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RASHMIKA'S
PERFORMANCE IN
PUSHPA GETS HER
LEAD ROLE IN
ANIMAL!

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BAN ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC KICKS IN FROM TODAY

As the ban on certain single-use plastic items kicks in from Friday, state governments will initiate an enforcement campaign and close down units engaging in production, distribution, stocking and sale of such items, Union Environment ministry officials said. Violation of the ban will invite punitive action, including a fine or a jail term or both, detailed under Section 15 of the Environment Protection Act (EPA) and under bylaws of respective municipal corporations, they said. For effective enforcement of the ban, national and state-level control rooms have been set up and special enforcement teams formed to check illegal manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of banned SUP items, officials in the ministry said.

INDIA DOMINATES UK IMMIGRATION SYSTEM: PRITI PATEL

India is the leading nationality for skilled workers and students coming to the UK and therefore immigration should be dis-aggregated from the wider free trade agreement (FTA), UK Home Secretary Priti Patel said on Thursday. We are going to have the highest number of Indian students come to the UK for the new semester year. India dominates our immigration system, she said. Free trade agreements, FTAs, are absolutely there for trade purposes. When it comes to people to people movement or migration, they should not necessarily be in trade agreements," she said.

TOP RUSSIAN OFFICIAL: WESTERN SANCTIONS COULD BE CASUS BELLI

A senior Russian official warned Thursday that Moscow could see Western sanctions as a cause for war. Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy secretary of Russia's Security Council chaired by President Vladimir Putin, denounced the Western restrictions as boorish and cynical and noted that they border on economic war. Under certain circumstances, such hostile measures could be perceived as an act of international aggression, or even as a casus belli, the Latin term for cause of war, Medvedev said in a speech at a legal forum. In response to them a state receives the right for individual and collective defense.

CRYPTO RULES TO MAKE EUROPE A GLOBAL LEADER AS PRICES PLUNGE

Europe prepared to lead the world in regulating the freewheeling cryptocurrency industry at a time when prices have plunged, wiping out fortunes, fueling skepticism and sparking calls for tighter scrutiny. The European Union took a first step late Wednesday by agreeing on new rules subjecting cryptocurrency transfers to the same money-laundering rules as traditional banking transfers. A much bigger move was expected as EU negotiators hammer out the final details late Thursday on a sweeping package of crypto regulations for the bloc's 27 nations, known as Markets in Crypto Assets, or MiCA.

AP tops in biz reforms prescribed by Centre

● Pips States like Gujarat, Tamil Nadu & Telangana

SNV SUDHIR
■ VIJAYAWADA

Prompt clearance of industry approvals, handholding of investors, mapping recommendations to departments, and appointing nodal officers are a few of the many efforts by the State Industries Department as Andhra Pradesh stood top among all the states in the country in the implementation of the Centre's Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) prescribed by the Centre.

In the top achievers' category, Andhra Pradesh scored the highest 97.89 percentage points. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday announced the assessment of States/UTs under the Business Reforms Action Plan (BRAP) 2020, the 5th edition of the BRAP exercise.

Andhra Pradesh, along with

THE TOP ACHIEVERS	
AP scored the highest	While Gujarat scored
97.89% points	97.77% points
Tamil Nadu's score stood at	96.97% points
94.86% points	Telangana scored

Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana have been declared the 'Top Achievers' based on the implementation of the Business Reforms Action Plan by the Centre on Thursday. While Gujarat scored 97.77 percentage points, Tamil

Nadu's score stood at 96.97 percentage points and the neighbouring Telangana scored 94.86 percentage points.

The BRAP 2020 includes 301 reform points covering 15 business regulatory areas such as Access to Information, Single Window System, Labour, Environment, Land Administration & Transfer of Land and Property, Utility Permits, and others.

As many as 118 new reforms were included to further augment the reform process. Sectoral reforms with 72 action points spread across nine sectors, namely, Trade License, Healthcare, Legal Metrology, Cinema Halls, Hospitality, Fire NOC, Telecom, Movie Shooting and Tourism were introduced for the first time to expand the scope of the reform agenda.

2

APSRTC hikes bus fares via diesel cess

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Placing a fresh burden on commuters, the APSRTC once again hiked the bus fares by levying an additional cess ranging from Rs 5 to Rs 60 on Thursday on various bus services to cover the huge losses on account of the steep increase in the price of diesel. The new fares will come into effect on July 1 (Friday).

On April 13 this year, the APSRTC levied a diesel cess of Rs 2 to Rs 10 per passenger. The diesel price was Rs 107 a litre on April 13, which now went up to Rs 131.

The corporation is spending Rs 2.50 crore additionally per day because of the hike in diesel price. "To cover this, we have decided to levy a further cess to cover the losses," APSRTC chairman A Mallikarjuna Reddy and Managing Director Ch Dwaraka Tirumala Rao said in a release here.

The enhanced fare on the account of the fresh diesel cess would come into force from July 1, they said.

City bus services in Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam have been spared from the extra levy, but stu-



- City bus charges spared but monthly student bus pass price raised from the present Rs 155 to Rs 300
- Passengers travelling from Vja to Hyd will have to spend Rs 60 more and those travelling to Vizag Rs 80 more

As per the new fuel cess, there is no fuel cess up to 30 km in Palle Velugu and Express buses, up to 25 km in Ultra Palle Velugu buses, up to 20 km in Ultra Deluxe services, up to 55 km in Super Luxury and Amaravati services, up to 35 km in Indra and Garuda and Metro services. Minimum fuel cess is Rs10 in Palle Velugu and Ultra Pallevelugu buses, Rs 20 in Express services, Rs.25 in Ultra Deluxe services, Rs 40 in Super Luxury services, Rs 50 in Metro Deluxe AC, Garuda, Indra, Amaravati, Dolphin Cruise and Night Riders services. The minimum fuel cess is Rs 80 in Night Rider and Vennela Sleeper services.

dent bus pass price has been increased to Rs 300 per month from the present Rs 155 per month.

"We are enhancing the diesel cess only under inevitable circumstances due to the rising price of fuel. This is not a burden on the passengers but only on diesel," they claimed.

Officials of APSRTC note that the public transporter suffered a revenue loss of a whopping Rs 5,680 crore in the last two years

because of Covid-19.

Diesel cess has now been enhanced on a pro rata basis and the passenger fares will accordingly go up. For the first 35 km in rural 'Palle Velugu' services, there would be no additional cess. In long-distance luxury services too additional cess would be levied only after 55 km.

Accordingly, each passenger travelling to Hyderabad from Vijayawada will have to pay an

additional Rs 60 and to Visakhapatnam Rs 80 due to increase in diesel cess, a senior RTC official said.

The additional diesel cess could help the corporation garner an extra revenue of Rs 1,500 crore per annum, he added.

"Even after levying the cess, we don't even break even. Actually we need to increase ticket price by 32 per cent to tide over the losses," the official pointed out.

5 women burnt alive as HT wire falls on auto

PNS ■ ANANTAPUR

Five agricultural labourers, all women, were burnt alive and three others were injured when a High Tension (HT) wire got snapped and fell on the auto-rickshaw in which they were going to a field for work at Chilakondayyapalli village in Tadipatri mandal of Sri Satya Sai district in Andhra Pradesh on Thursday.

DSP Ramakanth told the media that 12 agricultural labourers were going to a field in the ill-fated auto-rickshaw. An 11 KV High Tension wire got snapped and fell on the auto-rickshaw, resulting in them being electrocuted. Flames engulfed the vehicle in which five persons were charred alive.

The deceased were identified as Kumari (35), Ratnam (35),



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Ramulamma (35), Lakshmi Devi (32), and Kantham (32). The condition of one of the injured, Lakhmi, is said to be critical. The eyewitness told the media that the deceased did not find time to escape as flames engulfed the ill-

fated vehicles within minutes.

APSPDCL CM Harinath Rao told the media that a 'squirrel' climbed the High Tension wire and it led to the short circuit, resulting in the High Tension wire getting snapped and falling on the auto-

rickshaw. He said that an inquiry would be conducted by Anantapur SE into the accident. The APSPD-CL would also extend Rs 5 lakh compensation to the bereaved families, the CMD said. Hindupur MP Gorantla Madhav and TDP leader Paritala Sriram rushed to the accident site and learned the details from the officials.

Expressing shock and grief over the accident, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy announced Rs 10 lakh ex gratia to the families of each of the victims.

The officials informed CM, who is presently away in Paris, about the ghastly accident. The CM immediately directed the officials to provide the best treatment to the injured.

2



Amanchi files quash petition in HC

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former MLA and YSRCP leader Amanchi Krishna Mohan on Thursday filed a petition in the AP High Court seeking to quash the FIR filed against him by the CBI in a case of indecent remarks against judges on social media.

Krishna Mohan's counsel N Niranjan Reddy had requested that the High Court directed the CBI not to take further action in the case. The High Court had asked the CBI to file a counter and posted the next hearing after two weeks. Krishna Mohan had earlier appeared before the CBI in the same case at Vizag.

On the directions of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, the CBI had registered a case on November 11, 2020, against 16 accused and it took over the investigation of 12 FIRs from the state Crime Investigation Department (CID).

It was alleged that the accused were intentionally targeting the judiciary and made derogatory posts on social media platforms against judges following some court verdicts delivered by the Judges of the High Court.

Naidu waging fraudulent war to regain power, says Sajjala

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) president N Chandrababu Naidu is waging a fraudulent war against the government to regain power, Government Advisor (Public Affairs) Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy has said.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, he said that the YSRCP government is moving ahead by winning people's hearts with transparent and welfare governance. Ramakrishna Reddy said that the Opposition leader is surviving chiefly with his conspiracies and a section of media, spreading false propaganda to mislead the public.

He said that TDP had already lost people's trust as Naidu failed to fulfil the poll promises during his term in 2014 and thus failed as a political party. He recalled that Chandrababu Naidu had taken the outstanding loans and pending bills to over Rs 4 lakh crore in his five-year rule ruining the State finances without having any responsibility towards the people.

In regard to CRDA auctioning lands to raise funds for taking up development works in Amaravati, he said that the opposition leaders are unnecessarily creating havoc when even the previous government had gone auctioning lands to pool funds.

Asserting that the current government has more commitment to developing the Amaravati region, he recalled the increase of the annuity amount and period to 15 years, along with developmental works like



TDP has already lost people's trust as Naidu failed to fulfil the poll promises during his previous term and thus failed as a political party. Chandrababu Naidu had taken the outstanding loans and pending bills to over Rs 4 lakh cr in his five-year rule ruining the State finances without having any responsibility towards the people

widening Karakatta Road. Hitting back at the Opposition over malicious propaganda on alcohol, Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy said that it was Chandrababu Naidu who gave permission to the distilleries and is now intentionally slinging mud on YSRCP. He said that the current government did not permit any new distilleries.

On this occasion, he said the Chief Minister had fulfilled more than 90 per cent of the promises in the manifesto, while Chandrababu Naidu had failed to keep even a single promise.

2

Ex, sitting MPs' train travel bill Rs 62 cr in 5 yrs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Free train travels of sitting and former Lok Sabha members over the past five years have cost the exchequer Rs 62 crore, which included nearly Rs 2.5 crore in the pandemic-hit 2020-21, according to information revealed under the RTI Act.

While sitting MPs are entitled to use the railways' first class air-conditioned or executive class for free, their spouses too can avail free travel under certain conditions. Former MPs are also entitled to travel in any train in AC-2 tier along with a companion or in AC-1 if alone.

2



TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:
Tithi: Dvitiya: Jun 30 10:49 AM to Jul 01 01:09 PM
Tritiya: Jul 01 01:09 PM to Jul 02 03:17 PM

Nakshatram:
Pushya: Jul 01 01:07 AM to Jul 02 03:56 AM
Ashlesha: Jul 02 03:56 AM to Jul 03 06:30 AM

Rahukalam: 10:42 AM to 12:20 PM
Yamagandam: 3:35 PM to 5:13 PM
Varjyam: 06:06 PM to 07:52 PM
Gulika: 7:26 AM to 9:04 AM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy
Temp: 36°C
Humidity: 70%
Sunrise: 5:38 AM
Sunset: 6:44 PM



Updated: JUNE 30, 2022 5:00 PM

Shinde takes oath as CM, Fadnavis as his deputy

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde was on Thursday sworn in as the 20th chief minister of Maharashtra, while BJP stalwart Devendra Fadnavis took oath as the deputy chief minister, capping a day of surprises and hectic political activities, just 24 hours after the collapse of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

In a surprise move, Fadnavis announced in the evening that Shinde, who led the rebellion in the Shiv Sena, will be the new chief

'MAHA' TWIST

minister, while he himself will be out of the new government, only to change his stand and become the deputy CM following prodding from his party's central leadership.

Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari administered the oath of office to Shinde and his deputy Fadnavis at the Raj Bhavan in South Mumbai shortly after 7.30 pm.

Shinde, a four-time MLA, began oath taking by paying tributes to late Shiv Sena leaders Bal

Thackeray and Anand Dighe, his political mentor in Thane district.

His supporters shouted slogans hailing Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Sena founder Thackeray and Dighe as he finished taking the oath. Earlier, BJP president J P Nadda said Fadnavis would be part of the new Maharashtra cabinet led by Shinde, minutes after Fadnavis announced he will not be in the government.

"Development of the state is my priority. I will take all sections of society along with me," Shinde said after the ceremony.

PM to unveil Alluri statue in Bhimavaram on July 4

□ Special CS Rajat Bhargava inspects arrangements for Modi's visit

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Special Chief Secretary Rajat Bhargava (Tourism and Culture) on Thursday inspected the arrangements for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bhimavaram town in Andhra Pradesh on July 4, to unveil the statue of legendary freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav.

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswa Bhushan Harichandan, Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, Union Tourism and Culture Minister G Kishan

Reddy and others will attend the event.

Rajat Bhargava said arrangements were in full swing for the Prime Minister's visit.

Four helipads have been readied while the Special Protection Group personnel were taking care of security measures, he added.

The Prime Minister will reach Vijayawada airport at Gannavaram by a special flight from Hyderabad and fly by hel-



icopter to Bhimavaram in West Godavari district.

From 11 am to 12.15 pm, Modi will take part in the commemoration ceremony of the 125th birth anniversary of Alluri Sitarama Raju.

The Prime Minister will unveil a 30-ft bronze statue in Bhimavaram Park and address a public meeting.

He will fly back to New Delhi from Vijayawada airport at 1.10

pm, according to the tentative schedule released by the Prime Minister's Office.

Union Minister for Tourism and Culture G Kishan Reddy sent an invitation to Telugu Desam chief N Chandrababu Naidu to attend the event. Kishan Reddy also spoke to Chandrababu over phone and the latter informed that TDP state president K Atchannaidu would represent him at the event.

The Union Minister also invited film star and former Union Minister K Chiranjeevi to Alluri's 125th birth anniversary celebrations.



5-day week for AP Sectt staff extended for one more year

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh government on Thursday extended the five-day working week for a further period of one year, till June 27, 2023.

Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma issued an order to this effect on the representation submitted by the AP Secretariat Association.

The five-day week would be applicable to employees of AP Secretariat, Heads of Departments and state-owned corporations, with working hours from 10 am to 5.30 pm.

The previous Chandrababu Naidu government introduced the five-day week in June



The previous Chandrababu Naidu government introduced the five-day week in June 2016 following the relocation of offices from Hyderabad to AP's new capital Amaravati. That was being extended every year as the new capital has not fully developed and the employees could not settle in

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fully developed and the employees could not settle in.

There was uncertainty this year on whether or not the government would extend the five-day week as relevant order was not issued even after the lapse of the one-year period. But finally, the extension order was issued with a three-day delay.

Meanwhile, confusion prevailed among the government employees as the General Administration Department (GAD) issued a note on Wednesday asking them to vacate by June 30 the flats allotted to them as transit accommodation.

Since 2016, when they first moved in from Hyderabad,

the state government leased private flats at various locations and provided them as free transit accommodation to men and women employees.

In April this year, the GAD extended the free accommodation by two months only.

On Wednesday, GAD Special Chief Secretary K Praveen Kumar issued an official note asking the employees to vacate the accommodation today "in good condition", failing which the employees concerned would be liable for damages. In the eleventh hour, however, the Chief Minister's Office intervened and issued another note saying the free transit accommodation would be extended till August 31.

Engineer lands in ACB net

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials caught E Surendra Babu, Superintendent Engineer at the Office of the Municipal Corporation, Kurnool, red-handed while accepting a bribe on Thursday.

A complaint had been lodged by P Srinivasa Reddy, Krishna Nagar, Hyderabad, with the DSP, ACB, Kurnool, stating that Surendra Babu demanded Rs 35,00,000 as a bribe for sanctioning the final contract bill for Rs 1,52,00,000 under AMRUT scheme.

Subsequently, a trap was laid by the ACB officials and the officer was nabbed while he was accepting Rs 15,00,000 under Krishna Nagar Flyover in Kurnool town. Searches were conducted in his office as well as residence.

The accused officer was arrested and produced before the Court for SPE & ACB Cases, Kurnool.

PSLV injects three Singapore satellites in successful mission

AP ■ SRIHARIKOTA

The Indian Space Resarch Organisation (ISRO) on Thursday evening successfully launched PSLV-C53 with three Singapore satellites onboard. In a post-launch release, ISRO said, this is the 55th mission of PSLV, oftendescrbed as ISRO's trusted workhorse and the 15th one using the PSLV-Core Alone variant.

In its second successful mission within a week, ISRO launched three foreign satellites in precise orbit from the spacecraft here on Thursday.

PSLV-C53 is the second dedicated commercial mission of New Space India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of ISRO. It had on June 23 launched GSAT-24 in its first "demand-driven" communication satellite mission post space sector reforms, leasing the entire capacity on board to Direct-to-Home (DTH) service provider Tata Play.

The four-stage, 44.4 metre tall PSLV-C53 that blasted off from the second launch pad of Satish Dhawan Space Centre and placed the three Singapore satellites—DS-EO, NeuSAR and SCOOB-1 in intended orbit. ISRO Chairman S Somanath confirmed that the mission achieved its intended objective, saying the rocket placed the three customer satellites "in the precise orbit of 570 km with a 10 degree inclination" and congratulated NSIL for accomplishing "yet another major mission this month itself," the earlier one being the communication satellite GSAT-24 launch (from Kourou in French Guiana) last week.

"With today's mission, all these three satellites are placed

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in the right orbit," he said. Mission Director SR Biju described the launch as "wonderful."

Earlier, the launch vehicle lifted off at 6.02 PM at the end of the 25-hour countdown.

This is the 55th mission of PSLV, often described as ISRO's trusted workhorse and the 15th one using the PSLV-Core Alone variant. It also marks the 16th PSLV launch from the second launch pad.

The mission, which is designed to orbit DS-EO satellite along with two other co-passenger satellites from ST Electronics, Singapore, proposes to demonstrate the utilisation of the spent upper stage of the launch vehicle as a stabilised platform for scientific payloads subsequent to the separation of the satellites, ISRO said.

DS-EO is a 365 kg satellite while NeuSAR weighs 155 kg. Both belong to Singapore and are built by Starec Initiative of the Republic of Korea, while the third satellite is a 2.8 kg SCOOB-1 of + Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore. PSLV Orbital Experimental Module (POEM) DS-EO carries an Electro-Optic, multi-spectral-payload that will provide full colour images for land classification, and serving Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief needs. NeuSAR

is Singapore's first small commercial satellite carrying a SAR payload, which is capable of providing images in day and night and under all weather conditions.

SCOOB-1 is the first in the Student Satellite Series (S3-I), a hands-on student training programme from the Satellite Research Centre (SaRC) at Singapore's NTU School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering. The POEM activity performs in-orbit scientific experiments using the spent PS4 stage as an orbital platform, ISRO said. It is the first time that the PS4 stage would orbit the earth as a stabilised platform, Somanath said.

Attitude stabilisation is achieved using a dedicated NGC system, it said. POEM derives the power from the solar panels mounted around the PS4 tank and a Li Ion battery. POEM carries six payloads including two from Indian Space Start-ups M/s Digantara and M/s Dhruva Space, enabled through IN-SPACE and NSIL.

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan and Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy hailed the launch of PSLV C-53 and successfully placing three commercial satellites from Singapore into orbit on Thursday, from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, SHAR, Sriharikota.

Hyd to host first Formula E Race on Feb 11

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad E-Prix has been given the green light. The prestigious sports car event, 'Formula-E', will be held in the heart of the city.

The World Motor Sports Federation on Wednesday officially announced that the 'Formula E-Race' Championship will be held in Hyderabad on February 11, 2023.

With this, Hyderabad will be the venue for one more global event and is going to be the venue for car races. The Telangana Government is making arrangements for this event. The announcement was made while revealing the season 9 calendar of the championship for 2023. Hyderabad will be the venue for the fourth race of the season.

Final version of BRAP 2020-21 framework released in Nov 2020

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has released the final version of the BRAP 2020-21 reform framework on November 2, 2020, for the states to implement.

The DPIIT has recommended 301 reforms as a part of SRAP 2020. The 301 reforms of SRAP 2021 are categorised into 'General'(197) and 'Specific'(104) for the purpose of the survey. The specific reforms are the ones where users can be identified and subsequently respond to the survey such as Factory licenses etc. The 'General Reforms' are the reforms intended to facilitate services such as the Public

Service Guarantee Act etc. Each specific reform has points allotted and the total mark that can be scored in the feedback survey is 534. To score high, the State government had also conducted many outreach activities to understand the concerns faced by industrialists during the setting up and operationalisation of their industry. Interactive workshops by District Collectors with local entrepreneurs to discuss various issues concerning the local industry and promote EODB reforms and workshops by departmental teams especially the Town Planning, and Pollution Control Board were also held.

"During the interactive meetings, the industry participants

raised various issues faced by them in the forum. The Special Chief Secretary, Industries and Commerce department along with the officials responded to their issues and gave directions to departmental officers to immediately resolve the issues," said a senior official of the State Industries Department.

The government had also conducted capacity-building of officers to enable them to interact with the industrialists and other users and inform them about EoDB reforms undertaken. All the officers were not only trained on respective departmental reforms but also on all the other reforms to appreciate the EoDB environment.

Union Min performs puja at Vemulavada

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRCILLA

Union Minister of State for Power and Heavy Industry Krishan Pal Gurjar on Thursday offered prayers at the Vemulavada Rajarajeswara Swamy temple, a pilgrimage centre that earned the reputation of the Varansasi of the South.

Amidst chanting of Vedic hymns the temple priests have extended traditional welcome to the Union Minister as per the temple rituals.

DGP urged to act against soil mafia

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP former MLA T. Sravan Kumar on Thursday urged the DGP of AP to take stern action against the soil mafia for attacking TDP leader Dhulipalla Narendra in Pedakakani.

In a letter to the DGP here, Sravan Kumar stressed the need for preventing indiscriminate digging of canals and ponds all over the State. The ruling YSRCP leaders

were giving all sorts of indirect support to the soil mafia.

The TDP leader said that the illegal soil digging has gone to extremes because of a lack of action from the police and the concerned departments. The mafia gangs were colluding with the ruling party leaders and getting support from the police.

Sravan Kumar told the DGP that there was a need to keep a vigil on

the unlawful digging going on in the drinking water tank at Anumarlapudi village in Pedakakani mandal of Guntur district. The soil mafia along with the ruling YCP goondas had attacked Narendra and they had broken the window panes of his car.

The TDP leader recalled how Narendra gave a call for a peaceful meeting at Anumarlapudi tank on June 20, 2022. But, over 450 police

arrived there to obstruct the peaceful protest. This was despite the constitution providing the right to hold meetings without holding any weapons as Article 19(1)(b).

Sravan Kumar said that the natural resources should have to be protected for future generations. The DGP should inquire into the indiscriminate digging by the soil mafia and take preventive action against this.

5 women workers burnt alive as...

Continued from Page 1

Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan expressed anguish over the loss of lives in the accident. He directed the district administration to provide better medical care to those injured in the incident. The Governor offered his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members. Vice-president M Venkaiah Naidu also expressed shock and grief over the incident and conveyed sympathies to the bereaved families.

TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu, state president K Atchannaidu, and MLC Nara Lokesh also expressed shock and grief over the incident

Meanwhile, in a statement

here on Thursday, Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan said the death of five women labourers caused him anguish and termed the incident as heart-wrenching.

All the deceased were mouth to existing families and the government should extend financial help to the bereaved families. Pawan Kalyan demanded that the government order an inquiry into the accident. The government is hiking power tariffs but not evincing interest in maintaining quality standards on the High Tension electric lines, he criticised.

In many places, electric poles are seen tilting to a side precariously but no action was taken.

Ex, sitting MPs' train travel bill Rs 62 crore in 5 years

Continued from Page 1

In the response to a Right to Information query filed by Madhya Pradesh-based Chandra Shekhar Gaur, the Lok Sabha Secretariat said it has received a bill of Rs 35.21 crore from the Railways for the travel of sitting MPs and Rs 26.82 crore for former MPs during 2017-2018 to 2021-22.

According to the response, the MPs and ex-MPs also used the Railway passes even during the pandemic-hit year of 2020-21 when their bill was Rs 1.29 crore and Rs 1.18 crore, respectively.

The Railways' pay and accounts department forwards the bills to the LS Secretariat for processing.

The Railways has recently put on hold an array of concessions it offered to certain categories of passengers including senior citizens.

While there was subdued anger among certain sections over the move, the discontinuation of the subsidy given to senior citizens has drawn a lot of ire.

According to official data, between March 20, 2020 and March 31, 2022, the Railways did not offer concessions to 7.31 crore senior citizen travellers. These included 4.46 crore males over the age of 60, and 2.84 crore females over 58 and 8,310 transgender people.

UoH MoU with ICAR-NRCM, Elvikon

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The city's Institution of Eminence, University of Hyderabad (UoH), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Research Centre on Meat (ICAR-NRCM) and Elvikon India.

The main objective of the collaboration is to digitize the details of the best packaged foods, especially meat products, thereby addressing not only the meat waste but also increasing food safety for consumption. The current proposal by an industry-academia consortium is to develop a smart sensor by integrating hardware components and an application for providing real-time quality information to consumers.

Elvikon (industry partner) will provide sensor technology and knowhow, formulation of the sensor ink and integration of hardware components and make the demonstrator prototype, while the academic partner, UoH finalizes the specifications required for hardware integration of the smart sensor, and provide customized mobile APP for digitalization of the best before date.

Jain Guru Vaibhav Ratna Vijay to participate in Chaturmasa Deeksha

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

All arrangements are being made for the upcoming Chaturmasa Deeksha to be held by the members of Sambhavnath Rajender Suri Jain Shwetambara Trust, Vijayawada, on July 3. Jain Guru Jayant Sen Sureshwar Maharaj's disciple Vaibhav Ratna Vijay will be welcomed to take part in the Chaturmasa Deeksha, said Trust president Raju Solanki, secretary Narendra and treasurer Rikab Chand Jain here on Thursday.

Speaking to media persons at the Trust office in One-Town, the Trust members said that special arrangements were being made to welcome the Jain Guru on the special occasion. They said that the Jain guru would be brought to the temple in a huge procession from Ratham Centre through Brahmama Veethi, Park Road, BRP Road and RR Apparao Street. Horses and bullock



carts would be roped in and a large number of Jains would participate in the procession.

The members said that along with Guru Vaibhav Ratna Vijay,

three other gurus would come and stay in the city for four months and participate in various puja activities. The gurus will explain the non-violence practised by the Jains.

Trust members Narendra Kumar Solanki, Devvar Chand Ballar, Jayanti Lal Sanghvi, Manish, Mafat Lal and others unveiled a wall poster.

Inebriated man kills son-in-law

PNS ■ MEDAK

In a horrific incident, a man under the influence of alcohol allegedly killed his son-in-law at Kothapalle village under Haveli Ghanpur mandal in the district.

According to police, Mogulla Sailu gave his daughter in marriage to Nithin (35). Nithin hailed from Latur in Maharashtra.

Nithin, who was eking out a living by doing business at Kamareddy. He went to his father's-in-law house at Kothapalle village for celebrating a festival. As Nithin's wife and daughter went for shopping, Nithin and his father-in-law had drinks. As a drunken brawl flared, they started fighting with each other.

The father-in-law, the police said, had attacked Nithin with a stick and it resulted in the death of the latter. The village sarpanch took him to Medak government hospital. On the advice of doctors, he was rushed to Gandhi Hospital in Hyderabad where he died while undergoing treatment.

Naidu waging...

Continued from Page 1

He opined that a section of the media had been preparing TDP's agenda and thus published articles like the government taking a u-turn on distributing laptops, and withdrawing GFP money. He clarified that providing laptops was only an option instead of 'Amma Vodi'. However, it is providing tabs along with 'Amma Vodi'.

He wondered if any government could take Rs 800 crore without any records and stated that the GFP issue had occurred due to a technical glitch.



ANDHRA PRADESH INDUSTRIAL INFRASTRUCTURE CORPORATION LIMITED

(An under taking of A.P. Govt.)

Email ID: chiefengineer2-ap@apic.in, sv.prasadnao@gov.in

's PROCUREMENT NOTICE

No. 10/CE-APIIC/2022-23 Dt: 29.06.2022

Chief Engineer-II/APIIC Ltd., Mangalagiri invites bid for the following work:

Tender Notice No: 10 Invitation for Expression of Interest for Operation & Maintenance of YSR Executive Centre at Kopparthi, Y.S.R Kadapa District in Andhra Pradesh. **Date of publication: 01.07.2022**

Last date & Time for submission of proposal: **14.07.2022 upto 3.00 PM.**

The details of tender notice and bid document can be downloaded from website: **www.apic.in** (or) **http://apic.in/downloads-tenders/**

Sd/- Chief Engineer-II

R.O.No: 1153PPIC/ADVT/11/2021-22, Dt: 30.06.2022

APIIC Ltd, Mangalagiri.

Jagan mortgaging State's interests, says Yanamala

The TDP leader finds fault with CM for lending unconditional support to NDA's Presidential candidate

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP politburo member Yanamala Ramakrishnudu on Thursday slammed the YSRCP government for not making any effort to protect the AP interests with regard to payments of GST compensation by the Centre.

Ramakrishnudu said that except for Andhra Pradesh, all other States sought an extension of GST compensation for five more years in the 47th GST Council meeting held in Chandigarh.

In a statement here, the TDP leader expressed concern that Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy was mortgaging the AP interests just for the sake of his illegal assets cases. Even small states like Puducherry and Jharkhand raised their voice over the GST compensation. They had questioned the Centre.

Ramakrishnudu said that it was provided in the GST Act



“Except for Andhra Pradesh, all other States sought an extension of GST compensation for five more years in the 47th GST Council meeting held in Chandigarh.”

itself to pay some portion of income to make up for losses to the States that would suffer losses due to over 17 types of taxes going into the hands of the Centre in GST. The YSRCP Government in AP was not in a position to ask for the benefits that were due to it as per the laws.

The TDP leader accused the Jagan regime of giving unconditional support to the Central government in the Presidential election. It was a big opportunity to get Special

Status for the State but the YSRCP regime failed to use it. The CM had destroyed the golden future of the AP youth.

Ramakrishnudu criticised that the YSRCP was extending support to the Centre though the State was suffering huge losses financially. The AP government had failed to prevent the financial burdens on the people. The Centre took decisions at the GST Council that would put unbearable burdens on the people. But still, the YSRCP government gave its support and this was condemnable.

The TDP leader said that in

the compensation aspect, AP's loss would be more than its gain. The AP government should present before the public the details of its consent report to the GST Council. The YSRCP regime had miserably failed to explain the real tough situation in the State.

Ramakrishnudu deplored that they were increasing taxes even on LED bulbs that were being used to save electricity. The Jagan regime was unable to object even when new burdens were being imposed on farmers by increasing taxes from 12 to 18 per cent on electric pumps and machines.

3 liver transplants performed in a span of 48 hours

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Three back-to-back liver transplant surgeries were successfully performed in a span of 48 hours at Manipal Hospitals, Vijayawada, giving a new lease of life to three patients. This week, the partnership between Manipal Hospitals and the South Asian Liver Institute proved its worth to the patients of Andhra Pradesh. The transplant team spearheaded by Prof. Dr Tom Cherian, Liver Specialist and Transplant Surgeon, Founder of South Asian Liver Institute, successfully completed three highly complex liver transplants in a span of two days.

Speaking about the case, Prof Dr Tom Cherian said, “At any given moment, many people are on the waiting list for receiving organs. Therefore, there are not enough organs for everybody. Our team using both cadaver donors and live donor transplants maximised the benefits for the patients. We are grateful to the Andhra Pradesh government for supporting these transplants financially through the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.”

NEP, move to shift Classes 3, 4 & 5 to high schools opposed

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Progressive Democratic Front (PDF) MLCs KS Lakshmana Rao and Katti Narasimha Reddy have given a call to oppose the New Educational Policy-2020 (NEP), G.O.No.117 and shifting of Classes 3, 4 and 5 to the nearest high schools. They alleged that the State government encouraged private universities in the name of NEP and the education system in the State was being destabilised. As many as 5,000 faculty posts were vacant in various universities while about 20,000 teaching posts were vacant in government schools, they added. The PDF MLCs participated in the seminar on 'Education Sector - Problems - Solutions', organised by the AISF in Vijayawada on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, Krishna-Guntur Graduates constituency MLC KS Lakshman Rao said that most of the great universities like Andhra University, Acharya Nagarjuna University, SVU and SK University were facing severe shortage of faculty. As many as 5,000 posts of professors, associate professors and assistant professors were still vacant and the students were facing severe prob-

lems, he said. Higher Education Council Chairman Hema Chandra Reddy made several decisions which posed danger to the higher education system, he alleged.

He further said that the common entrance test in government degree colleges is discouraging a section of students from taking admission there. Due to the online admission system, most of the students choose private and corporate colleges while in government colleges, seats remain vacant, he said.

“Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had decided to close down aided educational institutions. However, he withdrew the move after the students and teachers' unions protested. Later, the government revoked its decision and now, 50 aided educational institutions out of 124 are functioning as aided institutions,” he said.

He said that the State government should withdraw G.O.No.117, which shows 15,000 posts as surplus. The State government stopped the process of shifting Classes 3, 4, 5 to high schools as it caused an increase in dropouts, he said.

Another MLC Katti Narasimha Reddy said that India

was in the 146th spot in the world in the education sector. Finland, which is a very small country, holds the top position. The State and Central governments jointly constitute committees for every 10 years and implement its recommendations. But there is no use, he said. The Kothari Commission had given its recommendations in 1964. Later came the New Education Policy in 1986 and again in 2020, he added.

He also alleged that the State and the Central governments were not allocating sufficient funds for the development of the education sector and on an average four percent of funds were allocated for education. “The Central government is giving top priority to privatisation of the education sector. The State government should immediately release notification for recruitment of professors and teachers,” he said. Former MLA K Rama Krishna, AISF State president V Johnson Babu, secretary K Sivareddy, STU secretary Timmanna, AISF former leaders G Eswaraiah, V Lenin Babu, Vidya Parirakshana Committee convener Ramesh Patnaik, Prajanatyamandali secretary Chandra Naik and others were present.

Van donated to blood bank in Vizag

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Rotary Club Visakha Port City presented a Maruthi van to Rotary Blood Bank on Thursday through the hands of K Vijayalakshmi, District Medical and Health Officer (DM&HO) at Rotary Blood Bank, Jagadamba Centre, Visakhapatnam. She praised the services of the Rotary Blood Bank to the needy, particularly during COVID -19 time. She assured full support and cooperation to the blood bank. Rotary Club Visakha Port City president D V Varma briefed about the club activities.

‘Illegal’ arrest of critics flayed

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu on Thursday slammed the Jagan Reddy government for making 'midnight arrests' of those who questioned its ruthless policies.

Naidu questioned the rationale and legality behind the AP police jumping over compound walls, breaking house locks with 'gunapam' (a crowbar), and taking away individuals from their homes.

In a tweet here, the TDP chief condemned the manner in which the police made mid-night attacks to arrest Venkatesh, an ordinary youtube channel operator at Dharanikota village in Amaravati mandal. Another



person Sambasiva Rao was also arrested illegally.

Naidu said that the AP police were strangely following a 'dacoit culture' of stealthily entering houses during mid-night hours only to pick up people unlawfully. It was not a crime to criticise the government on social media. But,

breaking electric bulbs and disturbing people at midnight hours were indeed a crime on the part of the police.

Chandrababu Naidu demanded the police to explain whether the social media activists were terrorists or murderers. Some police were degrading to any extent in order to get favours from the powers-that-be in the Government. Such officers would certainly face serious consequences for their omissions.

Naidu demanded that the police immediately release Venkatesh and Sambasiva Rao from their illegal custody. The police officers should explain to the public all their excesses despite strictures passed by the courts many times.

SWC member visits women's hostel

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh State Women's Commission (APSWC) member Boosi Vineetha conducted a surprise inspection at the working women's hostel under the Women's Development and Child Welfare Department, near Civil Courts in Vijayawada on Thursday.

The APSWC member enquired the inmates about the facilities, rooms, food menu and maintenance.

“There are 100 inmates in the hostel,” said Hostel Superintendent Purnima. Vineetha expressed satisfaction over the facilities provided to the inmates.

Speaking on the occasion,



Vineetha said that the department should develop the working women's hostel. Several

government and private employees are staying at the working women's hostel. The

department should provide them with necessary facilities, she added.

Sreedhar is Vizag CIFT Scientist-in-Charge

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Principal Scientist U Sreedhar, has taken over as Scientist-in-Charge of the Visakhapatnam Research Centre of ICAR-Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (ICAR-CIFT), on Thursday.

Sreedhar has nearly 25 years of research experience in harvest fisheries and nearly 30 years of government service. He is awarded a doctorate (Ph.D.) in Marine Sciences from Acharya Nagarjuna University (ANU) and Post-Graduation in Marine Sciences from Bombay University.

He has worked at the Mumbai base of FSI, Mumbai, and ICAR-CIFT research stations at Veraval, Gujarat, and Visakhapatnam.



Sreedhar was involved in research pertaining to the long-term sustainability of the fishery resources, protection of biodiversity, environmental safety, energy conservation in fish harvesting, fishery legislation, by-catch discards and

protection of endangered species, fishery enhancement, selective fishing gear and practices, by-catch reduction technologies, environment-friendly fish harvesting systems.

He visited the Maldives to interact with officials of the Ministry of Fisheries to gain knowledge on the operation and development of a cost-effective tuna long-lining fishing system in India.

He participated in the Training Programme on Regional Ocean Governance Framework, Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of The Sea (UNCLOS) and its related instruments in the Southeast Asian Seas and the Indian Ocean at Phuket, Thailand.



Aakash+BYJU'S launches Classroom Centre in Kadapa

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

To further expand its network to various parts of the State and to help thousands of students realise their dreams of becoming doctors and IITians, Aakash+BYJU'S inaugurated its first Classroom Centre in Kadapa on Thursday. The new centre will have eight classrooms accommodating up to 600 students.

The Classroom Centre will cater to the students preparing for medical and engineering entrance examinations, along with foundation-level courses that help them prepare for various types of competitive examinations apart from strengthening their basics.

The Classroom Centre was inaugurated by Gude Sanjay Gandhi, Deputy Director, Aakash+BYJU'S.

On the occasion, Aakash

Chaudhry, Managing Director, Aakash+BYJU'S, said, “The new Classroom Centre in Kadapa will be a big boon for local students aspiring to clear Olympiads and prepare for becoming doctors and IITians. Aakash+BYJU'S is widely known for providing quality education throughout the country through its Pan-India network of centres. The quality of our educational content and the effectiveness of our teaching methodologies, as evidenced by the number of selections of students, have made Aakash one of the top choices for students intending to qualify for undergraduate medical and engineering courses.”

The Classroom Centre is located at Aakash+BYJU'S, 1st floor, PRCR address, opposite PF office, Railway Station Road, Yarramukkapalli, Kadapa.

Start admissions to degree colleges: APGCLA

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Government College Lecturers Association (APGCLA) has urged the AP State Council for Higher Education (APSCHE) to start the admissions process to degree first year course for the 2022-23 academic year immediately.

APGCLA president Dr M Raghava Reddy, general secretary Dr M Shyam Babu and leaders Dr K Sudhakar Rao and B Ramakrishna submitted the representation to APSCHE secretary Prof. B Sudheer Prem Kumar at the APSCHE office near here on Thursday.

Speaking on the occasion, the APGCLA president said that the State government should start the admissions to first-year degree courses in both government and private degree colleges through Online Admissions Module from Degree Colleges as early as possible. Due to the Covid-19 situation, students lost their education in 2020-21, 2021-22 academic years, he said.

He further said that the Telangana State had already started the degree admissions through 'DOST' portal.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Vellore Institute of Technology Engineering Entrance Examination (VITEEE)-2022 began on the VIT AP campus, Amaravathi, on Thursday, said Vice-Chancellor Dr SV Kota Reddy. VITEEE is conducted for admission to B.Tech programmes offered by the VIT's Vellore campus, Chennai campus, Amaravathi (Andhra Pradesh) campus, and Bhopal

campus for the academic year 2022-23.

Dr K Manivannan, Director of Admissions, VIT-AP University, said that the entrance examinations would continue till July 6. The test is being conducted in three sessions daily -- from 9 am to 11.30 am, from 12.30 pm to 3 pm and from 4 pm to 6.30 pm.

Dr Jagadish Chandra Muduganti, Registrar, said that online entrance examinations

were being held at various exam centres across the world till July 6. He said that 1.86 lakh students would appear for the online entrance examination at 119 examination centres. Examination centres were set up in Dubai, Qatar, Mascot and Kuwait also. Thousands of students across the country from all the States had enrolled for the entrance examination. The results will be released on the VIT website, www.vit.ac.in, by July 8.



Ham academy condoles death of ‘Indian Marconi’

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Academy of Ham Radio has expressed profound grief and sadness over the passing away of legendary Ham Radio operator S Rammohan Rao, 91, in Kakinada. For the last few days, he was being treated at a local hospital for a lung infection.

On Wednesday morning, he had suffered a massive cardiac arrest and subsequently breathed his last. By profession,

he was a retired communication engineer in Kakinada Port Trust. Rao was one of the few people in India to be licensed in the early days of the ham radio licensing system.

He was the First Ham Radio operator from India to assemble a Single Side Band transceiver and using this equipment he communicated to many ham stations across the globe. He built satellite communication equipment and actively participated in the

global communication network using his self-made equipment.

He has observed that commercial Ham Radio equipment available in the international market is costing near about Rs 70,000 and is out of reach to many Indians. In the year 1996, he designed a low-cost Ham Radio communication Equipment, using all local available electronic components.

This circuit can be built by

any middle-class Ham by investing just an amount of Rs 2000.

He is the pioneer and an inspiration to all Indian Hams who wish to build self-made equipment. He has deep knowledge of electronics and contributed to the field of Radio Communication.

As a token of recognition that he has rendered for the Radio Communication, many Hams consider him as the 'Indian Marconi'.



ONE DEAD, 30 HURT AS BUS HITS LORRY

PNS ■ ONGOLE

One person was killed and 30 others were injured when a private travel bus overturned after colliding with a lorry at Pusalapadu village in Kambham mandal of Prakasam district in the wee hours on Thursday.

The police said that the ill-fated bus was going to Anantapur from Vijayawada. The bus driver tried to avoid hitting a pedestrian, resulting in his vehicle colliding with a lorry.

A CRPF constable Sambashivudu, who was passing by the road, was killed as the bus ran over him. As many as 30 bus passengers were injured in the accident and they were shifted to government hospitals in Guntur, Kurnool and Nandyal in ambulances.

After hitting the lorry, the bus fell onto the road, blocking vehicular traffic on the busy road. Due to the accident, vehicles were stranded on either side of the road for 2 km.



The police pressed a crane into service to remove the bus from the road.

Meanwhile, a father-son duo was killed when the car in which they were travelling collided with a lorry at Palakurthi village in Kodumur mandal in Kurnool district in

the wee hours on Thursday.

Police said that the deceased Mohammad (75) and Hussain (35) were going to Kodamuru from Hyderabad when the accident took place. The police registered a case and shifted the bodies to the Kodumur PHC.

One killed, 15 hurt as RTC bus collides with lorry

PNS ■ KAKINADA

One person was killed and 15 others were injured when an RTC bus on its way from Sileru to Vijayawada collided with a cement-laden lorry at Toolukonda village on the outskirts of Chintoor in East Godavari agency area from here on Thursday.

Police said that while the lorry driver was killed on the spot, the bus driver along with other 14 passengers suffered injuries. The injured were rushed to an area hospital at Chintur where their condition is stated to be out of danger.

The Chintur police have registered a case and further investigation is on.



BAN ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

Rally to enhance awareness

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Mayor Kaviti Manohar Naidu has said that the ban on single-use plastic products would come into effect from July 1 and appealed to all not to use single-use plastic products.

A rally was taken out on Thursday from Sampath Nagar Shiva temple in the 20th division to main road and formed a human chain to create awareness of the single-use plastic ban.

Speaking on the occasion, the Mayor said that the ban would come into effect from July 1 in the city and urged the people of the city not to use single-use plastic.

He said that awareness programmes were being organised in all divisions on the single-use plastic products ban. The Mayor said that various studies had shown that the use of plastics could cause serious harm to the future, leading to dangerous cancers and other

health problems.

Similarly, the plastic ban could not be fully implemented without the participation of people, businessmen, and civil society, he said, adding that volunteers and secretariat staff should go door to door in their jurisdiction and educate people on how plastic damages the environment and harms public health.

Manohar Naidu warned that the companies selling banned plastic products would

not only be seized but also action would be taken against the consumers who use them.

For the health of future generations and as a part of environmental protection, it was informed that biodegradable products should be used instead of plastic items. He called on all to be part of the efforts of banning the use of plastic products in the city. ITC representatives, corporators, and secretariat secretaries were present.



Mayor participates in cleanliness drive

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Mayor Gangada Sujata took part in the cleanliness drive by cleaning the road at the Domodaram Sanjeevaiah Vegetable Market here on Thursday.

She expressed anger over the encroachers of the road and warned the hackers of action if they continue to occupy the road, creating obstacles to the traffic. She directed the officials to take steps to remove the encroachments on the road.

She said that bins were given to every shop. She said that though the dust bins were

given to all they were not dumping garbage in them. She warned of action if garbage is littered on the road.

She also warned of action if single-use plastic covers are sold and said that checking would be conducted every day.

The Mayor directed the officials to ensure that the encroachments on the new vegetable market road are removed.

Municipal engineer Sundara Rami Reddy and Assistant city planner Venkateswarulu were among those who accompanied the Mayor.

33,933 bottles of liquor destroyed

PNS ■ ELURU

As many as 33,933 liquor bottles, which were seized in raids, worth about Rs 80 lakh, were destroyed here on Thursday.

The liquor bottles, which were seized while being brought to the state from neighbouring states illegally, were destroyed by crushing with a JCB at ASRIMS hospital.

Superintendent of Police Rahul Dev Sharma, Additional SP (Admin) K Chakravarthi, excise superin-

tendent V Arun Kumari, district taskforce CI Dhanaraju and other inspectors monitored the destruction of the seized liquor bottles.

Speaking on the occasion, Superintendent of Police Rahul Dev Sharma said that the liquor bottles were seized from 2021 to March 7, 2022, by seven special enforcement bureau circle officials. The SP said that 33,933 liquor bottles including non-duty paid and duty paid liquor bottles were destroyed by crushing them with a proclainer. All the bottles were seized when

being brought illegally, he added.

"About 70,000 more liquor bottles will be destroyed soon. We are dealing sternly with brewing, selling and consuming illicit liquor. Cases will be registered against those who supply ingredients to brew illicit liquor," the SP said.

The SP warned of invoking the Preventive Detention (PD) Act against those who indulge in illicit liquor cases repeatedly. The SP asked the public to inform 955035110, 8332959175, or 100 about the illicit liquor units.



Make progress in house constructions, says Collector

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Prakasam District Collector AS Dinesh Kumar has directed the officials concerned to achieve tangible progress in the construction of houses in the Jagannatha colonies.

He directed the officials to take photographs of the construction of houses and send the same to him every day.

Panchayat Raj and Rural Development Principal Secretary Gopal Krishna Dwivedi and Commissioner Kona Sasidhar held a video

conference with the Collector on Thursday. Later, the Collector reviewed the progress of the construction of houses in the colonies with the officials.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector instructed the officials concerned to expedite the construction works of houses. He directed them to take steps to resolve the court litigation on the sites. The Collector asked them to file needed affidavits in the courts to resolve the court litigations. He also directed them to iden-

tify alternative sites for the construction of houses.

Collector Dinesh Kumar told them to upload the details of the disbursement of bills. The indent for the cement should be sent without delay, he told them. He said that the officials should take steps to resolve the issues with the contracting agencies. Panchayat Raj SE Kondaiah, DPO Narayana Reddy, DWAMA PD Seena Reddy, RWS SE Mardhan Ali, and ZP CEO Jali Reddy were among those who were present.

SP directs officials to keep strict vigil on anti-social elements

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Bapatla district Superintendent of Police Vakul Jindal has directed the police officials to keep a strict vigil on the anti-social elements and curb the anti-social activities with an iron hand. As part of the annual inspections, the SP on Thursday inspected Amarthaluru Police Station in Bapatla Sub Division, Tsundur Circle.

The SP inspected the surroundings of the police station, examined the vehicles seized in various cases and the case property, and gave several instructions to the officers regarding the safeguarding of the case properties. He also examined the functioning of the station, the duties performed by the staff, the investigation of important cases, the case diary maintained at the station, the village roster, and various crime records.

He told the officials that every case file should be thoroughly scrutinized and compared with CCTNS regarding the crimes committed within the Amarthaluru Police Station

during the last three years and the investigation conducted by the officers on those offenses.

He instructed the police officials to follow up the missing cases with women police, crimes against women and children, cybercrime, illicit brewing, sales, and unscrupulous activities from time to time. The police officers were ordered to regularly visit the villages which come under the station, resolve the problems there and ensure that there is no disturbance to law and order. He also asked them to take strict action against those who indulge in uncivil activities.

Talking to the media on the occasion, the District SP said "I have inquired about the performance of the staff and officers, information about the adopted villages assigned to the police personnel, information about the old criminals, bullies, suspects and other criminals in that village, and directed the officers on the steps to be taken in the coming days to control crime, those involved in illegal activities, smuggling and strict action will be taken against them.

Rally with 100-ft-long National Flag marks Alluri birth anniversary

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Krishna District Collector P Ranjith Basha has said that celebrating the 125th birth anniversary of freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju so that the younger generations could learn about his heroic life story, was a matter of pride for the Telugu people.

Krishna District Youth Welfare, Tribal Welfare and Education Departments jointly organised Alluri Seetarama Raju's 125th birth anniversary celebrations at Koneru centre at Machilipatnam in Krishna district on Thursday. Collector Ranjith Basha garlanded Alluri's portrait and paid tributes.

Later, the Collector inaugurated the rally with a 100-foot-long Indian flag. People of all age groups enthusiastically participated in the rally, taken out from Koneru centre to RTC bus stand.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that Alluri Sitarama Raju's armed struggle had a specialty in the Freedom Movement. Alluri thought that freedom



would come with only armed struggle and he sacrificed his life for the country at the age of 27 years, he said.

He further said that as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the birth anniversary celebrations would be conducted across the country. "Alluri opposed the British Empire and fought against the British

army. The British Empire feared his courage. Alluri Sitarama Raju is still alive in the hearts of Indians as a hero," he said.

Machilipatnam RDO I Kishore, DEO Tahera Sultana, Youth Welfare Department officer Srinivas, Tribal Welfare Officer D Phani, Chief Coach K Jhansi and others were present.

Students take out rally with 125-ft Tricolour

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

West Godavari District Collector P Prashanthi inaugurated a rally taken out by the school students with a 125-foot long National Flag in Narasapuram on Thursday.

The rally was taken out by the students as part of the 125th birth anniversary celebrations of freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju. Interestingly, the rally was taken out by the students of Tailor school where Alluri Sitarama Raju studied.

Speaking on the occasion she exhorted the students to draw inspiration from Alluri Sitarama Raju.

The Collector said that as part of Azadi Ka Amrit programme Prime Minister Narendra Modi is coming to Bhimavaram to unveil the 30 feet bronze statue of Alluri Sitarama Raju on July 4 as part of 125th birth anniversary of



Sitarama Raju. The Prime Minister would address a public meeting on the occasion. Alluri Sitarama Raju sacrificed his life to free India from the ruling Britishers.

Government chief Whip Mudunuri Prasad Raju said that Sitarama Rajustudied at Tailor school in Narasapuram and all should feel proud for the same. Kshatriya Corporation chairman Patapati Saraju and municipal chairperson Barri Venkataramana and other officials were present.

Brewing, sale of illicit liquor being curbed firmly: SP

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Superintendent of Police Malika Garg made it clear that stringent steps were taken to curb the brewing and selling of illicit liquor in the district.

The SP held a special meeting with officers of SEB, Excise, Police, and owners/representatives of rectified spirit and molasses units at DPO with the aim of eradicating illicit liquor manufacturing channels in the district here on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, the

SP directed the SEB, the police and the excise officials to keep a close watch on the rectified spirit using chemical companies and molasses units mainly located within the Chimakurthy and Singarayakonda SEB stations as there is a possibility of producing illicit liquor using rectified spirits.

SP Malika Garg asked the officers to regularly inspect the spirit loads going to the companies, records, bills related to the rectified spirit units and

vehicles going out from those companies. The SP said that the owners and representatives should take measures to ensure that the rectified spirit brought to the RS factories should not be misused under any circumstances, should check workers, employees every day that the spirit is not taken outside, and should immediately inform the local police or SEB officials if there is a discrepancy in the loads coming to the companies.

SP Malika Garg warned that

strict legal action would be initiated if the rectified spirit coming to their companies was being used for malicious activities such as illicit brewing which is highly dangerous to public health.

District SEB JD ASP Suryachandra Rao, SEB Superintendent A. Avulaiah, DSB DSP B. Mariadasu, Excise Distillery Officer Nagamalleswar Reddy, CI Vamsidhar, SEB Station SHOs Srinagesh, Dayakar and others participated in this meeting.



INDIA CORNER

College student dies of rabies infection in Kerala

A college student succumbed to rabies infection despite taking necessary vaccination at Mankara in this north Kerala district on Thursday, police said. The 19-year-old woman, identified as Sreelekshmi, was bitten by her neighbour's dog and she took all necessary vaccinations as prescribed by the doctors soon after that, the police said quoting her relatives. She had reportedly suffered the bite while going to college on May 30. The woman did not show any symptoms in the initial days. When she had started showing symptoms of rabies infection a few days ago, she was first rushed to a private hospital here and then to Thrissur Government Medical College with high fever. She died at the hospital early today. Meanwhile, Health Minister Veena George directed the state Health Director to carry out a probe and submit a report on the incident. A detailed probe would be carried out after forming a rapid response team under the district surveillance officer here, an official statement said.



'Yoga on 75 locations of Ganga basin saw participation of over 10L people'

Yoga sessions organised at more than 75 locations in states across the Ganga basin on the International Day of Yoga saw participation of over 10 lakh people, the National Mission for Clean Ganga said on Thursday. On the International Day of Yoga on June 21, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) had organised Ghat Par Yag' at Signature Bridge Ghat on the Yamuna river here. This was part of a special initiative of NMCG to have Ghat Par Yag' on all Ganga ghats. A group of NGOs, officials from the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), volunteers from Ganga Vichar Manch, students, children and local people participated in large numbers in the event. According to NMCG, Yoga sessions were organised at more than 75 locations in states across Ganga Basin and saw participation of over 10 lakh people.



Bhima Koregaon case: Varavara Rao moves SC for bail

The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to hear on July 11, a plea filed by Telugu poet and Bhima Koregaon-Elgar Parishad accused P Varavara Rao challenging the Bombay High Court order rejecting his prayer for permanent medical bail in the case. A vacation bench of Justices Surya Kant and JB Pardiwala was told by senior advocate Anand Grover that he is an 83-year-old man suffering from various comorbidities. All I am asking is that the plea be listed on reopening of the court, Grover told the bench while mentioning the plea for urgent listing. He said that the petitioner was granted medical bail and he is to surrender in July. The bench said that it will list the plea on July 11. Upon being orally mentioned by the learned Senior counsel appearing for the petitioner seeking urgent listing of the matter, the Registry is directed to list this matter on July 11, 2022, before an appropriate Bench, the vacation bench ordered.



Govt to provide high-speed internet to every village: Modi

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The government is working to provide high-speed internet to every village, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday while urging the world to make use of the opportunities in the digital and technology space and invest in India.

Calling the present times as an era of technology and underlining the benefits of technology as demonstrated during the time of the pandemic, he said it is important to invest even further in technology and innovation.

The Prime Minister was inaugurating the new 'smart' campus of Bosch India, a leading supplier of technology and services, here, via video message.

Modi said India is among the fastest growing major



economies, and investments have picked up in the last two years.

Thanks to our youth, our start-up eco system is among the biggest in the world. In the tech world itself there are so many opportunities," he said.

The government of India, the Prime Minister said, is working to provide high-speed internet to every village.

Our vision of a Digital India includes integrating technology with every aspect of government. I would urge the world to make use of these opportunities and invest in our nation, he said.

The Prime Minister congratulated Bosch India on completing 100 years of its presence in India and noted the special significance of the

event falling in the 75th year of India's Independence.

This (new smart) campus will certainly take the lead in developing futuristic products and solutions for India and for the world, the Prime Minister said, recalling his October 2015 visit to the Bosch facility here with the then German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Praising Bosch's work for innovation and scale, he highlighted the need for sustainability.

India's growth is becoming greener with the installed capacity of solar energy increasing nearly 20 times in the last 8 years", Modi said, and lauded Bosch's feat of achieving carbon-neutrality in both India and outside.

The Prime Minister urged Bosch to think of doing even more in India.

Teen commits suicide after sister throws mobile in drain

PNS ■ MUMBAI

A 17-year-old girl allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself after her elder sister threw her mobile phone into a nullah in the western suburb of Malad here on Thursday, police said.

The girl was found hanging in her under-construction house in Malvani area of the suburb, an official said.

The girl was having an affair with a boy from the neighbourhood and her family had found out about it. The girl's elder sister scolded her and threw her mobile phone into a nullah suspecting that she had been talking to the boy every day, he said.

The girl's body was found by locals, who alerted the police, the official said, adding that an accidental death report (ADR) has been registered in this regard.

No one has any right to kill anybody: NHRC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

NHRC chairperson justice (ret'd) Arun Kumar Mishra on Thursday extolled the ancient wisdom of India that speaks of 'ahimsa' and other human virtues, as he asserted that 'adhiakar' essentially means "peaceful co-existence" and no one has any right to kill anybody or snatch someone else's bread to satiate their hunger.

In his address at a technical session held here as part of a conference on 'Human Rights in Indian Culture and Philosophy', he also said that 'ahimsa' (non-violence) via Buddhism is a "gift from India" to the wider world.

His comments come in the backdrop of brutal killing of a tailor in Udaipur by two men who had posted videos online that claimed they were avenging an insult to Islam.

The two-day event is being hosted by the National



Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA).

"Words used in our scriptures, Vedas, Puranas, Mahabharata, teaching of our great persons... Ahimsa was talked of," Mishra said.

The NHRC chief then cited Mahatma Gandhi, Raja Rammohun Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Dayanand Saraswati and said, "then we

have to remember Akbar also" in this context.

"Gandhi, Patel lived with 'ahimsa', it is taught in Jainism and Buddhism too. Forty-seven countries have adopted Buddhism, it is gift from India -- 'ahimsa'. What Ashoka borrowed from Buddhism - 'ahimsa'... What we have given to the entire world is being talked about today... Indian culture, we have not forgotten, it is in our blood," he said.

Govt to start mapping each family to provide job or self-employment

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday said that his government will soon start mapping each family in the state to connect one member of each household with job or self-employment.

"Families from which no member has got a government job till now, have not received



cooperation of banks, today the youth have got employment according to their aspirations. The unemployment rate has been reduced from 18 per cent to less than three per cent."

He also said that the Bharatiya Janata Party government of the state not only took forward the infinite possibilities in the field of agriculture, but also started the 'One District One Product' scheme with research and comprehensive action plan in 2018 to encourage traditional enterprises.

The event, Loan Fair, was organized by the MSME Department of the state. Congratulating all the entrepreneurs and artisans who got loans in

Referring to his government's work in the direction of employment generation in the state, Adityanath said, "With the encouragement of the UP government and the positive

Godrej Capital to offer flexi-repayments for SMEs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Aiming to grow its lending to small businesses, Godrej Capital on Thursday said it will allow flexible loan repayments to borrowers in the segment and also introduced a longer tenor 'loan against property' offering.

The non-bank financier, which is among the youngest of the lending companies having entered in late 2020, will let borrowers from the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) segment 'design' their own earnest monthly installments, as per an official statement.

Select borrowers can pay only interest for the first three years of a loan, the company said, adding that it is also mulling to allow borrowers to pay quarterly or bi-monthly. The lender is also introducing a 25-year Loan Against Property (LAP) as against competition which does not go beyond 20 years, the statement said.

"The product offerings that we bring in are the basis of our learnings from the growing consumer segmentation and micro clusters that we have engaged with," its managing director and chief executive Manish Shah said.

Shinde: Former auto driver now in Maha driving seat

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Eknath Sambhaji Shinde, who on Thursday became the 20th Chief Minister of Maharashtra, once drove auto-rickshaw to earn a living before rising as a formidable Shiv Sena leader.

The 58-year-old leader who hails from western Maharashtra's Satara district shifted to Thane, a Sena bastion adjacent to Mumbai, in his young days and started his political career in the same city. The four-time MLA, who held the urban development and PWD portfolios in the previous Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government led by Uddhav Thackeray, never hid his humble origins. On the contrary, he made it a point to mention it to underscore how he has been indebted to the Shiv Sena and its founder, late Bal Thackeray for his rise in Maharashtra politics.

Born on February 9, 1964, Shinde dropped out of college before completing graduation. After moving to Thane, he soon found his calling as one among thousands of Shiv Sena cadres who were ever-ready to hit the streets at the command of Bal Thackeray.

Thackeray formed Shiv Sena in 1966 as a party fighting for the rights of the 'sons-of-the-soil' Marathi-speakers,



and later aggressively championed the cause of 'Hindutva'. As Shinde joined the Sena in Thane, he found a mentor in local party stalwart Anand Dighe. He became Dighe's deputy and strengthened the party in Thane-Palghar region after Dighe's sudden death in 2001.

The sitting MLA from Kopri-Pachpakhadi in Thane city, Shinde was once a quintessential Shiv Sena street-fighter. He faces dozens of criminal cases for charges such as 'voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons' and rioting, registered during various party agitations. He became a corporator in the Thane Municipal Corporation in 1997 and won his maiden Assembly election in 2004. In 2005 he was made the Sena's Thane district chief.

Currently he is in his fourth

term as an MLA, while his son Dr Shrikant Shinde is the Lok Sabha MP from Kalyan in the district.

Shinde was appointed the Leader of Opposition in the Maharashtra Legislative Assembly for a brief period in 2014 when the Sena initially refused to join the Devendra Fadnavis cabinet. The party later joined the BJP-led government, and Shinde became a cabinet minister.

His closeness to Chief Minister Fadnavis set tongues wagging. It was also noted that the BJP contested elections to all civic bodies in Maharashtra in 2016 against the alliance partner Shiv Sena, except in Thane, Shinde's home turf.

When the Shiv Sena snapped ties with the BJP, and Sena president Uddhav Thackeray became chief minister of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government with the NCP and Congress as allies after the 2019 elections, Shinde became a cabinet minister for the second time.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the NCP handling the health ministry, it was Shinde-controlled Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation that set up health-care centres in Mumbai and its satellite cities to treat coronavirus patients.

BA.4, BA.5 subvariants causing Covid spike in West Bengal: Experts

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Genome sequencing of Covid positive samples has revealed that Omicron subvariants BA.4 and BA.5 have started replacing the BA.2 alternative that caused the surge in cases of the infection in West Bengal earlier this year, a senior official of the state health department said on Thursday.

According to experts, it is mostly subvariant BA.5, which has features identical to BA.2, that is responsible for the recent spike in coronavirus cases in the state.

We have been conducting genome sequencing on positive samples in West Bengal. A few subvariants of Omicron, mostly the BA.4 and BA.5 was found. But there is nothing to worry about. The BA.5 subvariant though highly infectious is not that threatening, at least for those who have no comorbidities," Siddhartha Niyogi, director of health services said on Thursday.

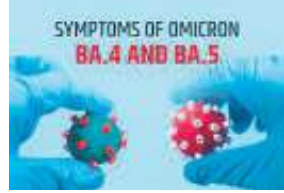
"Examinations of the samples showed that the subvariant BA.5 is gradually replacing the BA.2," he said.

Most of the Covid samples sent to National Institute of BioMedical Genomics in Kalyani for genome sequencing tested positive for the

BA.5 subvariant of Omicron along with some BA.4.

Khaya Mukherjee, the associate professor of the department of microbiology at Beliaghata ID&BG Hospital held the Omicron subvariant BA.5 responsible for the recent surge in COVID cases in Bengal.

The state, she said, will witness more and more cases in



the next few weeks as the infectivity rate of BA.5 is "much more" than its predecessor, the BA.2, she said.

"The steep rise in the number of Covid cases in Bengal is primarily due to this subvariant BA.5. There are cases where subvariant BA.4 is present. There are cases which are still caused by BA.2. I doubt how complicated BA.5 will be compared to BA.2 subvariant because most of the people are vaccinated. The infection will be mild and the fatality rate will be low as well," Mukherjee said.

NSA calls for seamless coordination among maritime security agencies

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval on Thursday called for seamless coordination among various agencies involved in protecting India's maritime interests in the face of emerging security challenges and increasing rivalries and competitions in the Indian Ocean.

In his address at the first-ever meeting of the Multi Agency Maritime Security Group (MAMSG), Doval said there must be common protocols, standard operating procedures and operational framework among various stakeholders, noting that India will not be able to become the power it deserves to be in absence of a very strong mar-

itime security apparatus. India's security planners have consistently been pressing for a coordinated approach in dealing with maritime security challenges following the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks 14 years ago when a group of sea-borne terrorists struck at the heart of the country's financial capital.

Doval said the National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC) should be the focal point to bring in synergy in maritime security domain and

galvanise coordination in various aspects including operational matters. In the context of changing geopolitical scenario, Doval said that the Indian Ocean, which has been an "ocean of peace", is witnessing increasing rivalries and competitions and India needs to protect its interests as the region has the potential to witness clash of interests.

His comments came amid growing concerns over China's increasing forays into the Indian Ocean, considered the

backyard of the Indian Navy. The meeting was chaired by Vice Admiral G Ashok Kumar (Retd), the country's first National Maritime Security Coordinator (NMSC), a post created with a mandate to ensure coordination among various key stakeholders with an overall objective to strengthen the country's maritime security.

The meeting was attended by top maritime and coastal security brass from all 13 coastal states and Union territories as well Indian Navy and other central agencies.

Doval said security at the high seas and economic well-being is inextricably linked and all stakeholders must work unitedly.

Punjab Assembly passes resolution against the Agnipath scheme

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Punjab Assembly on Thursday passed a resolution against the Centre's Agnipath defence recruitment scheme.

Two BJP legislators Ashwani Sharma and Jangli Lal Mahajan opposed the resolution. The resolution was moved in the House by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann. Participating in the discussion on the resolution, Mann said he will soon raise the issue of Agnipath scheme with the prime minister and the Union home minister.

Vehemently opposing Agnipath, Mann said this scheme was against the country's youth.

MALEGAON BLAST CASE

NIA court rejects plea seeking cancellation of accused's bail

PNS ■ MUMBAI

A special National Investigation Agency (NIA) court here on Thursday rejected a plea seeking cancellation of bail granted to Sudhakar Dwivedi, an accused in the 2008 Malegaon blast case, for allegedly violating the bail conditions.

Dwivedi had secured bail in 2017, and one of the bail conditions was that he cannot leave the country without the court's permission.

Nisar Ahmed Bilal, the father of one of the victims and an intervener in the case, sought cancellation of the bail granted to Dwivedi, claiming

that the latter had allegedly violated the bail conditions by travelling to Nepal without taking the court's permission. In his plea, filed through a advocate Shahid Nadeem, Bilal claimed that when he stumbled upon information about Dwivedi's visit to Nepal, he did his own research and found evidence for the same. Photographs of the said



event (Nepal visit) were submitted with a request to the special public prosecutor that the NIA file an application for cancellation of bail. However, no such action has been taken till today, said the plea, which was filed in October last year.

Special judge A K Lahoti rejected the plea, but directed the accused not to breach the bail condition henceforth.

Rebel turns king

After a series of twists and turns, Shinde is the Maharashtra CM and Fadnavis his deputy

When Uddhav Thackeray resigned as the Maharashtra Chief Minister immediately after the Supreme Court's refusal to stay a floor test in the Assembly on Wednesday, it looked like former Chief Minister and top Bharatiya Janata Party leader in the State Devendra Fadnavis was set to make a comeback. The rebel Shiv Sena leader, Eknath Shinde, was expected to be his deputy. But that was not to be; at a joint press conference with Shinde, Fadnavis himself announced that Shinde would occupy the high office. This was a big surprise for everyone — not just the BJP and Shiv Sena leaders but also the Thackeray camp and other anti-BJP politicians. There was some disappointment in the BJP camp that their leader Fadnavis



become a part of the Government. So, made a personal request to him. The central leadership has said that Devendra Fadnavis should take charge as the Deputy CM of Maharashtra."

Finally, at 7.30 pm, Shinde was sworn in as the Chief Minister and Fadnavis as his deputy. Such are the twists and turns in Indian politics. By making Shinde the CM, the BJP top brass seems to be more interested in the longevity of its Government in Maharashtra, a leading industrial State, than in the benefits that come with the top office. Besides, they know that Shinde would be completely dependent on them for survival. As it is, he has crossed the Rubicon in Sena politics by snapping all ties with the Uddhav Thackeray family, which is often seen and presented as the heart and soul of the Shiv Sena. At present, perception is that while Shinde has the majority of Sena MLAs with him, the party rank and file is solidly behind Thackeray. But then there is often a chasm between perception and reality. Shinde and his followers have themselves risen through the ranks. In other words, Shinde and Co cannot be dismissed as nobodies, as leaders who are of no consequence without the backing of the Thackeray family. Ironically, Thackeray might have helped Shinde's case as the Chief Minister. In his response to the rebellion, he had asked the Shinde camp, "If I step down, can you guarantee another Sainik will be the Chief Minister?" Well, instead of the rebels, the BJP has answered that question.

PICTALK



Women carry pots filled with cooked rice, decorated with turmeric and neem leaves, to goddess Kali in Hyderabad

Power shift

Israel is seeing a change of guard as Yair Lapid takes over as caretaker PM

The reins of power have not changed hands only in Maharashtra, and no longer does Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy remain the only high-profile head of a State who has appeared in popular television programmes. Quite a geographical distance away from India and Ukraine, the small but powerful country of Israel too is witnessing a shift in power. In the 10 years since he relinquished his job as a political chat show host to turn a full-time politician, Yair Lapid had dreamed of becoming Israel's Prime Minister. Now, as he prepares to take over in a caretaker capacity, he is sure to put his best foot forward to prove that he deserves the top job in the long term even as the country prepares to go to polls for the fifth time in less than four years. Meanwhile, former amateur boxer Lapid faces a stiff challenge from conservative Benjamin Netanyahu — Israel's longest-serving leader — whom he successfully knocked out of office in 2021 by forging an unlikely alliance between eight, ideologically diverse political parties. Of course, Netanyahu — seeking his sixth term in office — will seek to paint his bitter rival as weak on security, particularly when it comes to Iran and terrorism. The challenge for Lapid will be to prove that he can protect Israel from its enemies and promote domestic unity.



But how does the shift in Israel's domestic power equation impact India? Well, time will surely shed more light on this subject as the current fluid situation unfolds until a new Government is formed after polls due in October or November. However, here're a few pointers. India and Israel have an extensive and comprehensive economic, military and political relationship. India is the largest buyer of Israeli military equipment and Israel is the second-largest supplier of military equipment to India after Russia. From 1999 to 2009, military business between the nations was worth around \$9 billion. Military and strategic ties between the two nations extend to intelligence-sharing on terror groups and joint military training. As of 2019, India was the third-largest Asian trade partner of Israel, and its tenth-largest trade partner overall, with bilateral trade, excluding military sales, clocking \$5.53 billion. Needless to say, New Delhi shall be keenly watching the unfolding drama in Tel Aviv. So far, Israel has been an all-weather friend and hopefully that won't change.

Global 'mission' & democratic culture

The recent street violence has put the focus back on the malignant influence of the Islamic ummah on large sections of Indian Muslim population



SARADINDU MUKHERJI

In 1353, England had enacted the Statute of Praemunire to prohibit all appeals to authorities outside England involving cognisable cases before the local courts. History knows how Henry VIII (1509-1547) had made use of this legal measure to bring an end to papal control, establish the sovereignty of the English State, dissolve the monasteries and taking forward the process of reformation. These have important lessons for many cutting across national boundaries.

The ongoing display of street violence in many cities of India, the attack on railway carriages, blockades put up on the highways, coupled with incendiary statements and threats of physical violence against the spokespersons of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party have once again brought to the surface the malignant influence of the Islamic ummah on large sections of the Indian population. The support extended by the "secularists", basically anti-Hindus, has further bolstered them. "Secularism", as it has been practised in India since the Khilafat days, and more rigorously after Independence/Partition, is known for its promotion and pampering of many absurdities, irredentism, extra-territorial loyalty and theologically sanctioned intolerance/destruction of the "other".

Those who foul-mouth "others" and threaten people with dire consequences in the name of alleged "blasphemy" must realise that what was easily achievable in the middle ages, long before the advent of enlightenment, liberalism, democratic system of governance, is not possible in 21st century India. Whether to stay cocooned in the primitive past or move forward with time as the rest of the civilised world is doing is for the respective societies to decide. It is true that certain political parties and State Governments have been partial to jihadi outfits and appear sympathetic to their atrocious religio-political objectives. True, these zealots were virtually let off for their lawless behaviour over the Citizenship Amendment Act, 2019. Those guilty of large-scale



violence in West Bengal before and after the polls in 2021, which resulted in the killing and rape of many Hindus, still remain unpunished. Hence, they feel emboldened.

However, it is time to ponder the unacceptable conduct of people pushing forward with the objectives of the Islamic ummah. Khilafat was discarded by Kamal Pasha in Turkey but got a fresh lease of life because of Gandhi, leading to the genocide of Kerala Hindus (Moplahs, 1921). Subsequent emasculation of the Indian National Congress, leading to the Partition, marked the ultimate defeat of Hindus and a glorious victory for the Islamic ummah. While Pakistan carried out a systematic religio-ethnic cleansing of its Hindu, Buddhist, Sikhs population, India's "secular" leadership did not permit any exchange of population. Thus the basic issue remained unresolved.

The Hindus of Kashmir Valley turned into refugees in their own land. Certain constitutional provisions, gradual extension of Sachar Commission largesse, Minority Commission and the practice of helping the obscurantist elements have consolidated and rabid anti-Hindu elements.

URGENT REMEDIAL LEGAL REFORMS ARE NEEDED TO DEFINE 'BLASPHEMY', IMPOSE CONDNIGN PUNISHMENT FOR ESPOUSING NON-INDIAN IDEAS THAT VIOLATE OUR POLITICAL-LEGAL SYSTEM AND CREATE A PERPETUALLY POISONOUS ATMOSPHERE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FOCUS ON CLEANER TECHNOLOGIES

Sir — The theme of the G7 Summit was to discuss the invasion of Ukraine, ways and means to stabilise energy markets and lessen dependence on Russian gas and oil. Close on the heels of the upcoming Nato Summit, the G7 has laid out the contours of strategic conversation around Ukraine. The announcement of Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment by US President Joe Biden to invest \$600 billion by 2027 in poor and developing countries is aimed at providing an alternative to China's BRI, which is seen as imposing an untenable debt burden on developing countries.

PM Narendra Modi reminded the western countries of their promises made a decade ago of financing cleaner and green technologies to the poor and developing countries to the tune of \$100 billion per year, which have fallen far short of the target. India's concern for greater investment in cleaner technologies is real as it has been able to achieve climate goals to a certain extent. By neither endorsing the Chinese President's GPI nor commenting on Biden's new initiative, India has rightly underlined its central role in the new thrust for the Indo Pacific by the western nations.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

UDAIPUR MURDER IS CONDEMNABLE

Sir — In a horrific incident in Rajasthan's Udaipur district, two youth (Mohammed Gos and Riyaz Ansari) who posed as customers at a tailoring shop, allegedly beheaded tailor Kanhaiya Lal Teli days after he allegedly shared social media posts in support of Nupur Sharma. The assailants broke into his shop in daylight, stabbed him multiple times with a sword and then slashed his throat. Then the suspects posted a message on social media bragging about their misdeed. Lal had earlier complained about receiving death threats over his alleged social media post.

But the tailor himself was arrested and the matter was 'settled' after police-mediated sessions between him and the complainants. But the manner in which he was

A step in the right direction



I would like to express my delight on the important step taken by our Government to forbid the use of single-use plastic products. It is the right step in the country's mission to save the environment as single-use plastic can harm animals that eat it out of the debris and these can ultimately lead to its accumulation in the human body over time. This leads to severe health problems such as obesity and cancer. The Government's move will create new jobs in the recycling industry and give its contribution in solving India's unemployment

problem. It would also increase the demand for more sustainable products which would boost the country's overall economy.

This step would drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It is also a pocket-friendly step as other alternatives are much cheaper. To ensure that the step is implemented properly, we need more social scientists like Mubarak Ahmad Khan who developed a carry bag from the jute plant that serves the same purpose as plastic polythene bags. Other alternatives for replacing single-use plastics are using platinum silicon for food packaging, which has the same properties as plastic. We can replace plastic food wraps with beeswax-coated cloth as an alternative. Stainless steel and glass may be a replacement for plastic for food and beverage storage. These measures in India would go a long way in leading the fight to reverse climate change.

Krishna Kararia | Rohini

butchered isn't only shocking but gives clear indication that terror-mongers were involved. The mixed population of Hindus and Muslims in the area is worried about the growing tension. It's heartening that immediately after Lal's murder, Ajmer Dargah Deewan Zainul Abedin Ali Khan said Indian Muslims will never allow the Taliban mindset to spread in the country. The National Investigation Agency has already taken over the murder investigation and re-registered a case under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN'S VICTORY

Sir — With his victory, SAD (Amritsar) Sir Simranjit Singh Mann in the Lok Sabha bypoll wrested the lone seat held by AAP. The bypoll was necessitated by the resignation of Bhagwant Mann since he took over as the Punjab Chief Minister. The bypoll victories do not indicate the mood of people or nation. Therefore, any attributions to Mann's victory or the opponent's

defeat may be imaginary. A buoyed Mann has credited the victory to Khalistani militant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. He should have introspected before issuing such a controversial statement. If Bhindranwale's teaching could permeate such an influence, why was AAP brought to power instead of his party?

Bhindranwale was certainly not a patriot. He was a religious leader backed by Pakistan for the aim of carving out Khalistan. Indira Gandhi ordered Operation Blue Star to check separatist activities, which led to confrontation with the military in 1984. At the time, Bhindranwale was among those killed in Operation Blue Star. If Mann thinks that his victory is a victory for Khalistan's movement, he is living in a fool's paradise. It may be recalled that he had insisted that he be allowed to carry kirpan to Parliament House.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

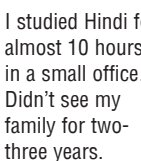
Due to Rajasthan Govt's policies, a situation of communal frenzy has arisen in the State.



Rajasthan ex-Chief Minister —Vasundhara Raje



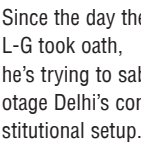
Ukraine President —Volodymyr Zelenskyy



Actor —Nargis Fakhri



India cricket skipper —Hardik Pandya



AAP leader —Atishi

FIRST COLUMN

YOGA NOW ACCESSIBLE TO ENTIRE HUMANKIND

Yoga seeks to unite human body with mind

ISHWAR V BASAVARADDI

On June 21 the world comes together to celebrate the aspirations of human spirit by hosting Yoga sessions. India, which gave birth to Yoga, is continuously playing a substantial role in making this ancient science of holistic well-being accessible to a large portion of the world's population, keeping in mind India's philosophy of Vasudaiva Kutumbakam, i.e. 'the entire world is one family.'

Yoga is a discipline that seeks to accomplish the union of human body and mind towards the realisation of its infinite potential and elevating the human consciousness beyond the confines of individual mind and ego until it merges with all pervading Supreme Consciousness. The regular practice of various tenets of Yoga aids holistic well-being by improving physical, physiological, psychological, emotional and intellectual health.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 27, 2014, urged the United Nations General Assembly to take cognisance of the universal appeal of Yoga. This is how June 21 became the International Day of Yoga (IDY).

India has also succeeded in impressing upon the world that Yoga is integral to its ancient cultural heritage which goes back to 5,000 years. The proactive efforts by the Indian Government also led to Yoga's inclusion in the Unesco's representative list of intangible cultural heritage of humanity in December 2016.

Today, the knowledge and practice of Yoga has spread beyond the confines of East and South Asia. International Day of Yoga is now celebrated as a festival in almost all countries, by all creeds, race, caste, gender, and age groups making it the biggest global event for humanity's holistic health and wellbeing.



The word Yoga first finds mention in the ancient text of Rigveda which was composed during the Indus-Saraswati Valley Civilisation. It was then developed further by the sages. Raj Yoga (the Yoga of Mind Management) was arranged into a eight-limb treatise, Yoga Sutras, by Patanjali during the 2nd Century BC.

Srimad Bhagvad Gita, the most widely read scripture, discusses mainly four classical forms of Yoga—i.e., Jnana-yoga, Bhakti-yoga, Karma-yoga, and Dhyanayoga.

Although the Western World is interested in Yoga, its focus is mostly limited to the physical aspect of Yoga. However, in the last few decades, the US healthcare fraternity has been using Pranayama (regulated breathing techniques) and meditation in Yoga for treatment of the autism spectrum disorder. Various research articles in PubMed and research done in India in collaboration with AIIMS, NIMHANS, etc., clearly show the efficacy of yoga in physical, mental and spiritual well-being.

India encourages the daily practice of Yoga among people. The effectiveness of Pranayama was manifest during the outbreak of Covid-19. Records show that millions of healthcare workers and Covid-19 patients in India made a lasting and faster recovery by practicing Yogasana, Pranayama, and meditation.

To increase awareness about Yoga and to encourage its practice among people, the Government has declared Yogasana as a competitive sport. India's efforts to establish it in Asian and Olympic Games are continuing. The Prime Minister has also announced two categories of awards, international and national, to honour individuals and organisations making outstanding contributions towards the promotion and development of Yoga.

Currently, about 1.25 lakh wellness centres teach Yoga across the country. In rural India, Gram Panchayats are continuously being sensitised about the regular practice of Yoga and the Yoga Protocols through various efforts. Prime Minister wrote letters to 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayat Pradhans to promote Yoga-related activities. The Practice of Yoga has also been introduced in uniformed services.

(The author is Director, Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, New Delhi)

Sexist attitude, remarks must be challenged

Normalisation of sexist harassment must cease for gender equality; educational institutions should embrace gender sensitivity



VK KARTHIKA

Sexual violence is widely equated with rape cases. The media spotlight brings spotlight on increasing crime rates, violence against women and safety of women. But sexist harassment, the most commonplace and everyday occurrence, is normalized.

Sexist harassment is consumed as something very normal. This normalcy is because of the patriarchal perspectives. There could be a fear factor too, for the victim might be unsure about raising voice. The act of sexist harassment for many simply means "a friendly gesture" or "a naive joke." Thus, as rightly pointed out by Sheela Suryanarayanan, there is "an expensive silence" about sexist harassment.

Sexist violence begins from domestic spaces that formulate and foster different rules for women and men. This further gets reinstated at social institutions. Human minds are thought to be chastised by all kinds of biases when they become educated, on the premise that higher education institutions are considered as places that host healthy debates on social taboos to enable the youngsters to transcend boundaries of narrow mindedness, social inequalities and identity crises.

Sadly, gender discrimination and sexist violence creep into higher education institutions and contaminate all possibilities of establishing gender parity. Misogyny is palpable in all sectors while educational institutions are transforming into habitats of sexist ideologies that victimise women students, faculty, and non-teaching staff alike although the nature and gravity of violence varies.

An integral constituent of educational institutions is the student welfare office. When this office itself operates as an agency that endorses sexist notions either by visibly channelling or by metaphorically sanctioning them, it is important to underscore that everyone who consumes or disseminates such ideologies becomes a part of misogynistic propaganda.

Many of the educational institutions impose separate rules for the female students with regard to the dress, behaviour and their conduct on campus. Even during arts and sports festivals which allow the men students to be part of the festivities, the women can be a part of it until it is the time for them to get back to their hostels as there is a "gendered curfew" on campus. Authorities circulate notices that prescribe separate rules for women students and their men counterparts.

However, sexism operates covertly through subtle references towards the character of the girl who violates the popular gender expectations of the authorities. If confronted about the unjust treatment and policing, the authorities always defend themselves using benevolent sexism, with the best intention to protect the womenfolk!

Recently the Dean of Students' Welfare of an Institution of Eminence in central India issued a pamphlet on dangers of drug



SEXIST HARASSMENT AND THE PREVAILING MISOGYNISTIC SENTIMENTS AROUND US CERTAINLY DO HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON WOMEN'S PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT. IT IS HIGH TIME SOCIETY, ESPECIALLY ITS EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, STOPPED OBJECTIFYING WOMEN

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use, worded supposedly for witty and catchy slogans, created by students as part of a competition. These slogans were accredited and enlisted as the best entries from the contest.

"Drug and Death - Couple with No Divorce" topped the rest and the acknowledgment of the nuanced and metaphorical references to the wife and husband never to be divorced appears both compulsorily heterosexual and naive, not to mention the valorised nature of the marital relationship as the ideal and the goal of all youthful relationships. This slogan is an allegory of the conservative reinforcement of the institution of marriage and propagating such ideas in a university campus where youth must engage in critical questioning of institutions that must be condemned. The pamphlet institutionalised the ritual of sexist harassment.

To begin with, why is there a need to gender the drug-use and drug-menace?

'Heroin' being punned with 'heroin' and the appeal to be a 'hero' without the counterpart are all such supposedly 'powerful slogans' that disturbingly equate drugs with women. "Be a hero without heroin" is an index of the masculine construction of heroism where the absence of the female counterpart adds to the glory of being a hero. Thinking in binaries, having a choice of either this or that, encourages irrationality. This is very evident in the immediate one that follows - Heroin will make you loose [sic] Heroine! Although it sounds apparently innocent and jocular, this slogan shows the sheer absence of gender sensitivity.

Secondly, it normalises the

prevalent gender stereotypes and patriarchal prejudices that exist around us. Women connoting drugs, inebriation and destruction being hailed as winning slogans is a reinforcement of unjust gender relations through not-so-veiled metaphors in the minds of the youth.

Benevolent sexism and 'concerns about protecting the rich cultural traditions of India' had been metaphorically showcased when the men students of another central university in northern India covered the university's walls with the picture of a 'caged bird' in which each bar of the cage represented 'faith', 'dignity', 'submission' and 'morality' with an inscription that cancelled any attempts of women to claim their human rights as 'evil' acts. In the same institute, women students were denied access to the library as the head of the institution believed that their presence unnecessarily invited boys to the library! The academic implications of this curfew had already been debated back in 2014.

Thus, the passive consumers of sexist ideology in fact indirectly or intently become its spokespersons later. A woman scholar from an institute of national importance states: "In a recent sports event, our batch won the overall championship. One of the teammates, a boy, said that the girls should go and collect the trophy even though they did not partake in the match. When asked about the reason for this he said that it was a compensation for cheering them which came as an insult for all of us girls. Our gestures of solidarity were misread and our male friends considered us cheer girls."

Despite clearing the UGC

National Eligibility Test (NET) and securing a Master's and a B. Ed. Degree from two different central universities, a woman lecturer was reduced to her clothing by the management of College of Applied Sciences (CAS), Kodungalloor, Kerala. The lecturer refused to meet the management's condition of wearing a saree and had to resign. This incident resulted in the state's higher education department issuing a circular, in November 2021, that clarified that the teachers do not have to adhere to a particular dress code.

It is embarrassing to understand that the statutes of various Central Universities, IITs and NITs carry gendered language. The references in these documents to the principal administrators like the Vice Chancellor, Director, Deputy Director and Registrar have taken the personal pronoun 'he' with its variant possessive forms wherever required. Does it mean that there is a predominant assumption about a woman's incapability to assume positions of power? Or is it mandatory that a woman, if at all fortunate to be in an office, compromises with the male oriented linguistic constructions evident in these documents?

Sexist harassment and the prevailing misogynistic sentiments around us certainly do have a negative impact on women's personal and professional development. It is high time society, especially its educational institutions, stopped objectifying women as pleasing gadgets/substances or as powerless secondary citizens.

Gender equality is one of the development goals that we need to strive towards for a sustainable society.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

HOW I WISH THE GOVERNOR HAD SHOWN DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE AND DUE DILIGENCE IN ACTING ON OUR CABINET'S RECOMMENDATION. —MAHARASHTRA EX-CHIEF MINISTER UDDHAV THACKERAY



(DEVENDRA) FADNAVIS COULD HAVE BECOME CM GOING BY THE NUMBERS BUT HE SHOWED A BIG HEART AND I THANK HIM. —MAHARASHTRA CM-DESIGNATE EKNATH SHINDE

India leads with effective climate change response

Decisive mandate for Modi Government helped India to step up climate change response

In the May 2014 general elections, after a gap of 24 years, a single party won the absolute majority in the Lok Sabha.

PM Modi gave the mantra of 'sabka sath, sabka vikas' for governance. This helped in unveiling the pro-poor and gender sensitive schemes such as Ujjawala and Swachh Bharat, besides enactment of triple talaq legislation. India's international stature also grew significantly. PM Modi retained power after the 2019 elections with BJP and its allies in the NDA winning 335 Lok Sabha seats.

On forest and environment conservation, it is worthwhile to assess the performance of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. Policies of the



VK BAHUGUNA

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Environment sector influence the success of several programmes of different Ministries. There is a mixed bag of assessment.

Soon after taking over the reign of administration the first thing the Ministry urgently needed was to ensure transparency in granting forest and environmental clearances. Transparency is the hallmark of corruption free governance. The Ministry apart from other steps had created a mechanism under the 'Parivesh' portal where all user agencies are supposed to apply online for environmental and forestry clearances. It has ensured transparency, accountability, and time bound performance and thus made the clearance process free from delay and red tape. Procedures were simplified for quick and professional examination of proposals. The changes ensured access of services to all sections of the people. While the poor people in the villages got quick clearances at the Regional offices/DFO levels for schools, police outpost, hospitals and other developmental works, the industries and other public utility sectors, necessary for infrastructure and development like water schemes, dams, electricity and mining, got timely clearances, which were earlier delayed for several years.

In a major reform, the Ministry in 2021 re-organized its regional offices by restructuring the manpower, besides constituting regional empowered committees so that interface with people and state governments improves for better governance and cut delays.

The Forest Survey of India recorded an 8021 square km increase in overall forest and tree cover amounting to one percent jump in forest and tree cover during 2015 to 2017. Similarly, the trend continued during 2019 to 2021 when the forest and tree cover in the country increased by 2261 square km, taking the country's forest and tree cover to 80.9 million hectares with 24.62 per cent of the geographic area. The tiger population in the country has witnessed a steady increase from 2226 in 2014 to 2967 in the latest assessment.

The Compensatory Afforestation and Management Authority (CAMPA) Amendment Bill was languishing for a long time. The government brought accountability and streamlined the use of CAMPA funds, amounting more than Rs 80,000 crore. More than Rs 48,000 crore was released by December 2021 to 32 States which will give impetus to increase the forest cover.

The welfare of more than 10 crore tribal people is at the core of the policy making of the government. The Ministry has signed a memorandum with the Ministry of Tribal Affairs to sort out the emerging issues between the two Ministries in the implementation of Forest Right Act 2006. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs in 2018 launched the 'Van Dhan' scheme in 2018 through TRIFED. This cross cutting scheme aims at increasing the income of tribal people

engaged in the collection of Minor Forest Products (MFPs) through value addition of the products through Minimum Support Price (MSP) & Development of value Chain for MFPs in 340 districts of 27 states through 3225 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras to 10 lakh tribals.

On the international stage, PM Modi has assumed the leadership role in the field of climate change negotiations and India is the voice of developing countries. India has solid achievements in the field of combating climate change. The Prime Minister jointly with French President Emanuel Macron created an International Solar Alliance to combat climate change. India has achieved its voluntary target of reducing emissions

intensity of its GDP by 21 per cent over 2005 levels by 2020 and is poised to achieve 35 per cent reduction well before the target year of 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2070. India is home to 17 percent of the world population but our emission footprint is only 4 per cent compared with the developed world's 60 per cent with 17 per cent population.

However, on the flip side the Ministry has fallen in the trap of a few foreign agencies by promoting certification of government forests. It will compromise the sovereignty of the country on our natural resources and the Prime Minister as well as External Affairs Minister must caution the Environment Minister from 'acting penny wise pound foolish'.

Cryptocurrencies 'clear danger', says RBI Governor

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Thursday described cryptocurrencies as "clear danger" and said that anything that derives value based on make believe, without any underlying, is just speculation under a sophisticated name.

The government is in the process of finalising a consultation paper on cryptocurrencies after gathering inputs from various stakeholders and institutions.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been flagging concerns about cryptocurrencies, which are seen as a highly speculative asset.

In the foreword to the 25th issue of the Financial Stability Report (FSR) released on Thursday, Das also said that as the financial system gets increasingly digitalised, cyber risks are growing and need special attention.

"We must be mindful of the emerging risks on the horizon. Cryptocurrencies are a clear



The government is in the process of finalising a consultation paper on cryptocurrencies after gathering inputs from various stakeholders and institutions.

danger. Anything that derives value based on make believe, without any underlying, is just speculation under a sophisticated name," Das said.

In recent weeks, cryptocurrencies, which are not back by any underlying value, have witnessed massive volatility amid global uncertainties.

RBI first came out with a circular regarding cryptocurrencies in 2018 and had barred entities regulated by it from dealing in such instruments.

However, in early 2020, Supreme Court struck down the circular.

While regulatory clarity is yet to emerge with respect to the cryptocurrency space in the country, the government is working to finalise a consultation paper on cryptocurrencies with inputs from various stakeholders and institutions, including the World Bank and the IMF.

In the foreword of the FSR, Das also said that while tech-

nology has supported the reach of the financial sector and its benefits must be fully harnessed, its potential to disrupt financial stability has to be guarded against.

"As the financial system gets increasingly digitalised, cyber risks are growing and need special attention," he noted.

Regarding the economy, he said it is skewed towards global spillovers and geopolitical tensions.

Economy on recovery path:RBI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday said the Indian economy is well on the path of recovery even though inflationary pressures and geopolitical risks warrant careful handling and close monitoring of the situation.

The RBI's 25th Financial Stability Report (FSR) also said banks as well as non-banking financial institutions have sufficient capital buffers to withstand shocks.

"Notwithstanding the challenges from global spillovers, the Indian economy remains on the path of recovery, though inflationary pressures, external spillovers and geopolitical risks warrant careful handling and close monitoring," the report said. The report observed that the outlook for the global economy is shrouded by considerable uncertainty because of the war in Europe, front-loaded monetary policy normalisation by central banks in response to persistently high inflation and multiple waves of the coronavirus pandemic.

Centre's fiscal deficit at 12.3 pc of full year target in May: Official data

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The central government's fiscal deficit at the end of May stood at 12.3 per cent of the annual budget target for 2022-23, mainly due to higher expenditure, according to official data released on Thursday.

Fiscal deficit is the difference between total expenditure and revenue of the government. It is an indication of the total borrowings that are needed by the government.

The fiscal deficit was at 8.2 per cent of the Budget Estimate (RE) of 2021-22 during the corresponding period.

In actual terms, the deficit was at Rs 2,03,921 crore at the end of May, as per the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

The country's fiscal deficit is projected at 6.4 per cent of the GDP for this fiscal ending March 2023 as against 6.71 per cent for the previous year.

As per the data, the total



receipts of the government at the end of May was at Rs 3.81 lakh crore or 16.7 per cent of the BE for 2022-23. The collection was about 18 per cent of the BE of 2021-22 in the corresponding period last fiscal.

In May, the tax (net) revenue was at 15.9 per cent of the BE of 2022-23. It was 15.1 per cent of the BE 2021-22 in the year-ago period.

In actual terms, the net tax

revenue stood at Rs 3,07,589 crore during April-May 2022-23.

As per the data, the central government's total expenditure at the end of May stood at Rs 5.85 lakh crore or 14.8 per cent of this year's BE. It was 13.7 per cent of the BE in the corresponding period.

For 2022-23, the fiscal deficit of the government is estimated to be Rs 16,61,196 crore.

MONEY MATTERS

Govt approves sale of electoral bonds from July 1-10



The government on Wednesday approved issuance of the 21st tranche of electoral bonds that will open for sale from July 1. Electoral bonds have been pitched as an alternative to cash donations made to political parties as part of efforts to bring transparency in political funding. State Bank of

India (SBI), in the 21st phase of sale, has been authorised to issue and encash electoral bonds through its 29 authorised branches with effect from July 1 to July 10, the finance ministry said in a statement. The authorised SBI branches include those in Lucknow, Shimla, Dehradun, Kolkata, Guwahati, Chennai, Patna, New Delhi, Chandigarh, Srinagar, Gandhinagar, Bhopal, Raipur, and Mumbai. Assembly elections are due in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh later this year. Polls for five states -- Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Goa -- concluded in March this year. Electoral bonds can be purchased by Indian citizens or entities incorporated or established in the country. Registered political parties that have secured not less than 1 per cent of the votes polled in the last Lok Sabha or legislative assembly election are eligible to receive funding through electoral bonds.

India's coffee exports rise 19 pc in Jan-Jun this year



Coffee shipments from India, Asia's third-largest producer and exporter, rose 19 per cent to 2,24,293 tonne in the first half of the current calendar year, according to Coffee Board. The country had exported 1,88,736 tonnes in the year-ago period. India ships both robusta and

Arabica varieties, besides instant coffee. According to the Board's latest data, the shipment of Robusta coffee jumped 39.43 per cent to 1,32,852 tonne during January-June 2022 from 95,280 tonne in the same period last year. Whereas Arabica coffee exports declined 16.75 per cent to Rs 29,058 tonne from 34,905 tonne in the said period. In the case of instant coffee, its shipments increased by 24 per cent to 15,858 tonne from 12,794 tonne in the year-ago period. The volume of coffee re-exported remained marginally higher at 46,324 tonne against 45,621 tonne. Italy, Germany and Belgium were the major export destinations for Indian coffee during the period.

India, Japan discuss cooperation in 5G technology



Cooperation in 5G telecom technology figured prominently in the India-Japan cyber dialogue held virtually on Thursday. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said both sides discussed important areas of bilateral cyber cooperation and reviewed the progress achieved in the areas of cybersecurity and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) including 5G Technology," the MEA said in a statement.

The Indian delegation at the fourth India-Japan Cyber Dialogue was led by Muanpui Saiawi, joint secretary in the MEA's cyber diplomacy division. The Japanese delegation was led by Yutaka Arima, ambassador in-charge of cyber policy at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Indian delegation consisted of senior officials from THE MEA, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Defence, National Security Council Secretariat, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Department of Telecommunications, Indian Computer Emergency Response Team and National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre.

Maruti Suzuki drives in all new Brezza, prices starting at Rs 7.99 lakh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India on Thursday launched the all-new version of its compact SUV Brezza, with a price starting from Rs 7.99 lakh (ex-showroom) as it seeks to strengthen its presence in the SUV segment to reinforce its leadership position.

The second-generation Brezza, which competes with the likes of Tata Nexon, Hyundai Venue and Kia Sonet, will be available in manual and automatic transmission options, priced between Rs 7.99 lakh and Rs 13.96 lakh.

The manual trims are priced between Rs 7.99 lakh and Rs 12.46 lakh while the automatic variants are tagged between Rs 10.96 lakh and Rs 13.96 lakh.

Speaking at the launch, Maruti Suzuki India Managing Director and CEO



Hisashi Takeuchi said the all-new Brezza is the company's sixth launch in the last eight months and "reflects our confidence in the Indian market".

As part of the company's vision of providing 'Joy of mobility' to as many people as possible, the automaker will strengthen its "presence across segments, with special focus on SUV portfolio", he added.

Also, it will introduce products that are high on design, technology and features and

bring products, which "offer indulgence, comfort and convenience that reflect the aspirations of New India".

"The all-new Brezza is an important step in this direction. This model is the first offering in our upcoming vibrant SUV portfolio," Takeuchi noted.

Stressing that the Brezza has a strong legacy, he said, "It was our first model to be conceived, designed, and developed exclusively for India".

National Rubber Mission in offing to boost domestic production

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rubber Board on Thursday said it is finalising the contours of a national rubber mission in order to boost domestic production and reduce imports.

Currently, nearly 35 per cent of the domestic demand is met through imports.

"A National Rubber Mission is in the works to produce enough natural rubber within the country so as to meet the demands of domestic industry and minimise import," Rubber Board Executive Director K N Raghavan said while addressing the Managing Committee Meeting of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA). The proposed mis-



sion will target new rubber plantation in 5 lakh hectares of land by 2025-26 with the focus being on non-traditional areas, an official statement quoted Raghavan having said in the meeting.

Nearly 95,000 hectares have been identified for planting in

the current financial year, he added.

The tyre industry is all for verdant natural rubber plantation in the country for producing rubber that is qualitatively superior and competitively priced, said ATMA Chairman Satish Sharma.

Rupee relatively better placed than other global currencies against dollar: FM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the rupee declining against the US dollar, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday said the Indian currency is relatively better placed than other global currencies against the greenback.

Emerging market currencies have been falling against dollar amid geopolitical tensions in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine war, concerns over growth, high global crude prices, sustained inflation and central banks worldwide adopting hawkish monetary policy approach. "We are relatively better placed. We are not a closed economy. We are part of the globalised world. So, we will be impacted (by global developments)," the finance minister said on the sidelines of an event here. She was responding to a question on the movement of rupee



against the dollar. The rupee breached the psychologically significant level of 79 per dollar level for the first time ever on Wednesday and has also hit a series of lifetime lows this month. However, on Thursday, the domestic currency rose 13 paise to 78.90 against the US dollar in early trade. Since the war in Ukraine broke out in late February, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has expended its foreign exchange reserves in order to shield the rupee from steep depreciation.

4.4 GW solar projects seeing cost pressure

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The increase in prices of solar PV cells and modules coupled with the Basic Customs Duty (BCD) effective from April 1 is leading to cost pressure for solar power projects aggregating 4.4 GigaWatt (GW), according to Icrea.

The rating agency said these are the projects awarded over the last 12-18 months.

The cost of solar PV modules (mono PERC) has climbed by over 40 per cent to USD 27-28 cents per watt in the past 18 months, mainly driven by the disruption in operations across the value chain of the solar PV module manufacturing in China and the spike in the cost of polysilicon, a key input for module producers.

The cost pressure is signifi-

cant for projects aggregating to 4.4 GW which constitutes around 12 per cent of the projects under implementation in the country, Icrea said in a report.

"The increase in solar PV cell and module prices along with the imposition of BCD on imported cells and modules is leading to cost pressure for solar power projects awarded over the last 12-18 months," Girishkumar Kadam, Senior Vice President & Co-Group Head - Corporate ratings at Icrea, said.

Last year, the government announced imposing 40 per cent BCD on solar modules and 25 per cent on solar cells with effect from April 1, 2022.

While the bid tariffs have increased from the lows of Rs 1.99 per unit in Dec 2020 to Rs



2.2-2.5 per unit, the extent of the increase in bid tariffs remained lower than what Icrea estimates is necessary to mitigate the increase in module

prices, Kadam said.

"The risk of moderation in returns is significant for projects aggregating to 4.4 GW awarded over the past 18

months, wherein the tariffs are below Rs 2.2 per unit," he added.

According to Icrea, as modules are required to be sourced

from domestic OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) under the ALMM (Approved List of Models and Manufacturers) notification for projects awarded post-Apr 2021 and a majority of the domestic OEMs do not have backward integration beyond cells, the dependence on wafer/cell imports is likely to continue over the medium term.

Recently, Union New and Renewable Energy Minister R K Singh said there are "no plans" to review the BCD levied on solar modules and cells.

"I don't want any Chinese imports and want everything Made in India. As a result of the duty, the domestic manufacturing capacity of modules and cells has started going up," he had said.

Yesteryear's Glam Queen Zeenat Aman Unspools Her Memories



All that is simple is not devoid of a wondrous depth. Veteran actress Zeenat Aman expanded upon diverse topics ranging from her love for rice and 'dal' to the chutzpah that unconventional roles in movies demand.

Zeenat opened up about her choice for food and said, "I am a vegetarian and my favourite food is dal chawal."

The actress who gave several hits such as *Satyam Shivam Sundaram*, *Hare Rama Hare Krishna*, *Qurbani*, *Dhund*, *Don*, *Manoranjan* and *Yaadon Ki Baarat*, was known for doing unconventional roles and breaking the on screen image of traditional Indian women with her bold and bindaas persona.

She said, "I was bold enough to take up roles that other celebrities were hesitant to take up. When I pause and look back, I feel blessed that I had so many opportunities."

While talking about her favorite director, she took the name of legendary Raj Kapoor and called him a 'perfectionist'.

Among her most challenging projects, she said, "It was *Satyam Shivam Sundaram* and *Hare Rama Hare Krishna*."

When asked about the most embarrassing moment of her life she said, "Most embarrassing

moment for me is when people come and request me to sign autographs as Parveen Babi or Shabana Azmi."

The actress started her career with modeling and also worked as a journalist. She said, "I took up journalism as I love writing."

On how she bagged Dev Anand's *Hare Rama Hare Krishna*, the actress recalled, "The film's director OP Ralhan knew that Dev Anand was looking for an actress for the film. A lot of the actresses had turned down the role because they wanted to play the romantic lead. So, OP Ralhan organised a meeting with Dev Anand. I was in my room, smoking a pipe, wearing a skirt, and he (Dev Anand) considered me to be perfect for the role."

She further shared, "I had the good fortune of working with a lot of actor-directors like Dev Anand, Raj Kapoor, Shammi Kapoor, Manoj Kumar, Amjad Khan, Feroz Khan and Sanjay Khan. Many of these were filmmakers and actors. So they brought that extra bit of creativity."

She also talked about working in the movie *Shalimar* starring Dharmendra, Zeenat Aman, Shammi Kapoor, Prem Nath and Aruna Irani. The film was being made in Hindi and English both at the same time and the actress recalled how two tutors were

appointed, one for Zeenat to teach Hindi and other for Dharmendra for English.

"It was so funny after the shoot, Dharmendra used to be in his room with his English teacher and I would be with my Hindi teacher."

She also gave her piece of advice to the actress of today's generation, saying, "Today's female stars have to be careful while choosing roles as a wrong choice affects them in the long run."

Later, she also emphasised on certain positive changes in the film industry, "I think our girls are doing wonderful projects. They're doing women-oriented films and they are asking for fair pay and there is more pay parity now as compared to that time."

On her OTT projects, Zeenat shared, "I have just completed two web series. I enjoy my work but in short quantity."

She asserted that now she wants to take up those roles that she had not played before. "I'm going to try a lot of things that I haven't done. Maybe I would write, maybe direct a project and a lot of things that I look forward to."

On the question of trolling that many have to face today, she said, "For several personal reasons I am not on social media but trolling was done during our times also in different ways."



Travis Barker Hospitalised For Pancreatitis

The reason behind *Blink-182* drummer Travis Barker being admitted to a hospital following an undisclosed medical condition is now reported to be pancreatitis, which in doctors' opinion has been triggered by a colonoscopy, reports Variety.

According to 'TMZ', multiple sources connected to the family have confirmed the hospitalisation was a result of pancreas inflammation which includes symptoms like nausea, intense stomach pain and vomiting.

There are no details as to when Barker had the colonoscopy, but 'TMZ' reports it was recent. The 46-year-old and husband to Kourtney Kardashian was rushed to Cedars-Sinai Medical Centre for further care after first checking into West Hills Hospital and Medical Centre on Tuesday.

'Variety' further states that Barker's medical history involves illnesses like staph infection and cellulitis, which is a bacterial infection that can cause swelling, inflammation and pain. In

2018, he suffered blood clots in his arms, forcing a string of shows from Blink-182's Las Vegas residency to be cancelled. Moreover, in 2008, Barker endured the traumatic experience of a plane crash that claimed the lives of six people; he previously opened up about how the accident left him with third-degree burns all over his body.

For nearly three decades, Barker has been a pillar of the music industry. His most recent collaborations include Machine Gun Kelly and Post Malone.

South Park: The Streaming Wars Part 2 Teaser Shows Fictional Town Being Pushed To Disaster



The teaser of *South Park: The Streaming Wars*

Part 2 was released on Thursday. The fourth South Park TV movie

is set to stream from July 13 on OTT platform Paramount+,

reports 'Deadline'. As per 'Deadline' the streaming movie tells the story of a severe drought that pushes the town of South Park to the brink of disaster, as evidenced by one man's desperate attempt to gain entry to a water park.

Part 1 of The Streaming Wars premiered June 1 on Paramount+ and saw Cartman locking horns with his mom in a battle of wills, while an epic conflict unfolded and threatened South

Park's very existence. South Park co-creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone serve as executive producers on both Streaming Wars projects, alongside Anne Garefino and Frank C. Agnoffe II. Eric Stough, Adrian Beard, Bruce Howell and Vernon Chatman are producers.

The latest South Park telepic continues the 25th anniversary celebration of the low-tech town, which premiered August 13, 1997, on Comedy Central.

James Bond Being Reinvented

Charming and stylish British secret service agent James Bond won't be returning to the silver screen for at least two years as the character is getting a revamp as per the franchise producer Barbara Broccoli, reports Deadline.

The producer told Deadline at a star-studded private event in central London to honor Broccoli and her brother Michael G. Wilson for their BFI Fellowships, that it will be at least two years before the next 007 movie begins filming. He said that the task of finding an actor to replace Daniel Craig hasn't begun "because it's a reinvention of Bond."

Broccoli wouldn't be drawn on who would play Bond next but did offer an update on the decision-making process.

She said, "Nobody's in the run-



the next film because, really, it's a reinvention of Bond. We're reinventing who he is and that takes time. I'd say that filming is at least two years away."

Deadline further stated that the night was a Bond love fest, peppered with warm-hearted and witty video messages from Bond luminaries, including Craig, Dame Judi Dench, Lea Seydoux, Rami Malek, and Sam Mendes, director of *Skyfall* and *Spectre*.

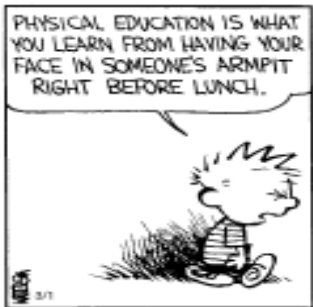
EON duo Broccoli and Wilson were presented their BFI Fellowships by Bond regulars Ralph Fiennes, who plays spy chief M, and Naomie Harris, who plays no-nonsense Miss Moneypenny.

FUN

ARCHIE



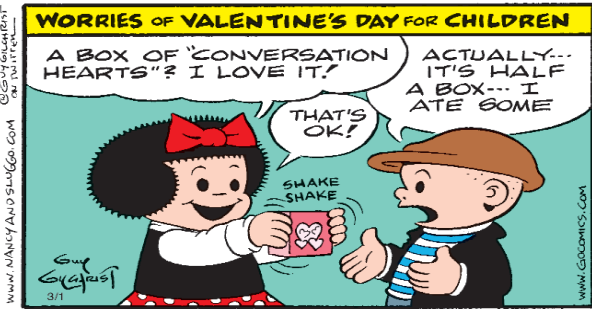
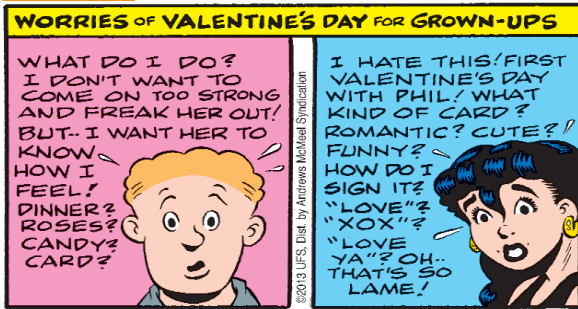
CALVIN AND HOBBS



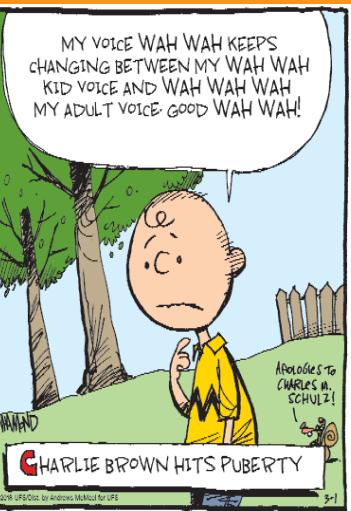
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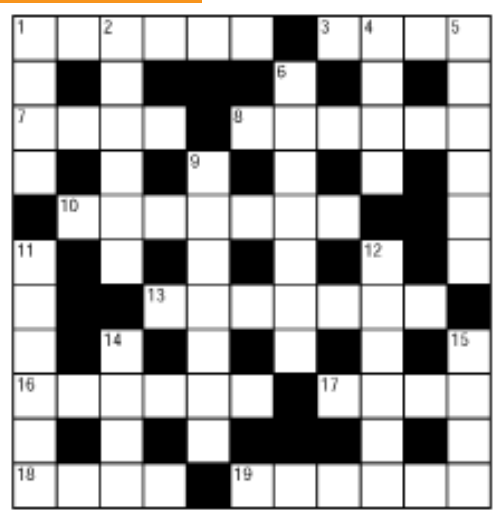
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



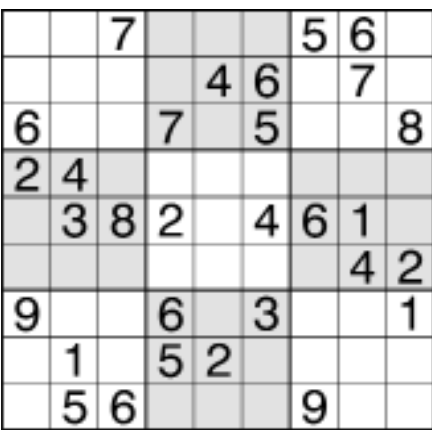
CROSSWORD



GINGER MEGGS



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

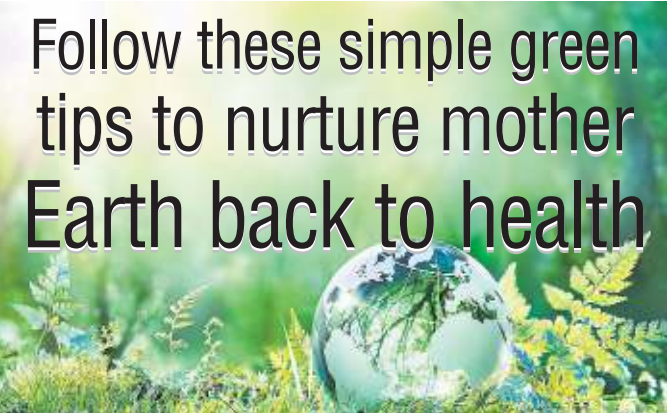
ACROSS

- Nearly
- Wide smile
- Tame animals
- This colour plus red makes orange
- One hundred years
- Parts of a minute
- Tired and drowsy
- Meat and vegetables boiled slowly
- Drink made from grapes
- Happening every twelve months

DOWN

- Mountains
- A parent
- A law
- The one bought most recently
- Sleep in this room
- Try
- A puzzle with many pieces
- A newspaper boss
- A plant with fronds that grows in shady places
- Absent





Follow these simple green tips to nurture mother Earth back to health

Extreme weather conditions, untimely rains, scorching heat and frequent natural calamities are the by-products of destructive human activities: an inordinate amount of greenhouse gases, deforestation and destabilised ecosystems. Increased use of plastic and non-biodegradable products is stressing the environment even more. As global conferences and youth-led mass movements address the danger of climate change on a broader scale, we, as individuals, can also do our bit for the environment right at home. If all of us take the initiative to make small changes in our lives, cumulatively they will have a huge positive impact on the environment.

Here are a few ways in which we can all do our bit for mother Earth.

Ditch single-use plastics:

Single-use plastics like disposable cups and take-away containers are a part of our everyday lives, but the harm they can cause to the environment is beyond our comprehension. Scientists predict that by 2050, there will be more plastic than fish in water bodies, especially in the oceans. Straws, chocolate wrappers, plastic cups, bottles, and bags create around 300 million tonnes of plastic each year and leave a huge carbon footprint on the planet. They are also consumed by animals, and they contaminate groundwater and the food chain. We can also stop buying over-packaged produce from supermarkets and instead buy fresh vegetables and fruits from local farmers.

Build an eco-sensitive home:

As architects like Didi Contractor, Chitra Vishwanath, Laurie Baker, and Charles Correa have proven, sustainable architecture can also be beautiful, comfortable, and affordable. Building a green home with climate-appropriate, locally available materials, using solar panels, composting waste, and harvesting rainwater can make a huge difference to the earth. Houses can be constructed in such a way that ample light and air get in and there is natural ventilation. Reports say that 40% of greenhouse gas emis-

sions are from the construction sector. Minimising construction waste should be a priority and we must realise that transporting materials like Italian marble or granite, etc. from other states can leave behind a big footprint.

Plant, donate, or gift a tree:

Gift a sapling to a loved one on a special day or planting a tree to memorialise an occasion or a relationship are simple ways to give back to the earth. Trees are possibly one of the most thoughtful and eco-friendly gifts as they leave a lasting and loving impression on the earth. Off late, you can also send greetings through a eTreeCertificate or eTree Card to one or many people.

Switch to slow fashion:

Cheap but fast-wearing clothes that we buy online often end up in overflowing landfills, and it is time to think about the true cost of fast fashion. Our independence movement was focused upon Swadeshi products, including Khadi, and maybe it is time to announce our independence from synthetic, unsustainable fabrics. Khadi is slowly coming back in vogue and in October 2021, the Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC) in Delhi saw an exponential sale of Rs 1.02 crore. Popular brands are also introducing fabrics like linen, mulmul, and bamboo cotton, while designers are upcycling vintage fabrics and creating slow fashion that lasts a long time.

Reduce, reuse, recycle:

One of the biggest issues the earth is facing today is the accumulation of unsegregated waste. We can segregate our waste and also reconsider the culture of impulse led shopping which wastes money and often clutters our home with things we don't need. We can also follow the three R's of waste management to create a sustainable life and to prevent stuff from ending in landfills. We can all resist the urge to buy unnecessary things and also repair and reuse items rather than replacing them. We can also upcycle and recycle furniture, clothes and objects to continue using them rather than discarding them thoughtlessly.

Medical bills resulting financial toxicity?

SHIKHA DUGGAL

During the past few years medical science has observed rapid advancements, due to which the cost of medical treatment has increased drastically. Medical emergencies or accidents do not happen with prior intimation. It could happen at any point of time and leave us in a state of shock and

bills, drugs, lodging, and travel is directly apparent and countable, indirect cost is also substantial and includes days off work, loss of daily wedges, deceased work efficiency. It is a worldwide problem and is a major cause of bankruptcy. In India also, financial toxicity is a major hurdle in optimum cancer care."

Over 75% of the cancer patients incur out-of-pocket expenses that are not covered by insurance compa-

has also shot up immensely. A six months course of, for example, immunotherapy in recurrent head and neck cancer may cost 12 to 15 lacs to the patients. Other determinants of financial toxicity are low government health expenditure, poorly maintained public hospitals, and poor penetration of care facilities in rural and remote areas forcing the patients to come to metro cities for the treatment.

sure there are no out-pocket expenses or they are kept to the minimum.

In additional, he says, "Much work needs to be done to alleviate the financial toxicity of cancer care. It requires broad engagement of patients, doctors, government, public and private hospitals, NGOs to develop a patient-centered treatment delivery system that integrates effective care with the respective disease economics. Regular awareness and health education programs in the society can encourage the patients seek care in early stage of the disease."

Besides significantly high chances of cure, the cost of the treatment is also substantially low in early stages of as they are usually managed with one treatment modality. The extent of the surgery is limited with minimal postoperative complications and hospital stay in early-stage cancer, bringing down the cost of the treatment significantly. So, health insurance coverage needs to be expanded to contain the out-of-pocket expenditure on care.

Other effective measures to reduce the financial toxicity are cost transparency, availability of financial counsellors, and second treatment opinions.

He says, "The specialists are duty bound to communicate realistic outcomes to the patients without any prejudice, false hopes or reassurance, and vested interests like new and expensive drugs with marginal survival benefit in days/weeks must not be prescribed as magic drugs. It is the duty of the government to enhance health expenditure for widely available care facilities across the country, including the remote and hilly areas, to ensure successful implementation of Ayushman and other government schemes, to formulate standard treatment guidelines based on evidence-based practice, to bring out the, for example, anticancer drugs price-fixing policy," he substantiated.

Financial assistance with low-interest rates and staggered repayment option to patient needs to be strengthened through public or private banks. Public-private partnership is an attractive model that needs to be encouraged for consolidating the care facilities in India, especially to bridge the gap in remote areas.

As we celebrate World Doctors Day today, *The Pioneer* brings to you how medical treatments and bills can lead to financial toxicity



trauma. Taking care of the patient and ensuring quality medical treatment won't suffice, arranging sufficient funds for paying the hospital expenses also add on to the tension. To ensure complete peace of mind and fight effectively against illness rather than sourcing finances, a prior financial planning is essential.

On the special occasion of Doctor's day, we speak to Dr. Pankaj Kumar Garg, an oncologist on how, for instance, cancer may kill one patient but its financial toxicity lays the whole family.

Current estimates suggest that out of every 9 Indians, 1 among them will develop cancer in their lifetime. "Despite wide under-reporting of the cancer data, it still gives a glimpse of the huge magnitude of the financial toxicity of cancer treatment."

But, we were trying to understand better, what exactly is this terminology called financial toxicity? He clears, "Financial toxicity is a kind of financial distress that a cancer patient and his/her caregivers face due to the direct and indirect cost of the cancer treatment. Though direct cost of cancer including hospital

nies or government schemes. The cost of care has become so onerous that some people have ditched going to the doctor altogether.

The expert continued, "The financial toxicity is determined by multiple factors. At patient level, advanced stage at the presentation is a major issue as over 70-80% of Indian patients still seek treatment very late in the course of the disease. The treatment of advanced stage usually warrants multi-modality treatment which escalates the treatment cost substantially. Other patient related factors are poor insurance coverage, recurrent cancer, education, young age, low household income, geographic location of residence, lack of savings and other social responsibilities."

In fact, according to a poll, close to 3 in 10 of the participants said they considered not seeking care to avoid their high deductibles, while more than 20% said they stretched their prescription drugs by taking less than the recommended dosage.

With newer treatment options available in the armamentarium of the doctors, the cost of the treatment

On buying a health insurance plan, a small fraction of the coverage amount goes as premium to the insurance company. A policyholder, therefore, expects the insurer to pay the entire hospitalization bill amount to the hospital. However, there could be instances when the insurer pays only a partial amount and the policyholder has to bear the balance as out-of-pocket expenses. In spite of having a medical insurance cover, a policyholder may have to pay a portion of the bill to the hospital.

"The impacts of financial toxicity are both short term and long-term for the patients and their caregivers. Immediate fallouts of financial toxicity are poor treatment compliance and, incomplete treatment, and poor quality of life of not only the patients but also the caregivers. It also results in accumulation of debts for the family. It pushes slowly pushes the family into poverty when they are deprived of basic life necessities including school dropouts of the children," he added.

He advises while purchasing a health insurance policy, keep a few important things in mind to make

Making a profession of something you love is never an easy task. It's the same with Dino James, who takes us through his journey, his album, his style of music and a lot more in an exclusive interview



K. RAMYA SREE

He spent many years being rejected, underestimated, demotivated, and unappreciated in various professions.

Despite this, he didn't let it affect his confidence and kept doing what he does best: hip hop. What makes Dino James stand out from other hip-hop artists and one of the most celebrated musicians in the country is his pure storytelling process.

Recently, Def Jam India, an international record company that was launched in India, published his first album. One of the first two Indians to be signed by the multinational label was Dino James.

The album introduces Dino and focuses on his independently created path in Indian hip-hop as well as how he has developed musically to merge rap and melody, changing not only himself but also the Indian hip-hop scene. On the album, tough rap tracks like *Chosen*, *Sab Ka Rapper Ek*, *D*, and *D and Me* meet thematically rapped songs like *Lost*, *Pyaar Pyaar*,

'Every music has a story'

and *Arambol*, showcasing Dino's flexibility in hip-hop. This time, we catch up with the renowned musician to get some insider information about his life, music, and everything in between.

Excerpts from the interview:

Can you first tell more about your album?

My album is a compilation of the music I wanted to do; hip hop, melody, rap. I have been a big fan of hip hop all my life. So I have attempted to put together this album in a natural way.

Where do you draw inspiration from for your music?

Inspiration can come from anywhere. From watching hip hop music videos to reading books to talking to people around you, I take inspiration from everything. I've always been around a lot of directors and filmmakers, and we talk about ideas all the time. I try to include it in the music I listen to. The stories going on around you are a significant source of inspiration for me since there is so much music being created on this planet.

How does it feel to be one of the two Indians to collaborate with Def Jam?

Well, my whole attention has been on

improving myself. I've been working really hard as an independent artist for the last six years, and it has totally paid off. Numerous labels have contacted me, but I have always said no. But Def Jam sounded excellent when I heard about it. It is a reputable, veteran hip-hop label that has done it all. There was no reason not to work with them since they are a group that can enhance my craft.

Can you take us through your journey to becoming a celebrated hip-hop artist?

Like any other hip hop artist, you first have no idea what's going on and are just focused on writing songs. I still don't see any artists becoming successful overnight. It is a process, and whether or not your music succeeds is not in your control. I give the songs my best and really focus on them. Whatever occurs, I believe, is a favour from God.

What inspired you to take up hip hop?

I didn't choose hip hop, the Goddess of hip hop chose me. I had no idea I was a crafty person until it just occurred. It was all God's decision. I had no idea that I could write. I was a dyslexic child who never showed any interest in writing. My mother at times breaks down in tears when she reads my work and wonders whether I am the same kid who was unable to read or write when I was younger.

When did you know for sure that this was the career you wanted to keep?

In the course of creating three songs, as well as in the brief feedback sessions I used to get from friends, I realised I am a capable writer. By God's grace, my three songs became a success, and as a result, I realised that this is my calling and what I was intended to do. I had previously believed that if my first three songs I wrote didn't do well, then I was on the wrong road.

How would you describe your style of music?

I am a storyteller. So my songs and the topics are entirely drawn from events in my life. I was overcome by feelings. I wanted a setting where I could let my emotions run wild. This is why I went with hip hop. Pure, simple, excellent storytelling is my USP.

What hip-hop music did you listen to growing up?

I used to listen to a lot of rappers like Drake, Eminem, and other artists, but I was a huge fan of Eminem in particular, because it seemed to be speaking for me, in my opinion.

Which is your favourite instrument and why?

My favourite instrument has always been the guitar. My subconscious musical adventure began when a buddy taught me how to play the guitar. I felt free to sing when I learned to play the guitar.

Who is your favourite singer of all time?

I grew up listening to a lot of different singers. I've been listening to Arijit a lot lately. He is emitting an entirely different vibration. I also like a number of other musicians, including Rahman, Lucky Ali, Bob Dylan, and Axl Rose.

A message to give fans?

Be genuine. Whatever you choose to do, never lose sight of who you are. Create things and tell your story.

Rashmika's performance in *Pushpa* gets her lead role in *Animal*

Rashmika's performance in *Pushpa* and her character of Srivalli made her an overnight sensation and since then she has been unstoppable. The famous step *Saami* by the star is still the most trendy step on social media. Due to her phenomenal performance in *Pushpa*, Rashmika Mandanna was roped in for Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Animal* alongside Ranbir Kapoor.

Talking about the same,

Rashmika says, "The makers of *Animal* approached me for the film after they saw my performance in *Pushpa*. I did not think twice before saying yes to the film because I was confident that the audience would get to enjoy a new side of me."

Post the success of *Pushpa*, Rashmika Mandanna is the IT girl. The actress is undoubtedly one of the freshest faces in India today. Due to her charm, aura, and talent, Rashmika is one of

the most celebrated actors in India today. She is undoubtedly the national crush of India and her vivacious energy makes the actress stand apart.

Rashmika is currently the IT girl of the industry, with a lineup of big-budget films from all across industries in her kitty. Apart from *Goodbye*, she will be next seen in *Pushpa 2*, *Animal* opposite Ranbir Kapoor, *Mission Majnu* opposite Sidharth Malhotra and *Varisu*.



Modern Love arrives in Hyderabad

To kick off the promotions for upcoming Amazon Original series *Modern Love Hyderabad*, a few cast members and creators were spotted during the wee hours of the day at the historic Charminar.

Producers Elahe Hiptoola, actors Abijeet Duddala, Naresh Agastya, Komalee Prasad and director Uday Gurralla were seen posing in front of the structure to announce the launch of new Telugu Amazon Original. Commenting at the moment, Elahe Hiptoola, producer of Amazon Original series *Modern Love Hyderabad*, "It's an extremely overwhelming feeling to be standing in front of the iconic and gorgeous Charminar, a structure that is symbolic of Hyderabad. Apart

from having lived all my life in this beautiful city, I began my career as a storyteller with Hyderabad Blues which introduced the world to the uniqueness of this city and with *Modern Love Hyderabad* we go further in bringing the common people, culture and cuisine to audiences. We are super excited for the series to launch on July 8 on Amazon Prime Video and hope viewers across the globe will enjoy our delicious spread and let love in with these heartwarming gems."

Ram Pothineni rubbishes rumours on marriage



Actor Ram Pothineni, who is all set for his upcoming action comedy film, *The Warrior*, squashes rumours of him mar-

rying his high school sweetheart.

For the past few days, the rumours of the actor getting married have been doing rounds. Finally, the actor breaks his silence. The actor on Wednesday took to his social media and refuted that he will be tying the knot.

He said, "Oh God! Stop!..... It's reached a point where in I'm having to convince my own family and friends that I'm not getting married to any 'Secret High School Sweetheart' TBH, I hardly went to High School."

Jr NTR wins hearts, once again

NTR is always known for his helping nature and down-to-earth attitude. He comes forward to help anyone who is in dire need.

According to the latest updates, it is coming out that Janardhan, a diehard fan of NTR was suffering from ill health and was admitted to the hospital. His health condition deteriorated and his mother expressed her desire to speak with NTR.

Fans of NTR forwarded this news to NTR.

NTR at once showed his kind heart and called Janardhan's mother at once and assured them of all help. He also told them that

he will soon meet them in person and Janardhan recovers completely. He asked them to be strong and keep faith in God. NTR's gesture won the appreciation

of his fans. NTR recently showed his power at the box office in Rajamouli's *RRR* and has his next projects with Koratala Shiva and Prashant Neel.



Words fall short to express gratitude, actress Raashi tells fans

Actress Raashi Khanna, who plays the female lead in director Maruthi's *Pakka Commercial* which is scheduled to hit screens today. On Wednesday expressed her heartfelt gratitude to fans for their unconditional support to her.

Taking to Instagram, the actress said, "The crazy schedules, the 24-hour shifts, the night shoots, the diets, the workouts, the multiple city hopping - every second feels worth it when I get to meet you and see your love and enthusiasm. Words always fall short for me to express my gratitude. Thank you for all your love and support through and through. My heart is full! p.s: *Pakka Commercial* releases today. Hope to really entertain you through this one and bring a smile to your face. Lots of love your way."

The trailer of the film,

which the team released a few days ago, shows Gopichand playing an advocate who does not mind taking the side of law breakers for a handsome sum in the film.

Raashi Khanna joins as an assistant to Gopichand in the film while Sathyaraj, who plays Gopichand's dad in the film, chooses to appear against his own son for the sake of justice in the film.

The film, that has been written and directed by Maruthi, is being presented by Allu Aravind and

produced by Bunny Vass.

Cinematographer Karm Chawla has shot the film while Jakes Bejoy has scored the music of the film, which is scheduled to hit screens on July 1.



Haunting and Mysterious!!!

K. RAMYA SREE

Review:

Anya's tutorial is a mystery crime thriller premiering on aha from today in both Tamil and Telugu languages.

The lead roles in the film are played by Regina Cassandra as Madhu and Nivedithaa Sathish as Lavanya, who are both sisters with a terrified past. They deal with bringing unearthly things alive and recounting incidents of paranormal activities and experiences. The two girls don't believe in the existence of God due to the circumstances they face after the demise of their father.

The story revolves around these two sisters where Madhu

is unhappy with Lavanya aka Anya trying to become a social media influencer. Lavanya goes through a traumatic childhood and everything changes between them as Anya moves to a different house which is again HAUNTED. This crime mystery has a social media touch to it where Anya goes LIVE and things turn upside down for her.

The first four episodes of this season begins with Anya dreaming something terrific which gives chills to the audience.

Speaking of the performances, both the leading ladies deliver a terrific performance while Regina's fans will be somewhat disappointed as the Nivedithaa gets more screen space. Yes, as the title suggests

this is *Anya's Tutorial*, still when people hear the name of Regina, they have some high expectations on the project, given the kind of projects she is doing off late.

Nivedithaa's performance definitely deserves an applause for the way she got into the skin of her character.

While the fourth and fifth episodes tend to get a bit boring, the final episodes makes up for it.

The director Pallavi Gangireddy and the story writer deserves a special mention for including the angle of how social media can sometimes turn toxic to young minds and how the pressure to be famous and a reputed social media influencer can make people go to any extent. The direction and

screenplay was well done so that you will totally involve yourself into this drama.

Music is the cherry on the cake. Well suited for this mystery drama and keeps your excitement level at its peak.

Verdict: Dark, mystic, chilling, intriguing, is how we would describe *Anya's Tutorial*. And dear audience, ensure your young children are not watching it, even if they do, ensure your presence, because this is such a nerve-racking crime thriller that anyone will enjoy if you love the genre horror.

Director: Pallavi Gangireddy
Writer: Sowmya Sharma
Cast: Regina Cassandra, RJ Hemanth, Nivedithaa Sathish

Producer: Allu Arvind, Shobu Yarlagadda aha videoIN

