

**ANALYSIS 7**  
CAN MODI-CAPT DUO HELP  
BJP IN PUNJAB?**MONEY 8**  
GRANULES INDIA GETS USFDA NOD  
FOR GENERIC PRODUCT**SPORTS 12**  
RANJI TROPHY TO BE HELD  
IN TWO PHASES: BCCI

HYDERABAD, SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

NAGA CHAITANYA  
IN TALKS TO MAKE  
OTT DEBUT

Page 11

**DELHI LIFTS WEEKEND CURFEW,  
REOPENS RESTAURANTS**

New Delhi lifted a weekend curfew and allowed restaurants and marketplaces to reopen on Friday, following a sharp drop in new infections of Covid. Under new orders, however, the city will remain under night time curfew, and schools will be closed, Delhi's lieutenant governor said. Restaurants, bars and cinemas will be allowed to operate with up to 50% capacity and the number of people at weddings will be restricted to 200. The number of new cases in Delhi fell to 4,291 on Jan. 27 from a peak of 28,867 on Jan. 13. More than 85% of Covid beds across the city's hospitals were unoccupied, government data showed.

**BJP FACES REBELLION IN 4 GOA SEATS,  
INCLUDING PANAJI, AHEAD OF POLLS**

The ruling BJP has managed to contain dissent in most areas in the run up to the Goa Assembly polls scheduled for February 14, but four seats, including the prestigious Panaji constituency, continue to be a cause for worry. In Panaji, Utpal Parrikar, the son of former chief minister and BJP's tallest leader from Goa so far late Manohar Parrikar, is up as an Independent against the ruling party's Atanasio Monserratte, who had quit the Congress in 2019. Utpal Parrikar has claimed his heart continues to be with the BJP but he was contesting to ensure a "wrong person" does not get elected.

**WINE IS NOT LIQUOR, SALE WILL DOUBLE  
FARMERS' INCOME: SANJAY RAUT**

Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut on Friday stated that the Maharashtra government's decision to allow the sale of wine in supermarkets and walk-in stores would boost farmers' income. "Wine is not liquor. If wine sale increases, farmers will benefit from it. We've done this to double farmers' income," said Raut. Hitting out at the BJP for criticizing the state government's decision, Raut said, "BJP only opposes but does nothing for farmers. Mallikarjun Kharge has said it right. BJP has sold the public sector."

**AKHILESH YADAV SAYS CHOPPER DELAY  
FROM DELHI TO UP WAS 'CONSPIRACY'**

Akhilesh Yadav, who has emerged as a key challenger in Uttar Pradesh, this afternoon alleged that his helicopter was briefly stopped from flying from Delhi to UP's Muzaffarnagar - he called it "losing BJP's conspiracy". Nearly half an hour after accusing the ruling party of halting his chopper, he posted a cheeky tweet - "We are ready to take the flight to victory". "My helicopter has been halted in Delhi without any reason. It is not being allowed to fly to Muzaffarnagar (in UP). But a BJP leader was just allowed to fly from here. This is losing BJP's conspiracy - a proof of their frustration," the former UP Chief Minister tweeted in Hindi at around 2:30 pm.

**Are lenders aboveboard  
in l'affaire Karvy?****Banks fail in their duty of due diligence**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Going by the revelations till date in the Karvy scam, it is now obvious that major banks and fintech companies that gave massive loans to the company either failed to do due diligence in checking the validity of the documents, shares and collaterals submitted to them; or, worse still, connived with the promoters of the company.

When an individual obtains mortgage loans or pledges shares for loans, banks take possession of the original title deeds, after creating a charge and transferring the

property rights to itself in association with the person obtaining the loan, pending clearance of the loan amount. In any case, certified records from the registration department are scrutinized thoroughly before sanction of the loan simply because no person can sell anything that he does not own in the first place.

The investigators have gone after Karvy promoters without looking sufficiently into the questionable role evidently played by the lending banks and fintech firms.

**Crash in Amaravati real  
estate led to Karvy collapse****2019 SEBI order said KSBL diverted funds to its real estate subsidiary**SNV SUDHIR  
■ VIJAYAWADA

Companies that divert and siphon off public funds for investment in realty through shell firms are foredoomed, if one goes by what has happened now to Karvy group of companies and what had resulted in the downfall of once IT major Satyam Computers some years back.

Parallels are being drawn between the collapse of once celebrated Hyderabad-based stock broking firm Karvy group and that of Satyam Computers, also based in Hyderabad, in 2009. In both the cases, the companies had resorted to diversion of funds mainly to invest them heavily in real estate.

The collapse of Hyderabad real estate market as a consequence of the 2008 global economic meltdown eventually resulted in the fall of



Byrraju Ramalinga Raju-led Satyam Computers. In the case of Karvy Stock Broking Ltd (KSBL), the main reason is the crash of real estate in Andhra Pradesh's capital Amaravati.

The Enforcement Directorate

(ED) on Thursday got four-day custody of arrested KSBL Chairman and MD C.Parthasarathy, and CFO G Hari Krishna, in the over Rs 2,800 crore security scam.

**Root out drug menace  
from Telangana: KCR**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao has called upon the State Police and Excise officials to step up their efforts and adopt unique methods and strategies to root out the illegal sale and consumption of narcotics and prohibited substances in the State.

The Chief Minister was addressing the State Police and Excise officers conference convened at PragathiBhanven here on Friday

with the objective of formulating measures to root out the evil of illegal supply and consumption of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

KCR suggested a dual strategy of identifying drug addicts and putting them in de-addiction centres with help from their family members as well as eliminating the network through which youth get attracted to drugs and become addicts.

Asks Police and Excise officials to adopt a dual strategy of identifying drug addicts and putting them in de-addiction centres as well as breaking networks supplying drugs

Wants the State Police authorities to examine the methods being followed by the Scotland Yard Police in nabbing criminals dealing in narcotics

Calls for social movement and concerted efforts against the scourge of drugs

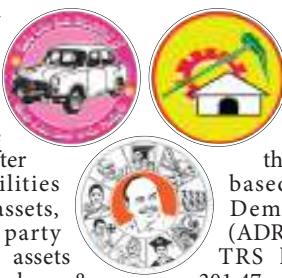
**TRS, TDP, YSRCP among top 10 parties to declare high assets**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Telangana's ruling party TRS has declared the second highest assets and capital/reserve fund among 44 regional parties across the country during the Financial Year (FY) 2019-20. Also, the three regional parties of Telugu states - TRS, YSRCP and TDP - are among the top 10 regional parties across the country that have declared the highest capital/reserve fund and also the

highest assets during (FY) 2019-20.

The capital/reserve fund is the amount set aside by the parties after subtracting liabilities from the total assets, every year, for party expenditure. The assets include fixed assets, loans & advances, deposits made, investments, etc.



According to the analysis of the assets, liabilities and capital declared by the 44 regional parties in the country by Delhi-based Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) for FY 2019-20, TRS has declared Rs 301.47 crore worth of assets.

**95.27% of total assets  
held by 10 regional parties**

As per ADR's analysis among the 44 regional political parties, the assets of the top 10 parties are worth Rs 2,028.715 crore or 95.27 pc of the total assets declared by all the regional parties for the FY 2019-20.

**TS braces for coldest  
nights; Bheempoor  
records 5.7°C**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With cold winds blowing, Telangana is likely to witness the coldest night of this January as the temperature is expected to drop up to 3-4°C in north Telangana and up to 8-9°C in GHMC. As per the Telangana State Development Planning Society (TSDPS), Bheempoor in Adilabad recorded as low as 5.7°C on Friday, while Sirpur in Komaram Bheem Asifabad recorded 6.1°C.

In GHMC, Uppal recorded the lowest temperature of 11.3°C followed by, Rajendranagar (11.8), Marredpally (12.4),

**Those symptomatic nearly 100  
times than reported Covid +ve**NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State is witnessing a strange trend. While the ongoing Fever survey has identified nearly 3.45 lakh people with Covid-19-like symptoms, the official media bulletin claims that only 3,877 people tested positive as of Friday.

Health Minister Harish Rao said that the first round of Fever survey in the state had been completed in nearly 28-29 districts. The second round of the survey is set to begin.

The Fever surveys were conducted in 77,33,427 households in the state and 3,45,951 kits provided. Harish said: "Everyone should come forward and take part in the Fever survey. Fever survey has reduced the spread of Covid-19. The state government is sufficiently equipped with testing kits



and home isolation kits. We are prepared with 1 crore kits to ensure there is no shortage".

Telangana on Friday registered 3,877 Covid-19 infections, including 1,189 positive cases under GHMC. The number of active Covid-19 positive infections in Telangana as on Friday surged to 40,414, with nearly 36,500 of them in areas within GHMC.

**1,755 Covid +ve  
women delivered  
at Gandhi till date**

P 3

**Student leaders held in Osmania University**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Several members of student organisations and other groups were taken into preventive custody on Friday at Osmania University here after they sought to obstruct the visit of ruling TRS leaders to the campus, with one of the protesters publicly threatening to immolate himself, police said.

A leader of TRS students' wing announced a plan to start a cricket tournament on Friday ahead of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhara Rao's birthday in February. MLAs and other leaders were invited for the event.



A protester resisting a cop on OU campus in Hyd

**Jagan hails Centre's move  
to amend IAS cadre rules**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

While his counterpart in the neighbouring Telangana, K Chandrasekhara Rao has squarely opposed the Centre's proposal to amend IAS cadre rules on Central deputation, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has taken a cautious approach.

Jagan on Friday wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi with a balanced and measured response to the Government of India's proposal to amend IAS cadre rules.

In his letter, Jagan, while welcoming the concept of officers going on Central deputation, urged Modi to reconsider the proposal and retain the existing process of

requiring state governments to issue NOCs to officers going on deputation to Central government. He mentioned that the officers who should be sent to Central deputation, should be decided by the State government.

**Bharat Biotech  
gets nod for Covid  
intra-nasal vaccine  
phase-3 trials**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Bharat Biotech has received approval from the Drug Controller General of India to conduct phase-3 trials for its COVID-19 intra-nasal vaccine (BBV154), sources in the company said on Friday.

The trials would evaluate the nasal vaccine for both the two-dose primary schedule and also to use as booster dose schedule, they said.

"BBV154 (nasal covid vaccine) has received approval for phase-3 clinical trials. The trials will evaluate BBV154 nasal vaccine for both the two-dose primary schedule and booster dose schedule," the sources said.

An intra-nasal vaccine would not only be simple to administer but also reduce the use of needles and syringes, among others. It would also impact the overall cost of a vaccination drive, chairman of Bharat Biotech Krishna Ella had said.

**KCR okays Rs.1 cr towards house  
for Padma Sri Mogilayya in Hyd**

P:2

**TODAY****ALMANAC****Month & Paksham:**

Pausa, Krishna Paksha

**Tithi** : Dwadashi . Jan 28 11:36 PM to Jan 29 08:37 PM

Trayodashi . Jan 29 08:37 PM to Jan 30 05:29 PM

**Nakshatram** : Moola . Jan 29 05:07 AM to Jan 30 02:49 AM

Purne/Adraha . Jan 30 02:49 AM to Jan 31 12:22 AM

**Rahukalam** : 9:40 AM to 11:05 AM**Yamagandam** : 1:53 PM to 3:17 PM**Varjyam** : 11:26 AM to 12:53 PM**Gulika** : 6:52 AM to 8:16 AM**Amritakalam** : 09:06 PM to 10:33 PM**Abhijit Muhurtham** : 12:06 PM to 12:51 PM**HYDRABAD****WEATHER**

Forecast: SUNNY

Temp: 31°C

Humidity: 41%

Sunrise: 6:52 AM

Sunset: 6:05 PM

Updated JANUARY 28, 2021 5:00 PM





# Center hails TS fever survey as ‘good strategy’

■ Center to formulate policy to replicate fever survey ■ 3.45 lakh show Covid-like symptoms

NAVEENA GHANATE  
■ HYDERABAD

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has lauded the Fever survey launched by the Telangana government as part of its efforts to contain the spread of coronavirus. The Union Health Minister hailed it as a "good strategy" of the state government. He said that steps would be taken to formulate a similar policy for replicating it in all the states.

The Union Health Minister on Friday held a video conference on the situation with regard to Covid-19 in the states. It was attended by the Health Ministers and senior officials from Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Lakshadweep Island, Andaman and Nicobar and Puducherry



states.

TS Health Minister Harish Rao briefed the Union Minister on the situation relating to coronavirus in the state, the state government's preparedness, Fever survey, vaccination and related matters.

So far, 77,33,427 households in the state have been surveyed for fever and 3,45,951 kits been provided. Harish Rao explained

that during the second wave, the Telangana Fever Survey was started for the first time in the country and it yielded good results.

According to Harish, a total of 21,150 teams are participating in the Fever survey, with three members each from the health, panchayat or municipal divisions going to each house to check people's health. Those

with symptoms are being given home isolation kits right there and their health condition monitored for the next week. People with severe symptoms are rushed to a nearby government hospital for treatment.

The Telangana government has readied one crore home isolation kits and two crore testing kits in the state as per Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's directives.

Harish said that with the Fever survey, the government had introduced medicine at home, which reduced the positivity rate and reduced hospitalisation. Covid-19 OP services had been set up at all levels - from sub-centers, PHCs, Basti dispensaries to district and teaching hospitals. The Minister explained that vaccination was going on successfully across the

state. He said that oxygen facility had been provided to more than 27,000 beds in the state.

Harish Rao requested that booster dose be given to all those aged above 60 years, including those with comorbidities. He suggested the duration of the two doses be reduced as well as the interval between the second dose and the precaution dose from 9 months to 6 months. Every citizen aged over 18 years should be considered for booster dose. Harish urged the Center to release the pending second phase funds due to the State under Emergency COVID Response Plan -2. He requested upgrading of Pediatric ICUS, apart from allocation of human resources and supply of humidifiers required to bring the Center-supplied ventilators into use.

# Telangana procured 70 lakh tonnes of paddy, bagged third slot: Kamalakar

ML MELLY MAITREYI  
■ HYDERABAD



Telangana has come third in the country by procuring 70 lakh tonnes of paddy during the Kharif/Vanakalam season exceeding the target set by the Centre, said the Minister for Civil Supplies, Gangula Kamalakar.

Of the total quantity of paddy procured across the country, Telangana's procurement is the third highest, and it exceeded by 1.31 lakh tonnes the target set by the Centre, he said in a statement.

This is despite problems like the Covid-19 pandemic, the Minister said.

As per the instructions of Chief Minister K. Chandrasekar Rao, the Civil Supplies Corporation procured

44 per cent more than what was procured in the last Kharif season by procuring 21.21 lakh tonnes of extra paddy. He said every paddy grain brought to the centres was procured.

The State set up 6,872 purchase centres and procured paddy worth Rs 13,690 crore from 12.78 lakh farmers. The money for the paddy is being transferred since the last two days into the bank accounts of

farmers and it will be over in a week, he said.

Explaining the proactive measures taken by the TRS government, Kamalakar said that they had kept ready around five crore gunny bags more than last time and except problems regarding the higher percentage of moisture in the paddy due to unseasonal rains, overall the paddy procurement was completed smoothly. Even now, paddy is being brought to purchase centres and it is being accepted, he said.

The high yields of paddy and procurement became possible because of Rythu Bandhu, Rythu Bhima, 24-hour free power supply, the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project and other schemes, he said.

## TS braces for coldest..

Continued from page 1

Qutubullapur (13.7) and Kukatpally (13.9). The average minimum temperature of 13.4 degree Celsius was recorded in the city, in the early hours of Friday, which is at least three degrees less than expected.

As per IMD forecast, dry weather is likely to prevail over Telangana and minimum temperatures likely to be below normal by 2 to 4 °C at isolated pockets over Telangana for two days.

## Congress to support teachers' dharnas at Collectorates today

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress will support the dharnas by the Teachers' Unions Movement Committee in front of Collectorates across the State on Saturday (January 29) demanding that the state government should abolish GO No: 317, TPCC Chief Revanth Reddy said Friday.

Revanth gave a call to Congress leaders including DCC presidents and senior leaders to support those par-

ticipating in the dharnas held by Teachers' Unions.

He said that the Congress will wage a fight regarding all the problems facing teachers. He said that due to GO No: 317 teachers are going to face permanent trouble regarding their local status.

He said the Congress not only extends support but will also join the fight against GO No: 317. Revanth asked teachers not to lose confidence as the Congress would fight for them.

## KCR okays Rs.1 cr towards house for Padma Sri Mogilayya in Hyd

ML MELLY MAITREYI  
■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K Chandrasekar Rao has announced an amount of Rs.1 crore to Padma Sri award winner and folk singer Mogilayya, who made his unique 'Kinnera' instrument popular, towards a house for him in Hyderabad.

KCR felicitated Mogilayya with a shawl when the latter met him at Pragathi Bhavan on Friday. The amount would be used to acquire a house site in Hyderabad for construction of a house for the singer and to meet other requirements.

KCR appreciated Mogilayya for protecting the rare musical instrument of Telangana. He instructed MLA Guvvala Balaraju to help Mogilayya in getting a house site and taking up construction.

The Chief Minister reiterated that the State government would honour artists who were helping in restoration of Telangana's fine arts and art forms and would always be of help to them.

Ministers Srinivas Goud, Malla Reddy and others were present on the occasion.

## Seniors continue attempts to stop DS' entry into Cong

K VENKATESHWARLU  
■ HYDERABAD

Like the many reasons for Karna's death, many reasons are delaying the entry of TRS Rajya Sabha Member D. Srinivas into the Congress. There are many reasons why the entry of Srinivas into the Congress is getting delayed.

DS would have joined Congress a few months ago, however, the Congress and DS strategically postponed it. But the Congress and DS confirmed that he will join the Congress on January 24 at any cost. But once again it was postponed due to several reasons including the Corona surge.

Leaders of the Congress in

Telangana have been making all-out efforts to stop the entry of DS into the party. Senior Congress leaders sent letters to AICC Chief Sonia Gandhi a few days ago regarding this.

It is believed that Congress leaders from erstwhile Nizamabad and Medak districts are behind the letters. They have told the Congress high command that the entry of DS into the party will not help in any way as his younger son, the MP representing Nizamabad, is in the BJP. They ask how DS will work against his son in Nizamabad district.

On the other hand, the elder son of DS, Dharmapuri Sanjay, is eagerly waiting to join the Congress along with

his father. Sanjay's entry into the Congress along with his father may end the arguments of the senior Congress leaders, who are opposing the entry of DS.

There is also an argument in favour of DS as the leaders opposing his entry are not at all winning elections, a leader supporting the entry of DS into the Congress told The Pioneer.

But there are also leaders who are winning elections, who oppose the entry of DS. It is learnt that their 'Hawa' will not run after DS' entry, the same leader told The Pioneer.

As of now the senior leaders are making all out efforts to block the entry of DS into the Congress.

## Employees ending lives due to KCR, says Eatala

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BJP MLA representing Huzurabad, Eatala Rajender, has alleged that the TRS government is remaining mum on the issue of government employees and teachers.

The government has been behaving cruelly forcing its employees to commit suicides due to the hardships caused by transfers following GO No: 317.

He alleged that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekar Rao has been behaving as he liked resulting in employees losing their nativity status. KCR is not even listening to opposition leaders, he said.

Eatala said the KCR government is the reason for the suicide of Narsampet resident Uppala Ramesh. There are no incidents anywhere in the nation where government employees are committing suicide, he said.

He demanded that the KCR government should hold discussions with employee unions and abolish GO No: 317 immediately to do justice to teachers and employees.

Consoling the family of Uppala Ramesh, Eatala assured them that the BJP will stand by them. Eatala gave Rs 50,000 to Ramesh's family as a token gesture of help from the BJP.

# Crash in Amaravati real estate...

Continued from page 1

According to informed sources in industry circles, KSBL's subsidiary, Karvy Realty Private Limited (KRPL), bought huge tracts of land in Amaravati, projected previously as the new capital of Andhra Pradesh, in anticipation of then chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu's return to power. The whole idea was to make a killing once Naidu retains gaddi.

However, the regime change in Andhra Pradesh and the subsequent change in the priorities of the new government in Andhra Pradesh upset KSBL's apple cart, with crash in real estate value in Amaravati leading the collapse.

A SEBI order, issued on November 22, 2019, stated "Prima facie a net amount of Rs. 1,096 crore has been transferred by KSBL to its group company i.e. Karvy Realty Private Limited

between from 01-April 2016 to 19-October-2019" (sic). All the amount that KRBL routed to its real estate subsidiary has been invested in Amaravati real estate.

ED's investigation into fund trail also confirmed diversion of funds from KSBL to its real estate arm.

Parthasarathy, Krishna Hari were arrested under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, in a money-laundering case connected with the fraud committed through illegal diversion of clients' securities by KSBL worth Rs 2,873.82 crore and pledging of these securities with banks/NBFCs for seeking loans and subsequent loan default.

The ED, in a statement said, money laundering investigation was launched based on the FIR filed by HDFC Bank with CCS Hyderabad Police under various sections of IPC for defrauding

HDFC Bank.

"Fund trail investigation has shown that the borrowed funds were transferred to other group companies, particularly to one WoS of KSBL i.e. Karvy Realty (India) Limited (KRIL), and then to 14 shell companies floated by Karvy Group," said ED.

ED had recorded the statement of various employees of the Karvy Group, and conducted searches at 9 locations last year in September. The central agency, during its investigations, had found the complex web of transactions designed by the Karvy management of the Karvy Group to misuse the securities of their clients and to raise loans fraudulently which were then rotated via multiple related companies and diverted from the state purchase.

It is learnt that Karvy Group had promised investors returns of 18-20 pc and collected large sums of money.

## Telangana: 3,877 new COVID-19 cases, two deaths

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana on Friday reported 3,877 new COVID-19 cases, pushing the tally to 7,54,976, while the death toll rose to 4,083 with two more fatalities.

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) accounted for the most cases with 1,189, followed by Medchal Malkajigiri (348) and Ranga Reddy (241) districts, the bulletin said, providing details as of 5.30 PM today. It said 2,981 people recovered from the infection on Friday. The cumulative number of recoveries till date was 7,10,479. Active cases stood at 40,414, the bulletin said.

It said 1,01,812 samples were examined today and the total number tested till date was 3,18,77,830.

The samples tested per million population were 8,56,470.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹202
Without Skin	₹222
Broiler at Farm	₹109

EGG RATES ₹/100	
HYDERABAD	405
VIJAYAWADA	430
VISAKHAPATNAM	425
RETAIL PRICE (IN HYDERABAD)	₹4.05

## Jagan hails Centre's move to amend IAS cadre rules

Continued from page 1

Jagan said the State government is in a better position to assess who all can be spared for the Government of India deputation, keeping their professional as well as personal requirements in mind.

"I wholeheartedly welcome such an initiative taken by the Government of India under your leadership to ensure that the departments and offices at the central government are manned by able officers from the Indian Administrative Service. Such a strong and sufficiently manned team at the helm of affairs in the central government would be essential to ensure the smooth and seamless functioning of the government.

I strongly believe that states

would benefit immensely from such well-functioning departments in the Government of India. Further, more IAS officers from the state cadre in different levels at the Central government will help the state in pursuing the issues pertaining to the state with the Government of India," said Jagan in the letter.

He further said that he fully appreciates the need for such a move and extended his complete support to the proposal. However, he said a few issues might arise during operationalisation of the proposed amendments.

He explained that IAS officers form the most important part of the State government who provide leadership to the departments and various projects handled by the State government.

# DCGI allows Bharat Biotech to conduct phase-3 trials for Covid's intranasal booster dose

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's drug regulator has given permission to Bharat Biotech to conduct phase-3 clinical trial for its intranasal Covid vaccine as booster dose on participants who have been previously inoculated with SARS-CoV 2 vaccines.

India is yet to approve the use of intranasal COVID-19 vaccine BBV154 developed by the Hyderabad-based company.

Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) on January

27 gave the nod to Bharat Biotech to conduct phase-3 randomised multi-centric clinical study to evaluate immunogenicity and safety of its intranasal vaccine as booster dose on participants who have been previously vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccines approved under new drugs under New Drugs & Clinical Trials Rules, 2019.

According to official sources, the trial would be conducted at five sites, including AIIMS Delhi.

In December, Bharat Biotech had sought permission from DCGI to conduct phase-3 study for its intranasal COVID-19 vaccine as a booster dose to participants previously vaccinated with SARS-CoV-2 vaccines.

Separately, the DCGI on Thursday also gave permission to the firm to conduct phase-3 clinical trial to compare the immunogenicity and safety of BBV-154 (intranasal) with Covaxin. This trial has been permitted to be conducted at 9 sites.

In August, the nasal vaccine had received the regulator's nod for conducting phase 2 clinical trials.

BBV154 is an intranasal replication-deficient chimpanzee adenovirus SARS-CoV-2 vectored vaccine.

"BBV154 (nasal covid vaccine) has received approval for phase-3 clinical trials. The trials will evaluate BBV154 nasal vaccine for both the two-dose primary schedule and booster dose schedule," a source in Bharat Biotech said.

## Trying to bring Sputnik M vaccine for adolescents to India- Dr Reddy's

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Dr Reddy's Laboratories on Friday said it is in discussions with the Indian drug regulator to bring Russia's Sputnik M, a COVID-19 vaccine for the 12 to 18-year-old category, to India.

Addressing a press conference after announcing the company's Q3 results, a senior executive of the drug maker said Phase 3 clinical trial data of Russia's single dose COVID-19 vaccine Sputnik Light has been submitted to

the regulator and is awaiting approval.

Deepak Sapra CEO - API and Services Dr. Reddy's, also said the company is fully geared to make Molnupiravir, a COVID-19 drug both API and Formulations, at its facilities, even as it approached World Health organization for the prequalification of the drug.

"Sputnik M is a sputnik for adolescents. In Russia, Sputnik M has been given the approval by the regulator for children in the 12 to 18 years old group.

## Root out drug menace...

Continued from page 1

Measures should be taken to invoke Preventive Detention Act against drug peddlers and suppliers. Police should collect evidence against the accused and strengthen the prosecution when the accused were produced in the court, he said. Easy grant of bail was encouraging habitual offenders to continue their illegal vocation and hence legal advice must be taken in this regard, he said.



# Opposing GO 317, teachers to stage protest at Collectorates today

Another protest planned in Hyderabad on February 5

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Though the government has been claiming that 90 per cent of transfers of employees zonal wise has been completed, several employees have been making complaints against the controversial GO 317. Zonal-wise allotment of employees has not been completed. Mainly teachers, in large numbers, have been agitating opposing the GO.

Issues relating to spouses, widows, mutual transfers, handicapped persons and women living separately were not solved. Under the circumstances, Upadya Sangha Porat Samiti (USPS) leaders gave a call to all teachers to stage dharna before district collectorates on Saturday with the demand to withdraw the GO 317.

Congress party extended support to the agitating teachers. The state government has been ignoring to solve the problems of teachers especially spouses, widows and others,



picture for representation only

the leaders alleged. Widows in union government services are not being considered by the state government, the agitating teachers said. Though the High-court had directed the government to submit an affidavit with regard to GO 317, the government had not sub-

mitted the affidavit, they said. Problems relating to spouse cases are mainly from 13 districts and as the state government had not given any clarifications, these issues were not solved. Though government gave certain promises to consider mutual transfers, such

transfers were not carried out, the teachers lament.

It is planned that the teachers would agitate first at the district collectorates on Saturday. A massive protest will be held in Hyderabad on February 5, the agitating teacher leaders warned. .

## SSC examination fee last date Feb14

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Directorate of Government examination (DGE) on Friday revised the due dates for remittance of examination fee for the SSC/OSSC/Vocational Public Examinations scheduled to be held in April /May -2022. The last date to pay the examination fee by the students to the headmaster concerned is February 14. With a late fee of Rs.50 and Rs.200, students can pay the exam fee till February 24 and March 4 respectively.

The exam fee will also be accepted with a late fee of Rs. 500 up to March 14th. These dates are applicable to regular and private candidates, once failed candidates wishing to appear for the SSC/OSSC/Vocational Public examinations April/May 2022. The due date of remittance of the exam fee would not be extended further under any circumstances, the DGE said. For more details candidates can approach the headmaster concern or visit the website [http:// www.bse.telangana.gov.in/](http://www.bse.telangana.gov.in/).

## KTR launches TSMDC website with access to GOs & policies

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development K T Rama Rao inaugurated the TSMDC [tsmdc.telangana.gov.in](http://tsmdc.telangana.gov.in) website on Friday. Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Minister said that the website which is launched on Friday will have access to all Government Orders related to Mining, the New Sand Mining Policy 2014 and Rules related with Major and Minor Minerals. KTR further said, "As suo moto disclosure under RTI, all agreements, geo-coordinates of sand reaches, quantity of sand extracted and disposed will be available on website".

In this connection, Manne Krishank, Chairman,



Minister for Municipal Administration and Urban Development K T Rama Rao inaugurating the TSMDC website in Hyderabad on Friday

TSMDC Ltd said, " Using this portal, people can access the Sand Sale Management & Monitoring system (SSMS) portal and also other Government of Telangana portal, Mines & Geology portal, Ministry of Mines,

Govt of India portal and Indian Bureau of Mines portal. Now, TSMDC is having Sand Sale Management & Monitoring System (SSMMS) web portal providing services to the customers through the portal".

## 84 illegal structures razed as demolition drive continues

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

On Friday, the District Task Force teams and the HMDA jointly carried out demolitions on illegal structures in Sangareddy Municipality and Nizampet Municipality.

Authorities demolished four 4 illegal structures in Sangareddy municipality and two 2 unauthorised structures in Nizampet municipality.

Officials have revoked permits for G+2 structures over 500 square yards in the Sangareddy municipality and demolished two or three floors of "penthouse" structures.

Authorities have cracked down on illegal construction (shopping shutters) on a 300-square-yard plot of land in Pragati Nagar under Nizampet municipality, noting that a liquor shop was operating on one of the shutters. Taskforce



officials on Friday demolished a 630-square-yard site in Nizampet as well. So far the District Task Force

teams, HMDA have jointly taken action on 107 illegal structures. Of them, 84 illegal structures were demolished.

## Police arrest mobile phone snatching gang in city

The four suspects are close friends and belong to the same locality

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Banjara Hills police arrested a four-member mobile phone snatching gang involved in six cases here on Friday. Police recovered eight mobile phones from them.

The arrested persons are Mohd.Khaja Pasha alias Khaja (19), a painter, Mohd.Sabeel (19), a degree student, Shaik Sohail (19), a painter and M.Pavan Kumar (20), all residents of Singadikunta in Banjara Hills. They are involved in cases in Golconda, Jubilee Hills and Banjara Hills.

The four suspects are close friends and belong to the same neighbourhood.

As they do not have a proper source of income, they decided to earn easy money by

committing mobile phone snatchings from pedestrians walking alone on secluded roads during the night. According to the police, recently Pasha bought a bike and they started committing mobile phone snatchings in Raidurgam.

On January 24 night, they met at Singadi Kunta auto stand and after consuming liquor, they went to Tolichowki in Golconda and snatched the mobile phone of a pedestrian. After which, they also snatched the mobile phone of another man in Banjara Hills. Based on a complaint, the Banjara Hills police booked a case and with the help of the CC from the crime spot and surroundings, the suspects were identified and arrested.

## Hyd tops list of states in utilising groundwater

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad topped the list in utilising ground water to a large extent followed by Rajanna Sircilla and Jangaon districts in 2019-20, according to ground water resource estimations carried out jointly by the State Groundwater Department and Central Ground Water Board.

Apart from Hyderabad, Rajanna Sircilla and Jangaon districts, Ranga Reddy, Mahabubnagar and Nizamabad were in the list of high use of ground water in the state. Nine other districts - Jagtial, Warangal Rural and Urban, Nagarkurnool, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Sangareddy, Vikarabad, Kamareddy and Siddipet were in the moderate use of



groundwater while the remaining districts were in the category of low use of groundwater. As much as 97

per cent of groundwater was consumed in Hyderabad while 79 per cent and 78 per cent of groundwater in

Rajanna Sircilla and Jangaon, respectively. Seventy-four per cent of groundwater was consumed in Ranga Reddy while 72 per cent in Mahabubnagar and 70 per cent in Nizamabad. Groundwater resources estimation of the State as on March 2020 were carried out based on the GEC-2015 methodology. As major part of the State was underlain by hard rocks, watershed was taken as assessment unit for the entire State.

As per resource estimation for 2019-20, the total annual extractable groundwater resources are 15128 million cubic meter (mcm) (command area: 6705 and non-command area: 8423), which is 22 per cent more in comparison to 2017 resources (12367mcm).



SAVE BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE

As Telangana government increased market values of lands and residential plots and other properties from February 1, registration offices at various place in Hyderabad witnessed large number of persons who have come for registration. The state government has also increased registration charges for properties. (picture for representation only)

## Girl drowned in water sump

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A seven-year-old girl drowned in a water sump while playing near her house at Laxmi Nagar Colony in Saidabad here on Friday.

The girl identified as Shivani, was playing alone when she is suspected to have slipped and fell into the water filled sump in front of her house around 5 pm.

According to K. Subbarami Reddy, Inspector (Rajendranagar), the family members, who realised that Shivani was missing for a long time, began searching in the surroundings and found her body in the water pit. They rushed her to a nearby hospital where doctors declared her dead.

## Jagadish Reddy reviews arrangements at Chinna Jeeyar Swamy Ashram

A separate team from TSSPDCL would be deployed to regularly monitor power supply for the event

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TSSPDCL) is making elaborate arrangements to ensure continuous power supply during unveiling of the Statue of Equality of Sri Ramanujacharya at Tridandi Chinna Jeeyar Swamy Ashram in Muchintal, on the outskirts of Hyderabad, in February.

Minister for Energy G Jagadish Reddy visited the ashram on Friday and reviewed the arrangements being made for the celebrations marking the 1000th birth anniversary of the religious philosopher Sri Ramanujacharya. The celebrations will be held from February 2 to 14, at Chinna Jeeyar Swamy Ashram.

Since the Prime Minister



Narendra Modi, Chief Ministers and Governors and senior officials from various States will attend the event, the

TSSPDCL was leaving no stone unturned in supplying power continuously, Jagadish Reddy said.

He inspected the arrangements at yagnashala and dining area. The Minister said a separate team from TSSPDCL

**The celebrations marking the 1000<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the religious philosopher Sri Ramanujacharya will be held from February 2 to 14**

would be deployed to regularly monitor power supply for the event and added that a 33/11 KV sub-station along with 28 transformers were already established at the ashram. TSSPDCL CMD G Raghuma Reddy and other senior officials were also present during the inspection.

## 1,755 Covid +ve women delivered at Gandhi till date

Achampet incident an aberration, say health officials

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

Notwithstanding public outrage over the recent refusal by Achampet Government hospital doctors to perform delivery of a Covid positive pregnant woman, it is heartening to note that doctors at Gandhi Medical Hospital here have conducted as many as 1,755 deliveries of Covid positive pregnant women till date.

In all, 1,623 deliveries were conducted at Gandhi Hospital during the first wave and the second wave combined. Since January 1 this year, a total of 132 deliveries of Covid19 positive pregnant women were conducted at the hospital.

Last week, a COVID positive woman from Maharashtra delivered a child at the Government Hospital in Nirmal. Another pregnant



woman with Covid infection gave birth at Mother and Child Health Centre in Jangaon.

On the denial of admission to the pregnant Covid positive woman at Achampet CHC, senior officials in Health Department reasoned: "It is unfortunate that this incident happened. The Superintendent and the duty doctor in Achampet, Nagarkurnool, were suspended. We have con-

ducted thousands of deliveries. In Gandhi itself, we did 1,755 and such one of incident gets highlighted. It demoralises our doctors who risk their lives while conducting deliveries".

The official said that it was safe for both mother and child to get the deliveries done at government hospitals. Even in district hospitals deliveries were being done. In the Kothagudem district hospital itself 117 deliveries were conducted during three waves; likewise, there were 20 deliveries this month at Khammam District Hospital.

Health Minister Harish Rao had stated that emergency services for pregnant women would run uninterrupted at State-run hospitals. Directions were issued to heads of health facilities and officials to ensure that Achampet-like incidents do not happen again.





Health Minister T Harish Rao and Transport Minister Puvvada Ajaykumar inaugurating cathlab, trauma care unit at Government Hospital in Khammam on Friday. (left) Harish Rao addressing a press conference at the Government Hospital

# Ministers inaugurate cath lab, trauma care unit at Govt Hospital

They also participated in developmental programmes in the Khammam district

**PNS ■ KHAMMAM**

Finance and Medical & Health Minister T Harish Rao and Transport Minister Puvvada Ajaykumar visited Khammam, Madhira and other places in the district on Friday and participated in inauguration and foundation stone laying programmes. The Ministers inaugurated newly arranged cathlab and trauma care unit at Government Hospital in Khammam in the morning.

Addressing a press meet at the hospital, Health Minister T Harish Rao stated that necessary funds

would be allocated to set up MRI centre at the Government Hospital in Khammam. Similarly, modern medical equipment would be provided to treat cancer patients at the hospital. In addition, Mortuary room will also be modernised at the hospital and other development works will be taken up for the convenience of patients, he said. The Ministers held a review meeting with Bhadradi-Kothagudem district medical and health officials which was held at ZP office. They inaugurated Health Sub-Centre at Atkur village of Madhira

mandal in the afternoon. The ministers - Harish Rao and Puvvada Ajaykumar - will lay foundation stone to the 100-bedded hospital

which was sanctioned to Madhira Assembly constituency with the initiative taken by Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao. They

will also lay foundation stone for primary health centre sanctioned to Sathupally Assembly constituency.

## 'Fever survey a model for other states'

The door-to-door fever survey being conducted by the State government is model for other States, said Minister for Finance and Health T Harish Rao on Friday. During the fever survey, health workers visited 77,33,427 households. The health workers had distributed home isolation kits to those with Covid symptoms, he said. Speaking at the inauguration of Cath lab here, Harish Rao said the breast milk bank was the second in the State after Niloufer Hospital. He promised to see that the construction of 100-bed hospital at Madhira is

speeded up. A total of 3,45,951 kits were made available to those suffering from Covid symptoms. Apart from it, one crore home isolation kits too were distributed. He called upon people to take part in the survey to curb the spread of coronavirus. The government had set up oxygen generation units in 86 hospitals. Khammam Lok Sabha member Nama Nageswara Rao, Zilla Parishad Chairman K Kamal Raju, MLC Tata Madhusudan, MLAs K Upender Reddy, Ramulu Naik, TMSIDC Chairman, District Collector V P Gautham and others were present.

## 'Select beneficiaries under Dalit Bandhu scheme'

**PNS ■ MAHABUBABAD**

Minister for Women and Child Welfare Satyavathi Rathod on Friday directed the officials to select 100 beneficiaries from each Assembly segment in the district under Dalit Bandhu scheme. Presiding over a review meeting on Dalit Bandhu, the Minister said Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao had introduced the scheme to help financial empowerment of Dalits. It is



one of a kind scheme, she said. The scheme was implemented as a pilot project first in Huzurabad and it proved a success. The meeting was attended by District Collector K Shashanka, Zilla Parishad Chairperson Bindu, MLC Thakkelapally Ravinder Rao, Disability Cooperative Society Chairman Vasudeva Reddy, MLA Shankar Nayak, Municipal Chairman Rammoohan Reddy and others were present.

## MP Kavitha got CM's Blessings

**PNS ■ MAHABUBABAD**

Mahabubabad MP Maloth Kavitha got blessings of CM KCR at Pragati Bhavan on Friday. She met CM KCR to get blessings on the occasion of her appointment as TRS Party Chief for Mahabubabad. In this occasion MP Kavitha's father and Dornakal MLA DS Redya Naik, Mahabubabad District TRS leader KSN Reddy, ZP Co-option Member Mahabub Pasha, Ayub, etc attended.



MP Maloth Kavitha thanking Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad on Friday

## Collector pulls up health staff for poor sanitary condition at PHC

Uday Kumar warns health workers of action if situation does not improve

**PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL**

District Collector P Uday Kumar on Friday pulled up the staff at Uppununthala primary health centre for failing to keep the premises clean. The Collector conducted a surprise inspection at the centre.

He inspected all the rooms in the centre. He expressed his anger at the staff when he found that the labour ward at the centre filthy. He warned the staff that action would be taken if there is negligence in duty. He said the sanitary condition in the hospital is not satisfactory. He, however, expressed his satisfaction over stocking and distribution of medicines to patients.

The Collector directed the doctors to ensure that there are 100 per cent natural childbirths at the centre. Patients should not be shifted to another hospital only for better medical treatment. If the patients are moved to another hospital on flimsy



District Collector P Uday Kumar at Uppununthala primary health centre at Uppununthala on Friday

grounds, action would be taken, he warned. First dose of vaccination was administered to 23,927 and second dose to 16,575 people under the jurisdiction of the primary health centre. He directed the health staff to complete 100 per cent vaccination in the mandal. He also asked the doctors to focus their attention on providing treatment to patients suffer-

ing from dengue, malaria, tuberculosis and leprosy. He said a big hospital with all modern hospital would set up to help provide medical treatment to people in remote areas too. The Collector was accompanied by District Medical Officer Sudhakar Lal, RDO Pandu Naik, Medical officers Tara Singh and Deepti and others.

## Four farmworkers die in truck-tripper collision

**PNS ■ KOTHAGUDEM**

Four women were killed and several others were injured in a collision between mini truck and coal-laden tipper on Friday at Tippanapally village under Chandrugonda

mandal. The accident took place when the women farmworkers were on their way in a mini truck to Yerragunta village. The ill-fated truck was completely mangled. The tipper truck was said to have been

transporting coal from Sattupalli to Kothagudem. It collided with the mini truck as the driver of the tipper had lost control of the vehicle, it is said. The truck reportedly flipped over. The deceased

were identified. Local people staged a protest in support of their demand for stern action against the tipper driver. They also demanded adequate compensation to the families of the dead.

## MLA Korukanti Chandar thanks CM KCR

**PNS ■ PEDDAPALLI**

Ramagundam MLA Korukanti Chandar thanked Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao for appointing him as TRS party chief for Peddapalli district. The MLA met Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao M KCR at Pragati Bhavan in Hyderabad on Thursday and expressed his gratitude for making him party chief for Peddapalli. He said that he would strive to keep



MLA Korukanti Chandar presenting a bouquet to Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao in Hyderabad on Thursday

up confidence reposed on him by KCR and also TRS working president K T Rama

Rao. He would also strive to strengthen the party in the district, he added.

## Collector calls for concerted action for uplift of Chenchus

**PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL**

District Collector P Uday Kumar on Friday called on non-government organisations to coordinate with the government agencies in improving living conditions of Chenchu community. The Collector was holding discussions with the RDT and Koneru non-government agencies on the measures to be taken for the benefit of Chenchus. He reviewed the measures so far taken for the development of Chenchu. The development activities have been undertaken under the auspices of the non-government agencies. Uday Kumar said the government would release Rs 7 crore for the welfare schemes to be implemented for the benefit of Chenchus. ITDA PO Ashok, Achampet Forest Officer Rohit Reddy, RTD regional managing director Pushpa and Koneru organisation representative took part.

## Students advised to take advantage of latest technology

Warangal Municipal Commissioner Pravinaya appreciates KITS for taking initiative in organising technical symposium in association with ISTE and others

**PNS ■ WARANGAL**

Greater Warangal Municipal Corporation Commissioner P Pravinaya on Friday pointed out that the technical symposia would help develop creative innovations and exchange of knowledge between students and technocrats.

The Commissioner was inaugurating national-level technical symposium, called SUMSHODHINI'21, organised by the Indian Society for Technical Education (ISTE) and KITSW student chapter of Kakatiya Institute of Technology and Science, Warangal (KITSW) in association with Technical Club, student Activity Centre (SAC), and all departments. KITSW

principal K Ashoka Reddy presided. Pravinaya said the symposium would provide a platform to transform textbook knowledge into practical knowledge. She advised the students to develop "apps," which are useful to the society. He stressed the need to utilise the latest technology like Artificial intelligence, etc.

Rajya Sabha member and KITSW secretary and correspondent V Lakshminantha Rao congratulated the faculty coordinators and the team of student coordinators for organising the technical symposium for the benefit of engineering and MBA students.

Alignity Consulting, Texas, USA, Chief Executive Officer Gopinath Kokkonda was the

guest of honour on the occasion. He said "talent is our strength." ISTE-TS Secretary A V S S Kumara Swami Gupta, who as the guest of honour, said there were 7,500 faculty and 4 lakh students in ISTE. The objective was to share and support the latest technological development. On this occasion convener and Dean student affairs G Raghobham Reddy said that more than 5,500 students participated in the technical symposium across the India from reputed NITs and engineering institutes. According to Co-convener and Associate Dean M Narasimha Rao, the technical symposiums are always a gateway to development and growth for both the students and the faculty in

terms of technical skills. In this program KITSW Principal prof. K. Ashoka Reddy, convener and Dean student affairs Prof. G. Raghobham Reddy, Co-convener & Associate Dean M. Narasimha Rao, chairman, ISTE KITSW chapter and Program coordinator, ISTE executive council member & Head, MED, Prof. K. Rajanarender Reddy, Dr. H. Ramesh Babu, Co-coordinator & Head, ITD, Dr. T. Senthil Murugan, all the deans, all the HODs, Faculty coordinators, student technical club, general secretary, P. Uday Kiran Ray; KITSW ISTE student chapter president N. Shashidhar and Associate professor of Chemistry, PRO Dr. D. Prabhakara Chary were present.

## Special officers deployed to pick beneficiaries under Dalit Bandhu

**PNS ■ ADILABAD**

District Collector Sikta Patnaik said on Friday said special officers have been deployed in all Assembly segments to select beneficiaries under Dalit Bandhu scheme. The Collector said the government had directed the Collectors to identify 100 beneficiaries in each Assembly constituency. The list of beneficiaries would be ready by February 5. The special officers would identify the beneficiaries in coordination with the local MLAs. The district in-charge Minister would examine the final list of beneficiaries.

She directed the Special Officers to help the beneficiaries open the bank accounts. She asked the officers to take the assistance of the bankers to open bank accounts.

## Vaccination centre set up at Collectorate



Mahabubnagar District Collector S Venkat Rao inspecting the vaccination centre in Mahabubnagar on Friday

**PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR**

District Collector S Venkat Rao on Friday appealed to government employees and retired officials to make use of Covid vaccination centre set up at the Collectorate.

The Collector, after conducting a surprise inspection of the vaccination centre, said some of the employees did get the jabs for one or other reason. As such, it is necessary that the employees and retired

officials should make use of the centre to get vaccinated. A doctor has been appointed in the centre, he said.

The district recorded 100 per cent coverage of first dose of vaccination. A total of 5,87,739 people got the second dose of jab, constituting 85.07. Vaccination was administered to 44,412 people in the age group of 15-17. The booster dose was administered to 6,652 persons so far, the Collector said.

## LS Speaker Om Birla calls Arvind, asks him to come to New Delhi

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Prakash Birla called Nizamabad MP Dharmapuri Arvind on Friday. Om Birla enquired about how the attack on Arvind by TRS activists took place and how the police behaved. Arvind told Om Birla that the TRS government had tried to murder him with the help of the police.

Reacting to the incident, Om Birla asked Arvind to come to New Delhi immediately. Arvind said that he will go to New Delhi within two days and file a complaint with the Speaker on the issue. The Governor made a telephone call to Arvind on Thursday



Om Prakash Birla

and enquired about the incident. The MP reportedly told the Governor that he was attacked by knife-wielding goons attacked him at Issapally village. He accused the police of orchestrating the attack. He also blamed the Police Commissioner for turning a blind to the incident.

## Centre not sanctioning Navodaya schools, higher edn institutions for Telangana: Vinod

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The BJP-led NDA Government has not been playing its role for the development of the education sector in Telangana and has not sanctioned any new educational institutions for the State in the last seven years, State Planning Board Vice Chairman B. Vinod Kumar said on Friday.

Despite several representations by the TRS Government requesting the sanction of institutions, there is no response from the Centre, he said. The Centre did great

**Despite several representations by the TRS Government requesting the sanction of institutions, there is no response from the Centre, Vinod Kumar said.**



injustice to Telangana by not sanctioning Navodaya Vidyalayas, the IIIT in Karimnagar, the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research in Hyderabad,

and the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), he said.

The four BJP MPs elected from the State were not backing TRS MPs in getting these educational institutions sanc-

tioned or trying on their own to get these institutions, Vinod said. The government reorganised the State and created 33 new districts for administrative convenience. Although

each of the new districts is eligible to get a Navodaya Vidyalaya as per norms, the Centre had been indifferent to the State's requests. At present, there were only nine Navodaya schools in the State and another 23 Navodaya institutions should be sanctioned to the State. If these institutions are set up, it will be helpful to SC, ST, BC and students from minority groups, he said.

Due to the non-cooperative attitude of the BJP Government at the Centre, students in the rural areas of Telangana are not getting quality education, he said.

## Cash, ornaments stolen from farmer's house

**PNS ■ NIRMAL**

In an incident of burglary on Friday at Kandi village, the miscreants decamped with over Rs 2 lakh in cash and gold ornaments.

The incident took place in the house of a farmer, B Dandari Mallesh. The miscreants, according to police, broken open the main door and gained entry into the house. They also broke open the almirah in which the money and gold ornaments were locked up. Police are investigating.





**INDIA CORNER**

## MVA govt committed to development of powerloom sector: Maha minister

Maharashtra Minister Aslam Sheikh said the Maha Vikas Aghadi government was committed to the development of the powerloom sector in the state. Sheikh was addressing representatives of the textile and powerloom association at Bhiwandi in Thane district on Thursday. The state textile minister said he wanted to understand the issues faced by weavers in the state and address them in the new textile policy to be framed by the government in the next one year. The MVA government has been given an opportunity to serve citizens and industries and not to crush and beat them, he said. "Our view in the entire process is that the government benefits and the weavers also benefit from it. With the help of a new textile policy, we will bring about a revolution in the sector," Sheikh said. The minister said he was touring powerlooms in Bhiwandi, Malegaon, Solapur and Ichalkaranji to discuss the issues faced by weavers and address the same in the next policy.



## TN police warns of action against those disturbing religious harmony

Tough action would be taken against those spreading canards in social media to create religious hatred or disturb public tranquility, Chennai police Commissioner Shankar Jiwai warned on Friday. Following a complaint against a BJP functionary which alleged that he posted tweets that created among people hatred and enmity based on religion, an FIR was filed by cyber crime wing and investigation has been taken up, police said. The complaint was against Bhartiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), Tamil Nadu president, Vinoo P Selvam and it was filed by a resident of Kilpauk here, Elangovan. Against this background, Jiwai warned of tough action against those spreading falsehood or distorting true news in social media to stoke communal passions or disturb public peace, a city police release said. Selvam had posted some tweets related to an allegation that a school in Thanjavur district had coerced a 17-year old girl student, a hostel inmate to convert to Christianity.



## Odisha: People from outside Puri allowed to cremate bodies at Swargadwar crematorium

The Puri administration has lifted a restriction on the cremation of bodies from outside the coastal district of Odisha at Swargadwar crematorium in the wake of an improvement in the COVID-19 situation here, an official said on Friday. The authorities had imposed the curb on cremation of bodies from other districts and outside Odisha from January 10, as Puri town witnessed a surge in coronavirus infections. The restriction imposed on the funeral services of deceased belonging to other parts of Odisha and neighbouring states at Swargadwar and also on immersion of ashes at 'Mahodadhi' (sea) to contain the spread of COVID-19, was withdrawn with the decreasing trend of coronavirus-positive cases in the Puri district, the official said, citing a notification issued by the local administration on Thursday.



# Naqvi takes swipe at Ansari for remarks on 'cultural nationalism'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an apparent swipe at former vice president Hamid Ansari, senior BJP leader and Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi said on Friday that the "Bharat bashing brigade" is engaged in a competition of "lynching" of the country's culture, commitment and Constitution". At a virtual panel discussion organised by the Indian American Muslim Council on Wednesday, Ansari had said there has been emergence of trends and practices that dispute the well-established principle of civic nationalism and interpose a new and imaginary practice of cultural nationalism. And it wants to distinguish citizens on the basis of their faith, give



ment to intolerance, he had said, drawing sharp comments from BJP leaders. Speaking to reporters, Naqvi said, "Some people are becoming a part of anti-India conspiracy of Pakistan sponsored organisations. These organisations are conspiring to create confusion over India's culture and inclusivity". These people are becoming a "partner in Pakistan's propaganda" to defame India, he said.

Naqvi said that the country feels that some people and organisations have taken "supari" (contract) to tarnish

India's culture, nationalism and its ethos of unity in diversity. "The mindset of Modi-bashing is now changed to Bharat-bashing", he alleged. Unable to digest positive atmosphere and constructive mood of the country, some people are spreading falsehood about minorities before the world, he added. Naqvi said the BJP government works on the plank of development with dignity which has ensured that every section of the society has become an equal partner in inclusive empowerment.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday lauded the strength of India's young population in fields ranging from start-ups to sports, and said no one can stop a nation whose youth works with the spirit of "nation first". Speaking at the National Cadet Corps PM Rally at Cariappa ground here, Modi said efforts are being made to strengthen the organisation with a high level review committee formed in this regard. Over one lakh new NCC cadets have been added in border areas in the last two years, he said while pitching for induction of more girls in the organisation. He noted that women are getting more and

## No one can stop nation whose youth works with spirit of nation first: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

more responsibilities in the armed forces. The prime minister also highlighted the menace of drug abuse and asked NCC members to work to keep themselves and their campuses free from this and also help those who are not in the NCC in getting rid of this. Noting that in an era of possibilities relating to digital technology and information sector there are also dangers of misinformation, he said NCC members can run awareness campaign for this.



## Maha govt, FDA crack down on oil adulteration



PNS ■ THANE

The Maharashtra food, civil supplies and consumer protection department and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) conducted a series of raids at edible oil manufacturing units in the Mumbai metropolitan area, an official said on Friday. The raids were conducted over the last few weeks to check the quality and hygiene standards being followed by the oil manufacturers in the region, he said. The state department

had raided a factory in Vashi area of Navi Mumbai on Tuesday, while the FDA conducted operations at units in Bhiwandi and Mira Road, the official said. The raids were conducted based on information about adulteration of sunflower oil, which was allegedly being mixed with palm oil and sold in Mumbai and parts of Maharashtra such as Panvel, Alibaug, Raigad, among others, said Kamlesh D Kedare of the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department.

## Calls received on Covid helpline dropped in Jan 12-25 period: Delhi govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The total number of calls received on the Covid helpline, enquiring about availability of beds, vaccination programme, e-passes and other details, fell from 2,041 on January 12 to 983 on January 25, according to official data. These figures were shared during the meeting of the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on containment of COVID-19, held on Thursday. According to data about the '1031' Covid helpline run by the Delhi government, 180 channels are active which is sufficient to handle 8,000 to 10,000 calls a day. In case of an increase in call volume, the call centre can enhance the number of lines within two days time, officials said. On January 12, the helpline had received 2,041 calls, including 515 related to tele-



consultations with empanelled doctors and 450 on e-passes for movement during curfew hours, the data stated. The total number of calls then gradually fell to 1,981 on January 13; 1,784 on January 14 and eventually to 983 on January 25. The total number of calls on January 23 and January 24 had

stood at 875 and 1,060 respectively. The pattern of calls for doctor's tele-consultations also showed a similar trend in this two-week period, with 515 calls on January 12; 506 on January 14 and 187 on January 25, according to the data. The number of daily cases in Delhi has been on the decline after touching a record high of

28,867 on January 13. The city had recorded a positivity rate of 30.6 per cent on January 14, the highest during the ongoing wave of the pandemic. It took just 10 days for daily cases to drop below the 10,000-mark. Delhi had on Sunday reported 9,197 Covid cases with a positivity rate of 13.32 per cent and 34 deaths.

## Yediyurappa's granddaughter Dr Soundarya dies by suicide

PNS ■ BENGALURU

Former Karnataka Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's granddaughter Dr Soundarya V Y allegedly ended her life by hanging herself from the ceiling fan at her Vasant Nagar flat on Friday morning, police said. According to police, the reason behind the extreme step taken by the 30-year old doctor working in a private hospital was not known immediately. Soundarya, daughter of the BJP leader's second daughter Padmavathi, was married to Dr Neeraj S, who works in the same hospital, in 2018, police said. On Friday morning, Neeraj left for the duty at around 8 AM and

it is suspected that she ended her life two hours later. The matter came to light when the maid came to the house and knocked on the door repeatedly but in vain. She informed Dr Neeraj, who too called her on phone but there was no response, the police said, adding, the door was then opened by force. The body was later shifted to the Bowring Hospital where the post-mortem was performed. Learning about the incident, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, some ministers and senior BJP functionaries rushed to Yediyurappa's house to console the bereaved family members, BJP sources said.



## BJP, SP giving casteist colour to Assembly polls: Mayawati

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

BSP president Mayawati on Friday accused the BJP and Samajwadi Party of colluding to give a communal and casteist colour to the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. In a tweet, the BSP supremo also cautioned the people against their designs. "The way religion and caste politics dominate in the UP assembly elections and the media is also full of such news, it seem that all this is happening as SP and BJP are colluding to give the elections colour of hatred on Hindu-Muslim and casteist lines.

## UP polls: BJP declares 91 candidates, 13 ministers find place in list

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The BJP on Friday released a list of 91 candidates for the Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, giving tickets to 13 ministers and repeating its sitting MLA in Ayodhya. The party dropped Co-Operative Affairs Minister Mukut Bihari Verma, whose son Gaurav will be contesting from his Kaiserganj seat in Bahraich. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's media adviser Shalabh Mani Tripathi has been fielded from Deoria. The BJP repeated its sitting MLA from Ayodhya, Ved Prakash Gupta. The ministers who have been fielded



include Siddharth Nath Singh, who will contest from Allahabad West, and Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi', who will be in the fray from Allahabad South. Agriculture Minister Surya Pratap Shahi has also found a place in the list.

## UP polls: SP workers' resolve to don red caps godsend for poll merchandise sellers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "red cap is red alert" jibe, Samajwadi Party workers are buying the cap in hordes in poll-bound Uttar Pradesh to drive home their point that the headgear is a symbol of "change and revolution". And the SP's resolve to prove a point has come as blessing for those selling election paraphernalia as they are witnessing a huge jump in the sales of red caps, a compensation of sorts for the losses they



have suffered due to the ban on election rallies due to Covid. Led by party chief Akhilesh

Yadav, SP leaders and workers are registering a silent protest against the prime minister's

statement by flaunting their red caps, according to senior leaders. "Today, every leader and worker of SP is campaigning in villages and streets of the state while wearing a red cap," SP national spokesperson and MLC Sunil Singh Sajjan told PTI. "After PM Modi and CM Adityanath's statement that red, the colour of socialism, is a 'red alert for UP' and 'goons with red caps', party leaders and workers are putting on red caps to bring back socialism in the state and change the current government," he added.

## Nadda hails SC order on MLAs' suspension

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP president J P Nadda on Friday welcomed the Supreme Court order that held the Maharashtra assembly decision to suspend 12 BJP MLAs from the House for one year as "unconstitutional" and "irrational". The court's verdict to reject this decision, which was in violation of democracy and the constitution, is a victory of truth, Nadda said, adding that the BJP will continue to raise its voice against Maharashtra's Maha Vikas Aghadi government.

## BJP declared assets worth Rs 4,847 cr in 2019-20

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP declared assets worth Rs 4,847.78 crore in financial year 2019-20, the highest among all political parties, followed by the BSP at Rs 698.33 crore and the Congress at Rs 588.16 crore, according to poll reforms advocacy group ADR. The Association for Democratic Reforms prepared its report based on its analysis of assets and liabilities of national and regional parties in 2019-20. According to the analysis, the total assets declared by the seven national and 44 region-



al parties during the financial year amounted to Rs 6,988.57 crore and Rs 2,129.38 crore, respectively. Among the seven national

parties, the highest assets were declared by the BJP (Rs 4,847.78 crore or 69.37 per cent), followed by the BSP (Rs 698.33 crore or 9.99 per cent) and the

Congress (588.16 crore or 8.42 per cent), the ADR report said. Among the 44 regional parties, the assets of the top 10 parties were worth Rs 2028.715 crore or 95.27 per cent of the total declared by them all combined. In the FY 2019-20, among the regional parties, the highest assets were declared by the Samajwadi Party at Rs 563.47 crore (26.46 per cent), followed by the TRS at Rs 301.47 crore and the AIADMK at Rs 267.61 crore. Fixed Deposits/FDR constituted the largest share of Rs 1,639.51 crore (76.99 per cent) of the total assets declared by

regional parties in the FY 2019-20. Under the FDR/Fixed Deposits category for the financial year, the BJP and the BSP declared Rs 3,253.00 crore and Rs 618.86 crore, the top two among all national parties, while the Congress declared Rs 240.90 crore. Among regional parties, political parties such as the SP (Rs 434.219 crore), TRS (Rs 256.01 crore), AIADMK (Rs 246.90 crore), DMK (Rs 162.425 crore), Shiv Sena (Rs 148.46 crore), BJD (Rs 118.425 crore) among others declared highest assets under FDR/Fixed Deposits.

## Budget session: Cong to work with like-minded parties; raise farmers issue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Top Congress leaders on Friday decided to work closely with like-minded parties during the upcoming budget session of parliament and jointly raise matters of public importance, including farmers' issues and border dispute with China. This was decided at a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Strategy group chaired by party chief Sonia Gandhi. The meeting was held virtually and it was decided to raise the issues of farmers' dis-



stress, border dispute with China and relief package for Covid victims. The party has

been demanding a compensation package for the families of Covid victims.



www.dailypioneer.com  
facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/  
PAPER WITH PASSION

# Missing classes

There is still no clarity from any quarter on whether it's okay to reopen schools

One would have expected the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (Insacog) or the National COVID Task Force or the entire body of epidemiologists and virologists to at least now come up with a view on the reopening of schools. Unfortunately, their view eludes us. Schools remained closed for all of 2020 and most of 2021. They began to reopen in several States at the end of the second wave but closed down again when Omicron surfaced. Scientists predict that the current wave is subsiding fast, but they do not want to tell us if it is okay for children to return to school. Restrictions are being lifted but no State Government is willing to bell the 'school reopening' cat. Is there something we do not know but ought to know? Or is it that nobody wants to take the risk because nobody can say with confidence that the reopening will increase, or not increase, the risk of infection? The children and their parents are owed an explanation. For over 600 days, students have missed school, been kept away from classroom studies and subjected to forced home isolation and, for no fault of theirs, they are becoming victims of mental distress. We hear the usual from the scientists that children have a strong immune system that prevents them from catching infection easily. On the contrary, months of sitting isolated at home without exercise or physical activity may have dented their immunity.



There is no data on how children faced infection and no surveys on whether strict precautions in schools can ward off infection till they are vaccinated. To a large extent, the hesitation of the Government in reopening schools is justified because children are the only segment of the population without a vaccine. Those over 15 are getting their first dose now. Vaccines for children above two years of age will have to wait for a while longer, probably till early summer when five vaccines will be available to them — Cadila Healthcare's ZyCoV-D, Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, the Serum Institute's Covovax, Biological E's RBD and Johnson & Johnson's 26COV.2S vaccine. In the meanwhile, there should have been a national assessment of the fall in education reception, or knowledge absorption and in the standards among children, if any. The shortcomings of the online method of teaching are already in the public sphere. Students from poor families are suffering from not being able to afford digital devices or lacking electricity to run them. Parents are beginning to ask why education is not an "essential" service like economic activity is. They find it surprising that bars are the first to reopen, but not schools. They say it is naïve to suppose children are not exposed to the virus when adults in the family go out regularly for work. It is time for rationality, not emotions, to decide on the reopening of schools. There is no scientific reason to keep them closed, anyway.



Tourists paraglide as weather clears after snowfall in the Solanganala plains of Manali

# Opportunists

Political leaders of myriad hues have turned elections into a joke in their lust for power

Till the 1980s, June and July used to be months of activity in Kolkata's football maidans despite the monsoon. That was the period of inter-club player transfers as a prelude to the Calcutta League. Though neither Bengal nor India were anywhere near the top 10 teams in Asia, the transfers took place with decency and dignity. The Indian Soccer League has since robbed the Calcutta League and the player transfers of their importance. The elections to five State Assemblies, to be held in February 2022, bring to mind more or less a similar scenario. Ministers, Assembly's sitting members and the out-of-favour leaders have suddenly sprung to life and are animatedly defecting from their old party to new outfits for the lure of tickets and other benefits. In Uttar Pradesh, many Ministers and their hangers-on have jumped fences and crossed over to parties which offered to fulfil their demands. A leader in the BJP's UP Government suddenly got enlightened that his community, Dalits and Muslims were being ignored by the Government in power since 2017 and so he walked off to the rival camp.

On why he kept quiet for five long years before crossing over to another party, his explanation was that people had given him the mandate for five years and that period was over once the election was declared! While this Minister defected to the Samajwadi Party, a leader from the house of the SP bosses jumped ship and joined the Hindutva bandwagon, portraying it as 'secular and humane'. The Uttarakhand PCC president joined the BJP because he would not have made it to the list of party candidates in the GOP. These are not stray incidents but routine shows that play out before every election. The Aaya Rams and Gaya Rams are still around... in modern avatars. Though Rajiv Gandhi after becoming Prime Minister amended the Constitution in 1985 with a view to checking defections, our ingenious political leaders have designed new strategies to circumvent the anti-defection laws. Politics is degenerating into 'politricks' and has truly become the 'Great Indian Political Circus'. If the common man opts for "one nation, one election" as proposed by the Prime Minister, it is only to get rid of this political gymnastics. A senior and respected MP was heard saying the other day she was willing to step aside provided her son was accommodated in her place. Cry, my beloved country!!



# Hindus as punching bags for centuries?

There are several mentions in historical recordings and scholarly papers to show that pre-Islamic religious edifices were razed to build mosques



PRAFULL GORADIA

There is no doubt that Hindus have had the image of being soft and, therefore, a useful punching bag. It was overdue for a firm stand to be taken as was rightly done by TS Tirumurti, the Indian permanent representative to the United Nations, very recently. Swami Vivekananda was palpably aware of the Hindu image having been tarnished and there being a Hindu phobia. Accorded a tumultuous welcome upon his return after making a great name for himself and his faith overseas, Swamiji gave a frank explanation for why there was Hindu phobia.

Sir Sankaran Nair, a member of the Viceroy's Council, in his book called *Gandhi and Anarchy* (published by Tagore & Company; Madras, 1922), wrote: "For sheer brutality on women, I do not remember anything in history to match the Malabar rebellion. It broke out about the 20th of August (1921). Even by the 6th of September, the results were dreadful." Gandhiji's comment which he wrote in *Young India* of September 29, 1921: "We have forgotten the divine out of dying for our faiths without retaliation..." The Hindus must have the courage and the faith to feel that they can protect their religion in spite of such fanatical eruptions." He warned the Government against excessive repression of the Moplahs. The ending of the revolt was a matter not only of urgency, but of simple humanity: "Be the Moplahs ever so bad, they deserve to be treated as human beings."

Amongst Swami Dayanand's successors, Swami Shradhdhananda was the most successful in implementing *shuddhi*. He was murdered in his sick bed. Gandhi's comment was: "I have called Abdul Rashid a brother and I repeat it. I do not even regard him as guilty of Swami's murder. Guilty indeed are those who excited feelings of hatred against one another." The message of Vivekananda was clear that many problems have their roots in us. There is no power in the universe to injure us unless we first injure



ourselves. One-fifth of the population in India has become Mohammedan. Whose fault is it? One of our historians says in ever-memorable language: "Why should these poor wretches starve and die of thirst when the perennial fountain of life is flowing by? The question is: What did we do for these people who forsook their own religion? Why should they have become Mohammedan?"

To go back to Aurangzeb, over two centuries after the desecration, F Growse, the magistrate of the district in the 1870s, felt that of all the sacred places in India, none enjoys greater popularity than the capital of Braj, the holy city of Mathura. For nine months in the year, festival follows upon festival in rapid succession and the ghats and temples are daily thronged by new troops of way-worn pilgrims. So great is the sanctity of the spot that its panegyrist do not hesitate to declare that a single day spent in Mathura is more meritorious than a lifetime passed in Benares. All this celebrity is due to the fact of it being the birthplace of lord Krishna.

In his *Mathura: A District Memoir*, Growse has recorded his exhaustive survey of



THE MESSAGE OF VIVEKANANDA WAS THAT MANY PROBLEMS HAVE THEIR ROOTS IN US. THERE IS NO POWER TO INJURE US UNLESS WE FIRST INJURE OURSELVES. ONE-FIFTH OF THE POPULATION IN INDIA HAS BECOME MOHAMMEDAN. WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

Brajbhoomi. He was so overwhelmed by the vandalism that visited the area repeatedly that he wrote feelingly, although his home was in far-away England. To quote: "Thanks to Muhammadan intolerance, there is not a single building of any antiquity either in the city itself or its environs. Its most famous temple, which was dedicated to Kesava Deva (Krishna), was destroyed in 1669, the 11th year of the reign of the iconoclast Aurangzeb. The mosque (*idgah*) erected on its ruins is a building of little architectural value."

Today, Balkrishna is worshipped in a little room which appears like a servant quarter adjoining the back of the *idgah*. Pathos can be experienced by any visitor, whether a devotee or otherwise. The mischief with *masjids* extends from Somnath in the west to Adina mosque on the Bangladesh border in the east. The Adina mosque is situated on National Highway No.34 near Gaur. On the wall outside, distinct remnants of Hindu deities are visible. One stone slab displays Ganesha by the side of his consort. Inside the mosque, the stone work is equally convincing that the original building was a temple. There

has obviously been done a fair amount of work on this place of worship. Memoirs of Gaur and Pandua by M Abid Ali Khan, subsequently revised by HP Stapleton, prove this.

A more recent work of scholarship is entitled *Mosque Architecture of Pre-Mughal Bengal* by Dr Syed Mahmudul Hasan. Evidently, local legend as to who built the Adina mosque and why, appears to be incorrect. According to scholars, it was established by Sultan Sikandar Shah between 1366 and 1374 AD. There is a difference of opinion, especially between JH Ravenshaw and other scholars as to whether Gaur, the famous capital of medieval Bengal, was older or whether Hazrat Pandua, where Adina is located, flourished earlier. The significance of the controversy is about how much rubble from pre-Islamic edifices could have been used. Dr Hasan is impartial enough to quote various scholars at length, although he betrays some unhappiness at the allegation about the use of Hindu materials.

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

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**THE MAHARAJA'S HOMECOMING**  
Sir — For the Tatas, the original owners of Air India, nothing can be greater delight than the homecoming of the debt-laden, yet the nation's prestigious, air carrier after nearly seven decades. Air India, which gave wings to the nation, was much more than a business venture to the country's biggest conglomerate. (*'Air India lands up in Tatas' hands*, January 28). From the first operation from Karachi to Bombay in October 1932, with JRD Tata steering a Puss Moth aircraft, to seizing control of Air India 89 years later, the Tata Group has had a rollercoaster ride in Indian civil aviation history.

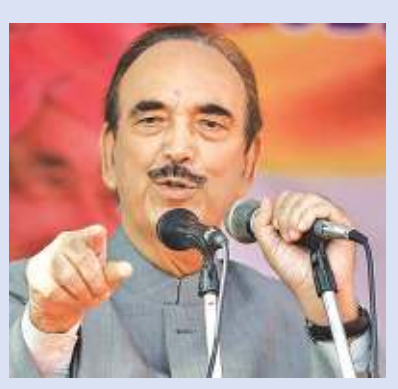
While normally aircraft head back to their original destinations after flying, perhaps for the first time in aviation history has an airline company itself headed back to its original roots. The skies of independent India had long witnessed the dominance of the country's flagship airliner, and perhaps they are eagerly waiting to welcome the beginning of a new era in India's aviation ecosystem. And the Maharaja, whose famous moustache was designed by Bobby Kooka, a close associate and friend of JRD Tata, is truly back with a bang.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

**INT'L HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY**  
Sir — We observe the International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27 every year to mark the liberation of Nazi Germany concentration camp, Auschwitz Birkenau, from the historical atrocities committed on Jews. This day reminds us of the crimes committed by Nazi Germany in concentration camps, leading to about 1.1 million deaths between 1940 and 1945. On this day, the qualities of tolerance, equality, free speech and human rights need to be inculcated in this world beset by a number of challenges and inequalities. As the holocaust memories fade in the mist of time, anti-Semitic, religious and racial intolerance are taking the centre stage.

Since the number of Holocaust survivors is showing a downward trend, the younger generation must be made aware

# Reason for Cong's discomfiture



This refers to the editorial, 'Missing focus' (January 28). The Government awarding the Padma Bhushan to Congress veteran Ghulam Nabi Azad in recognition of his services to public affairs has brought the fault lines in the party to the fore. Innuendoes and indignities against him are flying around. Praising the one from West Bengal as "Azad" for rejecting the national honour and mocking the other as

"Ghulam" for accepting it signifies the grand old party's deep decline. Azad's public affairs credentials are impeccable. He was the J&K CM in 2005, after Congress' CM Syed Mir Qasim in 1975. Also, he was Cabinet colleague to the party's who's-who of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Narasimha Rao and Manmohan Singh.

This Government has in the past honoured Congress stalwarts like Pranab Mukherjee and Tarun Gogoi, too. Terming the present conferment 'political' is not true. Even the Government's harshest critics, the Shiv Sena and TMC, endorse the honour to Azad. After being sidelined by his party since he is a G23 member, Azad is doing well by pulling crowds in his home State. He may be eying a new political innings in J&K. That he may align with the BJP is probably worrying the Congress. Sad that while senior party members are polarised on the issue, the party's top leadership is in such disarray that it cannot even focus on the upcoming State elections.

SK Prabhakar | Gurugram

of it so as to be able to separate facts from falsehoods and hatred. Enlightening the youth about the agony of Holocaust is a tool that can spring them into action against the scourge of hatred. When Holocaust survivors' memories become ours, the future generations will avoid the mistakes of their ancestors. Collective memory has the propensity not just to serve as a blueprint for the future but also to rekindle the past memories and avoid repeating mistakes.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

**WHAT'S WRONG WITH INDIAN CRICKET?**  
Sir — Cricket is like a game of chess and so every move counts in its shortest form. Having lost the Test series in a one-day fashion, we could have chalked out a strategy to avoid the mistakes committed in the longest form of the game. The blame game has started. It started from the Kohli era but we blame Rahul for the

downfall. The ex-captain is enjoying his cricket just like it is an outing in the park. As the captain, he was sending flying kisses to the pavilion and now, as a player, he is doing a cradle celebration. The batting standards have gone down considerably, which forced such a situation that the bowlers were put to test. In the event of a small total to defend, most of the time on the tour our strategy should be to dismiss the opposition early. We lost to South Africa 1-2 in Test matches and 0-3 in One-Day matches. As a result, we sacked certain star bowlers as scapegoats. How long can we bank on our home wins? What is wrong with Indian cricket? Thus India's T-20 ranking is by far the best, compared to Test (3rd) and ODI (4th) after the debacle in South Africa.

Bal Govind | Noida

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

# SOUND BITE

In the 75th year of Independence, we must resolve to ensure 75% turnout in every election.



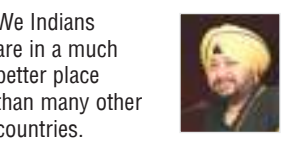
**Prime Minister**  
— Narendra Modi

No deal with prosecutors (in graft trial). I will continue to lead Likud (Party).



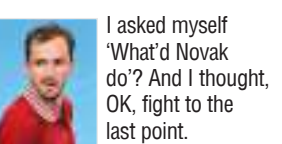
**Israeli ex-PM**  
— Benjamin Netanyahu

We Indians are in a much better place than many other countries.



**Singer**  
— Daler Mehndi

I asked myself 'What'd Novak do'? And I thought, OK, fight to the last point.



**Russian tennis player**  
— Daniil Medvedev

It's better to wind up tribunals if things are going to be like this. What about propriety?



**Chief Justice of India**  
— NV Ramana





FIRST COLUMN

SOVEREIGN BOND MOVE IS A WELCOME IDEA

Foreign capital inflow will ease down the bond yield to some extent



SHSHANK SAURAV


Union budget 2022 is few days away and there are speculations around inclusion of India's sovereign bond in the global bond index. Sometime back RBI governor said that the process is on and it should happen in few months. Historically, India has remained averse to the foreign ownership in the country's debt. This policy choice was largely driven by our experience related to balance of payment situation in 1990s. Government opened up the corporate sector for foreign capital (via FDI/Filroute) and even FPI limit in corporate bond was kept high but RBI continued to keep a conservative stand on sovereign bonds. Things have changed now and our foreign exchange reserve is enough to withstand the short-term volatility caused by sudden capital outflow. The Covid pandemic has curtailed revenue generation on one hand while public spending has increased on the other. The Government has resorted to borrowing as other non-tax receipts (like disinvestment proceeds or asset monetisation schemes) are lagging behind the target. The GOI 10-year bond yield has touched two years high of 6.54 percent in January 2022. Economic growth is still under the shadows of pandemic and therefore government borrowing is unlikely to come down drastically. When economy revives and credit demand picks up, banks would not be showing the same appetite for the Government papers and it appears that yields are not going to ease in near term. A higher yield means more outflow on account of interest payment and thereby leaving less amount with government for infrastructure and asset creation.

Foreign capital inflow will ease down the bond yield to some extent. However, this inflow will cause appreciation of INR and it will be detrimental to the exporters. This exchange rate movement can be managed by the RBI with its market intervention policies. Despite of various concessions and incentives given by government, private investment is not picking up and government has to come forward for almost all major infrastructure projects. Domestic borrowing directly impacts the liquidity which has direct impact on demand/consumption and inflation. In our case, external borrowing should be used for growth purpose only and foreign capital should not be tapped just to finance the fiscal deficit. Country's risk perception determines the demand of the government papers by the buyers. Credit Default Swap spread is generally used to gauge the risk perception on the securities issued by the borrower. India's five-year sovereign CDS spread has consistently fallen (after reaching its peak in March '20 due to Covid-related uncertainty) which means that credit perception has improved. India's sovereign credit rating has remained stable and downgrading by Moody's in June 2020 from Baa2 to Baa3 had invited severe criticism. Attractive yields on Indian bonds are remunerative to the foreign investors even if exchange rate risk is factored in and therefore demand of these securities is not a question which policy makers should worry about. There are certain areas which need to be clarified by the RBI and finance ministry before this policy shift sees the light of the day. Though there is an overall ceiling of six percent and two percent of outstanding loans for central Government and state development loans respectively, operational process should be smooth. Taxation aspect (both interest receipt at periodic interval and capital gain) is important as any relaxation to the foreign investors would be detrimental to the domestic investors. A concession to the foreign investors while taxing the transaction in the hands of domestic investors would go against the principles of equity. This structural shift shows change of mindset and it is a welcome step but will need to be monitored cautiously post implementation.

(The writer is a Chartered Accountant, author and public policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

# Solid waste management policy still suffers from niggles

## Primary segregation is key to effective solid waste management, specifically recycling and composting



RAJESH KUMAR

Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016 brought in by the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) and monitored by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) are having limited success. Authorities right from the Ministry of Urban Development, CPCB, State pollution Control Boards, Municipalities, and Gram Panchayats have been made accountable. Implementation is mainly by municipal authorities and gram panchayats as per rules. Segregation at source is the mainstay of the Rules as has been amply demonstrated by municipalities like Indore, making citizens and institutions responsible for primary segregation.

The ministries of Urban Development and Rural

Development are the main monitoring agencies at the national level.

Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, according to clause 7, has to ensure market development assistance and promotion of city compost with chemical fertilizers in the ratio of 3:4, but the ministry has done nothing to assist the municipalities and gram panchayats, where compost is being produced.

Similarly, the Ministry of Agriculture, as per clause 8, had to set up labs for checking the quality and propagation of compost on farmland, but it has done little. Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) hardly monitors State Pollution Control Boards for implementation. Even Delhi is not segregating waste as per rules right under the nose of CPCB. According to SWM Rules



2016, Clause 15 makes local authorities responsible for solid waste management. Except for municipalities like Indore, Ambikapur and a few others, no municipality is following the rules. Cities like Noida are finally working on different types of waste and segregation at doorsteps but implementation is insufficient even though City managers like Salil Yadav worked hard to implement and succeeded partially. He has been transferred to Greater Noida

Industrial Development Authority (GNIDA) to implement in the planned township of Greater Noida.

GNIDA was fined Rs 2 crore by National Green Tribunal in 2019 for not properly implementing SWM 2016 rules. Since then, it has taken action for empanelment of private agencies for bulk waste generators (apartments) and has empaneled more than 17 agencies in category 2 of its notification.

Sources said three attempts were made by GNIDA to empanel vendors for colonies but due to unfavourable conditions such as unwillingness to pay or pay very little, harassment of sanitary workers and collectors, the attitude of residents, foiled the initiative.

A look at the implementation of apartments and colonies

like Jalvayu Vihar, AWHO, Gurjinder Vihar, Jaypee Greens, La Residencia, NHPC Employee colony, Greenwood Society, Ansal Golf Links, Gaur City 1 & 2 throws up interesting facts.

Jaypee installed a composter machine in July 2021, in accordance with the SWM rules of GNIDA and Central Government, but the machine had not worked properly due to its vendor's inadequacies. Segregation at the residential level was patchy at best. A person from the machine maker explained that it is a proper aerobic composter and not a burning machine as used in many societies. Sources from GNIDA informed that Jaypee had been fined heavily on quite a few occasions as waste was not being processed and was picked by a company, K waste, which

disposed of all wastes in landfills. Penalty amount could not be verified. La Residencia was earlier a joint venture with Amrapali. After being fined by GNIDA they have bought the machine and are finalizing the vendor. In the case of Gaur City, a huge residential complex, segregation, and processing were not visible.

AWHO, similar to Jaypee Greens, has a very big aerobic composter and a proper structure allotted and one of the first to implement in 2019. It was inaugurated by Deputy CEO of GNIDA, but the machine is not working since September 2021. A source in the RWA office informed that a company was doing the composting till August 2021 but the RWA Housekeeping committee and the company had their differ-

ences and so, the company was asked to wait till they try a new vendor from September 2021. But it has been months and neither the current vendor K Waste nor the current RWA committee has taken action to rectify the machine. The plant did not have any workers and no evidence of any waste management work was seen. GNIDA has not taken action against AWHO as per rules. The earlier company was not available for comments.

In the case of AWHO, one RWA committee was the initiator and the committee which came later played the spoilsport and violator. GNIDA sources informed they have blacklisted certain vendors like SVM, who were throwing waste in landfills in Greater Noida or even transported it to Ghaziabad.



# Can Modi-Capt duo help BJP in Punjab?



AMITABH SHUKLA

Several Assembly polls have shown that Modi alone cannot be the face of BJP; it needs that extra zing, that extra person or an issue, to ride home

The Enforcement Directorate's raids on the house and business premises of the relatives of Punjab chief minister Charanjit Singh Channi follows a set pattern being followed by the central agencies for a while now in poll-bound states.

"This will generate a lot of smoke, this smoke will remain visible for a while but it will have little or no adverse political consequences for those who have been targeted," a leader in Punjab quipped on the timing of the raids when elections have been announced and the electoral process has begun.

Those who are knee-deep into politics say that the ED or Income Tax raids or any raid by a central agency hardly benefits the BJP in the elections as the fire is extinguished by those affected by the raid the very next day by playing the victim card to the hilt. The smoke too clears in the next 3-4 days after the agencies give an account of the recoveries and the dust it generates settles down in a week.

So, BJP in Punjab will have to rely solely on the charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the political guile of two-time chief minister Amarinder Singh, having a combined tenure of nine and a half years in the top job of the state.

As we all know by now, Modi has a great influence when it comes to something like presidential type elections where he hardly has any political rivals and easily towers over others. It happened in 2014 and 2019 where the election was clearly Modi versus the rest. Obviously the combined "rest" was no match to Modi and the results hardly had any element of surprise. Not much has changed even in 2022 on this front.

However, at the same time, the Assembly elections in several states clearly showed that Modi alone cannot be the face of BJP and it has to get that extra zing, that extra person or an issue to ride home. Even in the home state of the Prime Minister, Gujarat, Congress did reasonably well despite the fact that Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah hailed from the same state. There were a string of losses in states all over the country, suggesting that local and regional leaders held on their own in their home turfs.

In Chandigarh Municipal Corporation elections, Modi was the only face of the BJP in the polls and the party could not win a majority despite ruling the civic body for five years. It's a different matter that through political machinations, it managed to get its "minority" Mayor elected, though the Aam Aadmi Party had two seats more than the BJP in the House.

So in Punjab, it is unlikely that Modi will have a big influence in the voting process and outcome, whatever his supporters say. The only rally he was supposed to address before the polls were announced, in Ferozepur, had to be canceled after the much-publicized security



WITHOUT GETTING INTO IFS AND BUTS OF WHAT WOULD HAPPEN AFTER THE POLLING, IT IS CLEAR THAT BJP WANTS TO HAVE A ROADMAP OF ITS OWN IN THE SIKH MAJORITY STATE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IT WAS IN ALLIANCE WITH THE SHIROMANI AKALI DAL FOR OVER TWO DECADES IN THE BORDER STATE AND USED TO CONTEST 20 SEATS IN THE URBAN AREAS AS A JUNIOR PARTNER

(The writer is Senior Resident Editor, The Pioneer, Chandigarh. The views expressed are personal.)



breach. Though the weather was bad on that day and prevented people from getting out, the low presence at the rally ground suggested that despite the repeal of the three farm laws, BJP has still to cross several more bridges to gain the trust of the Punjabis. To bridge that gap, one election is too short a time. It will take a while and sustained political efforts before BJP comes with the right formulae and local social engineering to get going in Punjab.

As far as Amarinder Singh is concerned, many in the state, some even his supporters, now believe that for him, forming Punjab Lok Congress and aligning with BJP is not a serious shot at power but only an attempt to ensure that Congress which he feels humiliated him, is defeated. Also, many in his old party believe that Amarinder could well be looking at fishing in troubled waters with half a dozen MLAs in a possible hung Assembly.

Without getting into ifs and buts of what would happen after the polling, it is clear that BJP wants to have a roadmap of its own in the Sikh majority state in the near future. It was in alliance with the Shiromani Akali Dal for over two decades in the border state and used to contest 20 seats in the urban areas as a junior partner. The two parties complement-

ed each other well-SAD, claiming to put across Sikh point of view while BJP the Hindu point of view in a state which was badly affected by militancy in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The now repealed three agricultural laws changed the political dynamics of the state and no one either from the BJP or the SAD could envisage the consequences it would have on state politics before the bills were conceptualized and eventually passed. As Sikh farmers from the state gathered at Delhi borders in one of the most visible non-violent protests in decades, opposition to the farm laws became a sort of mass movement in Punjab which a party could neglect only at its peril. SAD took the initiative and parted ways with its partner BJP and withdrew its minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal from the Modi Cabinet.

Even when BJP was in alliance with SAD, particularly, during the ten years of its rule (2007 to 2017), there were demands within BJP to test electoral waters independently. This chorus grew louder since 2014 when Modi emerged as a towering leader and BJP won several state elections and changed the political dynamics of the country. So, in 2022 it will be the first time in decades that BJP would be the big brother in the alliance with Congress turncoat and PLC chief

Amarinder Singh and would contest 65 odd seats. If BJP manages a decent show and the definition of a decent outing would vary from one leader to the other, a new alignment could emerge in Punjab. But given the fact that BJP has been unable to grow in rural Punjab due to multiple factors, it looks like a long haul for the safe-party at present.

Many in the SAD believe that Amarinder Singh's PLC is only a one election wonder and they have little or no differences with BJP, more so when the reason for their differences-Farm Acts-no longer exists. So there would hardly be much surprise if the SAD is back in alliance with the BJP for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and a soft understanding soon after the 2022 Assembly polls. In fact, none of the two parties-SAD and BJP-are making noises against each other in the campaign, making it clear that there is hardly any difference of opinion amongst them. If BJP does reasonably well in assembly polls, it will then bargain for more seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls from SAD. That seems to be the refrain of some BJP leaders as well as an aging Captain Amarinder is no guarantee for their future political plans in the state and SAD completes the Hindu-Sikh political stereotype which helps BJP in rest of the country as well.

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

WARM CONGRATULATIONS TO @GHULAMNAZAD ON HIS PADMA BHUSHAN. IT'S GOOD TO BE RECOGNISED EVEN BY A GOVT OF THE OTHER SIDE.  
— CONGRESS LEADER  
SHASHI THAROOR



RIGHT THING TO DO (REFUSING THE AWARD). HE (BUDDHADEB BHATTACHARJEE) WANTS TO BE AZAD (FREE), NOT GHULAM (A SLAVE).  
—CONGRESS RAJYA SABHA WHIP  
JAIRAM RAMESH





# Granules India gets USFDA nod for generic product

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Drug firm Granules India on Friday said it has received approval from the US health regulator to market Potassium Chloride, which is used to treat low blood levels.

The US Food & Drug Administration (USFDA) has approved the abbreviated new drug application (ANDA) for Potassium Chloride for Oral Solution filed by Granules Pharmaceuticals Inc (GPI), a wholly-owned foreign subsidiary of the company.

Potassium Chloride is used to prevent or to treat low blood potassium levels (hypokalemia).

The product would be available for the US market



shortly, Granules India said in a statement. "We are pleased to receive the approval of the product and will surely be a valuable addition to our growing product

portfolio in the US market," GPI Executive Director Priyanka Chigurupati noted. Granules stated that it now has a total of 49 ANDA approvals from the USFDA.

According to MAT Nov 2021, IQVIA/IMS Health data, the current annual US market for Potassium Chloride for Oral Solution is around USD 44 million.

## Atul Q3 net profit falls Rs 17.6 pc to Rs 156.91 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Gujarat-based chemicals manufacturer Atul on Friday reported a decline of 17.56 per cent in its consolidated net profit to Rs 156.91 crore for the third quarter ended December 2021. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 190.35 crore during the October-December quarter of the previous fiscal, Atul said in a regulatory filing. Its revenue from operations jumped 44.85 per cent to Rs 1,380.31 crore during the quarter under review as against Rs 952.89 crore a year ago. Atul's total expenses were at Rs 1,176.15 crore, up 57.77 per cent in Q3/FY 2021-22, as against Rs 745.48 crore. Its Q3/FY22 revenue from the 'life sciences chemicals' segment was at Rs 397.61 crore and Rs 1,026.38 crore from 'performance and other chemicals'.

## Sebi to auction Ramel Industries properties on Feb 24

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi will auction properties of Ramel Industries for a total reserve price of Rs 19 crore on February 24 in order to recover money raised by the company from public through illicit schemes.

The properties to go under the hammer include land parcels, agricultural land, office premises and flat and godown across West Bengal, Sebi said in a public notice on Friday.

Inviting bids for sale of properties in the recovery proceedings against Ramel Industries and its promoters or directors, Sebi said the e-auction will take place on February 24, 2022 between 10.30 am and 12.30 pm.

Total reserve price of these properties is pegged at Rs 19 crore and the regulator has engaged Quirk Realty to assist it for sale of the properties.



The market watchdog said the bidders should make their own independent enquiries regarding the encumbrances, litigation, attachments, acquisition and liabilities of the property put on auction prior to submitting their bids.

"The properties are being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to Sebi. Sebi shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/rights/dues, etc," as per the notice.

## Embassy REIT Q3 net operating income up 30 pc

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Embassy Office Parks REIT on Friday reported 30 per cent increase in net operating income to Rs 621.3 crore for the quar-

ter ended December 2021 and announced distribution of Rs 493 crore to unitholders. Michael Holland, Chief Executive Officer of Embassy REIT, said, the company's per-

formance was good despite COVID disruptions. This underscores the resilience and growth potential of Embassy REIT, he added.

"We continue to see multiple

positive indicators for our business - the uptick in new leasing, our delivery of the 1.1 million square feet (MSF) JP Morgan campus, our 4.6 MSF of development pipeline, and a 5 MSF

potential acquisition opportunity in Chennai," Holland said. Embassy REIT leased 4,28,000 square feet across 15 deals, and achieved 14 per cent rent increases on 1.8 MSF.



## HT Media Q3 net profit jumps to Rs 51.23 crore, revenue up

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

HT Media Ltd on Friday reported a nearly five-fold jump in its consolidated net profit at Rs 51.23 crore for the third quarter ended December 2021.

The company had posted a net profit of Rs 10.33 crore during the October-December quarter of the previous fiscal, HT Media said in a regulatory filing.

Its revenue from operations was up 36.79 per cent to Rs 466.13 crore during the quarter under review, as against Rs 340.74 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal.

HT Media's total expenses were at Rs 440.13 crore, up 16.20 per cent in Q3/FY 2021-22, as against Rs 378.75 crore.

Commenting on the results HT Media Chairperson and Editorial Director Shobhana Bhartia said the company witnessed an improvement in operating profit margins in the quarter despite inflationary pressure on commodity prices.

"The third quarter of this financial year saw healthy performance in the media sector with an increase in advertising spends, especially during this festive season which was much

stronger than the previous year's. The operating environment continued to show improvement," she said.

The impact of the revival of economic activity and a turnaround in advertiser sentiment is reflected in HT Media's business performance, Bhartia added.

Its revenue from 'Printing & publishing of newspapers & periodicals' segment was at Rs 396 crore, up 36.89 per cent, as against Rs 289.27 crore of the corresponding period.

While revenue from 'Radio broadcast & entertainment' was up 27.23 per cent to Rs 34.48 crore, as against Rs 27.10 crore of Q3/FY21.

HT Media's revenue from the 'Digital' segment was up 42.36 per cent at Rs 36.19 crore, as against Rs 25.42 crore.

"Print (both English & Hindi publications), Radio and Digital have all recorded revenue growth both on an annual as well as a sequential basis. In our Print business, revenue growth has come from both robust advertising growth and better traction in circulation. Our Shine business continues to do well with an uptrend in recruitments," Bhartia said.

## NIIT Dec-qtr net jumps 32 pc to Rs 55 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Talent development company NIIT Ltd on Friday reported a 32 per cent jump in net profit to Rs 55 crore for the December 2021 quarter, and said its Corporate Learning Group (CLG) and Skills and Careers Group (SNC) businesses would be reorganised as separate publicly listed companies.

The company had registered a net profit of Rs 41.5 crore in the year-ago period.

Its revenues grew 51 per cent to Rs 383.6 crore in the reported quarter from Rs 253.4 crore in the October-December 2020 period.

"With talent emerging as the top priority for every organisation globally, NIIT with its strong balance sheet and market leading offerings is uniquely positioned to take advantage of the current environment," NIIT Ltd Vice Chairman and Managing Director Vijay K Thadani said. He added that creating two independently run businesses with significant growth capital will propel both CLG and SNC to realise their true potential and create value for all stakeholders.



### MONEY MATTERS

#### Rupee rises 5 paise to close at 75.04 against US dollar



The rupee snapped its three-day losing streak to close 5 paise higher at 75.04 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday amid expectation of better dollar inflows from upcoming IPOs.

However, the rebound in the rupee was restricted amid weakness in domestic equities, analysts said. Forex traders said geopolitical tensions, elevated crude oil prices and hawkish US Fed stance also weighed on the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 75.12 a dollar and witnessed an intra-day high of 74.88 and a low of 75.13. The domestic unit finally settled at 75.04 (provisional) against the American currency, up 5 paise over its last close of 75.09. Meanwhile, the US dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against the basket of six currencies, rose 0.11 per cent to 97.35. "The Indian rupee managed to stabilise after sharp sell-off in the last three days and retraced from one-month low on expectation of better dollar inflows from upcoming IPOs and position downsizing ahead of the Union Budget," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities. However, stronger dollar index, elevated energy price and higher bond yields could push local currency lower in the coming days, Parmar added. During this week, the local currency has depreciated 61 paise against the US dollar. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.49 per cent to USD 89.78 per barrel.

#### German economy shrank 0.7% in 4th quarter as COVID resurged

The German economy shrank by 0.7% in last year's fourth quarter amid a resurgence in coronavirus infections and new restrictions, official figures showed Friday. The quarter-on-quarter decline reported by the Federal Statistical Office followed two quarters of solid gains that came despite persistent supply bottlenecks. Gross domestic product grew 2.8% over the whole of last year, the office said, rebounding from a plunge of 4.6% in 2020 when pandemic lockdowns were at their most severe.

## AEPC set to double India's share in Colombia's total apparel imports

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) on Friday said that domestic exporters should aim to increase India's share in Colombia's total apparel imports by focusing on high value added products.

Speaking at an online event on 'India-Colombia Synergies in Apparel and Textiles', AEPC Chairman Narendra Goenka said that India's share is only 3.2 per cent in Colombia's global apparel imports.

"We are looking at escalating this to some respectable figure in double digits. We are focusing on higher value and specialised products like man-made fibre (MMF) apparels, medical and technical textiles," he said. According to the council, though there has been a fall in imports of ready-made garments (RMG) in Colombia, Indian RMG exports have been able to maintain its share in the Colombian market.

While Colombia's RMG import from the world fell from USD 652 million in 2019 to USD 408 million in 2020, India's share in Colombia's



total apparel imports remained the same at 3.2 per cent with USD 21 million in 2019 and USD 13 million in 2020, it said.

Goenka said that the Indian apparel sector offers a large opportunity for investment.

"Colombian investors can also set up manufacturing facilities in India directly or through joint ventures, and partner with us in building R&D, innovation and incubation centres in India," he said.

The textiles sector has attracted FDI worth USD 3.75 billion from April 2000 to March 2021.

Speaking at the event, Indian Ambassador to Colombia Sanjiv Ranjan said over a period of time, the popularity of Indian garments and textiles in Colombia has been increasing especially among women and this is an added advantage. "Concerted efforts would be required to reach the pre-pandemic level of exports of about USD 22 million," he said. Crisithian Salamanca, Executive Director, Colombia-India Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that Indian companies are reliable partners with the Colombian firms.



## Century Plyboards India's net profit jumps

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Century Plyboards (India) Ltd on Friday reported a 42.7 per cent jump in its consolidated net profit to Rs 93.89 crore for the third quarter ended December 2021.

The company had posted a net profit of Rs 65.79 crore in the corresponding quarter of last year, Century Plyboards said in a BSE filing.

Its revenue from operations

during October-December 2021 jumped 29.5 per cent to Rs 854.79 crore. It was Rs 660.09 crore in the year-ago period. Century Plyboards' total expenses stood at Rs 725.98 crore during the December 2021 quarter, a jump of 30.67 per cent as compared with Rs 555.60 crore.

Shares of Century Plyboards (India) Ltd on Friday declined 2.16 per cent to close at Rs 593.35 apiece on the BSE.

## PNB looking to further monetise its stake

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Punjab National Bank (PNB) on Friday said it is looking to further monetise its stake in UTI Mutual Fund as part of its non-core asset sale plan to shore up its capital base.

The bank has categorised non-core assets into two heads -- real estate and investment assets. "We have sold 3 per cent stake in UTI AMC, where we have earned an amount of about Rs 180 crore in October 2020...we had investment of 18 per cent in UTI AMC which we have brought down to 15 per cent. There is still scope to monetise that," S S Mallikarajuna Rao said at a virtual media briefing.

PNB is one of the sponsors of the country's oldest mutual fund company. Besides PNB, State Bank of India, Life Insurance Corporation of



India, Bank of Baroda and US-based T Rowe Price are other sponsors.

The bank also intends to divest its stake in Canara HSBC OBC Life Insurance Co Ltd, an associate of the bank, within the regulatory guidelines to monetise it, he said. The city-headquartered bank had acquired a stake in the life insurer post amalgamation of the erstwhile Oriental

Bank of Commerce (OBC) into itself last fiscal year. The erstwhile OBC held 23 per cent stake in the life insurer, which by virtue of amalgamation has come to PNB.

Besides, he said, the bank is also looking to divest stake in asset reconstruction companies during 2022-23.

With regard to real estate assets, Rao said, the bank has one of the floors in Bhikaji

Cama place at Delhi and other floors are in line.

Asked about the outlook for the current quarter, he said, the bank expects recovery of about Rs 5,000 crore from both NCLT and non-NCLT cases in the January-March period.

"At a conservative level we are confident of getting gross non-performing assets (NPAs) below 12 per cent by March 2022. We shall definitely get net NPAs below 4.5 per cent by March 2022 because we are expecting recovery to the extent of Rs 5,000 crore during the quarter," he said. On the bottomline, he said, the current financial year would close with net profit of over Rs 4,000 crore. For the 9 months, the profit is about Rs 3,250 crore, he said, "so we are properly in line with the guidance given that the profit at the end of March 2022 would be more than Rs 4,000 crore."

## AirAsia renamed Capital A to show it's more than an airline

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kuala Lumpur, Jan 28 (AP) Malaysia's AirAsia Group said Friday it has changed the name of its listed holding company to Capital A to reflect the diversity of its business portfolio as it seeks to grow its non-airline revenue.

Capital A CEO Tony Fernandes said the COVID-19 pandemic has allowed the group to accelerate plans to grow beyond the airline business to become a "one-stop digital travel and lifestyle ser-



vices group."

The airline retains the

AirAsia brand name. But the group will focus more on

expanding other businesses including logistics, aircraft engineering, venture capital, education and mobile applications for payments, travel and lifestyle.

"It's a significant milestone that marks a new era for the group. Today's announcement is about telling the world that we are much more than an airline," Fernandes said. He said he expects non-airline businesses to contribute half of group revenue by 2026.

Like many carriers, AirAsia has been struggling as regional borders closed due to the

pandemic. Malaysia's stock exchange earlier this month classified the firm as financially distressed.

Fernandes said domestic travel in key markets is rebounding, with AirAsia filling 80% of seats on offer in the fourth quarter of 2021, with the highest number of passengers since the pandemic began.

"We can bounce back as soon as borders are open," he said, predicting a return to normal capacity for international services by the third quarter this year.

## Power Mech Projects seps jump in profit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Power Mech Projects posted a multifold jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 32.75 crore in the December 2021 quarter, on the back of higher revenues. The company had reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 3.15 crore in the corresponding quarter last year, according to a BSE filing.





## A Telugu treasure: Sowcar Janaki's mark on the industry

Her 400th film was released in 2020 — *Biskoth* starred Santhanam and Tara Alisha.

Many of her films were immediately well-received, but some became classics. In the Telugu film industry, *Charanadasa* was a box office success, quickly followed in 1956 by *Edi Nijam*, which was another hit, and it received a National award for best Telugu feature film. The very

Here are some must-watch movies of Sowcar Janaki:

**Shavukaru:** It is a 1950 drama film, produced by Nagireddy & Chakrapani under the Vijaya Productions banner and directed by L. V. Prasad. Starring NTR, this film brought so much fame to Veteran South Indian actress Janaki that people began calling her as Sowcar Janaki after this film's release.

**Rajulu Marayi:** This story is set in a native village environment and portrays the changing times. The film is the debut of Waheeda Rehman in the film industry. *Rajulu Marayi* was released on 14 April 1955. The film ran for over 25 weeks in theatres, thereby becoming a Silver Jubilee film, and was remade in Tamil.

**Doctor Chakravarthy:** The film starring Akkineni Nageswara Rao is based on Koduri Kousalya Devi's novel Chakrabhramanam. The film was recorded as an industry hit at the box office. It is the first film to win the Nandi Award, instituted by the then Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1964. It inspired many people in India to become doctors.

**Samsaram Oka Chadarangam:** The film directed by S P Muthuraman, the film won three Nandi Awards. Her character as Chittamma won many applause then.

next year, her *Bhagya Rekha* would win the same award. In 1964, the next big Telugu hit of her filmography would be *Dr. Chakravarthy*, which was based on Koduri Kousalya Devi's book, *Chakrabhramanam*. It made history by becoming the first film to win a Nandi award.

*Manchi Kutumbam* in 1968 was also a critical success and was followed by *Dharma Dhaata*, which is a drama about money and love.

Other movies that are not to be missed are the wildly popular *Dasavataram*, *Samsaram oka chadarangam*, for which she received a Nandi award, *Geethanjali*, *Yevade Subramanyam*, and the 2015 hit *Kanche*.

enjoyed at the age of 15. Her debut on the silver screens was in the L.V. Prasad-helmed movie *Shavukaru* with NTR. The movie received great reviews and was the beginning of what was to be a long and exciting career for a versatile, expressive actress. It was the very movie that made Sankaramanchi Janaki become Sowcar Janaki! It was indeed in dire circumstances that she had to take up acting, with a baby and a family in need of money, but there was no looking back after tasting resounding success. She essayed a wide variety of roles throughout her 71 years career. The only other actors to have had such long careers in the field of acting in India were Dev Anand, Pran, Ashok Kumar, Akkineni Nageswara Rao, and Kamini Kaushal. However, by 2016, her career span has overtaken most other actors. The tireless diva has a movie in the works even today!

Veteran actress Sowcar Janaki was one of the few people from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to be awarded the coveted Padma Shri. She has appeared in 400 films and 3,000 live stage performances and is one of the most influential, iconic actresses to grace the southern screens of her day. She's shared the limelight with almost all the stars of southern cinema — ANR, NTR, Janaki, Savitri, SVR, Gemini Ganesan, Kamal Hassan, and many more. Her career has spanned over 7 decades, making her one of the very few Indian actors, who have enjoyed an extremely long career.

Born in Rajahmundry in 1931, Janaki was a strong-willed spirit from her early years. Her father's stern eye made her read the newspapers regularly, from where she picked up her impeccable English. She went on to become a radio jockey, a job she

## Shakun Batra tears up thanking Boman Irani of his love



waiting the streaming of *Gehraiyaan*, filmmaker Shakun Batra joined the virtual celebrations of the third anniversary of Boman Irani's production house, Irani Movietone. Many luminaries of Bollywood graced the celebration of the incredible milestone and witnessed an emotional Batra talking about his love and admiration for Boman. The filmmaker teared up as he expressed his gratitude to the actor-producer for being there for him as he concluded his heartfelt address. Shakun shares with us, "He (Boman) has seen me

as an assistant trying to figure his own life out. He has seen me nervous, anxious and has been there for me. I can never forget him coming up to me when I was being nervous to say you will be fine and it's rare that you meet people like him and then he became an important part of life."

Overwhelmed by emotions, he adds, "Bomsie I am so proud and happy. I genuinely wish that I could learn more from you and I was hoping to be as giving as you and there are not many like you so thanks for being you. Thanks for being amazing and I am very thankful to have people like you in my life."

## 'Delta or Omicron, vaccination is the only available solution'

To enhance awareness about the latest developments around Covid-19 virus, and how people can stay safe in these testing times, Business Network International (BNI) Hyderabad organised a webinar session for business owners on Friday. The session was attended by 250 participants from various businesses. The webinar was conducted by Dr Rohith Reddy, consultant pulmonologist at Century Hospital and many entrepreneurs and business owners, representing a few thousand of their staff and employees attended the webinar. In these fast-changing times, participants had many doubts about the threats and about the means to tackle the crisis, and every doubt was addressed by the doctor during the discussion.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Rohith Reddy said, "Covid-19 virus is constantly metamorphosing and emerging as a new variant or a new mutation, which is causing a great deal of concern among the population worldwide! Though none is sure about how long the novel coronavirus will stay amidst us, vaccination is the best available solution to tackle the

problem." "Foods that have anti-inflammatory, antibacterial/viral/fungal and immunity boosting properties must be consumed. Regular exercise with a healthy diet will minimize the need for medications, supplements, and hospitalization. Intestines are one of the largest organs in the body which host microbes for digestion and immunity, maintaining the gut flora with probiotics is equally important to tackle this problem," added Dr. Rohith

talinity in the population. Hence it is important people stay cautious in these challenging times, and not feel overburdened with agony even if they get infected by delta or omicron or any other variant.

Kids today have countless options to choose from the ocean of cartoon shows that have come up in the recent years! While parents' have control over what their children watch, they can't wade through this ocean and choose what works best for their kids. To make this task easier, we have picked up top five animated shows loved by kids and listed them below. These shows take them into a world full of magic, comedy, adventure, and a lot more!

### ● Motu Patlu

From their uncanny ability to attract trouble which only lands them in hilarious situations to teaching us friendship by always having each other's back, this

## 5 animated shows kids love watching these days



jodi takes you on a laughter riot every time you see them on screen. Watch the adventures of Furfuriya Nagar with Motu Patlu on Nick every day at 8.30 am.

### ● Shiva

The story of Shiva is about holding the right morals and fighting the villains! A not so smart policeman, a classical singer who can bring a tornado with his

singing, reliable and outspoken friends, kids have fallen for this show since its beginning. Join this 9-year-old cyclist save his city from evil on Nick, Monday to Friday at 5.30 pm.

### ● Rudra

Kids love magic but they love the magician more! A 9-year-old magician, an evil ruler of Kaal city, loyal friends, failed



magic tricks, an adventure to become the successor, this show is filled with laughter, drama, adventure, magic, basically, everything! Watch the show on Nick, Monday to Friday at 10.30 am.

### ● Golmaal Jr.

The spin-off of the popular movie franchise Golmaal, this show takes you in a comical ride filled with light hearted rivalry and innocence. From the geekiness of Laxman to the cunningness of Pappi, Madhav's never ending desire to win over Gopal and more! Watch this havoc filled adventures of the Golmaal prank gang only on Nick. Watch Golmaal Jr at 12.30 pm on Nickelodeon!

### ● Chikoo and Bunt

This show depicts sibling rivalry at its best! Since it went on-air, the show has gained immense popularity due to its relatability! From a father who is usually disinterested in the homely banter and a mother who takes charge of everything, to kids who have the BroVsBro vibe going on, the show is a mirror of every Indian household! Check out Chikoo Aur Bunt on Nick, Monday to Friday at 10.30 am.

From moral filled characters to overpowering villains (oh! They don't win) and a ride into different imaginary worlds, the shows have it all! Although we get that the list is never ending do drop in your comments to us if we missed out on your kid's favourite.





# what's brewing?

## Books with Indian twist

**A**s the sunny rays of winter pour through our windows, curl up on your reading chair and indulge in these binge-worthy reads.

### Bose: The Untold Story of an Inconvenient Nationalist by Chandrachur Ghose

New information throws light on Bose's intense political activities surrounding the revolutionary groups in Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra and United Provinces, his efforts to bridge the increasing communal divide and his influence among the splintered political landscape; his outlook and relations with women; his plunge into the depths of spirituality; his penchant for covert operations and his efforts to engineer a rebellion among the Indian armed forces. With this new information, what appeared to be dramatic now becomes more intense with plots and sub-plots under one man's single-minded focus on freeing the motherland and envisioning its development in a new era.

Was Bose really a Nazi sympathiser? Knowing very well about the strong public opinion that existed among the political leadership and the intelligentsia in India against Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and imperial Japan, why did he risk his own political image by allying with the Axis powers?

Pacey and thought-provoking *Bose: The Untold Story of an Inconvenient Nationalist* will open a window to many hitherto untold and unknown stories of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

### The Puffin Book of 100 Extraordinary Indians

100 inspiring stories of outstanding achievements! The Puffin Book of 100 Extraordinary Indians is a celebration of achievements and personal stories of those who forged new paths for themselves and others in a way that it continues to affect modern lives.

Written as short anecdotal bio-

graphical sketches, the book presents the lives of scientists, doctors, activists, painters, sportspeople, dancers, political leaders and many more from different walks of life. Featured in this collection are names like Irom Sharmila, Dutee Chand, Bhagat Singh, Gauri Sawant, Virat Kohli and Sundar Pichai.

Whether they climbed the heights, swam the depths, mastered science or track and field, picked the baton of education or activism - each of their stories is replete with big and small victories that continue to inspire.

### A Little Book of India by Ruskin Bond

As India completes 75 years of independence, we bring to you a slice of our beloved country in the words of our favourite author,

spiritual attributes of our homeland, and takes you on a journey filled with nostalgia and devotion.

### A short story collection by S. Hareesh X ADAM

Four Belgian Malinois puppies, raised by an ex-serviceman, who end up in four different life situations; two men who play a game made out of death notices clipped from newspapers; a man who exploits his friend's disability to satisfy his own bestial needs; a government employee who is intoxicated by the taste of wild meat and sinks deeper and deeper into the toxic world of hunting; two buffaloes who break away from their butcher, leading an entire village to chase after them; an old man who rejoices in the death of a sworn enemy who was once his friend.

S. Hareesh's Adam explores the more difficult of human emotions — lust, anger, jealousy, vengeance and greed. Translated from the Malayalam, the collection presents nine unusual stories about ordinary people, their passions and their diverse destinies in a world where humans, animals and nature collide. Hareesh's unique style of storytelling, which mixes astute social observation with an irreverent and sarcastic tone, makes these stories invigorating, and pushes the craft of the short story to new and refreshing realms.

### The Authentic Yoga Book, Brings Yoga Closer To One and All

Heartfulness launched The Authentic Yoga originally written by Shri P. Y. Deshpande with additional content by Heartfulness Guide — Daaji, that includes the Foreword and a new chapter presenting the yogic practices in the light of Heartfulness for everyone to benefit from Yoga directly. The book gives a deep insight into the true state of Yoga in finding unity within body, heart, and soul in totality that can rightly translate us into being 'human'.

— IANS

Photos by SV Chary

PARTY



### HAPPENING EXPO

**R**enowned fashion designers, artisans from across the country, put their work on display at the ongoing Aakriti Elite exhibition at Taj Krishna in Hyderabad.



**N**ational Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) was formally unveiled by Principal Secretary, Industries & IT Jayesh Ranjan at Hyatt Place in Hyderabad on Friday.

**H**yderabad will play host to 'International Photographer of the Year Awards (IPOY 2022)'. These awards will be presented in September in Hyderabad this year. Over 5,000 photographers from 65 countries are expected to compete in Hyderabad. All the award-winning photographers will be flown to Hyderabad, said BM Santhosh, IAS, MD, Hyderabad Growth Corridor Limited (HGCL).



## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



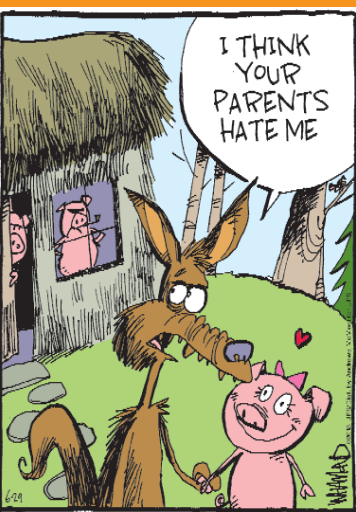
### NANCY



### GINGER MEGGS



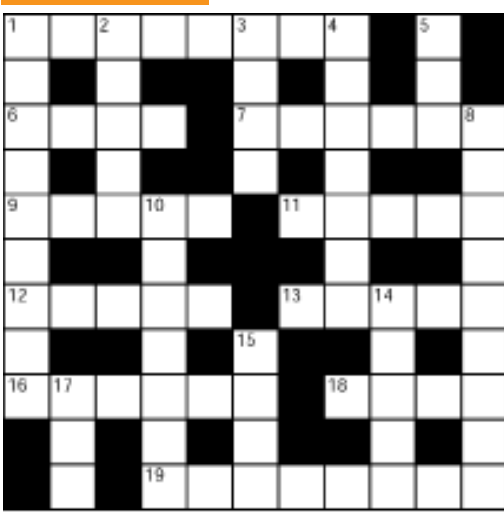
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



### CROSSWORD



### SUDOKU

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

#### Yesterday's solution

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

#### Rules

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

#### ACROSS

- Train stops
- Tumble over and over
- Young cows
- A tall type of building
- A feeling of rage
- Bees make this
- One third of twenty-one
- Instructions for cake making
- The part along the side or end of something
- Always ready to give away or share what you have

#### DOWN

- A thing with handles for carrying an injured person
- Let
- Say this when you get hurt

#### 4 Complete quiet

- Tell a fib
- People unknown to you
- The late part of the day
- A machine that can record television programmes
- A type of blood vessel
- Pixie





# ‘It still feels so dark when I recall assault on my husband’



**K**onda Murali, a former Congress MLC from Warangal, Telangana, spoke about the assassination attempt on his life 30 years ago and how he survived despite being shot 47 times. He was speaking at the launch of Ram Gopal Varma’s *Konda*, a biopic

Konda Murali’s wife, four-term former MLA Konda Surekha, was a member of the Congress before joining the YSR Congress and later switching to the TRS. Surekha lost the 2018 Telangana Assembly election while running on a TRS ticket, and has since returned to the Congress. The biopic’s main characters are Konda Murali and Surekha, for whom RGV spent 75 days in Warangal. Recalling the assassination attempt on him 30 years ago on January 26, Murali said, “Despite 47 bullets being pumped into my body, I survived the attempt, not for my family but for my people.” The trailer for Ram Gopal Varma’s latest directorial — *Konda* was unveiled at an event held on Wednesday. Billed to be the biopic of Konda Murali and Konda Surekha, the duo recalls the terrific attacks they had faced in their lives. Murali lauded Ram Gopal Varma

for his dedication, as he was in Warangal for more than 75 days just to shoot the movie *Konda*. “I narrated a few things in my life. Ram Gopal Varma researched and went on, to speak with several native folks to know more about my past and how I survived the most brutal attack,” Murali said. Surekha said, “The trailer has reminded me of the dark days when we faced the toughest challenges in life.” “The day on which my husband was subjected to an assault, there was blood everywhere. As I recall the incident, it still feels so dark. I was shell-shocked as I saw my husband in a blood pool,” Surekha said. *Konda* stars Irra Mor, who has played Surekha, while actors Prudhvijay, Parvathi Arun, Prashanth, LB Sriram, Tulasi, Jabardasth Ram Prasad, Abhilash Chowdhary, and others appear in important roles.



## Naga Chaitanya in talks to make OTT debut

sons. Other sources also report that the story of this much-hyped series revolves around time travel and each season will have around 8-10 episodes. While the team is yet to make an official announcement, there is so much anticipation around this venture. Chaitanya and Vikram Kumar, who are currently busy shooting for their upcoming movie *Thank You*, will soon start working on the other pre-production works so as to kick-start the series.

as he is also working on his physical appearance for the much-hyped web series. Inside talks suggest that Chaitanya will be seen in a role with multi-layered idiosyncrasy, while he plays a journalist. Now, in the talks is Chaitanya’s makeover, which he has been preparing to bring in, for the role in the web series. Chaitanya will be seen romancing Priya Bhavani Shankar, while the web series will have three sea-

# A yoga retreat was the best gift I could give to myself: Vijay Varma



**P**ost a year of hectic schedules, Vijay Varma on his trip to Rishikesh, “I feel it was much needed. A yoga retreat was the best gift I could give to myself post all the covid distress,” says Vijay Varma. All set to steal the show with an interesting lineup of projects, Vijay Varma has been busy with hectic shoot schedules all of last year and has now taken a short break to rejuvenate at a yoga retreat in Rishikesh post his recovery from Covid. Talking about his health holiday, Vijay says, “After a very busy year of shoots, I took this trip to Rishikesh which I feel was much needed. I am mesmerised by the peace and calm here. A yoga retreat was the best gift I could give to myself post all the covid distress. After almost 2 years I had a chance to just be spontaneous, and I am really enjoying using this break to recharge and restore my body and to just spend time with myself before getting back into the hectic schedules and life.” We have been seeing fun pictures of the actor across social media from Rishikesh where he was seen attending the evening *Aarti* and enjoying the winters of Rishikesh. After a year packed with back to back shoot schedules in Benaras, Mumbai and Rajasthan, the actor is finally taking this much deserved break. On the work front, the actor has an interesting lineup of projects including, *Darlings* with Alia Bhatt, *Fallen* with Sonakshi Sinha, *Hurdang* with Nushrratt Bharuccha and Sunny Kaushal as well as Viacom’s untitled project by Sumit Saxena.

# Aadavaallu Meeku Johaarlu to release on Feb 25



**Y**oung and happening hero Sharwanand is presently starring in a wholesome family entertainer *Aadavaallu Meeku Johaarlu* being directed by Tirumala Kishore under Sudhakar Cherukuri’s Sri Lakshmi Venkateswara Cinemas banner with the most sought-after actress Rashmika Mandanna playing the female lead. The film’s entire shooting has been wrapped

*Johaarlu* marks Sharwanand’s first collaboration with Rashmika Mandanna and Tirumala Kishore. Sharwanand plays a guy next door kind of role, while Rashmika Mandanna will be seen in a meaty role. The title itself suggests the importance of female characters in the movie. Khushbu, Radhika Sarathkumar and Urvashi are playing important roles in the film that also features some stellar cast. Sudhakar Cherukuri is pro-

ducing the film on grand scale with rich production values. Rockstar Devi Sri Prasad renders soundtrack for the movie. Popular cinematographer Sujith Sarang is handling cinematography, while Sreekar Prasad who won several national awards is the editor.



# Radhe Shyam releasing in March?

**T**he makers of the Prabhas and Pooja Hegde starrer *Radhe Shyam* seem to have finalised a new release date for the film and are expected to announce it shortly. The creators are considering holding a special promotional event once again in order to rekindle interest in this romance drama *Radhe Shyam* and rekindle the enthusiasm, which has certainly

piqued the interest of the viewers. According to sources, the film *Radhe Shyam* will be released in the first part of March. We hear that the news of the release date for *Radhe Shyam* will be a Valentine’s Day gift for Prabhas’ fans. If everything goes as planned, Prabhas and Pooja Hegde’s *Radhe Shyam*’s new release date announcement poster would be presented on February 14, Valentine’s Day.

# Shruti Haasan as Aadya

**O**n the occasion of Shruti Haasan’s birthday on Friday, the makers of her upcoming film *Salaar* released a special birthday poster, revealing that she will play Aadya in this Prabhas’ film. On Shruti Haasan’s birthday, the makers released a special poster introducing her character from the upcoming pan-India film *Salaar*, which is moving at a rapid speed under the direction of Prashanth Neel of *KGF* fame. In the picture, she is seen wearing a modest kurta and looking stunning. *Salaar* is an action drama that will be shot in Telugu and Kannada simultaneously and dubbed into Hindi, Tamil, and Malayalam. Vijay Kiragandur’s Hombale Films is producing the Prabhas and Shruti starring, while Ravi Basur is composing the music.



## Sree Vishnu mesmerises with his looks in Bhala Thandanana

teaser gives a glimpse into the interesting political thriller that is up for release in the coming days. As it seems to be a story that revolves around

Reddy, Adarsh Balakrishna, Satya, Posani Krishna Murali, and others have played key roles. *Bhala Thandanana* is produced by Rajani Korrapati under Vaaraahi Chala Chitram. The movie is slated for a February 2022 release.

**A**ctor Nani took to his social media handles to release the teaser of Sree Vishnu’s upcoming political thriller titled *Bhala Thandanana*. “Happy to launch the teaser of #BhalaThandanana A very talented team :) Wish you guys a huge success,” the *Shyam Singha Roy* actor wrote, as he shared the *Bhala Thandanana* teaser. The *Bhala Thandanana* teaser features Sree Vishnu in a boy-next-door *avatar*, while he showcases his other side of a revolutionary young man who goes against a corrupt political leader. Directed by Chaitanya Dantuluri, the

