PVT SECTOR EMPLOYEES

COMMERCIAL CHIPSETS BY 2023-24

SRH TO 195-6



SAMANTHA BAGS **ANOTHER**

VIJAYAWADA DELHI LUCKNOW

BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH

BHUBANESWAR RANCHI **DEHRADUN HYDERABAD**

Page 12

ENDORSEMENT

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US COLLEGE OFFERS COURSE WHERE STUDENTS WILL WATCH PORN FILMS

college in the United States is offering a class on porn during the summer semester, which is gaining attention on social media. The Westminster College in Salt Lake, Utah, has posted the course on its website which is being widely shared on social media and other platforms. The listing of the college's "FILM-3000: Porn" course says students in the class watch pornographic films together and discuss the "sexualization of race, class and gender," as well as explore pornography as an "experimental, radical art form". The listing says pornography is "as American as apple pie and more popular than Sunday night football".

MYSTERY LIVER DISEASE AFFECTS CHILDREN GLOBALLY

ne child has died and more than a dozen have undergone liver transplants as a result of a mysterious outbreak of severe acute hepatitis that's sickened children in the U.K., the U.S. and 10 other countries, the World Health Organization said. Health authorities are trying to determine the source of the liver-inflaming disease that's afflicted at least 169 children, ages 1 month to 16 years, as of April 21, the WHO said in a statement Saturday. Typical causes of viral hepatitis have been excluded. The United Nations agency was notified on April 5 of 10 cases among previously healthy children across central Scotland with jaundice, diarrhoea, vomiting and abdominal pain.

IN UTTAR PRADESH, A LOUDSPEAKER REMOVAL DRIVE AHEAD OF FESTIVALS

he Uttar Pradesh police today said hundreds of loudspeakers have been removed from religious places and thousands regulated across the states after dialogues with leaders of different religions, as part of an initiative started on orders of the Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath. In a law-and-order meeting review meeting last week, Yogi Adityanath had ordered special measures after the clashes in Delhi's Jahangirpuri, and also because the festivals of Eid and Akshay Tritiva are likely to fall on the same date early next month. One of those directions was to remove illegal loudspeakers from religious places and to regulate noise from sanctioned ones as per various court directions.

MLAs with low

denied tickets

PNS VIJAYAWADA

popularity to be

YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has warned the MLAs that they

will not be given party tickets in

the upcoming polls if their popularity level dips.

He has also given them a peri-od of eight to nine months

from May onwards to improve their popularity levels based

He also hinted that district

development councils would be constituted across the State

and party presidents would be

appointed as chairpersons to such councils with Cabinet

Official orders on setting up the district development coun-

He said that MLAs should

actively participate in the

Gadapa Gadapaki programme

cils would be issued shortly.

on their performance.

rank.

DELHI BRACES FOR EXTREME HEAT, MAY TOUCH 46 DEGREES, YELLOW ALERT ISSUED

n the precipice of another punishing heatwave spell, Delhi is predicted to see a jump of two to three degrees Celsius in the maximum temperature today. The Safdarjung Observatory -Delhi's base weather station - had recorded a maximum temperature of 40.8 degrees Celsius on Tuesday. It is expected to breach the 42degree mark today and soar to 44 degrees Celsius by Thursday. according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The maximum temperature may even leap to 46 degrees Celsius in parts of Delhi, a Met department official said. Delhi had recorded a maximum temperature of 43.2 degrees Celsius on April 21, 2017.

Jagan shifts gears, gets into poll mode

O Goal is to win all 175 seats in 2024 elections

SNV SUDHIR

YSRCP supremo and Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, who has clearly got into poll mode, has given a clarion call and told his party colleagues to be battle ready for the 2024 elections.

Stating that from May onwards he is shifting the gears of the party, Jagan said it was time to move fast.

Setting an ambitious agenda to win not less than the 2019 mandate of 151 assembly seats, Jagan, at a key party meeting held on Wednesday, asked why YSRCP couldn't aim to win all the 175 segments in the State, laying out his decire before his party collegeness to desire before his party colleagues to totally decimate the Opposition TDP and most importantly, not sparing even Kuppam, represented by TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu.

Jagan, on Wednesday, held a meeting with the newly-appointed regional coordinators, district pres-



attempt to give them a clear-cut direction about the party's future course of action with an aim to retain power with a larger mandate than that of 2019.

In the past three years after the YSRCP came to power, it was the first time that Jagan was conducting such a meeting with the key functionaries of the party.

In the last three years, Jagan was either busy with governance to make his mark in it or Covid

restricted his activities to an extent. In the meeting, Jagan clearly told

have better coordination with the party leadership in their respective

He deliberated on two main aspects -- strengthening the party at the grassroots-level and better coordination among the leadership.

Jagan also made it clear that the party was the supreme for everyone and told the ministers that the regional coordinators and the district presidents were more impor-

The district presidents would be taken into the Cabinet after the 2024 polls after winning all the constituencies in their region.

The Chief Minister said that in a blink of an eye, three years had passed and the next two years would also pass in a similar manner.

It was the right time to focus on the party activities and explain to the people the good things the present government had done and seek a mandate again to work ever

from May onwards

Tighten Covid protocols

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, on Wednesday, participated in the video conference held by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the prevailing Covid situation and discussed the preventive measures to control its spread.

Later, the Chief Minister held a review meeting with Health Department officials and directed them to implement Covid preventive measures effectively.

He instructed the officials to

ensure that the incidents at RUIA Hospital were not repeated in the State and added that the phone numbers for lodging complaints should be displayed at Arogya Mitra kiosks.

He said the numbers should be made clearly visible on 104, 108 and Thalli Bidda vehicles. One or two such incidents would tarnish the reputation of the system. The officials should be alert and set up an effective protocol.



DEOs asked to be more vigilant

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The nodal officers and DEOs across the State were asked to be more vigilant and strictly enforce the no-mobile phone policy in 10th standard examination halls. The board exams began on Wednesday.

issued in the wake of the Telugu question paper being out hours after the examination began.

"Some social media channels are reporting about the leak of the 10th class question paper. This information is totally false

and mischievous. We came to know that by around

11 am, someone started circulating the photos of the 10th Class question paper, taken in an exam centre. Since the exam started at 9.30 am, it cannot be called a leak.



Class 10 exams begin

98.97 per cent students appear for exam

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Class 10 examinations began in the State on Wednesday after a gap of two years. In all, 6,21,799 students have registered for the examination while 6,15,398 were present and 6,405 were absent for the first language Telugu on Wednesday. The present percentage is 98.97. As many as 3,776 exam centres have been set up across the State.

On the first day, three students were booked for malpractice in Anantapur, according to Government Examinations Director D Devananda Reddy.

exam centres were allocated and



a total of 36,123 candidates have registered for the exams. Of them, 35,961 were present for the first paper with 99.55 present per-

In Srikakulam district, 248



centage.

Govt approves Rs 60,939 cr subsidy for **fertilisers**

PNS NEW DELHI

The government on Wednesday approved a subsidy of Rs 60,939.23 crore for phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilisers, including DAP, for the first six months of this fiscal, as part of its efforts to provide soil nutrients to farmers at an affordable

The Union Cabinet has approved nutrient-based subsidy (NBS) rates for Phosphatic and Potassic fertilisers for the Kharif season (from April 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022).



Naidu, Uma skip appearance

PNS VIJAYAWADA

TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu and party leader Bonda Uma Maheswara Rao did not appear before the State Women's Commission on Wednesday in connection with their alleged misbehaviour with Comr Chairperson Vasireddy Padma.

Summons were served on Naidu and Bonda Uma and they were supposed to appear before Vasireddy Padma and give an explanation on their alleged highhanded behaviour with her during their visit to Vijayawada government hospital to call on the family of a rape victim.

Vasireddy Padma took a serious note of the rejection of summons by Naidu and Bonda.

Narrating how the two TDP leaders had misbehaved with her, she announced that she would take action against them as per the law. She alleged that Naidu had no respect towards the Women's Commission and even women.

Vasi Reddy Padma



Chandrababu Naidu



TDP women barge into Commission office

■ High tension prevailed, police stop party workers

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Tension prevailed at the State Women Commission's office in Mangalagiri on Wednesday as police stopped hundreds of TDP women's cell leaders and activists who tried to barge into the

The TDP women leaders, along with the family members of the GGH rape victim, barged into



the office of the Chairperson and handed over a booklet seeking justice for the victims.

NH will be completed expeditiously: MP

page 4

Kondamodu-Perecharla

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Tithi: Trayodashi: Apr 28 12:24 AM to Apr 29 12:27 AM Chaturdashi: Apr 29 12:27 AM to Apr 30 12:58 AM

Nakshatram: Uttara Bhadrapada: Apr 27 05:05 PM

to Apr 28 05:40 PM Revati: Apr 28 05:40 PM to Apr 29 06:43 PM Rahukalam: 1:48 PM to 3:22 PM **Yamagandam:** 5:55 AM to 7:30 AM Varjyam: 06:11 AM to 07:51 AM Gulika: 9:04 AM to 10:39 AM Amritakalam: 12:45 PM to 02:23 PM

to 12:38 PM VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Sunny Temp: 41° **Humidity:** 51% Sunrise: 5:48 AM Sunset: 6:28 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham:



11:48 AM



Be careful Modi your games won't work: KCR

NAVEENA GHANATE HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has warned Prime Minister Narendra Modi to "be careful" and said that his games would not work.

At the conclusion of the plenary, KCR observed: "That party (BJP) runs on a foundation of lies and polarisation, especially

targeting youth. If it is not stopped collectively, the consequences will be dire. Tasmat jagratha Narendra Modi (Be careful), your games won't

Stating that he would play a bright role in national politics, KCR said: "President is Hindu, PM, Supreme PM, except one or two CMs, everyone is Hindu.

How is Hindutva in Khatra?

Some people may be influenced." KCR remarked:"In Islamic countries, they are building Hindu temples. In our country, what are we doing? America is a Christian country. For everything, they say Oh Jesus! But in every important city, there is a Hindu temple. They don't think like here on communal lines.



Officials directed to ensure quality in construction works

Lives snuffed out in minutes in TN chariot mishap

PNS THANJAVUR/ CHENNAI

It was all over in a matter of minutes and before people could realise what was happening, 11 persons were electrocuted to death and others ran helter-skelter in disbelief while the temple chariot was

The Appar temple car procession in Thanjavur on Wednesday ended in a tragedy that led to an outpouring of grief and anguish

from various quarters.

"People were thrown away, they just fell down.

I could see a man lying here and another one there and the unfolding scene was freghtening as we could not understand what was happening," a woman eyewitness

Villagers say that the wooden The chariot's lighting was powtemple chariot, with parts being ered by a mobile generator. iron based fitment, was decorated



with colourful lights especially on the top, and it came into contact with the overhead electricity line.

This was tied to the rear end of

the temple car.

Local men said the lights on the top of the chariot and the foldable structure that supported it came in contact with the High Tension overhead powerline, leading to

"Organisers could not go near the generator, leave alone turning Obviously no one was sure from

it was mayhem," a villager who witnessed the procession move on Also, in keeping with the custom, water was poured on the ground on which the chariot was set to arrive on any street and the

wet surface too contributed in

where the electricity was originat-

ing and how it was passing on and

conducting the electricity. "When some people poured water to douse fire in a particular spot, it conducted electricity further and added to the chaos injuring people," another man said. The chariot that was by then ablaze was eventually gutted.



YSRCP plenary on July 8

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Former minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao (Nani) has said that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has directed all the party leaders to work together and put an end to the differences, if any, among the leaders.

them to work hard to bring the party back to power in the coming 2024 elections. The meeting also decided that

the plenary session would be held on July 8. Speaking to the media after a meeting with ministers and party presidents chaired by CM Jagan Mohan Reddy here on Wednesday,

Nani said the CM had directed the

MLAs to visit the secretariats from

next month and write down the

issues and problems faced by the The CM said that he would take up and resolve the issues written

in the secretariat. The CM said that the ongoing campaign against the party should be strongly addressed and ordered the party leaders to sensitise the people on the development and welfare schemes.

The CM will soon begin the dis-



trict tours. Regional coordinators were directed to resolve disputes and issues immediately.

The Chief Minister made it clear that there would not be early elections in the State.

2024. CM Jagan conducted surveys on the performance of the MLAs. According to the survey, 65 per cent of the people want CM Jagan back as Chief Minister. The popularity of some MLAs

The elections will be held in

has decreased.

The CM directed that the MLAs need to improve their performance or they will not be getting tickets in the elections.

All the MLAs should make use of another opportunity given by the CM," said Kodali Nani.

Jagan gets 65 pc popularity rating

It is learnt that during the party meeting held on Wednesday, YSRCP supremo YS Jagan Mohan Reddy also discussed the approval ratings of the MLAs including himself as the party president and the Chief Minister as per an assessment done.

Jagan reportedly said that as per the assessment, his popularity rating as party president and Chief Minister was 65pc.

Jagan said he had com- performance of the governmissioned a survey on the ment and the party recent-



graph had shown 65 percent, while the majority of the MLAs had got only 40-45 percent. Jagan also said that the performance of some MLAs had gone up.
He clearly said those who

didn't improve their performance by the time of the polls would be denied tickets without any mercy.

He also said the survey had revealed that the people were happy with the implementation of the welfare schemes and the overall performance of the govern-

Newly-wed Hindu youth hosts iftar at mosque in Karnataka

PNS MANGALURU

Setting an example in communally sensitive Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka, a newly married Hindu youth hosted an Iftar party at a mosque in Vittal in Bantwal

Amid the outcry over hijab, halal, azaan and the call for boycotting shops belonging to Muslims, the youth emerged as a symbol of communal harmony through his action.

J Chandrashekar of

Byrikatte in Vittal got married on April 24. As Muslims are celebrating Ramzan this month, many of his friends in the community could not enjoy the feast at the wedding

accused be severely pun-

ished in all rape cases, including the latest GGH

case, and the victim be

Later, Anitha got into a war of words with

Vasireddy Padma in the

It can be recalled that Vasireddy Padma had

issued summons to TDP

chief Chandrababu and

party leader Bonda Uma

accusing them of insulting

her in the Vijayawada GGH on April 22. However, the TDP leaders



ceremony. He then decided to host an

Iftar party for his Muslim friends at a mosque to mark his wedding celebration.

Later, the newly wed man was felicitated by the Imam and office-bearers of Jalaliya Juma Masjid and all the people who attended the Iftar blessed the newly-wed couple.

Focus on your goals, Suma advices students

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Telugu cine actor and anchor Suma Kanakala has asked students to strive hard to fulfil their dreams to achieve high positions in society.

She visited Maris Stella College at Vijayawada on Wednesday and interacted with the students during the promotion programme of Jayamma Panchayati. She said that everyone

had to focus on their goals and suggested that they should not put foot in two boats and be clear about their goals.

She explained that she would always complete the task assigned to her to the



fullest no matter how many hardships may arise in the

Suma said it was a female-

centric film. The character

Jayamma is a bold woman who overcomes many problems in her life.

The film is slated for

Naidu, Uma skip appearance...

Continued from Page 1

"They have displayed their male chauvinism in ignoring my summons," she said and blamed the TDP leaders for giving a call to the party workers to take up protest agitations against the Commission.

Vasireddy Padma listed out 10 mistakes of the TDP leaders during their visit to meet the Vijayawada rape victim.

The first mistake was that a large number of people tried to get too close to the rape victim. Secondly, they came to the hospital in huge groups and were shouting loudly. The third mistake was terrorising the victim in the process.

The fourth mistake was, coming to visit a rape victim with so many people is against the Supreme Court guidelines aimed at safeguarding the victim's dignity. Fifthly, they obstructed the Chairperson of the

Women's Commission and

TDP women barge into...

Continued from Page 1

Not stopping there, the women activists led by Vangalapudi Anitha goʻt into an argument with Commission Chairperson Vasireddy Padma in her chamber. After a few minutes, Padma took the book and said she would look

into it and take action.
Anitha asked the Chairperson about the action taken against the culprits in attacks against women and said that they had the right to complain Women's Commission. Anitha fur-

sixthly, prevented her from consoling the victim. The seventh mistake was threatening her and obstructing

her from her duties. Chandrababu threatening action was taken against the culprits in the GGH rape case.

ther questioned what

Initially, a large number of TDP women leaders tried to barge into the Commission's office. When they were stopped by the police, Anitha said they would hand over a petition regarding crimes against women and leave the premises. A limited number of women leaders were then allowed into the office. They handed over the petition to Vasireddy Padma and

take. Ninth mistake was

Bonda Uma insulting her

using derogatory language.
Lastly, they paraded the

skipped appearing before demanded that the the Chairperson in a personvictim's family members in al attack was the eighth mis-

supported.

chamber.

front of the media. However, Vasireddy said that she would discuss the matter with a legal team and take it forward.

Class 10 exams begin

Continued from Page 1

In Vizianagaram district, 181 exam centres were allotted. Of the 29,658 registered candidates, 29,495 were present. In Visakhapatnam district, 318 exam centres were allotted and 57,458 candidates have registered for the exams. As many as 57,144 students attended the exam on Wednesday.

In East Godavari district, 359 exam centres are allotted. Of the 66,680 registered candidates, 65,703 were present. In West Godavari, 274 exam centres are allotted. AS many as 48,374 candidates have registered while 47,518 candidates were present. Meanwhile in Krishna district, there are 364 exam centres and 54,878 candidates have registered for the exams. As many as 54,353 candidates were present on the first day. In Guntur district, 345 exam centres are allotted and 59,732 candidates have registered their names. Of them, 59,099 students were

In Prakasam district, 271 exam centres are allotted. Of the 41,154 registered students,

40,847 were present. In SPSR Nellore district, 245 exam centres are there and 33,527 candidates have registered for the As many as 32,945 candidates were present. In Chittoor district, 355 exam centres are allotted and 52,519 candidates

have registered for the exams, of which 52,089 were present on Wednesday. In Kurnool district, 272 exam centres are allotted and 52,119 candidates have registered their names. As many as 51,614 candidates were present. In YSR Kadapa district, 241 exam centres were set up and 38,394 candidates have registered for the exams. 38,139 candidates were present. In Anantapur district, 304 exam centres are allotted. Of the total 51,183 registered candidates, 50,491 attended the

exam on Wednesday. The candidates who arrived 30 minutes late, but presented valid reasons were allowed to

Jagan shifts...

The candidates can download the hall tickets directly from the official website as a few private schools are pressurising the students to pay the fee dues to issue hall tickets. Orders have been issued to allow hall tickets even if they are not signed by the principal and Section 144 is imposed at all the centres.

Police were deployed at the examination centre in Anantapur district.

The Class 10 examinations in Nellore district started peacefully amid strict arrangements. The authorities were asked to inform the control room if there were any issues while conducting the examination. Section 144 was imposed at the examination centres in Kurnool district.

In YSR district, CCTV cameras have been set up in the examination centres and the officials have identified about 10 problematic centres. Students writing the exams are provided free travel on RTC

DEOs asked...

Continued from Page 1

It is clearly a mischief created by someone," said a senior government official.

The Education Department officials identified the exam centre in question as Ankireddy Kolimagundla mandal, Nandyal district.

Action was also taken to identify the person responsible and arrest him. Strict action will be taken against the chief supervisor and invigilator, government sources said. "In the light of this inci-

dent, all nodal officers, RJDs and DEOs are directed to be more vigilant and strictly enforce the 'no mobile phone in the exam centre' rule. All staff on duty should give their phones to the Chief Supervisor, who should be held responsible and strict action taken if any deviation is noticed," said a senior official of the State Education Department.

Govt approves Rs 60,939...

in 2020-21.

Continued from Page 1

Briefing media about the Cabinet decision, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said the Cabinet has approved a subfertilisers for the Kharif season against the subsidy of around Rs 57,150 crore on these nutrients for the entire last fiscal.

He said the subsidy on DAP (di-ammonium phosphate) has been increased to Rs 2,501 per bag and the farmers will continue to get the DAP at Rs

1,350 per bag. Thakur said the subsidy on

DAP has been increased to on annual basis. 2,501 per bag from 512 per bag

The minister highlighted that even as the prices of fertilisers have increased sharply in the global markets, the govburden has not increased for the farmers

The Nutrient Based Subsidy (NBS) Scheme is being implemented since April 2010. Under the NBS Policy, a

fixed rate of subsidy (in Rs per Kg basis) is announced on nutrients namely Nitrogen (N), Phosphate (P), Potash (K) and Sulphur (S) by the government

The per Kg subsidy rates on the nutrients N, P, K, and S are converted into per tonne subsidy on the various P&K fertilisers covered under the NBS Policy.

available fertilisers, namely urea and 24 grades of P&K fertilisers to farmers at subsidised prices through manufacturers/importers.

In the case of urea, the Centre fixes the maximum retail prices and reimburses the difference between the MRP and production cost in form of

GST compensation for 8 months released to states, Rs 78,704 cr pending: FinMin

PNS NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry on next financial year. already released eight months of GST compensation dues to the states for the fiscal ended March 2022 and Rs 78,704 crore is pending due to inadequate balance in the cess fund.

In a statement, the ministry said normally, GST compensation for 10 months (April-January) of any financial year is released during that year and the

compensation of February-March is released only in the

ten months of 2021-22 has already been released to States. The pending amount will also be released as and when amount from cess accrues in the compensation fund," it said.

Under GST essential items are either exempted or taxed at the lowest slab, while luxury and demerit items attract the high-

"After delivering such a

Continued from Page 1

strong performance, we should win with flying There should be not less

than 151 seats. But why not the kind of results we saw in Kuppam in the local body polls, why not win all the 175 seats? Take each constituency as a unit and do work. Winning 175 seats can be a reality," Jagan told the party

The mass contact programme of the party leadership, 'Gadapagadapaki YSRCP', will be formally launched on May 10.

"Hope is always stronger than reality, but probably for the first time in the State reality is equally strong. After fulfilling the promises made in the poll manifesto, we are now going to the electorate. Going to polls with such a strong performance is a rare thing to happen. Ours is a manifesto-oriented drive and agenda. Social justice was implemented like never before What we have done in the past three years has to be explained to the public," he

MLAs with low popularity ...

Continued from Page 1

activities personally.

Rs 1.27 lakh crore were transferred to the beneficiaries in the past three years. In the next two years too, another Rs 55,000 crore will be transferred per annum. After such a strong performance, we are going to the polls. Every MLA should visit households from May onwards and within eight to nine such bra months, should complete manner.

regional coordinators and should visit households," said Jagan.

lso said that with ting up of several corporations, a big system had been created. District-level committees, following the social justice formula by giving majority of posts to weaker sections, should be appointed by the time party

YSRCP was not fighting TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu, but a strong coterie of media that would start negative branding of each and every MLA from now

Tighten Covid... Continued from Page 1

The Chief Minister said the

Police Department should be more vigilant and alert and directed them to take strict measures to ensure the incident at Vijayawada Hospital, where a woman was sexually assaulted, was not repeat-

He said the CI and the SI were suspended in connection with the issue. He reiterated that the State government had given top priority to Education, Health, Agriculture and Police Departments and they should function more effectively.

CHICKEN

HYDERABAD

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SC: Why can't Rajiv Gandhi case convict be released after serving 36 years?

PNS NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Wednesday asked the Centre why it cannot release A G Perarivalan who has served 36 years of his life term in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case, noting that the government took a bizarre stand

that the Tamil Nadu Governor had forwarded the decision of the state cabinet of releasing the convict to the President, who is a call on the mercy plea.

the competent authority to take The apex court said when people who have served lesser periods are being released, then why can't the Centre agree on releasing him. The Tamil Nadu government

said the Centre is only trying to unsettle the settled position in

The top court said that prima facie it finds the governor's

stitution. A bench of Justices LN Rao

the constitution as he is bound by the aid and advice of the state cabinet and it strikes a blow on the federal structure of the con-

and B R Gavai told Additional Solicitor General KM Nataraj, decision to be wrong and against appearing for the Centre.

Lives snuffed out in minutes in TN chariot ...

Continued from Page 1

At the same time, the injured people, which includes both severely injured and others with relatively less severity, screamed in pain drawing local people in hordes. They could however do nothing much as power conductivity was still

It soon became apparent that the persons lying motionless here and there could be dead. When they were rushed to the hospital, the fears of the families of participants in the temple event and local people became true.

"It was all over in a matter of minutes. It took a while for us

to understand that people were dead and many were injured,' a local man said.

Electricity Minister V Senthilbalaji, explaining about the accident in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, said that the power transmission automatically snapped in the HT overhead line (33 KV) since the top portion of the chariot 'came within the electricity conduction range.' The power transmission on the line stopped within 0.19 seconds through the 'Relay Indication' mechanism, he said.

Subsequently, there was fire

on the top portion of the char-

iot, and people used water to

douse it while the generator was still running and supply-

'This accident may have

happened as the generator continued to supply electricity to power the lighting though the electricity transmission on the 33 KV HT line stopped," the Minister said. Also, Senthilbalaji said the

HT line was 'well above 23 feet' from the ground surface. Though the top portion of the chariot was foldable, it did not bend when people were turning the direction of the car. Had this top structure folded, this accident could have been fully averted, he said. "An inquiry is on," he added.

District and conveyed his condolences. Also, he visited the injured people, being treated at the Thanjavur Government Medical College Hospital. A senior police official said,

"whether the chariot's top por-

tion actually touched the HT

line or not is part of the investigation. FIR is registered and a probe is on. A senior official of the state electricity corporation TANGEDCO (Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation) told PTI that there are standard guidelines

for holding such events. Meanwhile, Chief Minister "During temple chariot pro-M K Stalin visited the families cessions, power supply usual-

areas. Once the chariot crosses a particular street, supply is restored to such an area already covered by the temple car. Our field personnel would be on the spot for coordination," he said. We are not sure if local electricity officials were notified in advance about this temple event." Pontiff of a Veera Shaiva math, Mailam Bommapuram Aadheenam said for any such temple event, appropriate permission should be obtained from all relevant government authorities. "When we hold events according to the guidelines and advice of experts, such accidents can be averted. he told reporters in Chennai.

ly is switched off in specified

one round of visiting. The

Each MLA should visit at least 10 ward/village secretariats that come under their constituencies every month and monitor the

of Minister said that a personalised letter would be provided to the MLAs who visited every household and hand over those letters having a list of achievements of the government. "Benefits worth close to

the district presidents should monitor the process. Even ministers The YSRCP supremo

conducts plenary on July 8. He also stated that

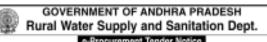
onwards. Jagan asked the party leaders to give retort to such branding in the same

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION DEPARTMENT T.N.No.44-81/2022-23 e-Procurement Tender Notice

Tenders called for 38 works under JJM grant with an estimate cost of Rs 2466.29 Lakhs pertaining to Konaseema District. The tender details are available in the portal http://www.apeprocurement.gov.in and the schedules can be downloaded from 04.05.2022 at 10.30 AM. Last date and time will be 5.00 PM on 19.05.2022. Sd/- M.Srinivas, Superintending Engineer DIPR.No. 4282/CLIAdv01/1/2022-23, Dt: 27-04-2022 RWS & S Projects Circle, Kakinada



Online tenders are invited under e-procurement platform form registered contractors for various works in guntur district from 06-05-2022. Total works: 46, Estimated value Rs. 1086, 39 lakhs. Details of works, tender conditions and further details can be seen at e-procurement platform a Sd/- Executive engineer RWS & S Department, Guntur DIPR.No. 4289/CL/Advi/1/1/2022-23, Dt: 27-04-2022



e-Procurement Tender Notice

Nos. 47 to 50/2022-23, Online tenders are invited for Providing FHTC by utilizing existing distri bution and retrofitting/augmentation in certain constituencies with total estimated cost of Rs. 2973.83 Lakhs under JJM Programme in Guntur Palnadu & Prakasam Districts of Andhra Pradesh. Tenders can be downloaded from e-market ie., www.tender.apeprocurement.gov.in for Sl.No.47 to 48: 04.05.2022 to 18.05.2022 upto 4PM and for Sl.No. 49 to 50: 05.05.2022 to 19.05.2022 upto 4PM. Sdi-Chief Engineer-II, RWS&S. DIPR.No. 4280/CL/Advt/1/1/2022-23, Dt: 27-04-2022

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Venkaiah urges media to be responsible in news coverage

Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu has called upon the media to follow values of ethical journalism and be responsible in their coverage of news.

Expressing his concern over the tendency to exaggerate and sensationalise news, he said that it was tantamount to misinforming the public. "At times, such misinformation can cause panic," he said, and added: "Be closer to the truth and stay away from sensation".

Naidu inaugurated a 100-metre tower for 10 KW FM operation at the All India Radio FM Station in Nellore on Wednesday. Soon after arriving at the AIR studio, Naidu gave a special address through live broadcast and dedicated the FM tower to the people of Nellore. He expressed happiness that the station he laid the foundation for when he was the Minister Information

Broadcasting, was operational. Addressing a gathering later, Naidu reiterated that freedom of press was indispensable in a democracy. He said the media played a vital role in educating the people on various issues and strengthening democracy. In this context, he underlined the



critical role of broadcast media in national develop-

Noting the widespread reach of the media in the digital age, Naidu advised the media to reflect the realities of society and always remain wedded to cardinal principles of journalism. There was also a need for the media to introspect and self-regulate. People should encourage media organisations that follow honest and ethical journalism.

Reflecting on the falling standards of TV debates, he called for more meaningful and respectful discussions on important national issues. Pointing out that India had 60 per cent rural population, he called upon all media organisations to focus more on the issues of rural India.

Touching upon the rise of social media, he expressed his concern over the phenomenon of fake news and said that people should not forward unverified and unsubstantiated information

The Vice-President noted the popularity of radio and its importance in educating people on various issues. He recalled how radio had been instrumental in giving recognition to many artists as well as bringing extension services

NGT orders probe into Kuppam illegal mining

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered the Chittoor District Collector to take

District Collector to take steps to prevent illegal mining in Kuppam assembly constituency.

The NGT on Wednesday issued several orders after hearing a petition filed by TDP former MLC Gourivani Srinivasulu regarding illegal mining in survey numbers 104 and survey numbers 104 and 213 in Muddanapalli village in Shantipuram man-

The Green Tribunal ordered the Chief Secretary and the officials of the Mining Department to visit the illegal mining area, conduct a scientific study and then submit a report.

The NGT considered the reports submitted by various government departments and confirmed that illegal mining was going on in forest lands.

The tribunal pulled up the mining officials for mentioning only illegal transportation of granite.

It has ordered the officials to provide the names and details of those resorting to illegal mining.



CM performs dua at iftar

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy wished a prosperous Ramzan to Muslims perous Ramzan to Mushims during the Iftar programme organised at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Stadium here on Wednesday. Earlier, CM Jagan inaugurated Shah Zahoor Musafir Khana in Wynchipet in one-town of Vijayawada in one-town of Vijayawada city amidst rousing reception from ministers, legislators, leaders and public.

CM Jagan, in a traditional Muslim attire of Topi (cap) and a shawl, participated in the Namaz with Muslim elders and performed Dua. Deputy CM SB Amzath Basha, Minister Taneti Vanitha, Jogi Ramesh, MLAs Md Mustafa and Hafiz Khan, MLC Md Ruhulla and others accompanied CM Jagan in the Iftar, Namaz and other programmes.

Deputy CM Amzath Basha said that late YS Rajasekhar



Reddy first provided four percent reservation to minorities, which was helpful to many minorities to get good education and employment opportunities. He said that following the path of YSR, Chief Minister Jagan was serving the minorities and giving them top priority in government, party and other institutions. He said that the Jagan government had given priority in the nominated posts to minorities and

in the AP Legislative Council. Amzath Basha said that

totally failed to uplift minorities and there was no representation of minorities in the AP Cabinet, but CM Jagan gave Deputy CM post and other important posts to minorities, which reflected the dedication of Jagan towards development of minorities. He added that CM Jagan would work further for the development and welfare of minorities in the next two years of YSRC govern-

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Ram Charan fans chant slogans in Durga temple, invite criticism

77,000 youths

to attend third

Mega Job Mela

ing movie Acharya, actor Ram Charam visited Kanaka Durga Temple in Vijayawada two days before the movie release on Wednesday. Knowing that Charan came to the temple, his fans and film lovers rushed toward him. They even organised a few rallies in Vijayawada and the whole Indrakiladri was echoing with chants praising Ram Charan, inviting crit-

People pushed each other just to get a snap of Ram Charan and the situation was a bit worrisome for a brief

PNS VIJAYAWADA

As many as 77,000 people

have applied for the third

Mega Job Mela to be held in

the Acharya Nagarjuna

University in Guntur on May

7 and 8. Addressing a press

meet, YSRC general secretary

and Rajya Sabha member V.

Vijaya Sai Reddy said on

Wednesday that the Mega Job

Mela was meant for unemployed youths in West

Godavari, Krishna, Guntur

Vijaya Sai Reddy released a

great successes. Now, the third

Mega Job Mela is going to be

held in ANU on May 7 and 8.

He appealed to all the unem-

ployed youths to make good

use of the opportunity to

and Prakasam districts.

period as the Police Department was unable to who came just to visit the temple had to face a lot of discom-

The fans who came to know that Ram Charan was coming, had gathered in large numbers at Gannavaram Airport since 8 am. Fans greeted Charan with a huge rally on his way to Durga temple from the airport. By the time he reached Îndrakeeladri, however, hundreds of fans were waiting at the temple chanting Jai Charan, Jai Jai Charan inside the temple, inviting criticism from the devotees and others.

secure jobs of their choice. Vijaya Sai Reddy said that in

the earlier two job fairs, as

Krishna Dist SP Kaushal stresses friendly policing

An orientation workshop was held for police personnel at Vuyyuru under nine police station limits, CCS and Traffic Police Stations in Vijayawada district by the Police Commissionerate for the first time after the reorganisation of districts. Krishna District SP Siddharth Kaushal, who was the chief guest, said that the workshop was aimed at quick resolution of public issues and friendly-policing, and said that issues of the staff would be

given top priority.

Speaking on the occasion, the SP said that every police officer should discharge their duties to ensure friendly policing and the officer should become fully proficient in it. with sympathy, courtesy, and with a smile, so that the people have more confidence in the Police Department.

Addressing the staff, he said that they were his army and assured that there would be no transfer till next year. He said that there would be no change in 90 per cent of transfers. The home guards, who had been





Oppn has no right to speak on women's safety: Roja

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Asserting that the State government has women's welfare top on the priority list, Tourism Minister RK Roja has said that the Opposition has no moral right to speak on women's safety.

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, the minister stated that TDP leaders under the guidance of N Chandrababu Naidu were trying to create chaos over every issue to gain political mileage. She said that the Opposition, unable to digest the good governance, was resorting to cheap politics to defame Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, and warned that action would be taken against those leaders who made abusive remarks on the Chief Minister



Chandrababu Naidu didn't even know how to console a victim without publicising or politicising the incident and even went overboard by attacking the Chairperson of the Women's Commission.

Stating that there were more maniacs in the TDP, she

stressed the need for bringing in laws to punish those who want to use victims for political mileage. She slammed Chandrababu Naidu for using abusive language against the Chief Minister and asked him why he didn't protest or hold rallies when TDP leader Vinod Jain sexually assaulted a minor.

The minister said that for the past three years, Jagan Mohan Reddy had been working for women empowerment and that 75 per cent of the welfare schemes were aimed at women beneficiaries for bettering their lives. Reiterating that women were betrayed and their welfare was deeply neglected by the previous government, she said that TDP leaders had no right to speak on women's welfare or their

IF FI FCTFD TO POWER

Will adopt Bhagyalakshmi temple

Bandi promises jobs to BJP party activists tortured by cops

PNS HYDERABAD

BJP State unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar on Wednesday he would adopt Bhagyalakshmi temple in the Old City of Hyderabad, Bhainsa and Utkur, if his party is voted to power.

. Speaking at Yadavalli village in Mahabubnagar district, during his Praja Sangrama Yatra, he promised to give jobs to the party activists who were subjected to police torture. He vowed to take vengeance on the police who tormented Hindus in Bhainsa. He also declared that his aim is to establish



party would not leave the guilty police per-

sonnel' unpunished. The police, he alleged, had subjected the party activists to torture. The party activists took out a motorcycle procession and farmers came to the venue of his yatra on bullock carts.

He claimed that the TRS leaders wished that he was no more. But he survived heart

attack. 'Death is afraid of me,' 'Hindu Raj.' he claimed. The Hindu dhrama would not wish 'death' on any-Kumar said the saffron one, he said.

He said that the party activists were waging a fight against 'goons' in Utkur. A number of activists had lost legs and even eyes. But they were continuing their fight, he said. He denied that he was instigating communalism.

The people were aware of 'atrocities' committed by Rajakars. He alleged the people, including women, in Utkur were subjected to torture under the rule of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.

Need a torch-bearer like KCR

PNS HYDERABAD

Bhagiratha, TS iPASS. He

said, "Now India needs a

Telangana model. Golden

Telangana model should be

introduced to India. The taxes levied on the people of Telangana are being sent to

the BJP-led Bimaru states. If

you want to see a smile on the

face of a poor man who has no

religious madness and no

caste madness and universal

many as 30,000 youth got var-IT Minister K T Rama Rao, ious types of jobs and in the third fair, as many as 208 comspeaking after moving the panies are going to participate. party's political resolution, He termed the allegations of said that the TRS party should Opposition parties against the play a key role in national poljob fairs as meaningless and itics in the broader interests of politically motivated. the country. KTR said: "In the He stated that CM Jagan had history of the Telugu states, ordered to continue the job two great men turned politics fairs till all the people got around - If the late employment. He further stat-Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao ed that many students and their parents had attended the created history, our KCR

two Job Melas and they were poster of the Job Mela on the occasion. He refuted the allehappy.
MP Vijaya Sai Reddy said gations of the Opposition par-ties regarding the Job Melas. He explained that following that in the coming two years, the party was planning to provide as many jobs as possible to the unemployed through Mega Job Melas. the guidelines of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, the party had conducted two job fairs in Tirupati and Visakhapatnam, which were

Ministers Ambati Karumuri Rambabu, Nageswara Rao and Merugu Nagarjuna, MLC Ummareddy Venkateswarlu, MLA Sridevi, MLC's Lella Appi Reddy and others participated in the pro-



brotherhood - it is the Telangana model."

While Telangana has a history of incredible success, the BJP and the Centre had a history of endless failures, he added. He said that Narendra Modi was anti-farmer. "Modi wants to give a house to all the poor by 2022 ... but with his bankrupt financial policies, now people have to sell their house with the tax

TRS IS PROSPEROUS PARTY

Rs 1,000crore assets, 2 Innovas and 1 Ford car

Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has declared that the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS) is a prosperous party with Rs1,000 crore assets. The ruling TRS party's 21st Foundation Day celebrations were held on a grand scale at HICC centre on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion, KCR observed: "We are a very prosperous party. Rs 451 crore as fixed deposits, including electoral bonds, as per the rules. TRS' assets are Rs 861crore in SBI and Bank of Baroda. On that, we get interest of Rs 3.84 crore every month. This accumulated in current account to Rs 24.75crore. It is a matter of pride for us to say we have Rs 865 crore in cash We are transparent. Including

all value of offices, we have Rs1,000 crore. We have 2 Innovas and one Ford vehicles We are planning to add more vehicles." Stating that TRS' advent in national politics would require money, KCR said:"Our party has 60 lakh members who can give money ranging from 1 crore to 1 lakh and Rs 1,000. If we give a call, like Telangana agitation, to develop country, on an average even if a person sends Rs 1000, it would be Rs 600crores." He said that there would be training sessions for leaders. "We will send party leaders to foreign countries to study the situation there". he said. TRS senior leader Keshav Rao delivered the welcome

address

KCR breaks down on Guv's system

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao became emotional and broke down at the party's Foundation Day on Wednesday while speaking about the deterioration in the institution of Governor.

KCR called the present governor's system as "vicious institution". However, KCR did not mention Telangana Governor

Tamilisai Soundararajan's name. Referring to incidents in Maharashtra, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, KCR said everywhere Governors were creating controversies. The Governors were keeping cabinet-approved files pending for months together. He said that the Maharashtra state cabinet had approved names for 12 MLCs but the Governor kept the file pending for more than a year. Same thing was happening in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal, he added.

It may be recalled that Telangana Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan recently said had she kept the file relating to Assembly budget session for 15 days, the TRS government would have collapsed.

Keeping this in mind, KCR mentioned about the Ramlal episode during the NTR regime and said after this incident also the Governors did not learn their lesson. KCR said, with the aim of doing good for the people, NT Rama Rao had launched Telugu Desam Party and people voted for the party in more than 200 assembly seats. But the then Congress government removed the NTR government by using the vicious Governor's system. KCR said that the Telugu people fought till NTR was reinstated in the CM's chair. Later, Governor Ramlal was removed. But it appears that Governors did not learn a lesson from this episode.



Kondamodu-Perecharla NH will be completed expeditiously: MP

Narasaraopet MP Lavu Sri Krishnadevarayalu made it clear that the construction of Kondamodu-Perecharla National Highway would be completed and 350 acres of land yet to be acquired for the

Addressing a press conference here on Wednesday, he said that Rs 1480 crore was allocated for the construction of roads to the Narasaraopet constituency for the year 2022-23 and no Parliamentary constituency was allocated such a huge amount. He said that Rs 600 crore was allocated for the construction of Kondamodu-Perecharla national highway, Rs 430 crore was allocated for the construction of Vodarevu-Chilakaluripet highway, Rs 450 crore was granted for the construction of Chilakaluripet-Nekarikallu highway. He underlined the need of highways to achieve rapid development in the Palnadu region.

The MP said that he is very much committed to the development of Kondamodu-Peracherla highway. He said the national highways would not be completed in two to



three years. Though the land acquisition process was completed in 2009, the Chilakaluripet bypass road works are being carried out

The MP explained that the land acquisition process for the Guntur-Vijayawada bypass road was completed in 2010 but the works were being carried out now, adding that the national highway expansion works should be completed in a phased manner. During the previous regime, proposals were not sent for the construction of Kondamodu-Perecherla highway. But now funds allocated for the same, the MP said, stating that the Kondamodu-Perecherla road was recognized as a national

highway after the YSRCP came

to power. He said that 350 acres

of land to be acquired for the

highway project. Sri Krishnadevarayalu said he appealed to the Center to bear the entire cost of land acquisition for the highway projects in view of the state's financial situation. He said the process might be delayed under the new Land Acquisition Act, adding that he was aware of the difficulties encountered as he was looking forward to completing it expe-

The MP informed that the Dachepalli-Macherla road has also been identified as a national highway, stating that approvals for the construction of Varikepudisela was imperative for the development of the region. Previously, the gov-

stone for the project without getting approvals, he remind-

"Varikepudishela project is the dream project of people of Palanadu. I have been vigorously trying to complete the project since coming to power. Since there is delay in getting clearance for the project they could not move forward in this regard", he clarified.

The forest department and revenue departments had given clearance for the project. At present the Centre has approved the project, he made it clear, adding that he had met Union minister Bhupendar Yadav for the clearance of forest land for which the minister responded favourably. Sri Krishnadevarayalu said

that a proposal for the construction of a bridge at Madipadu in Pedakurapadu division was sent to the government which approved the project and the works would begin soon. He said that he made efforts for the establishment of a medical college in Piduguralla and the college is being constructed by the state and Central governments

JSP objects collection of water cess

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Janasena party political affairs committee chairman Nadendla Manohar strongly objected to the collecting of water cess from the farmers.

In a statement here on Wednesday, he said that when the farmers were in lurch as the farmers were in furch as they were not getting remu-nerative price for their pro-duce, and at the same time, there is no guarantee whether they would get their produce without damage, the govern-ment forceibly collecting water cess from the farmers.

Ignoring the difficulties of the farmers, the government is collecting water cess from 2018 at the rate of 6 percent interest. The officials threatened the farmers of not extending Rythu Bharosa money if they did not pay the water cess, he alleged.

"Is CBI's adopted son Jagan Mohan Reddy ruling the state or doing money lending business. Houses were locked when the people did not pay property tax. Now the government has targeted the farmers. The government is harassing the farmers. The government did not spend money to de-silt irrigation canals", he said, and questioned how the government could force the farmers to pay water cess.

Officials directed to ensure quality in construction works

Municipal Commissioner Chekuri Keerthi directed the officials to ensure that quality is maintained in the construction of works including roads.

The Commissioner inspected the newly constructed CC road and drainage in old Guntur, major outfall drain and sewerage in Balaji Nagar and gave instructions to the official on Wednesday. Speaking on the occasion, the Commissioner told the officials to ensure that the works were completed in the prescribed time by following quality.
"There should be no com-

promise in maintaining quality in the construction works. Every work should be carried out following the standards", she told the contractors.

Chekuri Keerthi first inspected the quality of the CC road on the Bhagyanagar main road directly with a rebound hammer and checked whether there were any levels in the road to allow water to flow into the drains when it rained.

She examined the M-Book, details of tender approval for works, progress of works, material used in works. Representatives of a third party quality control agency were asked to file photos of the

respective stages and submit a quality report while the work was in progress.

She directed the engineering authorities to prepare the bills for the contractor within a week of the work being carried out and warned that action should be taken against the contractors and officials concerned for not following the standards in the works.

The SE was directed to inspect the Balaji Nagar Major Outfall Drain at the railway stubborn gate and remove silt in the drain and coordinate with the railway authorities on the arrangement of the culvert at the railway crossing.

Municipal

Commissioner directed the AE to inspect the drain on Jamia Nagar Gottala Road and take necessary steps to remove silt and obstruct the drainage as most of the sewage in the city is flowing from this drain. Public health officials were instructed to clean outfall drains in the city once every 2 days and move the incoming waste to a

dumping point immediately. SE D Srinivas, City Planner Madhu Kumar, EÉs Konda Reddy, Shanthi Raju, Assistant City Planners Ajay Kumar, Kalesha, Corporator Polavarapu Jyothi, DEEs Srinivasa Reddy and Ramesh Babu were among who accompanied her.



MP asks TDP cadre to make membership drive a success

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Telugu Desam party MP Galla Jayadev called upon the cadres to make the membership drive a big success in the state.

Speaking on the occasion of here on Wednesday, the MP said obtained now is valid from the

whether in power or in opposition, Telugu Desam to take the ideology of the Telugu
Desam Party to strength that no the people, and strive for the betterment of the in the country has weaker sections of at the field level. the society.

Guntur West TDP in-charge said that party membership registration was innovatively integrated with technology through WhatsApp, making it

own party membership. Guntur Urban TDP president Degala Prabhakar said that every worker should be prepared to work for party strength

easy for anyone to set up their

from the ward level. In case of technical glitches in the membership registration, the ITDP members concerned can be contacted and informed. The active membership of the party can be availed by paying a fee of Rs 100 and th

that the TDP is the only party, year 2022 to 2024. Telugu Yuvatha District President Ravipati Sai Krishna said that the Telugu Desam Party has a strength that no other political party in the country has at the field

level. He also said Kovelamoodi Ravindra (Nani) that the provision of accident insurance by the workers' welfare department to the youth to come forward voluntarily and join the party was highly commendable. ITDP state secretary Panchumarti Seshu, Telugu Yuvata Guntur district campaign secretary Cherukupalli Nagaraju and other leaders were





Eluru district Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh inspecting an examination centre in Eluru (Right) Bapatla district Superintendent of police Vakul Jindal inspecting an

X CLASS EXAMINATIONS BEGIN ON A PEACEFUL NOTE

.PNS ELURU/BAPATLA

The 10 th class examinations began on Wednesday across the state in a peaceful note and all the required arrangements were made for the students.

sources, 6,02,537 students were appearing for the 10 th class examinations in the state of which 3,02,474 were girls. The examination began at 9:30 am. Eluru district Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh inspected some of the examination centres on Wednesday.

The Collector visited the Kasturba girls high school and inspected examination centres. He expressed satisfaction at the arrangements made for the examinations and the way in which the examinations were being conducted.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that the 10 th class examinations began today and conclude on May 9. In the combined West Godavari district 48,407 students were appearing for the examinations of which 24.033

Visually impaired girl student denied permission to appear 10 th exam

KURNOOL A blind girl was denied permission to write the Wednesday in Nandyala district. Malladri Drakshayani is completely blind but she studied up to 10 th class by securing high marks. She has overcome her visual disability and continued her studies. The government permitted her to appear for the 10 th class examination and issued a hall ticket also. She prepared well for the examina tions. Her hopes were dashed as the educational authorities denied her permission to write the examination. She begged her to permit her to write the

Medium school in Nandyala to write her examination with her hall ticket. But the education department and examination officials denied her permission to write the examination today. The visually impaired students were given an opportunity by the government to dictate not allowed to write exami-

examination but the officials did

not relent. The blind girl went to

from the newly created Eluru district of which 11,842 were girls. He said that 136 examination centres were set up in the Eluru district.

Prasanna Venkatesh said that 1541 staff were deployed

answers to her proxy to write examinations. The grief of the visually impaired girl moved all It was not known why the visually impaired girl student was to conduct the examination,

48 sitting and 14 flying squads were set up to check copying. He said that Section 144 was clamped at the examination centre. He said that an arrangement for supplying

drinking water to the students was made. Elaborate security was provided to the centres where question papers were preserved. All steps taken to check malpractices in the examination and police proination centres. DEO RS Ganga Bhavani and Superintendent GS Padmaja were present.

Meanwhile, in Bapatla, Superintendent of police Vakul Jindal inspected examination centres today in the municipal high school. Speaking on the occasion, he said that elaborate security was provided to the examination centre.

Escort was also provided while taking answer papers for depositing in the strong rooms. All Xerox kiosks centres and net centres were closed in the surrounding areas of the examination centre. He said that 5 flying squads were set up to check copying and malpractices. Bapatla SDOP A Srinivasa Rao, SB CI A Srinivasa Rao and town CI P Krishnaiah accompanied the SP.



Focus on resolving problems of farmers, officials told

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

West Godavari district P Prasanthi directed the officials to focus on the problems of farmers and take steps to resolve them. She held a meeting with the officials in the Swarnandhra engineering college in Sitarampuram on Wednesday.

Speaking on the occasion she directed the officials to convince the farmers to buy tractors on 40 percent subsidy. She told then the e-crop process is completed. The process of issuing loan cards to the tenant farmers should be expedited.

The Polam Badi programmes should be organised extensively to explain to the farmers on how to yield maximum produce by spending less amount, she told the officials and directed them to hold agriculture advisory board meetings and know the problems of farmers.

Prasanthi directed the officials to take steps to disburse money to the farmers whose paddy was purchased by the paddy procurement centres, adding that the applications received for house sites should be resolved by 90 days.

She asked the officials to expedite to expedite the land survey and land survey work.

Applications received for mutations should be addressed within the stipulated time, she said, adding that applications should not be rejected without a valid reason. The Pattadar passbooks should be issued following transparency, she told the officials.

The Pattadar passbooks are required to be issued within the stipulated time, the Collector said, stating that the authorities should take steps to make the beneficiaries fully aware of the Iagananna purna bhuhakku Scheme and ensure that the scheme is available to all the beneficiaries.

The Collector told the offi cials that under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, 100 days must be provided to the workers. The works should be identified at the mandal level. Prasanthi directed the authorities to conduct surprise inspections of welfare hostels, Anganwadi Centres and government schools and to look into the services being rendered to the people in the village and ward secretariats.

Joint Collector JV Murali asked the officials to focus on implementing the programmes and achieve the set targets. Sub Collector Vishnu Charan and other officials were present.

District Collector inspects Veligonda project works

PNS ONGOLE

District Collector AS Dinesh Kumar along with Joint Collector Abhishikt Kishore inspected the works of the Veligonda project on Wednesday. The officials explained to the Collector progress of works of the second tunnel of the project.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the government set a target of completing the second tunnel of the project by March 2023. Since there is no dearth of funds, the works should be carried out expeditiously. He told the officials to take steps to release water through the first tunnel by August, 2022 since the works were complet-

The Collector said that the survey for rehabilitation of the displaced is almost complete the government



uees would be given packages

Dinesh Kumar said the

and would be shifted to safer

compensation would be pro-

vided to the displaced as per the first phase. As soon as the money was received, the evac-

He held a meeting with the people of 11 affected villages in Sunkesula village on Wednesday to elicit the views of the people on the issue of compensation. The Collector commented that such a big project is coming true with the cooperation of the people of 11 villages.

The Collector said compensation would be given to the beneficiaries in the affected villages in four installments over the next four months as the government had insisted on releasing water from the first tunnel by August. The Collector suggested that the required bank accounts should be in activation and made it clear that he would do justice on behalf of the government to the real settlers and not trust

any agents.

The meeting was attended by Joint Collector Abhishek Kishore, Special Deputy Collector Sarla Vandanam, Ardeo Lakshmi Shivajyoti, Projects Chief Engineer M Srinivasu Reddy, SE Varalakshmi, Tehsildar Umarani and other officials.

PD Act invoked against 2 notorious illicit brewers

PNS ONGOLE

Superintendent of police Malika Garg said here on Wednesday that the Preventive Detention (PD) Act was invoked against two notorious illicit brewers in the district. She told the media that Prakasam district police are taking a series of stringent measures to curb ID liquor from its grass roots across the district.

As a part of this, the PD Act was invoked against the illegal liquor manufacturers, transporters and vendors. The PD Act is also being invoked with the permission of the District Collector against those who have been involved in ID liquor related cases, she informed.

The PD Act was invoked against Mandla Srinivasu (37), a resident of Diguva Mitta village of Giddaluru Mandal who involved in 6 cases in Giddalur SEB PS limits for making ID liquor and selling it in Diguva mitta village, Giddalur municipal areas and the surrounding villages for last 3 years causing harm to the health of thousands of people and disturbing the peace and tranquillity, law and



order problems Hence, the PD Act was enforced against him and he was sent to Rajahmundry Central Jail.

Similarly, Konkala Kondayya (57) of Komarolu Mandal, Chintala Palli village,

who was booked in 7 ID liquor related cases 6 in Giddalur SEB PS limits and one case in Komarolu PS for making ID liquor and selling it in Chintalapalli village and surrounding mandals for the last three years also sent to Rajahmundry Central Jail under PD Act on the same grounds.

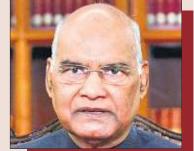
The district SP said that the distilling, hoarding, and selling of ID liquor is a crime and it is injurious to human health and despite repeated warnings that Illegal liquor is lethal to the public health. The accused indulged in the arrack brewing and hence they were sent to Rajahmundry Central Jail under the PD Act. The PD Act will be enforced against those who repeatedly commit ID liquor crimes to bring about a transformation in them.

The district SP said that a comprehensive action plan is being implemented to eradicate ID liquor by keeping special surveillance and robust information system, registering cases, proposing to bind over the accused and enforcement of the PD Act. The district SP warned that there is no let up for those who commit illegal activities.

WB post-poll violence: Lawyers' group to meet Prez, take out protest march on Apr 29

delegation of 10 advocates, who are part of an association named 'Lawyers for Justice' Asaid on Wednesday they will meet President Ram Nath Kovind on April 29 to demand justice for the victims of post-poll violence in West Bengal last year. Addressing a press conference, the association's convener Kabir Shankar Bose said a candle light tribute march has also been organised for families of the victims, from Patiala House Court to Tilak Marg

on Friday. "We will meet the President on April 29 to demand justice for the victims of post-poll violence in West Bengal," Bose said. The march will be taken out in Delhi as journalists in West Bengal have been "barred" from interacting with the victims, he alleged, adding it wants the media in the national capital to "hear their plight". "Post May 2, 2021, a reign of unprecedented terror, lawlessness and violence was unleashed by goons and anti-socials actively supported by the ruling dispensation and the political party in power in the state," he alleged.



Bengal govt spent Rs 1,500 cr in last 3 yrs to provide fuel subsidy: Mamata

est Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday said that her government has spent Rs 1,500 crore in the last three years to subsidise petrol and diesel prices in the state. Her retort came a few hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a virtual interaction with chief ministers, flagged higher fuel prices in opposition-ruled states such as Maharashtra, Kerala and West Bengal and asked the state governments to reduce VAT for

the benefit of the common man. "Today's interaction with PM Narendra Modi was completely one-sided and misleading. Facts shared by him were wrong. We have been providing a subsidy of Re 1 on every litre of petrol and diesel for the last three years. We've spent Rs 1,500 crore on this," Banerjee told reporters at the state secretariat. She claimed there was no scope for the chief ministers to speak at the meeting and hence, they could not counter the prime minister's statement



PM Modi to visit Germany, **Denmark, France from May 2-4**

n his first trip abroad this year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will embark on a three-day visit to Germany, Denmark and France from May 2 amid the crisis in Ukraine and Europe's firm approach to dealing with it. Announcing the visit, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on Wednesday said the prime minister will first travel to Germany, then visit Denmark and will have a brief stop over in Paris on his return journey on May 4. In Paris, Modi will hold talks with French President Emmanuel Macron, who was re-elected to the top post on

Marine Le Pen in the fiercelyfought presidential election. "In Berlin, the prime minister will hold bilateral talks with Olaf Scholz, Federal Chancellor of Germany, and the two leaders will co-chair the sixth edition of the India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC)," the MEA said in a statement.



Oppn accuses Modi of playing politics on fuel prices

The Opposition on Wednesday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of playing politics during his meeting with chief ministers on the Covid situation by raising the issue of fuel prices and "passing the buck" on to states to reduce VAT on petrol and diesel.

Hitting out at the Opposition. the BJP said its stance reeks of hypocrisy and alleged that for every litre of petrol, oppositionruled states were earning twice as much as the BJP-ruled states.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said the Centre owed Rs 26,500 crore to the state, after Prime Minister Modi said some states did not reduce VAT on petrol and diesel despite the excise duty cut by the Union government in November last year.

Thackeray also accused the Centre of a step-motherly treatment to Maharashtra and that

tractions, No Jumlas! Please give

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala attacked Modi, demanding that he give an account of the Rs 27 lakh crore "collected" by the BJP government from tax on petrol

"Modi ji, No criticism, No dis-

the state government was not responsible for the rise in prices of petrol and diesel.

account ?27,00,00,00,00,00,00 (?27 Lakh Crore) collected by BJP Govt from Tax on Petrol & Diesel, Surjewala said. He said that on May 26, 2014, when PM Modi assumed charge, crude oil was USD 108 per barrel, but petrol and diesel were priced at Rs 71.41 and Rs 55.49 per litre, while

today, crude oil is USD 100.20 per barrel, but the petrol and diesel prices have been increased to Rs 105.41/litre and Rs 96.67/litre respectively in Delhi.

"We will urge all states to

decrease VAT on Petrol/Diesel to pre-May 2014 level. Please admit BJP Govt earned Rs 27 Lakh Crore from Petrol/Diesel while all states collectively received about 16.5 Lakh Croré. Central Govt revenue from Petrol/Diesel has doubled in 8 years," he said in a series of tweets. Shiv Sena leader Priyanka Chaturvedi also slammed the prime minister, alleging that he made the "COVID meeting about politics". "The central government has earned 26 lakh Crore out of central excise on fuel, increased 18 times even when oil prices hit rock bottom. The GST share to states still owed, compensation component to state done away with and now pointing fingers," she tweeted

Maha to mandate wearing of masks in crowded places

PNS MUMBAI

Amid rising coronavirus cases in the country, wearing of masks in crowded places could be made mandatory again in Maharashtra, state Health Minister Rajesh Tope said on Wednesday.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray is expected to hold a meeting with the district collectors in the state to discuss the issue with them, he said. "I feel this decision (about making wearing of masks compulsory in public places) could be taken after the meet-

ing," Tope told reporters. He said Delhi has made masks mandatory and is even imposing a fine of Rs 500. Even masks restrictions are back in district of Uttar Pradesh adjoining Delhi, he said.

Maharashtra had done away all the COVID-19 related restrictions on April 2 on the occasion of Gudhi Padwa, the Marathi New Year.

However, Tope had then urged people to wear masks voluntarily to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Labour codes implementation imminent: Bhupender Yadav PNS NEW DELHI

Union Labour Minister Bhupender Yadav has exuded confidence that four labour codes, which would bring another wave of reforms, will soon be implemented as around 90 per cent of states have already come out with draft rules.

In 2019 and 2020, 29 central labour laws were amalgamated, rationalised and simplified into four labour codes, viz, the Code on Wages, 2019; the Industrial Relations Code, 2020; the Code on Social Security, 2020; and the Occupational Safety, Health & Working Conditions Code, 2020, noted the Survey.

During an interaction, Yadav told reporters that around 90 per cent of the states have already published draft rules on four labour codes and he expects the four legislations would become operational soon.

The new laws are in tune with the changing labour mar-

accommodate the minimum wage requirement and welfare needs of the unorganised sector workers, including the selfemployed and migrant workers, within the framework of legislation.

The central government has also pre-published the draft rules for all four codes. Now states are required to frame regulations on their part as labour is a concurrent subject.

Labour is in the Concurrent List of the Constitution and under the Labour Codes, rules are required to be framed by the central government as well as by the state governments.

The central government has notified four labour codes, namely, the Code on Wages, 2019, on August 8, 2019; the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 on September 29,

However, the Centre as well as states are required to notify rules under the four codes to enforce these laws in respective jurisdictions. Under the Codes, the power to make rules has been entrusted to the central government, state government and appropriate government and there is a requirement for publication of rules in their official gazette for a period of 30 or 45 days for public consultation.

The minister also said that the government is working to provide social security to the entire workforce in the country and that is why e-Shram portal or national database of informal workers is being cre-

CONGRESS REVAMPS HARYANA UNIT

Hooda loyalist Udai Bhan replaces Selja as president

PNS NEW DELHI /

The Congress on Wednesday appointing former legislator Udai Bhan as president of its state unit, replacing Kumari Selja, and naming four working presidents.

As part of the reorganisation that had been on the cards for the past few weeks, the Congress appointed Shruti Choudhary, Ram Kishan Gujjar, Jitender Kumar Bhardwaj and Suresh Gupta as working presidents in a bid to strike a power balance in the party's state unit.

"Hon'ble Congress President has accepted the resignation of Kumari Selja from the post of the President, Haryana Pradesh Congress Committee



with immediate effect," senior leader K C Venugopal said in a statement. Selja told PTI that she had submitted her resignation to the party high command a few days ago.

"I am a true soldier of the Congress party. I have full faith in my high command and we will all work together. My congratulations to the new state unit president and the working presidents," she said.

Like Selja, Bhan (66) is from the Scheduled Caste community. He has been an MLA from Hodal and Hasanpur fidant of former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh

Hooda, Leader of the Opposition in Haryana, termed Bhan a hardworking leader who has worked at the grassroots. "His appointment will further strengthen the Congress," Hooda told PTI.

Referring to the appointment of the four working presidents, Hooda said, "All will work together and strengthen the Congress."

The new state unit chief thanked Congress president Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi for reposing faith in

Two held in Mumbai with drugs worth Rs 76 lakh

PNS MUMBAI

The Mumbai police arrested two persons and seized mephedrone (MD) drugs their possession Wednesday, an official of the Anti-Narcotics Cell (ANC)

The duo, identified as Abid Ashraf Sheikh (28) and Rohit Suresh Soni (21), both city residents, was apprehended by an ANC team, he said.

Acting on a tip-off, the ANC team laid a trap at a building in south Mumbai and nabbed Sheikh, who was selling the drugs. After his interrogation, the police arrested Soni from the Sewri area, the official said.

In all, MD drugs worth Rs 76.20 lakh were seized from them, he said.

Nearly 20 million women digitally literate in India under PMGDISHA PNS NEW DELHI

Nearly 20 million women have been certified to be digitally literate in India under the PMGDISHA programme dedicated to digital literacy, Union mriti Irani Wednesday.

Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) aims to empower the people in rural areas by training them to operate computer or digital access devices (like tablets, smart phones, etc.), send and receive e-mails, browse internet, access government services, and undertake digital payment, among others.

Responding to a question at an interactive session at the Raisina Dialogue, India's premier foreign policy and geoeconomics conference, Irani said there is much that is being done in India digitally



and otherwise

She said PM's DISHA programme has close to 20 million certified digitally literate women in India.

"When India went into lockdown, we did not have a single PPE suit in the country and the workforce that made those PPE suit, about 75 per cent of it were Indian

women and in just three months we became the second largest exporters in the world and that is an indicator of female potential in Indian manufacturing," she said.

who are first responders in the COVID-19 pandemic, be it doctors, nurses, ASHA workers, and Anganwadi workers,' the women and child development minister added. She said under Ayushman

Bharat, the footfall of women in hospitals and healthcare establisĥments in last two years has been 450 million and women who are getting themselves checked for cancer or cancer of cervix, the number is 70 million.

'When you have a government which ensures that their needs are financially supported, they do not withdraw from these services," he said.

PM SVANidhi scheme to continue till Dec 2024

PNS NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday approved the continuation Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) scheme till December 2024, according to an official statement.

The approval was given by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the statement said, adding that through PM SVANidhi, affordable collateral-free loans are given to street vendors. "Today's approval has increased the loan amount to Rs 8,100 crore, thereby providing the street vendors working capital to further expand their business and making them AtmaNirbhar," the statement said.

Jaishankar to visit Bangladesh, Bhutan from April 28-30

PNS NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will begin a threeday visit to Bangladesh and Bhutan on Thursday focusing on enhancing bilateral cooperation and exchanging views on key issues. In Dhaka, Jaishankar will call on Bangladeshi PM Sheikh Hasina and hold discussions with Foreign Minister A K Abdul Momen, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Wednesday, announcing

Railway issues notices to mazar, temple in Agra

PNS NEW DELHI

As part of the railways' bid to remove illegal encroachments from its land, its North Central zone has issued notices to a mazar of Bhure Shah Baba and a Chamunda Devi temple in Agra in Uttar Pradesh.

In the notice issued on April 25 to Sajjada Nashim, the caretaker of the mazar, the railways has said the structure was constructed on land owned by the Agra Cantonment railway board and 182.57 square metres of the land have been "illegally occupied".

It has asked for documents defending the construction of the mazar to be presented before the board by May 13. The notice has instructed Nashim to prove the ownership of the land and appear for a hearing on May 13. It has further added that if the mazar caretaker is not available on that date, officials as well as the court will issue orders after hearing only one side.

Similarly, in a notice issued on April 12 to the priest incharge of the Chamunda Devi temple, the railways has said a part of the structure is



encroaching on platform number one of the Raja Ki Mandi railway station and causing inconvenience to passengers as well as affecting train movement. The notice has given 10 days' time for the removal of the temple from the platform as well as from rail-

around 814.5 hectares, which is at least nine times the total area of the New Delhi railway station, is encroached across the country and almost onefifth of it is in the Northern Railway zone, according to data provided by the railway ministry in Parliament in December 2021.

According to the ministry, railway land measuring nearly 176 hectares is under encroachment in the Northern zone, followed by 141 hectares in the South Eastern zone. Around 94 hectares are Railway land measuring encroached upon in the ments.

Northeast Frontier zone. The Supreme Court had blamed the railways in December last year for the encroachment on its properties and said it must initiate action against the unautho-

Not only the railways, most public departments are wary of taking action against religious structures, officials said.

rised occupants immediately.

However, senior officials said the railways, after the lashing from the apex court, has decided to take action against all such encroach-

Uttar Pradesh: Drive to remove unauthorised loudspeakers from shrines

PNS LUCKNOW

Over 6,000 unauthorised loudspeakers were removed from religious places and volume of other 30,000 was set to permissible limits across Uttar Pradesh following a govern-

ment order, a senior police official said Wednesday. A statewide drive

is being undertaken to remove unauthorised loudspeakers from religious places and set the volume of others within permislimits, sible

Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said. He added that loudspeakers

are being removed from all religious places without any

discrimination. Under this exercise, a total of 6,031 loudspeakers were removed and volume of 29,674

loudspeakers was set within

permissible limits till Wednesday afternoon, Kumar Explaining further about

the action, he said, "The loud-

speakers which are being

removed are unauthorised. Those loudspeakers which have been placed without taking due permission from the district administration or the ones which are placed in excess of the permitted numbers are

> thorised, he added. He said, Orders of the high court regarding loud-

categorised as unau-

speakers are also being considered during the exercise." The action followed after

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, during a review meeting on law and order with senior officials here last week, said people have the freedom to perform their religious practices according to

Safety, hygiene top priority for inter-city bus travellers: Survey prefer punctuality when chooscontinued focus on safety, The results illustrate that 65 per cent of travellers priori-

PNS NEW DELHI

Safety and hygiene are of utmost importance for people travelling from one city to another amid the COVID-19 pandemic, as per a survey conducted by leading mobili-

ty platform IntrCity. The platform conducted the study to understand Indian travellers' behaviour and preferences while travelling inter-

with long due vacations, Indians are enthusiastic to travel and yet cautious about hygiene and sanitisation.

IntrCity performed a nationwide online survey of 3,100 persons aged 18 to 60 rears old who travel between India's metros, tier-1, and tier-2 cities. It was conducted between March 15 and April

As per the survey findings, ty and hygiene, while men

tised onboard washroom facility, while 60 per cent prefer GPS tracking enabled bus.

The importance of hygiene and safety among travellers has skyrocketed. 65 per cent of the travellers prioritise travelling with an on-board washroom facility, while 60 per cent prefer GPS tracking enabled buses," the survey pointed out. Female travellers prefer safeing the mode of travel, it stat-

Nearly two-thirds of all respondents in the survey stated a clear preference for a bus that has comfort and convenience features over a regular

bus, even if it costs more.
"We are glad to bring the findings of our survey, which highlight the priority areas of inter-city travellers. The noted. new normal necessitates a

hygiene, punctuality and provid-

ing a differentiated experience travellers, IntrCity cofounder Kapil Raizada



FIRST COLUMN

IGNORANCE OF KCR AND KTR IS TRS' BLISS!



he venue of the TRS Foundation Day celebrations reverberated with rounds of applause when the party president and Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao announced that the State had made a clean sweep in the list of 10 "Best Villages" announced by the Union Government. "Telangana is a role model for the country. We are progressing with a wonderful administration. The rewards and awards speak volumes. The Union Government announced the list of top 10 villages in the country. All the 10 villages are from Telangana. In the list of 20 best villages, 19 are from Telangana. This is a sample for our performance (mana pani teeruku machhutunaka)," KCR said. KCR was referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet scheme, Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY), a village development project launched by the Government of India in October 2014. Under SAGY, MPs can adopt villages for development. Earlier, party working president and Minister K.T.Rama Rao congratulated his father on his 'proud'



achievement on Twitter. "Proud to share that all 10 out of top 10 villages in Sansad Adarsh Garmina Yojana are from Telangana and 19 out of top 20 villages from TS. Heartiest congratulations to Hon'ble CM KCR Garu for his vision, especially Palle Pragathi. Compliments to PR Minister Dayakar Rao and team," read KTR's tweet. KTR apparently cooked up a table to share along with the tweet. We don't know whether it was a deliberate attempt, but he excluded Gummadavelli village of Ranga Reddy district adopted by Union Minister G.Kishan Reddy from the list he tweeted. KTR tried to mislead on two fronts. Firstly, he gleefully claimed that these villages were developed under Palle Pragathi. Secondly, he excluded Gummadavelli developed by Union Minister Kishan Reddy. The father-son duo was in a hurry to pat their backs for this achievement, but the fact remains that these villages were developed by BJP MPs using central government funds.

While three villages are from Karimnagar -- the constituency of BJP State president Bandi Sanjay Kumar -- four are located in the Nizamabad parliamentary constituency represented by Dharmapuri Arvind. As mentioned earlier, Gummadavelli was adopted by Union Minister G.Kishan Reddy. The remaining two villages are located in the Bhongir constituency, represented by K. Venkat Reddy of Congress. It has to be noted that none of these villages is located in constituencies represented by TRS MPs. Though the central scheme is open for all MPs, irrespective of political affiliations, none of the TRS MPs took it seriously like BJP MPs who put their heart and soul to develop them. The BJP MPs proved that development can be ensured if elected representatives are capable and committed. It is pertinent to mention here that KCR's daughter and present MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha had once dubbed this scheme as 'useless' when she was an MP. Talking to reporters at Tungur in Jagitial on August 20, 2015, Kavitha, who was among the first MPs to adopt a village under SAGY, said that the adoption was turning into a burden. "Without even a single rupee funding, how can we develop the adopted villages?" she questioned. Obviously, Madam was unwilling to take up anything that did not involve funds. Even the Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar unabashedly supported the false claim, assuming the people of Telangana will not know the difference between top 10 highly developed villages in India versus the top 10 best performing villages under the SAGY scheme.

(The author is a spokesperson of the Telangana BJP)

Job insurance scheme vital for pvt sector employees



It is always said that opportunities are always there in the industry/market, but in most of the cases, there is lack of resources or basic skills to get through the process or lack of competency.

The pandemic has become an eye-opener to almost all the sectors, sections of society. It has hit hard some of them, including private sector employees. Many lost opportunities, jobs, lives and some even gave up lives in this fight against Covid. The landscape of employment opportunities has changed significantly since the pandemic started. It is always said that opportunities are always there in the industry/market, but in most of the cases, there is lack of resources or basic skills to get through the process or lack of the required competency. Now the situation before pandemic and after pandemic has brought several changes, challenges to the industries, be it to employers or employees in several sectors like Information Technology, Pharma, Healthcare, Life Sciences, Automobile, etc. It has given new horizons to both employees and employers, and equally benefited both of them. Earlier one had to struggle a lot for jobs now. With the pandemic, the scenario has changed. Every individual has almost 3-4 opportunities if he/she has the required skill set and with this situation industry is unsure to handle.

Several industries failed to regulate or curtail the dual employment engage-ment and low productivity issues and for this employers alone cannot be blamed, but the regulators and lawmaking bodies. They never made a fair assessment for benefiting employees, but always they took the stand of employer's side and thus it has led to these problems. It should be sorted out by the government by proactively making changes in the PF window. It helps to certain extent. However, once the offices start operating, dual employment will drastically go down.

Although the growth of opportunities has rapidly increased, the most con-cerning part is not addressed yet. The existing employment policy does not suggest Employment Insurance to the private sector employees, though there are certain privileges for the government sector employees.

In the foreign countries, they have effective policies for the most important portfolios like Education, Healthcare & Social Security. But in India we still struggle for the basic needs of education and healthcare and social security is at stake. Everything is costly and not accessible and most of them are not in a situation to afford. The government has brought several changes and is still trying to work for the welfare of people. Blaming the government alone does not make sense and will be unfair.

The government should start infusing ownership to the organizations, be it private, public sector and bring in certain regulations for the safety of private sector employees. These should be strict-



ALTHOUGH THE

GROWTH OF

OPPORTUNITIES HAS RAPIDLY INCREASED, THE MOST CONCERNING PART IS NOT ADDRESSED YET. THE EXISTING **EMPLOYMENT** POLICY DOES **NOT SUGGEST EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE TO** THE PRIVATE SECTOR EMPLOYEES. THOUGH THERE ARE CERTAIN PRIVILEGES FOR THE GOVERNMENT SECTOR **EMPLOYEES**



ly enforced by the government so that private sector individuals, employees will have certain relief. At any level, if we look, majority of them will be working in private sector. Only a few get opportunity to work in the public/govern-ment sector; the rest all are dependent on private jobs. So, for any government employee by default he/she gets certain benefits like pension, medical services and other means of financial assistance even during the times of most challenging and disasters. But private sector employees hardly have any job security. The most evident situation was during the pandemic. Most of them were not able to cope with the situation and have forcefully shutdown the institutions, organisations and industries, which left lakhs of them unemployed. It is accepted that when natural disasters or calamities occur one will have no control over it. But coming to job security, it is possible to exercise control when both the governments and the private sector work together. The government should make a thorough

policy of employment insurance in case an employer fires, lays off, or sacks employees under any circumstances. Like organisations ask for a tenure-based bonds they should also sign-up a agreement stating that all sorts of assistance financially and morally to be taken care when an employee is unfairly sacked. Most of the foreign countries have a legitimate policy of providing six months of extended pay even when an employee is removed from the organisation under any circumstances, except for exceptional behaviour issues/employemployment policy must also suggest the employers to take up the moral responsibility of their employees in terms of educational and healthcare benefits. This way it also reduces the overall burden on the government, especially in countries like India.

It is definitely possible when the employers come up and think on humanitarian grounds. In this regard, the government should make sure these are not only effectively implemented but employers.

by collaborating with them, by making an collective partnership to deliver some of their welfare schemes in this way. Thus, it also reduces the larger burden on the government to deliver them in individual capacity.

The government can collaborate, communicate and utilise the services of various private sector firms, organisations in delivering the welfare schemes like guaranteed healthcare to employees by giving a minor contribution. However, the major part should be taken care by the employers. This way we can make sure ees personal reasons. The most of them will be getting proper facilities in education and health care and decrease the financial burden on individuals and ultimately providing social security by giving all these assistance during employment and insurance when removed.

The pandemic has made us all realise that for every problem there can be a solution and in the case of private sector employees the onus is on both the government and the private sector

"SOME STATES DID NOT REDUCE VAT ON PETROL AND DIESEL DESPITE THE EXCISE DUTY CUT BY THE UNION **GOVERNMENT IN NOVEMBER LAST YEAR"** — PRIME MINISTER





"FACTS SHARED BY HIM WERE WRONG. WE HAVE BEEN PROVIDING A SUBSIDY OF RE 1 ON EVERY LITRE OF PETROL AND DIESEL FOR THE LAST THREE YEARS. WE'VE SPENT RS 1,500 CRORE ON THIS.'

WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER MAMATA BANERJEE

SCIRF report on religious freedom biased against India'

NARENDRA MODI

group of eminent Indian-Americans expressed disap- ness institution. Instead of r pointment over the latest annual report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom and alleged that it is biased against India.

The report recommended to the Biden Administration to designate India, China, Pakistan, Afghanistan and 11 other nations as "country of particular concern" in the context of status of religious freedom.

The recommendations are not binding on the US government.

'The USCIRF's report on India is biased through selection and omissions fuelled by anti-India campaigns in the United States," alleged Khanderao Kand from the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies(FIIDS), a USbased policy research and aware-

Instead of recognising that India's Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) is an act that gives citizenship to refugees who were religiously persecuted from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, it's wrongly projected as an act to take away citizenship,

Similarly, the report failed to mention that the National Register of Citizenship (NRC), which is common in the most democratic countries, is being implemented as per the ruling of India's court, Kand said.

"It is disappointing that the report only quoted Muslims from Kashmir but ignored Kashmiri Pandit Hindus who are victims of their terrorism being forced out and murdered. It failed to mention that the situation normalised after

SIMILARLY, THE REPORT FAILED TO MENTION THAT THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF CITIZENSHIP (NRC), WHICH IS COMMON IN THE MOST DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES, IS BEING IMPLEMENTED AS PER THE RULING OF INDIA'S COURT, KAND SAID.

the abolition of 370," said Jeevan Zutshi, founder member of the Global Kashmiri Pandit Diaspora

(GKPD). "The report is contradiction to India's humanitarian credentials as 90 per cent of my extended family and most of the Indigenous people from Bangladesh are going to India to save their lives from Jihadis," said Priya Saha, US-based editor of Dalit Kantha and Bangladesh Journal of Minority.

President of the Council for Strategic Affairs, Dr Adityan, observed a pattern of bias and said, "USCIRF in its annual ritual of report shows its compulsive anti-India bias! USCIRF report has become a political tool of US politics devoid of any objectivity! The report displays callous ignorance about Indian laws, consti-



tution and ground realities!

"Ignorance about reality and vested interests are the basis for this report. USCRIF should do an unbiased report and be above vested interests," said Professor

Yash Pathak, a Fulbright scholar. Sukhi Chahal, a Californiabased Sikh and chief editor of Khalsa Today criticised reported

labelling of Sikh farmers. "Some anti-India forces and

Khalistani elements from abroad had openly declared rewards in US dollars to create disruptions in India via the farmers' protests. Instead of acknowledging that Khalistani terrorists had infiltrated in the farmers protest, the report wrongly projected that the government discredited all Sikh farmer protesters as terrorist," Chahal said.

Chandru Acharya, president, South Asian American Voices For Impact said the report provides a one-sided and biased narrative about religious freedom in India with exaggerated claims that are designed to fuel an eco-system of fear and hate.

The report lacks authenticity and attempts to brand the vast majority of peace loving and pluralistic Hindus as extremists," he said.

Russia cuts off 2 EU nations from its gas in war escalation

Russia opened a new front in its war in Ukraine on Wednesday, cutting NATO members Poland and Bulgaria off from its gas, a dramatic escalation in the conflict that is increasingly becoming a wider battle with the West.

One day after the United States and other Western allies vowed to speed more and better military supplies to Ukraine, the Kremlin upped the ante, using its most essential export as leverage.

It then went even further, saying Russia could halt gas supplies to other European cus-

European gas prices shot up on the news that Poland and Bulgaria were cut off, a move that European leaders denounced as blackmail.

In a memo, state-controlled Russian giant Gazprom said it was cutting Poland and Bulgaria off from its natural gas because they refused to pay in Russian rubles, as President Vladimir Putin had demanded. The company said it had not received any such payment since the



beginning of the month.

The gas cuts do not immediately put the countries into dire trouble since they have worked on getting alternative sources for several years now and the continent is heading into summer, making gas not as ssential for households.

Still, it sent shivers of worry through the 27-nation European Union, which immediately convened a special coordination group to limit the impact of the move. And Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov's ensuing warning was sure to worry them even more. He told reporters that other European customers may be cut

off if they also refuse to pay in

On the ground too, the geopolitical fight intensified, with the Russian military claiming Wednesday that its missiles hit a batch of weapons that the U.S. and European nations delivered to Ukraine.

A day earlier, explosions rocked the separatist region of Trans-Dniester in neighboring Moldova, knocking out two powerful radio antennas and raising fears the war could spill over Ukraine's borders. No one claimed responsibility for the attacks the second in as many days but Ukraine all but blamed

European nations accuse Russia of natural gas 'blackmail'

PNS WARSAW

Polish and Bulgarian leaders accused Moscow of using natural gas to blackmail their countries after Russia's state-controlled energy company said it would stop supplying the two European nations Wednesday.

The gas cutoff came after Russian President Vladimir Putin said last month that unfriendly countries would need to start paying for gas in rubles, Russia's currency, which Bulgaria and Poland refused to do. Russian energy giant Gazprom said in a statement that it hadn't received any payments from Poland and Bulgaria since April 1 and was suspending their deliveries starting

Wednesday. If the countries siphon off gas intended for other European customers, deliveries to Europe will be deman reduced by that amount, rubles.

the company said. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki told Poland's parliament that he thinks the suspension was revenge for new sanctions against Russia that Warsaw imposed over the war in Ukraine. Morawiecki vowed that

Poland would not be cowed by the cutoff. He said the country was safe from an energy crisis thanks to years of efforts to secure gas from other countries.

Lawmakers stood and applauded when he said that Russia's gas blackmail would have no effect on Poland.

The new sanctions, announced Tuesday, targeted 50 Russian oligarchs and companies, including Gazprom. Hours later, Poland said it had received notice that Gazprom was cutting off its gas supplies for failing to adhere to the demand to pay in Russian

Iran to expand its military ties with China

PNS CANBERRA

PNS ISLAMABAD

Imran Khan.

Pakistan cannot afford to have

'enmity with the US at all,'

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

has said, as he vowed to mend

fences with all allies and friends

of the country who have been

estranged from Islamabad due

to the faulty foreign policies of the previous government of

that had always helped Pakistan

in difficult times, especially

China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and

He said there was a need to

end the mistrust between

Pakistan and the United States,

and both countries needed to

see if they had committed any

mistakes in the past, the Dawn

newspaper reported on

have enmity with the US at all,"

Sharif, also the President of

"Pakistan cannot afford to

the United States.

Wednesday.

Sharif, who assumed office

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi expressed Wednesday his government's desire for closer cooperation with China in remarks made during a visit by the Chinese defence minister, state media reported. According to the report, Raisi told China's Minister of National Defence Wei Fenghe that Tehran see its ties with Beijing as strategic. Closer cooperation would serve to confront what the Iranian president described as US unilateralism as talks to revive Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers have stalled. Confronting unilateralism and creating stability and order is possible through cooperation of independent and like-minded powers, Raisi was quoted as saying.

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) said while responding to a volley of questions from senior journalists during an Iftar reception at the Prime Minister Ĥouse on Tuesday.

Pakistan cannot afford 'enmity

with US at all': PM Sharif

Khan was ousted from power after losing a no-confidence vote in his leadership, which he alleged was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia,

on April 11, regretted that the previous government led by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party led by Khan had annoyed all those countries that had always believed Pakistan Afghanistan. The cricketer-turnedpolitician has repeatedly alleged that his political opponents col-luded with the US to bring about regime in Pakistan. But he provided no credible evidence

China and

Though Sharif touched on all the issues during his nearly hour-long conversation with journalists, his main emphasis remained on the country's for-

of this and Washington has

strongly denied any foreign

eign policy, the report said. He spoke about his forthcoming visit to Saudi Arabia and also expressed his concerns over the suicide attack on the

Chinese nationals in Karachi earlier on Tuesday. The prime minister said he was expected to have a discussion on bilateral issues and cooperation

with the Saudi leadership during his upcoming visit to Riyadh from Thursday.

Hitting out at the previous government over its

flawed foreign policy, Sharif said first the PTI government annoyed Qatar royal family by raising fingers at the contract signed by Pakistan for the purchase of gas in 2016, and then they did the same thing with China when they cried foul and corruption in Chinese projects launched in Pakistan under the ambitious

China-Pakistan Economic

Lankan Prez ready to discuss formation of all-party govt

PNS ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's embattled President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Wednesday convened a meeting of political parties on April 29 to discuss the possible formation of an all-party government to end the protracted political impasse in the country, amidst mounting pressure on Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa to resign to and make way for an interim government.

A letter to all party leaders in the ruling coalition said the government was in agreement to form an all-party government comprising parties represented in Parliament, according to a statement.

The meeting has been fixed for April 29 to discuss the new arrangement after the resignation of prime minister Mahida Rajapaksa, it said.

This comes in the backthe prime minister to resign to make way for an interim gov-

However, the statement from the president is in contrast to the position taken by his elder brother and the country's Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, who has

said he will not resign and any interim government formed only under his leader-

Both the President and Prime

Minister are under mounting pressure from fierce public protests demanding his resignation for mishandling the country's worst economic

Debt-ridden Sri Lanka is grappling with an unprecedented economic turmoil since its independence from within the ruling coalition on caused in part by a lack of for- businesses and other profeseign currency, which has meant that the country cannot afford to pay for imports of

staple foods and fuel, leading to acute shortages and very high prices.

Sri Lankan election commission on Tuesday urged all political parties to come together to form an allparty government or a

similar body to end political impasse prevailing in the country. President

Rajapaksa is com-

ing under pressure to set up an interim administration as an immediate step to resolve the economic and political

turmoil in the country. Mass anti-government protests demanding the resignation of the entire Rajapaksa family have been going on for

more than two weeks. The public is being made to wait in long lines for fuel and cooking gas amid power cuts.

sional organisations have repeated the call for an interim government.

Myanmar court sentences Suu Kyi to 5 years' jail for graft

PNS BANGKOK

A court in military-ruled Myanmar convicted the country's former leader Aung San Suu Kyi of corruption and sentenced her to five years in prison Wednesday in the first of several corruption cases against her.

Suu Kyi, who was ousted by an army takeover last year, had denied the allegation that she had accepted gold and hundreds of thousands of dollars given her as a bribe by a top political colleague.

Her supporters and independent legal experts consider her prosecution an unjust move to discredit Suu Kyi and legitimise the military's

seizure of power while keeping the 76-year-old elected leader from returning to an active role in politics.

She has already been sentenced to six years imprisonment in other cases and faces 10 more corruption charges. The maximum punishment under the Anti-Corruption Act is 15 years in prison and a fine. Convictions in the other cases could bring sentences of more than 100 years in prison in total for a Nobel Peace Prize laureate who already spent years in detention for defying military rule.

News of Wednesday's verdict came from a legal official who asked not to be identified because he is not authorised to release such information.

EU to stop abusive lawsuits against journalists puts the burden of proof on

PNS BRUSSELS

The European Union's executive arm said Wednesday that it wants to see the EU adopt a law to protect journalists and civil rights activists from lawsuits aimed at censoring them.

The European Commission proposed safeguards to curb SLAPPS, or strategic lawsuits against public participation. It described such litigation as a serious threat to democracy and fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression and information. Daphne Caruana Galizia, a

Maltese investigative journalist who was killed in a 2017 car bombing, faced more than 40 lawsuits when she was killed, the commission said.

The proposed law would allow courts to dismiss cases early in the proceedings and the parties bringing lawsuits "to prove that the case is not manifestly unfounded," the commission said. The suing parties would

bear all procedural costs, including the fees of defense lawyers, if a case is dismissed as abusive. Individuals targeted by SLAPPs would also be eligible for compensatory damages. The anti-SLAPP directive proposed by the European Commission today is a major step forward in the fight against the use of 'gag suits' to intimidate and silence journalists, media freedom organization Reporters Without Borders said.

To take effect, the proposal needs approval from EU member countries and from lawmakers in the European

Nepal imposes ban on imports of luxurious items to save foreign currency

PNS KATHMANDU

Nepal has formally banned the ous goods, including whisky and tobacco and have introduced two public holidays, citing a liquidity crunch and declining foreign

exchange reserves, despite government assurances that the economy will not go into a tailspin like

Since July 2021, Nepal has seen a decline in forex reserves due to the surging imports, declining inflows of remittance and

meagre earnings from tourism and exports.

reserves had decreased 17 per cent to USD 9.75 billion from USD 11.75 billion in mid-July 2021, according to central bank figures.

The ban has come into effect Bam Bahadur Mishra, said. starting Tuesday and will last the current fiscal year. A notice to this effect had been published in the Nepal Gazette, Deputy Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank, the central bank of the country,

"Import of luxury goods such By February 2022, the until mid-July 2022, the end of as cars, motorbikes above 250 es, tobacco and whisky have been halted for the time being to save foreign currency deple-

Musk's Twitter ambitions to collide with Europe's tech rules

Elon Musk's Twitter acquisition and his plans for a more handsoff approach to moderating content could clash with ambitious new laws in Europe meant to protect users from disinformation, hate speech and other harmful material.

Musk, who describes himself as a free speech absolutist," pledged to buy Twitter for 44 billion this week, with European Union officials and digital campaigners quick to say that any focus on free speech to the detriment of online safety would not fly after the 27-nation bloc solidified its status as a global leader in the effort to rein in the power of tech giants.

If his approach will be just stop moderating it, he will likely find himself in a lot of legal trouble in the EU," said Jan Penfrat, senior policy advis-



er at digital rights group EDRi. Musk will soon be confronted with Europe's Digital Services Act, which will require Google and Facebook parent

big tech companies like Twitter, Meta to police their platforms more strictly or face billions in

Officials agreed just days ago on the landmark legislation, expected to take effect by 2024. It's unclear how soon it could spark a similar crackdown elsewhere, with US lawmakers divided on efforts to address competition, online privacy, disinformation and more.

That means the job of reining in a Musk-led Twitter could fall to Europe something officials signalled they're ready

Be it cars or social media, any company operating in Europe needs to comply with our rules regardless of their shareholding, Thierry Breton, the EU's internal market commissioner, tweeted Tuesday.

Mr Musk knows this well. He is familiar with European rules on automotive, and will quickly adapt to the Digital Services

Musk's plans for Twitter haven't been fleshed out beyond a few ideas for new features, opening its algorithm to public inspection and defeating bots posing as real users.

France's digital minister, Cedric O, said Musk has interesting things that he wants to push for Twitter, but let's remember that #DigitalServicesAct and therefore the obligation to fight misinformation, online hate, etc will apply regardless of the ideology of its owner."

EU Green Party lawmaker Alexandra Geese, who was involved in negotiating the law, said, Elon Musk's idea of free speech without content moderation would exclude

large parts of the population from public discourse, such as women and people of colour.

Twitter declined to comment. Musk tweeted that the extreme antibody reaction from those who fear free speech says it all.

He added that by free speech, he means that which matches the law and that he's against censorship going far beyond the law The United Kingdom also

has an online safety law in the works that threatens senior managers at tech companies with prison if they don't comply. Users would get more power to block anonymous trolls, and tech companies would be forced to proactively take down illegal content.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's office stressed the need for Twitter to remain responsible" and protect

SpaceX launches 4 astronauts for NASA after private flight

PNS CAPE CANAVERAL

SpaceX launched four astronauts to the International Space Station for NASA on Wednesday, less than two days after completing a flight chartered by millionaires.

It's the first NASA crew comprised equally of men and women, including the first Black woman making a long-term spaceflight, Jessica Watkins.

This is one of the most diversified, I think, crews that we've had in a really, really long time," said NASA's space operations mission chief Kathy Lueders.

The astronauts were due to arrive at the space station Wednesday night, 16 hours after a predawn liftoff from Kennedy Space Center that



thrilled spectators.

Anyone who saw it realized what a beautiful launch it was, Lueders told reporters. After an express flight comparable to traveling from New York to Singapore, the crew will move in for a five-month stay.

SpaceX has now launched five crews for NASA and two private trips in just under two years. Elon Musk's company is having an especially busy few weeks: It just finished taking three businessmen to and from the space station as NASA's first private guests.

Sweden trial starts in stem-cell windpipe transplants case

n Italian surgeon who made headlines in 2011 for carrying out the world's first stem-cell Awindpipe transplants at Sweden's leading hospital went on trial Wednesday accused of aggravated assault against three of his patients. Stem-cell scientist Dr. Paolo Macchiarini, who was once considered a leading figure in regenerative medicine, is credited with creating the world's first windpipe partially made from a patient's own stem cells. In December 2018, Sweden decided

to reopen a previously discontinued investigation into three cases. Additional written evidence was obtained, and more interviews were held with individuals in Sweden, Belgium, Britain, the United States and Spain. The former surgeon appeared at the Solna District Court Wednesday but is first expected to be a witness Friday. His defense lawyer, Bj rn Hurtig, believes Macchiarini's former employer, Sweden's prestigious Karolinska Institute, should be held responsible, Swedish broadcaster



Minimum age for marriage raised from 16 to 18 in England, Wales

he minimum age for marriage in England and Wales has been raised from 16 to 18 years, making it illegal for anyone facilitating underage marriages. Under a new law that cleared the UK Parliament on Tuesday and will become law after Queen Elizabeth II's Royal Assent later this week, religious or cultural marriages not registered with a couples' local council will also fall within the legal age remit. Until now, girls and boys aged 16 and 17 could get married as long as

they had parental consent. The Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill, tabled in June last year, was introduced as part of efforts to combat cases of child marriages and also forced marriages. So, thrilled that my Marriage Bill has been approved by the House of Commons, and is on its way to becoming law. Thank you to all those who have supported the campaign to end child marriage once and for all in this country, said Conservative Party MP Pauline Latham, who had sponsored the Bill with House of Lords peer Liz Sugg



Australian Minister accuses China of election interference

senior Australian minister on Wednesday suggested that China had deliberately announced its security pact with the Solomon Islands during an election campaign Administration of the security pact with the colorinal localization of the security pact with the colorinal localization. The security pact with the colorinal localization of the security pact with the colorinal localization of the security pact with the colorinal localization. Andrews' accusation is consistent with her conservative Liberal Party's argument that

Beijing wants the centre-left Labour Party to win the May 21 election because Labour lawmakers were less likely to stand up to Chinese economic coercion Labour has described the government's inability to prevent the deal announced by the Chinese and Solomons governments last week as Australia's biggest foreign policy failure in the Pacific since World War II. Andrews who is responsible for the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation, the nation's main domestic spy agency.



India exports 13.5 MT finished steel worth Rs 1 lakh cr in FY22: Kulaste

ndia exported 13.5 million tonne (MT) of finished steel valuing Rs 1 lakh crore in the last financial year, Minister of Steel Steel Faggan Singh Kulaste has said. According to official data, India's finished steel exports were at 10.78 million tonne in 2020-21. "India exported 13.5 MT finished steel amounting to Rs 1 lakh crore and imported steel of around Rs 46,000 crore during FY22," Kulaste said at Steel and Engineering Exports organised by Metalogic PMS

on Tuesday. The value of merchandise exports from India was at USD 420 billion, he said. In FY22, India's steel consumption was at an all-time high of around 106 MT, while the country produced a record 120 MT crude steel, Kulaste said. The sector is growing at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 5 to 6 per cent on a year-on-year basis. "Notwithstanding the challenges arising out of COVID-19, the steel sector in terms of external trade. production and consumption registered a record performance.



ONGC inks MoU with Norway's Equinor for E&P, clean energy projects

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on Wednesday said it has signed a pact with Norwegian energy giant Equinor ASA for collaboration in oil and gas exploration and production as well as clean energy projects. The memorandum of understanding (MoU) was inked on April 26, the company said in a statement. The agreement is "for collaboration and partnership in areas of upstream exploration and production, midstream, downstream and clean

energy options, including carbon capture utilisation and sequestration (CCUS)," it said. Equinor is the leading operator on the Norwegian continental shelf, present in around 30 countries worldwide. The MoU was signed during the visit of a high-level delegation of Norway to India. Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri, Norwegian Foreign Minister Anniken Huitfeldt, ONGC Chairman and Managing Director Alka Mittal and Executive Vice President of Equinor Irene Rummelhoff were present on the occasion



Uniparts India files draft IPO papers with Sebi to raise funds

ngineering systems and solutions provider Uniparts India Ltd has filed preliminary papers with the capital markets regulator Sebi to raise funds through an IPO. According to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP), the initial share sale is entirely an Offer for Sale (OFS) of 15,731,942 equity shares by promoter group entities

and existing investors. Those offering shares in the OFS are promoter group entities -- The Karan Soni 2018 CG-NG Nevada Trust, The Meher Soni 2018 CG-NG Nevada Trust, Pamela Soni -- and investors -- Ashoka Investment Holdings Ltd and Ambadevi Mauritius Holding Ltd. Since the IPO (Initial Public Offering) would be entirely an OFS, the company will not receive any proceeds from the public issue. This would be the company's third attempt

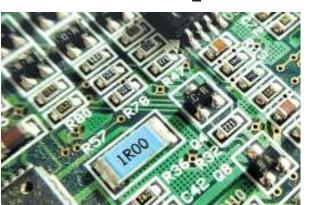


Timeline to roll out 1st indigenous commercial chipsets by 2023-24

The government has set a timeline to commercially roll out the first indigenous chipsets by 2023-24 under the Digital India RISC -V programme launched on Wednesday, Union minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar said on Wédnesday.

The Minister of State for Electronics and IT said that the Digital India RISC-V (DIR-V) programme aims to create future generations of microprocessors that will serve the need of India's strategic focus on mobility, computing and digitisation.

One big milestone that I am very focused on is to have the first set of commercial silicon



of Shakti and Vega processors available by December 2023 or early 2024.

"We want at least a few companies to adopt their product

designs to DIR-V products Shakti and Vega before 2023-24 and when the silicon is ready, they start manufacturing and incorporating chips in the

reporters. IIT Madras and the Centre for Development of Advance Computing (CDAC) have developed two microprocessors named Shakti (32 bit) and Vega (64 bit) respectively using Open Source Architecture under the aegis of

Microprocessor Development Programme of the Ministry of Electronics and IT. The government has appointed IIT Madras director Professor V Kamakoti as chief architect and CDAC Trivan drum Scientist Krishnakumar Rao as programme manager of the DIR-V programme.

The DIR-V programme will consolidate and leverage the ongoing efforts in the country with an integrated multi-institeam, finalise the formal architecture and target performance of chipsets, support original equipment makers and design wins in India and abroad. The DIR-V initiative is part of the government's Rs 76,000 crore effort to build a semiconductor ecosystem in the country.

"We also believe over the next one-and-a-half-years, the partnership between the Shakri and Vega teams and overall DIR-V programme with plat-form companies like HP, VVDN and Apple and large number of companies in the electronic ecosystem will help create design wins around DIR-V family of products Shakti and

Ports asked to build infra for zero waiting time for cargoes

The Shipping Ministry has asked all major ports to ensure adequate infrastructure by 2025 for achieving zero waiting time for inward as well as outbound cargoes.

In an office memorandum, the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) noted that port capacity required in 2047 will be around six-times of the present port

capacity.
"Major Ports should carry out detailed planning. If these are constraints on waterfronts and /or land availability, the major ports shall explore possibility of setting up satellite ports," it said.

The memorandum also said the major port authorities shall prepare a comprehensive master plan 2047 for the entire port area including cargo projec-



tions, warehousing etc with ultimate aim to achieve efficient logistics for enhancing economic development.

"Also, all major ports must ensure that there is adequate infrastructure in place by 2025 to achieve zero waiting time for inward as well as outbound cargo ie ship, rail, truck carrying cargo to and from port

should not be required to wait. it said. According to the memorandum, further in order to ensure the broad structure is in line with Maritime Vision 2030 and 2047 along with other initiatives of MoPSW, Indian Ports Association (IPA) is directed to coordinate with all the port authorities putting in place a suitable mechanism

Furniture startup WoodenStreet raises US\$ 30 million



PNS NEW DELHI

Online furniture and home decor platform WoodenStreet on Wednesday announced that it raised around USD 30 million (Rs 230 crore) in the latest funding round WestBridge Capital. The investment was done at a valuation of Rs 1,200 crore and it was a mix of primary and secondary investment, Wooden Street said in a statement. "So far, it is the largest funding raised by any vertical furniture player for the year 2022 in Îndia," the Jaipur-based startup said.

The fresh fund will be used for new market expansion, further development of the sion of supply chain and creation of new category offerings, it added.
With this fundraise,

WoodenStreet plans to achieve a turnover of Rs 600 crore in the next two years.

Sensex tumbles over 537 pts on profit booking in IT, financial shares

PNS MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled nearly 1 per cent on Wednesday on profit booking in financial and IT stocks after a recent rally.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 537.22 points or 0.94 per cent to end at 56,819.39. During the day, it tanked 772.57 points or 1.34 per cent to 56,584.04.

162.40 points or 0.94 per cent to 17,038.40.

From the 30-share Sensex pack, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank, Titan, Dr Reddy's, Wipro, State Bank of India, Infosys, Maruti and



UltraTech Cement emerged as the major laggards.

In contrast, Tata Steel, Asian Paints, HCL Technologies, TCS, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Reliance Industries and HDFC

Bank were the gainers. Asian markets were mixed, with Tokyo and Seoul settling over 1 per cent lower, while Hong Kong and Shanghai ended higher.

Markets in Europe were traing in the green in the afternoon session. Stocks in the US had ended

significantly lower on Tuesday. The Sensex jumped 776.72 points or 1.37 per cent to end at 57,356.61 on Tuesday. The Nifty rallied 246.85 points or 1.46 per cent to 17,200.80.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude gained 89 per cent to USD per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors continued their selling spree, offloading shares worth Rs 1,174.05 crore on Tuesday, according to stock exchange data.

HDFC AMC Q4 PAT rises 8.7% to Rs 343.55 cr



PNS NEW DELHI

HDFC Asset Management Company (AMC) on Wednes day reported an 8.7 per cent growth in profit after tax (PAT) ter that ended in March 2022.

In comparison, the company had posted a PAT of Rs 316.08 crore in the same quarter of the preceding fiscal, the asset management firm said in a regulatory filing to the stock

exchanges. The company's total income rose to Rs 580.93 crore in the period under review from Rs 545.57 crore in the fourth quarter ended on March 31, 2021.

For the entire t 2021-22, HDFC AMC clocked a PAT of Rs 1,393.13 crore as against Rs 1,325.76 crore in the preceding fiscal and total income grew to Rs 2,433.20 crore in FY22 from Rs 2,201.74 crore in the past fiscal.

Disptach to launch novel e-scooter

PNS MUMBAI

Electric scooter maker Disptach on Wednesday said it is looking to launch its maiden purpose-built e-scooter in the first quarter of 2023.

The Dispatch e-scooter, which the company claims will be the world's first purposebuilt scooter, will enable new business models with flexibility to pivot when business demands, all without replacing the fleet, a release said.

The company said it has partnered with one of the largest contract manufacturers globally for its e-scooter, which has manufacturing plants spread across 35 locations in the country with a total installed capacity of up to 6 million scooters per annum.



Dispatch said it has secured a tier-1 supply chain for all critical components, including mechanical parts, electronics and powertrain components, to ensure high standards of quality. The company added that it has been testing the vehicle for reliability and validation for the last one year.

'Fleets are currently stuck with vehicles designed for personal ownership, without the right infrastructure or relevant services under one unified

NTPC to raise Rs 1,500 cr via NCDs

PNS NEW DELHI

NTPC will on Friday raise Rs 1,500 crore by issuing non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on a private placement basis. "NTPC has decided to issue unsecured non-convertible debentures of Rs 1,500 crore on 29 April 2022, through a private placement at a coupon of 5.78 per cent per annum with a door to door maturity of 2 years on 29 April 2024," a BSE filing said. According to the filing, the proceeds will be utilised for, inter alia, funding of capital expenditure, refinancing of existing loans and other general corporate purposes.

State-owned power giant

Rupee settles almost flat against US dollar PNS MUMBAI

The rupee recouped early losses and settled almost flat at 76.55 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday on expectations of higher dollar

inflows. However, a lacklustre trend in domestic equities and the strength of the greenback in the overseas market weighed on the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 76.69 against the US dollar and touched an intra-day high of 76.50. It finally closed at 76.55, registering a rise of just 1 paisa

over its previous close of 76.56. According to Securities Research Analyst Dilip Parmar, the rupee managed to recoup early morning losses and settled with a slight gain on the expectation of dollar

inflows from initial pub-

lic offerings (IPOs) and corporate dollar selling. "Most of the Asian cur-rencies were down against the US dollar, while strength in the Chinese Yuan supported the local unit," Parmar

said. The US Federal Reserve's shift to a more aggressive rate tightening concern is mounting in capital outflows from

emerging markets and India as one of them, this has added pressure on the rupee against the US dol-

Foreign institutional investors have withdrawn more than USD 17.5 billion from domestic equities and debt in the past four months. "Spot USD/INR is expected to trade in the range of 76.30 to 76.75 with nearterm bias remaining bull-

76.40," Parmar noted. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.27 per cent higher at



India's retail industry to reach US\$ 2 trn by 2032

PNS MUMBAI

As the country recovers from the pandemic, the retail industry has resumed its growth trajectory and is likely to witness 10 per cent annual growth to reach approximately USD 2 trillion by 2032, according to a report.

According to a BCG-RAI report titled "Racing towards the next wave of Retail in India", while certain industry segments like food and grocery, restaurants and Quick service restaurant (QSR), and consumer durables have recovered to pre-COVID levels, others like jewellery and accessory, apparel, and footwear remain



on track to a full recovery. "The Indian economy continues to be driven by consumption and we are observing that consumption growth is back in the positive territory after the two-

year COVID pause," BCG Managing Director and Senior Partner Abheek Singhi said. Noting that India's retail industry will grow to approx USD 2 trillion in the next 10

decade will see organised retailers focus on footprint expansion, across all formats - offline and online - to fuel future growth". As per the report India's consumption, which was growing at approximately 12 per cent pre-pandemic, went into negative territory during the pandemic but has now recovered to surpass pre-pandemic growth levels at 17 per cent.

E-commerce in the country is expected to reach USD 130 billion by 2026, as compared to USD 45 billion in 2021, according to the report.

The rising competition and the need for constantly improv-

sition is driving the rise of ecosystems and the customers are approached by players across retail and non-retail. We are seeing examples of this trend already in India and is expected to significantly transform the entire landscape in the future," added Rachit Mathur, Managing Director and Partner, Consumer & Retail Practice, BCG.

The report is an in-depth study of retail players in the country, identifying challenges in the prevailing environment and highlighting emerging trends and models that can potentially shape the future of

Chemicals exports touch US\$ 29.3 bn in 2021-22

PNS NEW DELHI

Chemicals exports have touched USD 29.3 billion in 2021-22 on account of healthy performance in areas like agrochemicals, dyes and speciality chemicals, the commerce min-

istry said on Wednesday. India is the sixth-largest producer of chemicals in the world, third in Asia and 14th in exports.

"Today, India leads in dyes production and contributes 16-18 per cent to the world's dyestuff exports. Indian dye is exported to over 90 coun-



tries," the ministry said in a statement. The major export destinations are the US, China, Turkey, Russia and North-East Asian Countries (China, Hongkong, Japan, Korea RP,

Taiwan, Macao, Mongolia), it added. "This export growth has

been achieved in spite of

unprecedented logistical challenges like high freight rates, container shortages, etc. The increase in chemical products exports has benefitted small and medium exporters from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh," it noted. Over the years, the industry

has been modernising through new molecules, innovations in technology, product profile, and focus on quality, it said.

what's brewing?

Ryan Reynolds named recipient of American Cinematheque Award

ollywood star Ryan Reynolds will receive the American Cinematheque (AC) Award this year.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the multihyphenate personality will be hon-oured with a career retrospective as the 36th recipient of the award at the event to be held at the organisation's gala dinner at Beverly Hilton on November 17.

Reynolds joins an eminent list of previous honourees such as Robert Downey Jr, Ben Stiller, Jerry Bruckheimer, Matthew McConaughey, Reese Witherspoon, Ridley Scott, Amy Adams, Bradley Cooper, Charlize Theron, Spike Lee and Scarlett Johannsson.

Praising the Canadian actor-producer, AC Board Chair Rick Nicita said Reynolds is a Renaissance Man 2.0 for our times.



"He is an actor, a business entrepreneur, a writer, a comedian, a pro-

ducer and a creative innovator on screen and off. Most important to us,

he is a true modern movie star. He has reached the heights of stardom in movies shown on all platforms, in all genres ranging from comedies to dramas to action films or combinations of all three," Nicita added.

Reynolds' latest release was director Shawn Levy's sci-fi adventure film The Adam Project for Netflix. He will reunite with Levy for the third film in the Deadpool franchise. He also delivered a box office hit with the director on their collaboration on Free Guy last vear.

The actor next stars in the Christmas-themed musical film Spirited.

The American Cinematheque gala serves as the annual fundraiser for the nonprofit that programs year-round at the Aero Theatre in Santa Monica, Los Feliz 3 Theatre in Los Feliz and Egyptian Theatre in Hollywood.

Deepika Padukone to be part of Cannes Film Festival jury

for the festival's 2000 edi-

Sharmila Tagore in 2009,

Shekhar Kapur in 2010 and

Padukone, 36, was earlier

She found fame with her

Rai Bachchan in 2003,

Nandita Das in 2005,

Vidya Balan in 2013.

the chairperson of Jio

MAMI Mumbai Film

Festival for two years.

2007 film Om Shanti

Om, co-starring

tion, followed by Aishwarya

ollywood star Deepika Padukone is part of the competition jury of the 75th edition of the Cannes Film Festival along with prestigious

names such as actor-film maker Rebecca Hall and Iranian filmmaker Asghar Farhadi, festival organisers announced.

Padukone, best known for her films Piku, Padmaavat and Gehraiyaan and Hollywood project *xXx*: *The* Return of Xander Cage, is part of the eight-member jury which will reward one of the 21 films in competition with the coveted Palme d'Or during the closing ceremony on Saturday May 28.

French actor Vincent Lindon will be the President of the jury that also includes Swedish actor Noomi Rapace, Italian actor-director Jasmine Trinca, French filmmaker-actor Ladj Ly, filmmaker Jeff Nichols and director-screenwriter Joachim Trier from Norway.

In a statement, posted on the official website of the festival, Lindon said the jury 'will strive to take the best possible care of the films of the future".

"It is a great honour and source of pride to be entrusted, in the midst of the tumult of all the events we are going through in the world, with the splendid, weighty task of chairing the Jury of the 75th International Cannes Film Festival."

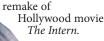
"With my jury, we will strive to take the best possible care of the films of the future, all of which carry the same secret hope of courage, loyalty, and freedom, with a mission to move the greatest number of women and men by speaking to them of their common wounds and joys. Culture helps the human soul to rise and hope for

tomorrow," Lindon said. Late filmmaker Mrinal Sen was the first Indian to serve as jury member of Cannes back in 1982, fol-

lowed by Indian-American Raasleela Ram-Leela, Bajirao director Mira Nair in 1990. Mastani, Padmaavat and Author Arundhati Roy was a Cannes jury member

The actor, who was most recently seen in Shakun Batra's Gehraiyaan, made her Hollywood debut with the 2017 actioner xXx: The Return of Xander Cage, fronted by Vin Diesel.

Padukone has a busy slate of projects which includes Shah Rukh Khan-led Pathan, Fighter with Hrithik Roshan, an untitled movie with Prabhas and the Hindi



Margot Robbie-led *Barbie* to release in July 2023, Warner Bros drops first photo



ollywood star Margot Robbie's much-awaited movie Barbie will make its debut in US theatres in July

During Warner Bros' presentation at the CinemaCon on Tuesday night, the Hollywood studio announced that the movie will release on July 21, 2023, according to The Hollywood

Reporter. Actor-filmmaker Greta Gerwig is directing the movie from a script she co-wrote with her filmmaker partner Noah Baumbach. Robbie is portraying the fashionforward doll from Mattel in the romantic comedy movie, which also features Ryan Gosling, Simu Liu, Will

McKinnon, Alexandra Shipp, Emma Mackey and America Ferrera.

The studio also shared Robbie's first look which sees her in a pink convertible, wearing a blue dress and a polka dot head-band behind the wheel. The movie's cast also

includes Emerald

Fennell, Kingsley Ben-Adir, Ncuti Gatwa, Connor Swindells, Rhea Perlman, Sharon Rooney, Scott Evans, Ana Cruz Kayne, Ritu Arva and Iamie Demetriou. In addition to starring, Robbie is producing the movie under her LuckyChap Entertainment banner along with Tom Ackerley and Josey McNamara.

Mattel's Robbie Brenner and David Hevman are also on board as producers. LuckyChap's Josey McNamara and Mattel's Ynon Kreiz will serve as executive pro-

I couldn't have asked for a better debut: Shantanu Maheshwari



ence with a power-packed debut, Shantanu has positioned himself as Bollywood's heartthrob. His introduction to the celluloid was hailed as flawless and promising by the trade pundits and audience. His arrival on OTT is a treat for those who've missed catching his spark in theatres.

Shantanu Maheshwari says, "I am really grateful for all the love that the audience has showered on



me. I couldn't have asked for a better debut. Gangubai Kathiawadi's arrival on OTT is yet a powerful reminder of how surreal this film's experience has been for me. I am grateful to Sanjay Leela Bhansali sir who offered me the role of Afshan. I am thrilled to see the reaction of the digital audience."

The actor rose to fame with Dil Dosti Dance and he followed it up with Girls on Top, Ihalak Dikhhla Iaa. India's Best Dramebaaz and Khatron Ke Khiladi 8. With Gangubai Kathiawadi, he took his biggest jump, transitioning from an actor known for his boynext-door roles to an SLB hero.



FUN

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REALITY CHECK







GARFIELD





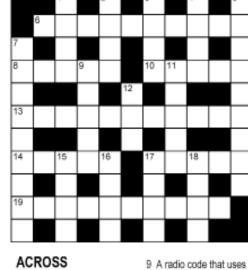




time machine RENTAL RETURNS IN THE FUTURE? PLEASE BE KIND REWIND



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1 Not in danger good

4 A sign of tiredness

6 A team game

with this

17 Stairs

10 A bamboo-eating animal

13 Measure temperatures

19 Book of word meanings

14 Player of bagpipes

8 Foe

2 All right, but not especially 3 Halt



dots and dashes

for anything

16 Spoil completely

15 Choose

11 Wide awake and ready

12 An animal kept for milk

17 Gritty stuff on a beach

GINGER MEGGS







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5 A big sea bird • The sum of all numbers in 7 A many-legged creature

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Thursday April 28, 2022

A true one-stop for

K. RAMYA SREE

our childhood and the warmth of your parents' home are unforgettable. When we think of our childhood, we can recall countless memories of love, care, and protection. Living far away from your parents due to unavoidable circumstances is not easy. The physical distance between you and your parents creates worry, stress, and fear. You often wonder how you can provide for your parents' needs despite being far away from them.

That's when Anvayaa comes into play, a one-stop shop for all elderly care. At Anvayaa, they wish to recreate the experience of warmth, safety, and love for your parents.

The variety of services they offer is something that everyone should be aware of. Further in this article, we will find out all about this organisation as we speak to Prashanth Reddy, founder and managing director of Anvayaa Kin-Care Pvt Ltd.

Beginning with how Anvayaa took its birth, Prashanth shares, "I started my career in IT. I was never in India after I started working. I was the only child, and I was always living away from my parents and I wasn't liking it. So I decided to come back and returned to India in 2006. Fortunately, my wife and kids supported my decision. When l was here, everyone started to tell me to "Do something". In 2006. I started working on idea, and finally, in 2015, I hired a few interns and sent them into the market to do my research. I realised 30% is a health care requirement. The rest is

Interestingly, they even celebrate the birthdays of people here, as there are people whose kids are living abroad but want their parents' special days to be celebrated.

all logistics. I felt there was a market for

Anvayaa, a one-stop shop for all elderly care. Hence it took its birth in 2016."

What started off with just 15 to 20 customers in the first year now offers its services to over 6,000 people across

India. Firsts are always special. So is the case with Anvayaa, too. According to Prashanth, the day when they got their first customer is the most memorable moment for them as a team, and it is

associated with a story worth cherishing. Not just this, there are a lot of memories that the people working here will cherish. Their caregivers are so caring that they are treated as their real sons by

their customers. What attracted us to Anvayaa is that it is India's first and only IoT and AI tech-based personalised elderly care platform. Very soon, they plan to launch a smartwatch that will improve

elderly care, which is again going to be the first in the country. "More details about the upcoming expansion will be

announced soon," shares Prashanth. But why

ronment for them."

an

Recently, the organisation also launched a personalised dementia care plan that is gaining a lot of prominence in the country. They developed a customisable module to provide person-alised care for dementia patients and

help them live with dignity.

The disruptive use of the innovative technology platform built using Artificial Intelligence (AI) called the Care Intelligence (AI) called the Care Platform constantly guides the caregiver by giving them the ability to ensure the PWD is meaningfully engaged. The platform suggests dementia stage-appropriate activities and provides directions in order to increase their physical, emotived and acceptable acceptable and acceptable and acceptable and acceptable and acceptable and acceptable and acceptable acceptable and acceptable acceptable and acceptable a tional, and cognitive well-being. The process enables efficient care and predictable services for senior citizens with dementia, supported by a network of trained clinicians and care managers.

Giving more insights about the launch, Prashanth explained, "This is aimed at helping families by reducing the burn rate of caregivers in the family to the PWD. Anvayaa's Dementia Care plan is a first-of-its-kind programme designed by experts exclusively for PWDs (Patients with Dementia). It is specifically targeted at improving the quality of life and has personalised

packages (person-centric care) based on the type and stage of dementia. We have special tieups with dementia psychologists, neurologists, and psychiatrists for timely and regular interventions. We have also appointed a team of specially trained

> managers and caregivers who systematically and periodithe family to re-align the care programme

care

based on the progress of dementia. We offer social, cognitive, physical, and personal engagements designed by experts to improve and arrest deterioration. A specialised diet plan is included in Anvayaa's dementia care plan to improve cognitive functions and health."

Besides this, the complete integration with Anvayaa's 360-degree technology platform network provides visibility, pre-dictability, and reliability of care to the patients.

Presently, its services are available in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Mumbai, Visakhapatnam, Coimbatore, Pune, and Kakinada. You can reach them at +91 7288818181/+91 939 2682922 for any elderly plan.

Author: Fausto Aarya De Santis, Illustrator: OginNayam |

solu-

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Anvayaa

keeping in

mind the practi-

cal problems that

the elderly face every

day, and we are deter-

mined to create a loving,

wholesome, and caring envi-

about refugees highlights their painful journey of losing home and hope, of liv-



ties without family, familiar neighbourhoods, and known cultures. e refugees are often left questioning where they belong. The story raises questions about the meaning of home and hope, of belonging and being.

Jamlo Walks

Illustrator: Tarique Aziz Published by: Pun Books, **Penguin Random House India**

Jamlo who was compelled to walk home during the COVID-19 panof Telangana to Chhattisgarh. Little Jamlo worked as a labourer for chili

picking. The story exposes stark inequalities that



through society and enables the reader to see the disparity. One can hope that through this book readers across age groups and geographies can be exposed to the different and intense struggles faced by humans

Kashmir! Kashmir!

Author: Deepa Agarwal Published by: Scholastic India

A refreshing anthology of short stories set in Kashmir. The stories are varied and multi-layered, that talk about people living there, people who were compelled to leave, and visitors who come and go. A book set on a chord where beauty and pain run in the same vein. The

stories bring in the reader to the daily experiences of struggle, dissent. helplessness, love, compassion, and courage of people living in Kashmir, and the uncertainty that constantly looms.





pandemic acted as a catalvst to this long-brewing revolutionary change of the industry, making it highly responsive and adaptive. Right from the entire supply chain to producing drugs and conducting clinical trials, pharma companies are relying on technology to create a digitally driven medical world. Many well-established pharma players have redefined their supply chain management, managing safety at work and following government orders while producing

he COVID-19

vaccines and drugs. As a result, pharma companies have created a more patient-centric ecosystem due to the increased use of automation, digital and analytical tools. They are now focusing on reorganising their assets and supply chain with more agility and transparency. As the sector moved towards the path of crisis management and recovery, companies have re-evaluated their business models and changed their outlook towards technolo-

Digital engagement with doctors The COVID-19 pan-

demic has proved to be a

tipping point and changed the way doctors engage with patients. This has nies to redefine their approach to marketing to doctors.Before the onset of the pandemic, pharma representatives spent most of their time traveling and waiting outside of doctors' offices, which also affected their work efficiency and led to infrequent visits. According to a research report, doctors on average spare only about 40-45 seconds for a pharma representative that results in lesser interaction with the doctor. In the wake of COVID-19, healthcare practitioners have restricted physical meetings and moved to teleconsultation for remote patients' screening. With doctor visits moving online as well as in-person consultation, pharma companies focus on both physical and digital interaction through calls, video, text, email, and WhatsApp messages.

As per a recent report, doctors in India prefer communication via WhatsApp which has more than 3.5 times higher click rate than email and 24 times higher rate than SMS. Considering the opportunities in digital communication tools, pharma marketers also focus on sharing engaging content with doctors through digital mediums. With this, the average engagement has reached 20+ doctors from 8 to 10

doctors a day.
On the other hand, the changes in the pharma industry due to technology adoption are revolutionising patient engagement. Pharma companies emphasise crafting digital marketing strategies to empower patients with more information that increases their role in decision making and enables them to manage their well-being. Furthermore, the companies adopt the right patient engagement strategies to

gather data and gain useful insights, which in turn improves patient experience and R&D.

Leveraging the use of data generated through medical devices

With a multitude of wearables, trackers, and sensors available in the market, it has become easier for pharma companies to gain insights into patient behaviour. The pharma players can take advantage of robust data sets to optimise clinical trials. Apart from this, the integration of AI in real-time medical devices and digitization of medical records (EMRs) have become critical components of clinical trials for

pharma companies.

The availability of data sets creates significant Real-World Evidence (RWE) studies that reduce the clinical product development cycle. Based on patient's characteristics and data gathered, pharma companies identify unmet needs of the medical world. Furthermore, data gathered from wearables help in decision-making at an early stage of product development that further helps in understanding how patients respond to a particular drug. As a result, the manufacturer gains speed and accuracy in product development while eliminating unnecessary costs.

Integration of AI in

drug development The Pharma industry experiences a high attrition rate in drug development. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), almost 50% of all experimental drugs fail in Phase III trials. To overcome these challenges, the pan-demic has induced opportunities for pharma companies to integrate AI in their drug development process. AI uses personified knowledge and presents solutions to complex problems. Due to increased R&D costs, there is reduced efficiency and speed in drug development, causing a high attrition rate in new drug approvals. Thus, pharma companies are finding ways to collaborate with AI-powered drug discovery firms to improve the efficiency of drug development and bring revolutionary changes in the traditional development process.

Bottomline

Though the pharma industry was realising the potential of advanced technologies, COVID-19 is the first humanitarian crisis that accelerated the adoption of digital practices in the industry. Digital Practices are not only helping pharma companies engage with physicians digitally, but it also helps in providing an improved and personalised customer experience. By opting for offline and digital marketing mix, pharma companies can realise the benefit of cost-saving and operational efficiencies even after the pandemic subdues. Consequently, it will empower pharma companies to ensure an efficient pharma marketing strategy.

(The writer, Gaurav Gupta, is the cofounder of Navia Life Care, a health



e live in a world of chaos and disparity. These realities are difficult to understand, especially for children. Conversations around social, political, and cultural differences, however hard and complex, are important to be had with them. They are perceptive of the world around us and will use their five senses to join the puzzle pieces. Children's books serve as phenome-

elderly

Prashanth answers, "Old

age can be a chal-

lenging time for

many. Your parents

need someone by their

side to manage everyday, mundane tasks such as paying

bills, taking medication on time,

visiting the doctor, or even house-

hold chores. Imagine if someone was

there to fill your shoes and take care of

all your parents' needs. We designed the

care?

nal educational tools to gently introduce kids to sensitive topics of social, political, and economic issues prevalent in our society. Through the nuanced world of children's literature, children can inculcate within themselves, values that will help them better themselves and the world.

Here are some good reads, featured as part of the Parag Honours List 2022, an initiative of Tata Trusts, to introduce your children to important social and political issues.

Bena's Summer Author: Shibal Bhartiya

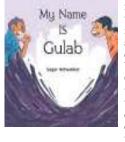
Published by: HarperCollins



An enchanting, true-to-life saga of a large, extended Muslim family in modern-day North India. 8-year-old Bena, the apple of everybody's eye is a most endearing, generous, and courageous character. Bena experiences riots, death, family feuds, and abuse during her visit to the old family home one summer and deals with it all most uniquely, which only children can.

My Name is Gulab

Author & Illustrator: Sagar Kolwankar Published by: **Tulika Publishers**



This powerful story tells is of a manual scavenger's daughter. Young Gulab takes the first step toward change by ensuring that her

father does not have to use his bare hands for his work. Addressing caste issues sensitively and sensibly, the book presents a world that most children are insulated from. Oppression and people living in the margins are portrayed through the narration.

Home

Published by: Pratham Books

This story ing with several

uncertain-

Author: Samina Mishra,

A heart-wrenching story of 13-year-old demic lockdown from the chili fields

Batters take SRH to 195-6

Abhishek (65), Markram (56) & Shashank (25* off 6 balls) shine for Sunrisers

PTI ■ WANKHEDE STADIUM (MUMBAI)

oener Abhishek Sharma and Aiden Markram struck sparkling half-centuries as Sunrisers Hyderabad posted 195 for six against Gujarat Titans in their Indian Premier League match here on Wednesday.

Abhishek blazed away to 65 off 42 deliveries, while Markram made a 40ball 56 during a third-wicket stand of

Then, Shashank Singh (25 off 6 balls) smashed Lockie Ferguson (0/52 in 4 overs) for three successive sixes to score 25 runs in the innings' final

To start with, SRH were helped by Mohammed Shami's (3/39 in 4 overs) 11-run opening over in which a firstball beauty was followed by five legside wides, not once but twice.

Yash Dayal too conceded 11 runs, thanks to two boundaries by Abhishek Sharma on the off side, as SRH raced to 22 for no loss in two overs.

Kane Williamson clipped Shami over square leg for his first boundary but that's all the SRH skipper could do with the bat as, three balls later, the seasoned India pacer went through the gate with a lovely seaming delivery to dismiss the Kiwi and give his team the match's first breakthrough.

Having got a life at point even before he could open his account, Rahul Tripathi smashed Shami for 6, 4, 4 before a review found that the batter was trapped in front of the wicket in an eventful fifth over, which went



Unperturbed by the fall of two wickets, Abhishek collected two successive fours off Alzarri Joseph -- first he lofted over the infield and then found the gap through a packed off-side -- to help SRH score 53 runs in the six power play overs at the Wankhede Stadium.

SRH needed a partnership at that stage and the duo of Abhishek and Markram not just provided them that but also kept the scoreboard moving at a very good rate by regularly finding the boundaries.

While Markram dealt with the likes of pacers such as Alzarri, Abhishek went after Rashid Khan, hitting the Afghanistan spin ace for his third six to reach his half-century in

Against Rashid, Abhishek was particularly strong on the on-side, getting his three sixes over long-on and deep mid-wicket.

However, the 21-year-old's fine innings came to an end when he inside-edged a slower delivery from Alzarri in the first ball of the 16th over.

Shami came back to dismiss the big-hitting Nicholas Pooran (3) cheaply before Markram got to his fifty by pulling the bowler for a six over deep mid-wicket. Stationed in the deep, Rashid's day in the field got worse as he misjudged it.

MARSH, SEIFERT JOIN DC TRAINING

In good news for Delhi Capitals, all-rounder Mitchell Marsh and wick- training session.

pointstable

Po.	TEAM	W	W	L	NR	Pts	NRR
1.	RR	8	6	2	0	12	0.561
2.	GT	7	6	1	0	12	0.396
3.	SRH	7	5	2	0	10	0.691
4.	LSG	8	5	3	0	10	0.334
5.	RCB	9	5	4	0	10	-0.572
6.	PBKS	8	4	4	0	8	-0.419
7.	DC	7	3	4	0	6	0.715
8.	KKR	8	3	5	0	6	0.080
9.	CSK	8	2	6	0	4	-0.538
10.	МІ	8	0	8	0	0	-1.000

boundarymeter

1097 **579**

etkeeper-batter Tim Seifert have returned to training after recovering from COVID-19, the IPL franchise said on Wednesday.

The two cricketers, who had contracted COVID-19 last week, have joined the training after completing the mandatory quaran-

Marsh and Seifert were seen training with their Delhi Capitals team-mates on the eve of their match against Kolkata Knight Riders at the Wankhede Stadium here.

Delhi Capitals took to social media to share photos of the two cricketers from the

Kohli will emerge from this run of low scores: Bangar

RCB head coach Sanjay Bangar reiterated that star batter Virat Kohli will soon "emerge" out of the lean phase he is experiencing at the moment and help his team win games going forward in the

Kohli's scores in his last five innings read 9, 0, 0, 12 and 1. The manner of his dismissals also show that he is not in the best of form.

"Regarding Kohli's form, he's a great cricketer. He's experienced these highs and lows many times before. I've observed him from close quar-

"He has the spirit and he'll emerge from these run of low scores. In the coming crucial games, he'll help us win," Bangar said at the post match press conference after RCB's 29-run loss to Rajasthan

Royals.
"We aren't talking about anything different (in practice), to be honest. The way he prepares, he always puts himself out of comfort zone and prepares and that's his special-

"This is why he can emerge from tough situations and his attitude his commendable. Yes, he's had a low run of scores but he is so mentally strong, he'll be



able to put in a better performance," he added.

Bangar has also worked closely with Kohli in the national team when he was the batting coach.

The former India international also acknowledged the top-order's form is a concern.

"We've all seen that negotiating the new ball is a challenge for most of the teams. Whenever we lose early wickets, we sort of lose them in clusters and that's what is pulling the team back and [we are] rightly [losing] games that we should have won. That's why we are not able to finish the

KKR eye revenge against DC

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Delhi Capitals will look to put the 'no-ball' controversy behind and gain much needed momentum against another side seeking course correction, the Kolkata Knight Riders, in the Indian Premier League here on Thursday.

Delhi suffered a 15-run loss against Rajasthan Royals, a game marred by a no ball controversy over a high full toss that resulted in a one match ban for assistant coach Pravin

Head coach Ricky Ponting watched the tight finish in quarantine and felt helpless. Now he is back with the team and is confident of finding momentum which will allow his players to play to their potential.

Delhi Capitals are currently seventh on the points table with three wins in seven outings. KKR are placed eighth having lost their last four

With the Delhi batting line-up comprising David Warner, Prithvi Shaw, Rishabh Pant and Powell, KKR's varied attack has to be on guard to stop the rampage.

Warner, after striking three back to back fifties, faltered against the Royals and would need itching to play another impactful knock. Ditto for Shaw, who needs to convert his starts into big scores.



Delhi's latest option at number three, Sarfaraz Khan, also failed and it remains to be seen whether he is benched or not. Pant will need to take greater responsibility along with the likes of all-rounders Lalit Yadav, Shardul Thakur

and Axar Patel. Pant can single-handedly turn any game, but he hasn't played to his potential and

Thursday at the Wankhede, where the tracks have helped batters, the skipper would look to come good.

Add to it, Powell's six-hitting prowess, Delhi have all the necessary firepower.

Delhi's bowling has fared well, but will need to forget the hammering at the hands of Ios Buttler. Khaleel Ahmed has been taking wickets upfront

Delhi vs Kolkata e from 7:30 pm IST **STAR SPORTS 1**

and has been complemented by Mustafizur Rahman, who can also be effective at the death.

While Kuldeep Yadav has redeemed himself, the other spinners Axar and Lalit have also played their parts to perfection. The trio has combined 20 wickets and their 12 overs would be vital.

Meanwhile, KKR need to and the batters, including skipper Iyer, will have to put up an improved show.

Shreyas failed in the last game and so did the opening pair of Sam Billings and Sunil Narine. If they continue with the same openers, the two would need to give an aggres-

For the likes of Shreyas, Nitish Rana, Rinku Singh and Venkatesh Iyer, it won't be an easy task, especially against inform Delhi spinners. Pushing Venkatesh down in the middle order has also not worked yet.

Shreyas has said it was just a matter of time and once KKR get going, they will be unstoppable as a team.

KKR pacers Umesh Yadav and Tim Southee have been right on the money. The only weak link seems to be Varun Chakravarthy who is having an underwhelming season.

Samson wasting good form & opportunity to press for international recall: Bishop

 $F^{ormer\ West\ Indies\ speedster\ Ian\ Bishop\ reck-} ons\ Rajasthan\ Royals\ skipper\ Sanju\ Samson$ is wasting good form and opportunity to press for a recall in the Indian T20 set up by not playing impactful innings in the IPL.

The wicketkeeper-batter is still on the fringes of the Indian T20 team and a stellar show in the IPL could be help him stake a claim in the T20 World Cup squad.

"That Sanju is wasting good form and good ortunity to score run national recall, to lead his team when Jos Buttler doesn't score," Bishop said on ESPNcricinfo's 'T20

Although, Samson is a delight to watch when he gets going, the free flowing right hander is yet to consistently play the kind of impactful innings one expects from him.

He last featured for India in the T20 home series against Sri Lanka in February.

With the flamboyant Jos Buttler failing against RCB on Tuesday, it was the perfect opportunity for the RR skipper to rise to the occasion. Samson even looked in good touch, smashing three sixes and a four but could only

He was dismissed by Sri Lanka spinner Wanindu Hasaranga after missing an attempted reverse-sweep.

"It's not that Sanju's out of form. But that's a match-up with Wanindu Hasaranga and him, and he should have known better. He got out of the blocks quite nicely," Bishop said.

"I'm a Sanju Samson fan, been that way for years now, (but) he's wasting good form by shot selection," Bishop added.

Former New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori feels the game comes too "easy" to Samson and

he thus tries to do too many things.

"It feels like the game is too easy for him, so 'I'm going to try something different, I'm going to try and make sure I can play every shot in the book'. He is at his best when he's striking down the ground," Vettori said.

"He's a joy to watch when he's playing that well. But everything looks a little bit easy and sometimes it feels like he isn't in the moment, and then he's out."

Apart from a 55 and an unbeaten 48 against Sunriers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals respectively, Samson has endured an underwhelming season.

Slater avoids iail in domestic violence case

AP ■ SYDNEY

Former Australian Test batter Michael Slater had charges of domestic violence dismissed on mental health grounds in a Sydney local court on Wednesday.

Magistrate Ross Hudson ordered Slater to undergo a 12month treatment plan under the care of a doctor.

vear-o worked as a television commentator after retiring from international cricket, was charged by New South Wales state police last October with stalking and intimidation of his ex-partner.

He later breached a restraining order by using a mobile phone to call and send dozens of text messages to his ex-partner and, in December, was ordered to check into a mental health facility as a condition of

Australian Broadcasting Corp. Quoted the magistrate as saying there had been "significant changes" in Slater's circumstances since December and the former cricket star "has recognized his need to stay medicated and to stay on top of his mental health."

Slater played 74 Tests for Australia from 1993-2001, scoring 5,312 runs at an average of

We're too good a team for our results to not change: Ponting

ll Delhi Capitals need is a little bit All Delni Capitais need is a fine of momentum to get their IPL campaign back on track as they are "too good a team for the results not to change", feels head coach Ricky Ponting. With three wins and four losses in

the first seven matches of the season, Delhi Capitals are currently seventh in the points table. Reflecting on the first half of the sea-

son, Ponting said, "I've said it a few times

this year where there's 36 or 37 overs of really good stuff, and we just let it slip for two or three overs. "And, that's the difference in these games. We sort of gear ourselves to not overtrain in the first part of the season, try and build up along the way. But our performances have been win one, lose

one, win one. So, we need to start getting that little bit of momentum." Ponting warned his players against trying "too hard" in the second half of

"I know we're so close to turning it all around. We've all got to trust, we've got to believe, we've got to stay upbeat and positive. And if we are, things will the game," he said.



definitely change for us.

The harder we try from here, the harder it's going to get. We're just going to stay nice and relax and keep repeating things we've been doing. And then results will definitely come our way. We are too good a team for the results not to change," he said ahead of Thursday's game against Kolkata Knight Riders.

The Australian re-joined the squad at training after completing his precautionary five-day room isolation after a family member had tested positive for COVÍD-19.

"I feel pretty relieved to be back outside again, actually after another five days locked in, and obviously missing

Arshdeep could soon play for India: Shastri

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Voung left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh could soon be walking into the national T20 side after consistent performances in the IPL over the last three seasons, feels former India coach Ravi Shastri.

Arshdeep, who made his IPL debut in 2019, is into his fourth season with Punjab Kings. He was among the two players retained by the franchise ahead of the mega auction.

The 23-year-old has improved his game with the new ball and is among the best death bowlers this IPL season.

"For someone so young and then to deliver time and time again when the chips are down and the pressure is on him (it's brilliant to see).



to his nerves brilliantly, he's doing well in death overs. "This shows he's moving up the ranks very Arshdeep is holding on quickly and he could be walking into the Indian team," Shastri told 'Star Other impressive per-

formances in the IPL have come from pacer Umran Malik, who plays for Sunrisers Hyderabad, and Mumbai Indians batter Tilak

The great Brian Lara compared Malik to West Indies pacer Fidel Edwards.

Umran Malik reminds me a lot about Fidel Edwards when he first started, a lot of pace and I hope that he understands it as he goes into international cricket, which I think he'll eventual-

"In the IPL, a lot of batsmen get accustomed to playing sheer pace, so I hope that he adds a little bit more to his armoury later on.

He's a quick learner in the nets, he's willing to learn and it's just awesome to see India has a pacer of that calibre, it's just tremendous,'

RR to celebrate Warne's life in IPL match against Mumbai stadium where Warne lifted the

PTI MUMBAI

R ajasthan Royals will celebrate the extraordinary life of legendary Australian spinner Shane Warne, who died recently, during their Indian Premier League match against Mumbai Indians here on Saturday.

Warne had lifted the inaugural IPL trophy after the Royals beat Chennai Super Kings by three wickets in the final in 2008, and his former franchise said it will pay tribute to its first captain to coincide with the team's triumph exactly 14 years back.

The franchise said Warne's brother, Jason will also be part of the celebration as he has accepted an invitation from the Jaipur-based side.

Considered one of the greatest cricketers of all time, Warne died of suspected heart attack at the Thai resort of Koh Samui last month. He was 52. He took 708 wickets from 145 Tests, besides 293 ODI wickets from 194 matches between 1992 and 2007.

iterate that it will not be an occasion to mourn, but to commemorate the great man, and salute him for his never-ending contribution to the game of cricket as well as impacting thousands of

"The franchise would like to

IPL trophy will see the cricket-

ing world come together to pay

their respects and celebrate his

life," the franchise said in a

both on and off the field." It said the celebrations will be led by the franchise and supported by the BCCI.

lives around the world through

his words, energy, and actions

The Rajasthan Royals playing squad will sport special initials 'SW23' on leading collars of their official playing kits to pay tribute to the legendary Australian.

A special area at the DY Patil Stadium has also been turned into a Shane Warne Tribute Gallery, which all the ticket-holding fans will be able "It is befitting that the same to visit and experience.

tollywood

Director Arun Matheswaran talks about casting Keerthy Suresh, Selvaraghavan for Saani Kaayidham



fter surprising everyone with a firecracker of a debut film

Rocky, filmmaker Arun Matheswaran is back with yet another cracker, Saani Kaayidham that is all set for a global premiere on 6 May on Prime Video. The revenge actiondrama brings together star actress Keerthy Suresh and acclaimed director Selvaraghavan. Through the edgeof-the-seat narrative. the film takes us through a genera-

tional curse that comes true when an unnerving injustice is inflicted upon the protagonist and her family.

Speaking about casting the versatile Keerthy Suresh in the lead role, Arun says, "I watched Mahanati and loved her performance in the film, so I had her in my mind for Saani Kaayidham. Moreover, the role she plays is one such character that she hadn't done before. So, I thought she would be the right choice, who brings in a breath of fresh

air with some wildness. She was the first choice and I am glad she came

onboard." Not only did the director take a leap of faith with his leading lady, he also was quite confident on who he wanted to cast as her brother. He adds, "Selva Sir is a big name in the industry and a wellknown director. I thought it would be a wild option to cast him." Revealing his

thoughts while approaching the director to act in Saani Kaayidham, Arun savs. "Siddharth (creative producer) is close friends with Selva Sir, so it was easy to approach him. Everyone had their apprehensions since he hasn't acted in any film before nor was he interested. But I just wanted to give it a shot, so I met him and narrated the story and he

loved it. Continuing further about his experience of directing a director in front of the camera, Arun adds, "I saw him as a director and was sceptical if he would give suggestions or if we would go into an awkward zone where we wouldn't understand each other, but he refuted all these thoughts. He trusted

me completely." Produced under the banner of Screen Scene Media Kaayidham will premiere worldwide exclusively on Prime Video on 6 May. The film will also be available as Chinni in Telugu and as Saani Kaayidham in Malayalam.



'Jayamma Panchayati is inspired by real-life events'

near Srikakulam. After her

post-grad, I made short films with an interest in cinema. I have been thinking for years about working with star heroes. It took me a while to **Panchayati** starring popular anchor, realise that filming with a television pre-senter, and host star hero is not that easy. Then I worked with some Suma Kanakala friends to make a film with a budget of Rs 60-70 lakh," in the lead shared the director. role, is all set to be released

in the-

May.

The

film, pro-duced by

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iourney,

atres in

Vijay Kumar says he never expected Jayamma Panchayati to come up as a potential script. "We did a workshop with the cast for a month before taking the film to the floors. I cannot imag-ine people like Pawan Kalyan, Rajamouli, and Trivikram promoting this film for the last few weeks," said the actor. Vijay Kumar initially

thought of roping in Ramya Krishnan in the role of Jayamma, but approached Suma as someone suggested to go for a fresh face. Even after Suma showed interest, he was sceptical about her performance. Hence, they did a test shoot, and only after that, did the director rope in Suma.

Heaping praises on Suma, he said, "Suma is very talented. She takes care of every small aspect of acting. After

reading the script, she saw my short films."

Speaking about the story, he said, "Jayamma Panchayati is inspired by real people. I have dramatically shown the people I have met in my life. Although it is a fictional story, some of the scenes are inspired by real events. The title is based on the story. In fact, we all know the myth surrounding Sati Savitri and Yamudi. Jayamma is also the story of a woman who fought over her problems. Jayamma once came from a wealthy family. She is in serious trouble in the village. Her fight turned into a big controversy. Jayamma is innocent. One of the strongest points in her strug-gle is hidden. That's what it

Suma learnt the Srikakulam dialect very quickly for the film.

On the other hand, the director made short films for 6 years. Some of them have won awards. One of them was Ice of Hunger.

"The difference between a short film and a feature film is that emotional content is almost normal. The screen is the only change," concluded the director, who is super excited for this release.

Major pushed by a week, to now release in June



he release of actor Adivi Sesh's multilingual feature film Majo will now hit the

makers said Wednesday.

Based on the life of 2008 Mumbai terror attack martyr Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan, the film was previously scheduled to open in cinema halls on May 27. The release of Major has been post-

poned multiple times in the past due to the

tions

them.

between

coronavirus pandemic. Sesh, who plays the titular role in the film, shared its new release date poster on

Twitter. date. Summer heat wave hits theatres one week later. June 3 it is," he wrote.

Major will be released in Telugu, Hindi and Malavalam. The film will clash at the box office with Akshay Kumar-starrer period drama Prithviraj, also scheduled to be released on June 3.

The Sashi Kiranhelmed action drama traces the journey of Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan, who selflessly fought to save the lives of peo during the 26/11 Mumbai attacks.

Major is produced by Sony Pictures Films India in association with Mahesh Babu's **GMB** Entertainment and A+S Movies.

The film also stars Sobhita Dhulipala, Saiee Manirekar. Prakash Raj, Revathi and Murali Sharma in pivotal roles.

Kanteerava in

November, 2020.

Brahmanandam returns to TV screens

as-O-Fast, an ayurvedic antacid brand from the house of Mankind Pharma, has continued its association with Brahmanandam as its regional brand ambass for Southern India. The brand will be launching a TVC featuring

Brahmanandam, which will be rolled out soon on mainstream media platforms to mark the launch of Gas-O-Fast's new range of flavors.

Brahmanandam as an actor is known for his comic timing and versatile roles. The association will help the brand to bolster the brand visibility in the southern market and establish a connect



with the support of the regional

brand ambassadors to drive the importance of Gas-O-Fast

panion to enjoy acidity free occasions.

Speaking about the association, Brahmanandam said, "I am elated that our association has been continuing for years. In today's lifestyle, stom related problems such as gas, acidity and indigestion have become quite common. To all such problems,

Gas-O-Fast gives a quick relief. We are confident that our association will help the

brand touching newer heights in the southern ket.'

Samantha bags another endorsement



The campaign uses creatives specially crafted for Hindi speaking audiences starring Aamir Khan and Alia Bhatt, while for the south markets of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the campaign features Dulquer and Samantha. In addition to being associate sponsors of the Tata IPL broadcast on TV, the campaign will run across TV, OTT, digital, print and social media plat-

forms till July 2022. Using humour to get the key message across, the campaign explores the relationship between bikers and traffic

across India with the backdrop of popular The project is yet to take off. songs acting as commentary on the interac-

The director of super hit movies Rajakumara and Yuvaratna Santhosh Anand Ram is directing the movie. Yuvaraikumar's aunt Ashwini Puneeth Rajkumar stated, "Wishing vou all the success that you richly

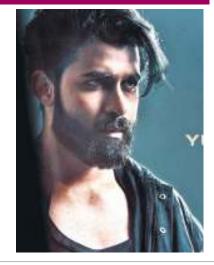
Hombale Films to launch Puneeth Rajkumar's nephew Yuvarajkumar

deserve. The legacy continues".

uvarajkumar, grandson of Kannada film legend, late Rajkumar, and nephew of late star Puneeth Rajkumar, is making a grand debut in the Kannada film

industry. KGF: Chapter 2 produc-tion house Hombale Films has made an announcement on Wednesday and released the first look of the actor which is loved by audiences.

Yuvarajkumar is the son of Kannada veteran actor Raghavendra Rajkumar. Yuvarajkumar has prepared well for his launch and he had caught the attention after the release of the teaser of Yuva



¬he police in Kerala have booked Malavalam actorproducer Vijay Babu for alleged sexual assault of a female

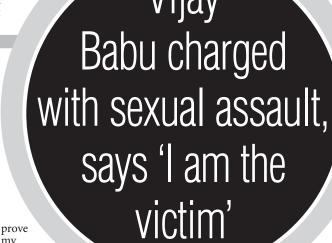
Soon after the news surfaced, Vijay Babu appeared live on his social media handle on Wednesday, claiming that he was the 'real victim' in this case, adding that he would take appropriate legal steps against the complainant, whom he also named.

The police are now planning to register a second case against Vijay Babu for disclosing the name of the complainant.

The case against the actor-producer was registered on April 22 by the Ernakulam South police station. The complinant hails from Kozhikode.

The complinant accused Vijay Babu of raping her multiple times at a flat in Kochi, and even recording an obscene video of her. She accused the actor of intoxicating her before the sexual abuse.

Even though the police are yet to record Vijay Babu's statement, late on Tuesday the actor took to social media and said, "Since I have done nothing wrong, I am least afraid as to what's in store for me. I also know the laws of the country with regard to 'Me Too' allegations. I am disclosing the name of the lady. I have decided to take legal steps against this lady and it includes filing a hefty defamation suit. I have all the records with me to



innocence," said Babu.

com-

"I am the victim in this case as I know how pained are my mother, my family, friends and well-wishers because of this baseless complaint. But I am not going to sit idle, I will fight it out and let it

beginning in such cases,

According to reports, the police tried to trace Vijay Babu after hearing that he was in Goa, but he is now understood to be in Dubai.

he said.

