunotherapy) for the treatment of locally advanced disease or micro-metastatic disease in early stages as well as palliation for the extension of survival in stage IV disease. A significant improvement in the survival of women with breast cancer has been witnessed over the past few decades due to the introduction

a declining trend due to the rapid advancements in screening as well treatment strategies. Having breast cancer is nothing to be ashamed about or feeling embarrassed rather it is a beginning to embrace the pain it takes to fight back. October is breast cancer awareness month and, on this occasion, let's pledge to quit smoking and alcohol; go for early and timely screening and adopt effective disease management strategies. By taking an active role in the screening, diagnosis, and treatment of breast cancer a woman can improve her chances of survival with a better quality of life.

(The writer, Dr. P. K. Julka MD, FAMS, is a Padma Shri Awardee, Principal Director at Max Oncology Daycare Centre, New Delhi).



Breast cancer cognisance — Everything a woman should know about the disease

Breast cancer is the commonest cancer that occurs majorly among women while the percentile of it is just 1 among men. According to a report by the National Cancer Registry Programme (2020), the highest number of breast cancer cases are reported in Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru, and Thiruvananthapuram. While it can affect women of all age groups, it is prevalent in women older than 50 years of age.

Risk factors:

Although breast cancer can affect women of all age groups, not every woman is at risk of developing the disease. There are both modifiable and non-modifiable risk factors associated with the incidence of breast cancer. The non-modifiable risk factors

refer to the biological factors that a woman cannot change. These include being a woman, ageing, personal or family history of breast cancer, inherited mutations to certain genes, such as BRCA1 and BRCA2, early periods, late menopause, and being taller, etc. A woman with a positive family history has about two to three times more likelihood of developing the disease than a woman with no family history of breast cancer. However, a woman can change certain behaviors or lifestyle choices to reduce the risk of breast cancer. These are modifiable risk factors and include consumption of alcohol, excess weight gain, sedentary lifestyle, first pregnancy at a later age or no pregnancy carried to full term, increased exposure to hormones or oral contraceptives, smoking, exposure to chemicals that can

cause cancer, exposure to ionizing radiation at a young age, etc.

Sign and symptoms:

The most common presenting sign and symptom of breast cancer is a lump within the breast. The other local symptoms include pain and enlargement of the breast, nipple discharge, etc.

Screening:

Screening plays a vital role in early diagnosis. The American Cancer Society recommends that women should begin monthly breast self-examination at the age of 20. It also recommends breast physical examination to be done every 3 years between the ages 20 and 39 and annually beginning at the age 40. Screening mammography reduces the mortality of breast cancer by 30% in women older than 50 years of age, and it

of chemotherapy, endocrine therapy and human epidermal growth factor receptor 2 (HER2) directed therapies. Although chemotherapy is mostly administered as an infusion into the vein (intravenously), some drugs can be taken in the form of pills or capsules as well.

Based on the stage of disease as well as the hormonal status of the tumor, management of breast cancer can be divided into three broad categories; (i) Adjuvant systemic therapy in early and locally advanced-stage disease, (ii) Neoadjuvant chemotherapy in early and locally advanced-stage disease, (iii) Therapeutic systemic therapy in metastatic disease.

Even though the incidence of breast cancer is on the rise, mortality from the disease has shown



IT WAS A TOTAL DISAPPOINTING BATTING EFFORT. I THOUGHT THE BOWLERS DID WELL TO BRING IT DOWN TO 18 ODD OVERS. BATTING HAS DISAPPOINTED US, WHICH IS WHY WE LOST TODAY — KIERON POLLARD

ENGLAND CRUSH BANGLADESH BY EIGHT WICKETS

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

England dished out a thoroughly clinical display with both the bat and the ball to steamroll Bangladesh by eight wickets in a Super 12 match of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.

Explosive opener Jason Roy anchored the paltry 125-run chase, with a 38-ball 61 (5x4, 3x6) to make his 50th T20I appearance memorable as England cantered home in just 14.1 overs to give their net run rate a huge boost.

Dawid Malan remained unbeaten on 28, while Jonny Bairstow (8 not out) finished off the chase, pulling Shoriful Islam for a boundary.

With two wins in a row, England now lead Group 1 table with four points.

Defending a below-par total, Bangladesh never showed any aggressive intent and their bowlers lacked discipline.

On a two-paced pitch, their pacers, led by Mustafizur Rahman, were guilty of bowling short as the England opening duo of Roy and Jos Buttler (18) never had any trouble, cruising to 37 for no loss in four overs.

Left-arm spinner Nasum Ahmed



gave the much needed breakthrough by dismissing Buttler but Roy kept up the rampage as England cruised to 90/1 at the halfway mark -- needing

just 35 off 60 balls. Roy was in full control of the innings and reached his fifty -- his second in T20 World Cup -- off just

33 balls, hammering Nasum Ahmed over the rope.

Shoriful dismissed Roy in the 13th over but by that time the explosive opener had made the equation completely in favour of his side as England needed 11 runs from 43 balls.

Earlier, England bowlers capitalised on a fine start given by off-spinner Moeen Ali to restrict Bangladesh to a paltry 124 for 9.

Opting to bat, Bangladesh were sloppy and failed to apply themselves as they lost wickets at regular intervals. Moeen took two wickets in two balls inside the powerplay en route to another fine outing (2/18 from 3 overs) with the ball.

Pacer Chris Woakes was also on the job inside the powerplay as he dismissed star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, reducing Bangladesh to 27/3 in first six overs.

On a day leg-spinner Adil Rashid -- fresh from his match winning figures of 4/2 against the West Indies -- returned wicketless and was their most expensive bowler, utility spinner Liam Livingstone did the job in the middle middle overs by taking 2/15.

Pacer Tymal Mills later wreaked havoc at the death with figures of 3/27 as Bangladesh could never recover.

Livingstone, who is capable of bowling both leg and off-spin, grabbed the crucial wickets of Bangladesh top-scorer Mushfiqur Rahim (29) and skipper Mahmudullah (19).

Livingstone trapped Rahim with a successful use of DRS.

It particularly hurt Bangladesh in the middle overs as Mushfiqur and Mahmudullah were looking to rebuild their innings with a 37-run partnership from 32 balls.

But Livingstone had Rahim plumb in front of wicket with his leg spin to break the partnership.

Afif Hossain departed after a comical run out for the addition of 10 runs to leave Bangladesh tottering at 83/6 with five overs to go.

Earlier, Liton Das, who looked ultra aggressive by smashing Moeen for two boundaries, took a top edge in the England off-spinner's second over.

Moeen then grabbed a second with Mohammad Naim falling tamely with a mis-hit to once again take two wickets inside the powerplay.

Woakes claimed the prized scalp of Bangladesh ace all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan with Adil Rashid taking a brilliant catch running backwards.

Scoreboard

BANGLADESH (BATTING)	ENGLAND (BOWLING)
Mushfiqur Rahim (29)	Tymal Mills 4 (27, 3wkt)
Nasum Ahmed (19)	Liam Livingstone 3 (15, 2wkt)
Mahmudullah (19)	Moeen Ali 3 (18, 2wkt)
Total 124 (9 wickets, 20 overs)	

ENGLAND (BATTING)	BANGLADESH (BOWLING)
Jason Roy (61)	Shoriful Islam 3.1 (26, 1wkt)
Dawid Malan (28)	Nasum Ahmed 3 (26, 1wkt)
Jos Buttler (18)	Mahedi Hasan 2 (21, 0wkt)
Total 126 (2 wickets, 14.1 overs)	

Scoreboard

SCOTLAND (BATTING)	NAMIBIA (BOWLING)
M.Leask (44)	R. Truempelmann 4 (17, 3wkt)
C.Greaves (25)	J. Frylinck 4 (10, 2wkt)
M.Cross (19)	JJ Smit 4 (20, 1wkt)
Total 109 (8 wickets, 20 overs)	

NAMIBIA (BATTING)	SCOTLAND (BOWLING)
In Progress..	

Total

points table

Group A			
Team	Matches	NRR	Points
England	2	+3.614	4
Sri Lanka	1	+0.583	2
Australia	1	+0.253	2
South Africa	2	+0.179	2
Bangladesh	2	-1.655	0
West Indies	2	-2.550	0
Group B			
Team	Matches	NRR	Points
Pakistan	2	+0.738	4
Afghanistan	1	+6.500	2
Namibia	0	+0.000	0
New Zealand	1	-0.532	0
India	1	-0.973	0
Scotland	1	-6.500	0

Namibia restrict Scotland to 109/8

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Left-arm pacer Ruben Truempelmann struck thrice in a sensational first over as debutants Namibia restricted Scotland to a below-par 109 for eight in a Super 12 match of the T20 World Cup here on Wednesday.

The 23-year-old got the ball to shape back into the right-hander from the word go and the one that went away with the angle also troubled the Scotland top-order.

George Munsey played on the first ball of the match before Truempelmann had Calum Macleod caught behind



off an angled delivery as the batter anticipated a lethal inswinger.

The next ball was the inswinger and Richard Berrington, who is leading Scotland in place of injured Kyle Coetzer, could do little about it. He reviewed the on-field umpire's decision but DRS found the ball clipping the leg-stump.

Scotland were reeling at 18 for four after all-rounder David Wiese trapped Craig Wallace in front of the stumps with a ball that skidded on to the batter's pads.

With their opponents in dire straits, Namibia could have attacked more after the first six overs. Michael

Leask (44 off 27) joined opener Matthew Cross (19 off 33) in the middle and the duo steadied the ship with a 39-run stand.

Another left-arm pacer, Jan Frylinck, found Wallace stumps from around the wicket to reduce Scotland to 57 for five.

Leask got the much-needed boundaries to take the team closer to the 100-run mark before falling to JJ Smit in the 17th over.

Considering their disastrous start, Scotland did well to get past 100.

Namibia were also brilliant in the last five overs, conceding only 25 runs and taking three wickets.

Kohli, KL Rahul slipped slots in ICC T20 batter rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India captain Virat Kohli dropped one place to fifth despite his half century against Pakistan for a lost cause in the ongoing T20 World Cup while team-mate KL Rahul slipped two slots to eighth in the ICC men's T20I Player Rankings issued on Wednesday.

Kohli (725 rating points) had hit 57 off 49 balls, while Rahul (684) scored 3 runs in India's total of 151 for 7 which Pakistan chased down with 13 balls to spare for a 10-wicket win in the blockbuster Super 12 match here on Sunday.

Pakistan opener Mohammad Rizwan is three places up to fourth -- his career best ranking -- following his match-winning 79 not out against India and 33 in their second win against New Zealand on Tuesday.

South Africa batter Aiden Markram, who struck 40 and 51 not out against Australia and the West Indies respectively, also attained his career-best ranking. He gained eight slots to reach third position, only behind Dawid Malan (831) of England



and Pakistan captain Babar Azam (820).

Markram's previous best was ninth place last month and he now averages nearly 40 with a strike rate of 147.29 in his career.

Afghanistan's Rahmanullah Gurbaz rose nine places to a career-best 12th position after notching up 46 against Scotland, while Bangladesh opener Mohammad Naim has moved up 11 places to a career-best 13th position after his 52-ball 62 against Sri Lanka.

Pakistan fast bowler Shaheen Afridi with a haul of three for 31, is up 11 places to 12th position.

Waqar Younis apologises for 'Namaz in front of Hindus' comment

PTI ■ KARACHI

Waqar Younis on Wednesday apologised for his communal remarks during a television show following Pakistan's 10-wicket victory over India in the ongoing T20 World Cup as the former Pakistan pacer was castigated on social media for his 'jihadi mindset'.

Appearing on the A Sports channel, Younis had spoken about not just the blockbuster match but also how opener Muhammad Rizwan had taken time out during a break in the Pakistan innings to offer prayers on the ground.

"What I liked the most was what Rizwan did. 'Usne Hinduon ke beech mein khade ho ke Namaz padhi (He stood in the middle of the ground and offered prayer in front of Hindus). That was something very very special for me," Younis had said.

Waqar's comments evoked a strong reaction in both the countries with former India pacer Venkatesh Prasad berating him for his remarks.



"Takes jihadi mindset of another level to say this in a sport."

What a shameless man," Prasad tweeted. Realising his blunder, Younis came out with an apology.

"In the heat of the moment, I said something which I did not mean which has hurt the sentiments of many. I apologise for this, this was not intended at all, genuine mistake. Sports unites people regardless of race, colour or religion," he tweeted.

He also apologised on the same channel. "Commenting on religious

matters is something I never do as I respect every one's religion. I got caught up in the moment and I didn't mean to hurt the sentiments of Hindus in Pakistan, India and anywhere in the world.

"I was very excited after Pakistan's win and those words came out in the heat of the moment. I apologise for it," he added.

Noted cricket analyst Harsha Bhogle too expressed his disappointment.

"For a person of Waqar Younis' stature to say that watching Rizwan offering namaz in front of Hindus was very special to him, is one of the most disappointing things I have heard. A lot of us try hard to play such things down and talk up sport and to hear this is terrible," Bhogle tweeted.

"I really hope that a lot of genuine sports lovers in Pakistan are able to see the dangerous side to this statement and join in my disappointment. It makes it very difficult for sports lovers like us to try and tell people it is just sport, just a cricket match."

Martin Guptill suffers toe injury, doubtful for India clash

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Experienced opener Martin Guptill has been rendered a doubtful starter for New Zealand's Super 12 match against India on Sunday after he suffered a toe injury during their clash against Pakistan in the ongoing T20 World Cup.

Guptill hurt his toe after being hit by a Haris Rauf delivery during his side's five-wicket loss to Pakistan here on Tuesday night.

New Zealand head coach Gary Stead said Guptill, who scored 17 runs from 20 balls before being cleaned up by Rauf, was not

feeling comfortable after the match.

"Guptill was looking in a little bit of discomfort at the end of the match and the next 24 to 48 hours will be decisive," Stead told reporters after the match.

"We'll see how he scrubs up overnight. He looked in a little bit of discomfort at the end of the game and it might take 24 to 48 hours to see how he goes."

If Guptill is ruled out of the India clash, it will be a big blow for the Kiwis, who had lost their pace spearhead Lockie Ferguson before the Pakistan match due to a calf muscle injury.

Rodrigues, Mandhana slam fifties in WBBL

PTI ■ LAUNCESTON

Jemimah Rodrigues stole the thunder from her Indian teammate Smriti Mandhana as Melbourne Renegades defeated Sydney Thunder by nine runs in the Women's Big Bash league here on Wednesday.

The 21-year-old



Rodrigues, a top-order batter for the Indian women's team,

Match 22 ICC T20 WORLD CUP 2021
Oct 28, 7:30 pm IST
Australia vs Sri Lanka
Dubai International Stadium
ICC Rank 6 vs 9
Head-to-Head in T20s
Australia: 16 Played, 16 Won, 8 Lost, 263/3 Highest Total 198/3
In T20 World Cup
3 Played, 3 Won, 1 Lost, 168/5 Highest Total 160/4
K&K SportsGraphics

slammed nine fours during her 56-ball 75 to power Melbourne to 142 for five.

Chasing the total, Mandhana, who opens the innings for India, smashed a 44-ball 64, studded with four hits to the fence and one maximum but it went in vain as Sydney were limited to 133 for 8 in their 20 overs.

OTHER SPORTS

Srikanth's fight ends at French Open

PTI ■ PARIS

Kidambi Srikanth suffered a heartbreaking defeat against top seed Kento Momota to make a second round exit but India's mixed doubles team of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini



Ponnappa advanced at the French Open Super 750 badminton tournament, here on Wednesday.

The Rio quarterfinalist played his heart out to match the Japanese and also held two-point lead towards the end of the decider but ended up losing the men's singles second round in 79-minute match.

Srikanth had lost to Momota last week also at Denmark Open but he produced a much better display here and came agonisingly close to outwitting the two-

time world champion only to fall short in the end. Rankireddy and Ponnappa, the world number 24 pair beat Denmark's Mathias Thyrrri and Mai Surrow in 37 minutes. They are likely to face second seeded Indonesian pair of Praveen Jordan and Melati Daeva Oktavianti next. Srikanth ran up a 4-0 lead but Momota clawed back to level the score.

He again moved to a 8-5 advantage only to see the Japanese eke out a slender 11-10 lead at the break.

Milan beats Torino 1-0

AP ■ MILAN

AC Milan again struggled in a 1-0 win that saw it move three points clear at the top of Serie A.

Olivier Giroud scored the only goal of the match in the 14th minute to help Milan move clear of second-place Napoli, which hosts Bologna on Thursday.

"We take the three points, that's the most important," Giroud said.

"We play every three days and it's very difficult for the body. Everything was not perfect, but we are very pleased with the win tonight. Torino is a tough team to play against."

The Rossoneri were still dealing with an injury crisis, but defender

Theo Hernandez was fit for a place on the bench after recovering from the coronavirus.

Milan was the only team in the top six in Serie A to win over the weekend but only narrowly avoided embarrassment as two late goals helped it beat nine-man Bologna 4-2.

It seemed as if matters had improved when Milan took the lead after Rade Krunic nodded on a corner for Giroud to tap in from a couple of yards.

However, the Rossoneri barely had another sight of a goal in a mediocre match.

11 athletes recommended for Khel Ratna

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, who became only the second Indian to win an individual Olympic gold at the Tokyo Games, and silver medal-winning wrestler Ravi Dahiya were on Wednesday recommended for the Khel Ratna as an unprecedented 11 athletes were selected for the country's highest sporting honour.

Boxer Lovlina Borgohain, who won a bronze at the Tokyo Olympics, seasoned hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh and woman cricket Test skipper

Mithali Raj were also recommended for the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna by the selection committee.



Iconic Sunil Chhetri also became the country's first footballer to be selected for the honour.

Last year, five athletes were picked for the award while four were selected after the 2016 Rio Games.

The announcement of the national sports awards was delayed in order to consider the performance of the para-athletes in the Tokyo Paralympics (August 24 to September 5).

Indian boxers continue unbeaten run

PTI ■ BELGRADE

Debutant Nishant Dev (71kg) became the seventh Indian boxer to enter the second round of the AIBA men's World Championships with a confident 5-0 triumph over Hungary's Laszlo Kozak here on Wednesday.

Dev will next fight Mauritania's Mervin Clair, who got a bye in the first round, and his victory maintained the unbeaten run of the country's pugilists at the ongoing showpiece.

Dev's win was a perfect start to the day for the country after Sumit (75kg) and Narender Bermal (+92kg) advanced to the second round of their respective categories with fine victories late last night.

“ROMANTIC IS A ‘PURE PURI’ MOVIE”

K RAMYA SREE

Akash Puri's debut film *Romantic*, starring Ketika Sharma, will open in theatres on October 29. The film, helmed by Anil Paduri is jointly produced by Puri Jagannath and Charmee Kaur under Puri Connects and Puri Jagannath Touring Talkies. Ahead of the film's

born comes from a family of doctors and it wasn't easy for her to choose an off-beat profession like acting and she is happy to make her debut with Puri Connects.

"I got a call from Puri Connects office saying they saw my profile on Instagram and asked me to come to Hyderabad for an audition. That's how it all started," shares an elated Ketika.

Taking us through her character in the film, the new-bee, who is already making youngsters go crazy over her hotness, shares, "I play a girl who wants to enjoy every moment in life, care-free, regardless of some guidelines set by the society for being a girl. If

IF PURI SIR HAD CAST A NEWBIE, EVERYONE IN THE INDUSTRY WOULD THINK THAT THE ACTRESS HAS SOME SKILLS. I THINK THAT IS THE REASON I WAS ABLE TO BAG TWO MORE FILMS. APART FROM THAT, I AM CONFIDENT THAT PEOPLE WILL LOVE ROMANTIC. THIS IS MADE FOR THE MASS AUDIENCE.

release actress Ketika Sharma chats with the media and shares about her journey, the film, and more.

Ketika, a Delhi-

Mounika loves someone, she gives her all to them."

For Ketika, Puri Jagannath is a legendary director and she says she learned a lot from him. She feels lucky to have been launched by him as she was able to sign two more films — with Vaishnav Tej and Naga Shaurya — before *Romantic*

even released in theatres and Ketika gives all the credits to Puri.

She shares, "If Puri sir had cast a newbie, everyone in the industry would think that the actress has some skills. I think that is the reason I was able to bag two more films. Apart from that, I am confident that people will love *Romantic*. This is made for the mass audience and it is a pure Puri movie."

On working with Akash, she says, "Akash is a very good man. He made sure I felt comfortable. I got a good friend in the form of Akash in this movie."

When asked what kind of films she loves doing, Ketika shares, "I like biopics. I like Sai Pallavi very much. She is very natural. I watched *Love Story*. I am impressed with the way she was in the film and her dance is awe-inspiring. I love everything she does."

Chiranjeevi's *Bholaa Shankar* on a roll

Megastar Chiranjeevi, who is gearing up for the release of *Acharya*, will kick-start shooting for next — *Bholaa Shankar* soon. Helmed by Meher Ramesh, the makers of *Bholaa Shankar* announced to start the regular shooting soon, and the movie is to be officially launched in a formal *Muhurat puja* event. The *muhurtham* and *puja* will be held on November 11 in Hyderabad.

Soon after the movie shooting begins, the makers have set everything, so as to begin the regular shooting from November 15. A major part of this movie is to be set in Kolkata. The makers of *Bholaa Shankar* are yet to make an announcement regarding the other cast. *Bholaa Shankar* is an official

remake of Kollywood star Thala Ajith's *Vedalam*. *Mahanati* fame Keerthy Suresh is to appear in the role of Chiranjeevi's sister in this upcoming film.

Chiranjeevi, on the other hand, is to appear in the movie *God Father*, which is an official remake of the Malayalam movie *Lucifer*.

Koratala Siva's directorial *Acharya* is to hit the screens soon. Ram Charan, Kajal Aggarwal, and Pooja Hegde are to play important roles in *Acharya*.

Meanwhile, the Megastar has promised to finance the cancer treatment of a fan named Venkat, who met him yesterday in Hyderabad.

Despite his busy schedule, the *Sye Raa* actor personally scrutinized the medical reports of Venkat and advised him to seek a second opinion from a private hospital in Hyderabad. Chiru personally referred Venkat to the hospital.

Venkat will get the best medical help from wherever he needs to. Everything will be borne by the *Acharya* actor, who has asked his team to take care of everything that the patient needs.

Since Venkat is not financially strong to bear immediate medical and other expenses, Chiru gave him Rs 2 lakh.

Venkat, speaking on the occasion, said that he felt fortunate to have got to meet with the *Bholaa Shankar* actor.

"I am blessed to have been born as his fan," he added.

Pushpaka Vimanam

releasing on November 12

Promotions of *Pushpaka Vimanam* film by the Deverakonda brothers are in full swing and how! The recently released candid interview of the duo took no time to go viral. Meanwhile, on Wednesday, the makers of the film announced its release date. The film slated to hit big screens worldwide on November 12, is being presented by Vijay Deverakonda, while Govardhan Deverakonda, Vijay Dashi, and Pradeep Errabilli are producing it under King of The Hills Production and Tanga Productions.

The film, a comedy-thriller, helmed by debutant Damodara has Anand Deverakonda playing the male lead, while Geeth Saini and Saanve Meghana will play female leads. Vijay Deverakonda revealed that the film will be distributed across the world by Freeze Frame LCC. Vijay shared on his social media, "very happy to announce our worldwide Distribution partners! #PushpakaVimanam to get a grand release by @SureshProds@CinemasGlobal & @FreezeFrameFLC."

On the other hand, Icon star Allu Arjun and Vijay Deverakonda will be releasing the trailer of the film on October 30 in a grand manner.

Ghani's new track sets the tone of the movie

Makers of the much-awaited Varun Tej-starrer *Ghani* now have released the perfect track to set the tone of the movie. The *Ghani Anthem*, an energetic and rousing score has strong lyrics that depict the fast-paced, intense feel the movie gives off. The sports drama about a boxer (played by Varun Tej) is written and directed by Kiran Korrapati, who was the co-director of several popular films like *Antariksham 3000*, *Tholiprema* and *Mirapakay*, and is jointly produced by Sidhu Mudda and Allu Bobby under the banners of

Renaissance Pictures and Allu Bobby Company. Presented by Allu Aravind, there is a lot of buzz surrounding the movie. The makers, pleased with how the recent glimpse of the movie went viral, made their intentions known to release the movie on December 3.

Varun Tej has undergone a complete physical transformation for the movie, to get into his role of a boxer. Saiee Manjrekar, who was seen in *Dabangg 3* and *Major*, will be in the lead roles alongside a supporting cast including Upenndra, Suniel Shetty, Jagapathi Babu, and Naveen Chandra.



BANGARRAJU JOINS SANKRANTI RACE?

This Sankranti is going to a box-office *dhamaka* with many big films coming to theatres during the festival. While it was already announced that *RRR*, *Bheemla Nayak*, *Sarkaru Vaari Paata*, and *Radhe Shyam* are all coming in the month of January, 2022, the latest we hear is that Akkineni Nagarjuna too is planning to join the Sankranti race with *Bangarraju*. An official confirmation regarding the same is yet to be made. The film will also see Chaitanya in a crucial role, while Uppena fame Krithi Shetty plays his love interest. *Bangarraju*, directed by Kalyan Krishna, also has Ramya Krishnan playing the female lead.

Biopic on KCR starring Srikanth gets release date

The official date for the KCR biopic titled *Telangana Devudu* has been announced as November 12th! The movie, directed by Harish Vadthya, is based on the Telangana CM's personal life and political career chronicling the years of 1969 to 2014, leading up to the state formation. The movie stars Meka Srikanth, Jishan Usman, Tanikella Bharani, Sangeetha and Ajay as lead characters, while other popular actors like Brahmanandam, Posani Krishna Murali, Sunil, Suman, Brahmaji and Sayaji Shinde will also be playing significant roles. Reports have said that the film features more than 50 actors.

"The drama is based on the life of a great man who led the movement for statehood for Telangana," said the mak-

ers of the movie. The film is produced by Mohd. Zakir Usman of Max Lab Pvt. Ltd. He said that the film chronicles the Telangana movement and its ramifications. Jishan Usman, his son, will be debuting with this feature film. Speaking at the film's pre-release event, Telangana Home

Minister Mahmood Ali wished the team all the best. "KCR garu played a huge role in securing statehood. With his developmental activities, the CM has proved skeptics and detractors wrong," he added. Music is by Nandan Bobbili, cinematography is by A Vijay Kumar and editing is by Gautham Raju.

