IN PREZ ELECTION

RNI No.APENG/2018/764698 **Established 1864**

Published From

'I CHOOSE SCRIPTS THAT SUIT ME, REGARDLESS OF

THE BUDGET'

Page 12

VIJAYAWADA, WEDNESDAY, JULY 6, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3 the pioneer

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20 AIRPORTS EQUIPPED WITH AMBULIFTS TO HELP 'DIVYANG'

wenty airports have been equipped with ambulifts to help flyers with disability or reduced mobility in boarding an aircraft under the Centre's Accessible India campaign, the Disability Affairs Department said. These airports include Vijayawada, Kanpur, Port Blair, Jodhpur, Belgaum, Silchar, Jharsuguda, Rajkot and Hubli, officials said. The initiative has been taken to facilitate passengers with reduced mobility, 'divyang' travellers on wheelchair and passengers on stretchers during their air travel. The department also said India's 35 international airports and 55 out of 69 domestic airports are now accessible to 'divvangian' with accessibility features, and 41 airports are fully equipped with aerobridges.

BODY PARTS, GEAR FOUND ON ITALIAN GLACIER AFTER AVALANCHE

escuers found body parts and equipment as they searched Tuesday for hikers missing following a powerful avalanche that killed at least Seven people and is being blamed in large part on rising temperatures that are melting glaciers. Officials initially feared 13 hikers were still missing, but the province of Trento on Tuesday reduced the number of people unaccounted-for to five, after eight others checked in with authorities. Rain hampered the search Monday, but sunny weather on Tuesday allowed helicopters to bring more rescue teams up to the site on the Marmolada glacier, east of Bolzano in the Dolomite mountains. even as hopes dimmed of finding anyone alive.

FATHER-DAUGHTER DUO CREATES HISTORY IN IAF, FLIES SAME FORMATION

father-daughter duo has created history in the Indian Air Force (IAF), when they flew in the same formation here recently, IAF said on Tuesday. There has not been any previous instance in the IAF where a father and his daughter were part of the same formation for a mission, an official release said. Air Commodore Sanjay Sharma and his daughter Ananya flew in the same formation recently. 'The father-daughter duo created history on 30 May 2022, when they flew in the same formation of Hawk-132 aircraft at Air Force Station Bidar, where Flying Officer Ananya Sharma is undergoing her training before she graduates onto faster and more superior fighter aircraft of the IAF," the release said.

HIGH COST OF RUSSIAN GAINS IN **UKRAINE MAY LIMIT NEW ADVANCE**

fter more than four months of ferocious fighting, Russia claimed a key victory: full control over one of the two provinces in Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland. But Moscow's seizure of the last major stronghold of Ukrainian resistance in Luhansk province came at a steep price. The critical question now is whether Russia can muster enough strength for a new offensive to complete its capture of the Donbas and make gains elsewhere in Ukraine. Yes, the Russians have seized the Luhansk region, but at what price? asked Oleh Zhdanov, a military analyst in Ukraine, noting that some Russian units involved in the battle lost up to a half their soldiers.

Nine initiatives changed the face of edn in AP: CM

For the third consecutive year, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has distributed Jagananna Vidya Kanuka kits to 47.4 lakh students at a cost of Rs 931 crore as schools across the State were reopened on Tuesday.

Addressing a public meeting here on Tuesday, The Chief Minister emphasised providing quality education to every student for eliminating poverty and stated that everyone should study in English medium. In regard to 'Vidya Kanuka' kits, he said that it was a gift to the students from their uncle, and there will not be any compromise on the quality of the

He said that the value of the kit has been increasing over the years and went up to Rs 2,000, as the kit



quality also gets improving. In the academic year 2020-21, each kit was valued at Rs 1,530 and was distributed to over 42 lakh students at an expenditure of Rs 650 crore. In

books, notebooks, a school bag, shoes, a belt, two pairs of socks, and an Oxford Dictionary will be given to the new admissions and to those who lost their previous one. The Chief Minister said that the government will be providing Tabs to 4.7 lakh class 8 students with Byju's content free of cost, with an additional expenditure of Rs 500 crores. He stated that in three years of governance, the overall admissions in government schools across the State increased by 7.2 2021-22, the cost of the kit lakh, registering a total strength of increased to Rs 1,726 and was given 44.3 lakh students in the academto over 45 lakh students at a cost of ic year 2021-22.

to 47 lakh students with an expen-

diture of Rs 931 crore. The kit com-

prises three pairs of uniform clothing, bilingual textbooks, work-



Increased enrolment at govt schools, a shot in the arm for Jagan's reforms

C PRADEEP KUMAR

In what appears to be a thumbup to a series of initiatives taken by the Andhra Pradesh government to revamp the education system, schools across the State on Tuesday reopened to increased enrolment at government institutions. The Department of School Education has made arrangements for comprehensive teaching and learning programmes in all schools for the academic year 2022-23. The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) has also released the academic calendar that includes the activities to be undertaken on each day. Keeping its promise for the third successive year, the State government has made arrangements for the distribution of school kits to government school students under the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' on the first day of the reopening of schools.

Top IAS official puts wards in ZP school

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In an interesting development in the State, a few top officials have joined their wards in government schools. Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP) MD N Prabhakar Reddy has joined his two children in the ZP High School at Patamata in Vijayawada. Speaking to media persons on Tuesday, Lakshmi, the SAAP MD's wife, said that they joined their

two children in Patamata school as the State government was giving top priority to education in Andhra Pradesh. She said that earlier their children studied in a government school in Nellore when Prabhakar Reddy was the joint collector. Government schools have well-qualified B.Ed teachers with good skills and the students will not feel the stress of studying.





ABV moves AP HC against suspension



Senior IPS officer AB Venkates wara Rao, who was suspended for the second time, has moved the Andhra Pradesh High Court seeking to quash the case filed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) against him in 2021 suspecting corruption in the purchase of security equipment during his regime as intelligence chief. In his petition, Venkates wara Rao submitted that not a single rupee was spent on the purchase of any equipment and not a single paisa was paid to anybody. The ACB had foisted a case against him by making the general inquiry, without going through the process of an inves-



ALMANAC

Saptami: Jul 05 07:28 PM Nakshatram:

to Jul 07 12:19 PM 12:20 PM to 1:58 PM Rahukalam: 7:28 AM to 9:05 AM

Amritakalam Abhiiit Muhurtham

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Thunderstorm

Temp: 34° Humidity: 83% Sunrise: 5:40 AM Sunset: 6:44 PM



PNS VIJAYAWADA

tigation by the AP Vigilance Commission.



BJP planning to check Pawan Kalyan with brother Chiranjeevi

Rs 790 crore. In the current aca-

demic year 2022-23, each kit costs

In a significant development, Prime ed former Union minister megastar Chiranjeevi to New Delhi.

Prime Minister Modi unveiled the statue of Alluri Sitarama Raju at Bhimavaram in West Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh on Monday. Chiranjeevi was also invited to the function.

When Chiranjeevi greeted Prime Minister Modi on the dais they had a discussion for a few seconds. It appeared that Prime Minister Modi had given special attention to



Chiranjeevi. Sources on the dais said that Prime Minister Modi had invited Chiranjeevi to New Delhi. They said that the PM told Chiranjeevi, "Please come to New Delhi once. We can have a discussion. In the past too I have invited

you." It may be recalled some time ago that there were speculations that Chiranjeevi may join the BJP. Chiranjeevi himself denied He had categorically made it clear that he has no interest in joining politics again. In 2014, after the Congress-led

UPA was defeated in the general elections, Chiranjeevi kept away from politics and concentrated on films. Chiranjeevi has good relations with both Telugu Chief Ministers, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and K. Chandrasekhar Rao.



2 of Raghurama's security men suspended for attack on AP cop

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Supreme Court challenging the Centre's 'Agnipath' scheme for recruitment in the armed forces.

The petition filed by ex-servicemen Ravindra Singh Shekhawat has sought quashing of notification issued by the Ministry of Defence, contending it as illegal, unconstitutional, and ultra vires to the rights guaranteed under the Constitution.

The recently launched scheme has received skepticism nationwide from the armed forces aspirants and has left several questions unanswered. Some of the concerns are related to the aspirants who were in the middle/final stages of their recruitment process. This abrupt change in the recruitment process has evoked several unforeseeable circumstances for the aspirants and has put their futures at stake/

Food Security Act: State ranks 3rd in implementation



PNS VIJAYAWADA

Adding another feather to its cap, Andhra Pradesh stood among the top three states in the general category in the State Ranking Index for National Food Security Act

While Odisha has been adjudged the top-ranked State followed by Uttar Pradesh at the second spot, Andhra Pradesh stood third amongst the general category States in the State Ranking Index for NFSA. Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Piyush Goyal released the first edition of 'State Ranking Index for NFSA' during the conference of Food Ministers of States/UTs on 'Food Nutrition and Security in India' organised by the Department of Food and

Public Distribution in Delhi on

While Odisha obtained an index score of 0.836 and ranked number one, Uttar Pradesh at second rank obtained a 0.797 index score. Andhra Pradesh stood third among the general category states in the country had obtained a 0.794 index score. This "State ranking Index for NFSA" attempts to document the status and progress of implementation of NFSA and various reform initiatives across the country, post consultation with states. It highlights the reforms undertaken by states and UTs and creates a cross-learning environment and scale-up reform measures by all states and union terri-



Pithapuram girl tops APPSC Group 1 exam

PNS VIJAYAWADA

APPSC Chairman Gowtam Sawang released the 2018 results on Tuesday Rani Sushmitha from Pithapuram, East Godavari secured the first in Group I-2018 examinations followed by K Srinivasulu Raju, Kotulaguttapalli, Kadapa district who secured the second rank and V Sanjana Simha of Hyderabad, Telangana, secured the third. Among the top 10 ranks, seven ranks were secured by women, he said. The results were released by APPSC Chairman at the R&B conference hall in Vijayawada. The results have been uploaded to the APPSC website.



TODAY

Month & Paksham:

to Jul 06 07:48 PM Jul 06 07:48 PM to Jul 07 07:28 PM

Jul 05 10:30 AM to Jul 06 11:44 AM Uttara Phalgun

08:20 PM to 09:59 PM 10:43 AM to 12:20 PM

Updated: JULY 5, 2022 5:00 PM

Fresh plea challenges 'Agnipath'

PNS NEW DELHI

A fresh plea has been filed in the

Desilting works at Prakasam Barrage gain steam

Project taken up at a cost of Rs.102.447 cr to increase storage capacity of Prakasam Barrage

DASARI SRINIVASA RAO

Desilting of the foreshore of Prakasam Barrage across River Krishna to store water to the full reservoir capacity of 3.071 TMC is progressing at a brisk pace. Five desilting works are in progress and

another one will begin soon. Water Resources Department (WRD) has proposed 12 works for desilting the barrage with help of the Andhra Pradesh Mining Development Corporation Limited (APMDC) and the tender process was completed two years ago. Tender agreements for five

works are yet to be done. The Water Resources Department took up these works worth Rs.102.447 crore with the help of

The works began in September 2021 and the department could extract 8,60,566 cubic metres of silt from the river bed so far

APMDC a few months ago. The desilting is expected to help in increasing the storage capacity of Prakasam Barrage, apart from increasing the availability of sand.

According to available information, the State government had accorded administrative approval to take up desilting works upstream of Prakasam Barrage spending Rs 102.44 crore, in March 2021. As per the orders, desilting operations have to be taken up half-a-kilometre away from Prakasam Barrage upstream (from 0.50 km to 13.50 km on River Krishna). The works began in September 2021 and the department could extract 8,60,566 cubic metres of silt from the river bed so far. Of this, 2,02,499 cubic metres of de-silt material have been handed over to APMDC and 6,58,067 cubic metres are yet to be handed over. The target is to extract 50 lakh tonnes of de-silt material from the foreshore of Prakasam Barrage, sources said.

The government told the department that the value derived from the sale of the desilted material should exceed the cost of the end-to-end operation i.e., survey, excavation, transportation, and sale among others, and result in net profit to APMDC Limited/government.



Why YSRCP MLAs feel left out in disbursal of welfare benefits

very legislator of the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) in Andhra Pradesh is aspiring to get re-elected in 2024. Although YSRC president and Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy POINT has fond hopes that the party would return to power on the strength of his government's welfare schemes bundled as 'Nava Ratnas', the YSRCP legislators are jittery about re-election at the individual level. For, none of them is seen publicly disbursing the benefits under popular welfare

schemes in the present system. The Chief Minister has given priority to implementation of the welfare schemes, claiming that there is absolutely no scope for corruption. The schemes are so structures that there is Chief Minister one the

side and just beneficiaries on the other side, with the money getting credited directy to the beneficiaries' accounts . The whole thing looks if the Chief Minister is

giving money directly to the beneficiaries to obviate graft. This is where the legislators are feeling the pinch, because they are nowhere in the picture when it comes to disbursal of welfare schemes. Thousands of crores of

rupees are going into the bank accounts of beneficiaries of welfare schemes before the eyes of the MLAs, but without their direct involvement. During the erstwhile regimes, it was customary to involve local MLAs in the disbursal of welfare benefits to the beneficiaries. This practice gave the

Thousands of crores of rupees are going into the bank accounts of beneficiaries of welfare schemes before the eyes of the MLAs, but without their direct involvement. During the erstwhile regimes, it was customary to involve local MLAs in the disbursal of welfare benefits to the beneficiaries. This practice gave the MLAs some heft.

MLAs some heft. That is why even establishing a pump to ensure drinking water in a village is done under the aegis of the local MLA. Likewise, pensions for old age people are disbursed by legislators.

Legislators believe that it would benefit them if they are involved in Nava Ratnas too. They are not all that happy at disbursement of funds relating to various schemes in the presence party cadre at the constituency-level meetings. These legislators feel that their 'graph' of performance and image in the public domain has gone down. Despite having the power to decide the list of beneficiaries of various welfare schemes, they rue their

'non involvement' in the dis-



bursement exercise.

Votes required for the party's victory at the hustings are drawn from the individual image or graph of legislators. The rest of the contribution of votes for victory probably of the government or leader-ship! Only blending of the images of the legislators and the Chief Minister would lead to the ultimate result. Thinking of retaining power with only the image of the Chief Minister in the public domain may not be the correct approach, it is felt by legislators. Even if the Chief Minister assures anything to people during his visit to any constituency, that would get fulfilled only at the behest of the local legislator.

If it is proved tomorrow that

a seat has been lost because of the low image of the local leg-islator, the leadership may have to be held responsible for such a loss. Images of both leadership and legislator may together work for success. The contribution of a legislator at the constituency level is essen-

Will Jagan lend his ears to the feelings of legislators who are keen on shoring up their individual image in the minds of people? Internal differences among party leaders surfaced recently at constituency-level meetings involving public representatives. Of course, the leadership has gagged public representatives. Local legislator Perni

powerful man out there and so is MP Vallapaneni Balasouri, a business partner of Jagan. By virtue of being CM's 'own man', the MP had pressed for stern action. But the leadership turned down his demand. In regional parties, there is no cope for acting against the MLA at the behest of an MP.

Venkatramaiah @Nani is a

An amount of Rs. 1.37 lakh crores of rupees has been disbursed through the accounts of the beneficiaries of various welfare schemes. A total amount of Rs.2.47 lakh crores of rupees will have been credited to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries for the period

Legislators are looking longingly at the huge amounts going to electors without their active involvement. Another source of embarrassment for some of the legislators is the non-clearance of bills relating to party workers who had executed government works on contract basis. Such party workers had mobilized money at high rates of interests from financiers. They chose to avoid their legislators who had come to their streets for campaigning. Legislators are feeling that they have become useless when it comes to even getting pending bills cleared.

2 of Raghurama's security men suspended for attack on AP cop

The CRPF has suspended ASI/GD K Ganga Ram and CT/GD (jawan) Nanaware Sandip Sadhu of Battalion-221 for manhandling and injuring Intelligence Constable Sk Farooq Basha of the Andhra Pradesh police in Hyderabad.

Farooq Basha had filed a complaint with the Gachibowli police station against Raghu Ramakrishna Raju's family members and some CRPF constables, who had attacked him while he was discharging duty at ISB gate in Hyderabad on Monday morn-

YSRCP rebel MP from Narsapuram K Raghu Ramakrishna Raju's security personnel (CRPF constables) had assaulted Sk Farooq Basha while he was on duty in Hyderabad during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit on July 4. As per reports, the constable was attacked and forcibly taken to the MP's house on Monday morning when he was posted near the MP writes to KCR over 'recce

SR Congress Party (YSRCP) rebel MP from Narasapuram, Raghu Ramakrishna Raju wrote to Telangana CM, K I Chandrasekhara Rao, on Tuesday stating that six people were conducting recce around his house at Emaar Boulder Hills on Monday. The CRPF security allotted by the Central government had identified the persons and managed to catch one of them while the others escaped in a 4-wheeler, presumably an AP police vehicle. The person, who was caught, was identified as Subhan Ali Basha who claimed to be an employee of the Intelligence Department, AP Police. Raghurama Raju said that they had requested to show the identity card but Subhan Ali Basha told he was not carrying the same.

Indian School of Business (ISB) during the PM's visit.

During Prime Minister Modi's visit to AP and Telangana, the police of both States had made security arrangements following the guidelines of the Special Protection Group (SPG) as per protocol. It was also reported based on Intelligence inputs that some groups from Andhra Pradesh had reached Hyderabad to protest against the Prime Minister. In Vijayawada and

Bhimavaram also, it was found that some people were ready to stage agitations. Based on these inputs, the AP Intelligence Department appointed some constables as spotters in Hyderabad to keep track of the movements of the representatives of such groups, agitators, and suspects who had come from AP to Hyderabad. As per Union Home Ministry guidelines, this is the policy followed by all State police departments. As part of the guide-

cational programmes to the



lines, the AP police appointed Intelligence Constable Farooq Basha from Anantapur as a spotter at the ISB gate in Hyderabad on Monday morning. The ISB gate is about a kilometre away from the MP's residence at Boulder Hills in Gachibowli.

As Farooq was discharging duty, some members of the MP's family along with CRPF constables came in a car (a white Ford Eco Sports bearing number 7777) and attacked Farooq. They thrashed him up on the sidewalk and questioned him. Though he tried to show his identity card and stated that he was an Intelligence Constable, they paid no attention and confiscated his ID card. Not stopping there, they

held his hands behind and assaulted him on the road, and dragged him to the MP's house even as people were watching on the main road. Some of the pedestrians also took videos of the constable being assaulted and dragged on their cell phones. They, along with Raju's family members, took him to the MP's house and beat him up for more than two hours. They later took him to the Gachibowli police station and handed him over to the police and lodged a complaint stating that the person was caught moving around suspi-

Farooq Basha filed a complaint with the Gachibowli police station against Raghu Ramakrishna Raju's family members and some CRPF constables and said that they had snatched his purse, mobile phone, and ID card. Farooq . Basha was shifted to a hospital and his condition is said to be stable. The MP was said to be present in the house when the constable was assaulted.



Grandeur marks celestial wedding in Washignton DC

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Srinivasa Kalyanam fete was observed with utmost religious grandeur at Washington DC in the United States of America during the early hours on Tuesday. The team of TTD 'Archakas' and 'Veda' pundits performed the Srinivasa Kalyanam as per

to the accompaniment of 'Mangala Vaidyam'. TTD is organising the holy event across various cities in the United States of America in collaboration with APNRTS and TTD advisory committees in each city. The event was a celestial feast for the scores of NRI denizens who participated in the divine wedding ceremony with utmost enthusiasm and devotion.

The various stages of Srivari Kalyanam fete included 'Punyaha vachanam', 'Viswak sena Aradhana', 'Ankurar panam', 'Maha Sankalpam', Kanyadanam', 'Mangalya Dharana', 'Varana Mayiaram' and finally 'Harat'i.

Increased enrolment at govt schools...

Continued from page 1

The government has made certain changes under the new (NEP) which has come into force right away.

This academic year has started with Pre-Primary 1 (PP1) and Pre-Primary 2 (PP2) to strengthen the foundation of education. These schools have been categorised into Satellite Foundation, Foundation, Foundation Plus, Pre-High School, High School, and High School Plus. The Education Department has also issued instructions to the officials to shift students of Class 3, 4, and 5 of the primary schools to nearby high

schools and pre-high schools. For the current academic year, the schools will function for 220 days. The Education Department has taken up the school readiness programme from June 28 for

Food Security Act..

Top IAS official puts wards in ZP school

Continued from page 1

She said that the classrooms are good and the parents are allowed to check the classrooms unlike in private schools. The school has a good playground and is maintaining good infrastructure, well-maintained toilets and nice colours on the walls with quotes that inspire the students, she said.

the reopening of schools. Besides cleaning every school, and providing drinking water facilities, it also conducted village visit programmes to encourage children from neighboring areas and villages to join government schools. The government is explaining the edu-

ing the states and UTs is built on three key pillars which cover the

end-to-end implementation of

NFSA through TPDS. These pil-

lars are NFSA— Coverage, tar-

geting and provisions of the Act,

Delivery platform, and

parents and encouraging them to enroll their children in schools. On the other about the shortage of textbooks and 'Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' kits in a few schools. DEO Krishna Tahera Sultana said that there is a good response to admissions in government schools and said that she had been receiving calls stating that there was no vacancy in a good number of schools in the district. In a few schools in the State, more than 80 per cent of attendance was reported from schools that wore a festive look. She said that 90 per cent of textbooks and JVK kits with nine articles were distributed to the students on the first day of school. The kits will continue to be distributed for a few more days until the admissions are completed.

Nutrition initiatives. The NFSA was enacted on July 5, 2013, and in order to celebrate the day, the conference was organized to deliberate and discuss nutritional security, food security, best practices followed in Public Distribution System, crop diversification, reforms in PDS, and storage sector.

Two more incidents take place on SpiceJet aircraft PNS NEW DELHI in the last 17 days -- to seven. According to officials of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), the Civ

as the airline's Delhi-Dubai flight was diverted to Karachi due to a malfunctioning fuel indicator and its Kandla-Mumbai flight did priority landing in Maharashtra's capital city after cracks developed on its windshield mid-air.

The two incidents of Tuesday have taken the total number of technical malfunction incidents on SpiceJet aircraft -- which have taken place aviation regulator is investigating all the seven incidents.

The Boeing 737 Max aircraft -- which was heading from Delhi to Dubai Tuesday morning -- started showing unusual fuel quantity reduction from its left tank when it was mid-air, following which it was diverted to Karachi, they

When an inspection was done at the Karachi airport, no

said the pilot of SpiceJet's Delhi-Dubai flight contacted the control tower while flying over Pakistan airspace, stating that the aircraft has developed some technical fault.

After the plane was allowed to land on humanitarian grounds, engineers of the Pakistan International Airlines worked with SpiceJet crew to locate and rectify the technical fault, the PCCA official diately so another aircraft was arranged to take the passengers to Dubai, he said.

Another source at the Karachi airport said around 150 passengers were on board the aircraft and were provided food and refreshments.

Later during the day, a Q400 plane of SpiceJet conducted a priority landing at Mumbai airport after its windshield cracked at 23,000 feet altitude, surisation issues, they noted

About the Kandla-Mumbai flight incident, SpiceJet said, "On 5th July, 2022, SpiceJet Q400 aircraft was operating SG 3324 (Kandla-Mumbai) During cruise at FL230 (23,000 feet altitude), P2 side windshield outer pane cracked. Pressurization was observed to be normal. The aircraft landed safely in

BJP planning to check Pawan Kalyan... ing to have an alliance with the mind. Generally, political par-

Continued from page 1

He has good relations with the Congress and BJP leaders too. Chiranjeevi wants to become 'Andarivadu' and is not interested in joining any particular political party.

In AP, at present, the BJP and the Jana Sena of Pawan Kalyan, the brother of Chiranjeevi, have an alliance. The BJP leadership is maintaining good relations with Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy too. Sources said that the BJP leadership has learnt that Pawan Kalyan is try-

TDP headed by former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. After the 2019 general elections, the BJP leadership totally turned against Chandrababu. In spite of Chandrababu's attempts to revive old relations the BJP leadership refused. Now the BJP leadership's plan is to use Chiranjeevi if Pawan Kalyan dumps the BJP and opts for an allies as with the TDP The BJP. alliance with the TDP. The BJP is planning to check the 'Power Star' with the 'Mega Star' Modi might have invited Chiranjeevi to New Delhi keeping this in

ties want to come to power. If that is not possible they want to come to power through an ally. In AP, the BJP has no chance of coming to power. So it prefers Jagan to continue in power than the TDP coming to power. The BJP leadership is aware of Chiranjeevi's decision that he has no interest in joining any political party. But if they maintain good relations with Chiranjeevi there will be some confusion among Kapus and they may not sail with Pawan Kalyan if he joins hands with the TDP.

Nine initiatives changed the face of edn in AP: CM

Continued from page 1

With nine initiatives such as 'Mana Badi Nadu-Nedu', 'Vidya Kanuka', 'Jagananna Gorumuddha', 'Sampoorna Poshana', 'Amma Vod'i, English Medium education, 'Vidya Deevena', V'asati Deevena', and pact with Byju's, revolutionary changes were brought in the education sector. He said that the government is making Byju's app available to underprivileged children, which would change the lives of poor students and the content would guide them to learn better, as content provided by Byju's will make it easier for children to achieve

good results. 'Byju's content was not available without paying Rs 20,000 per year towards a subscription, whereas the government has made it available for free to the students studying in government schools, said the Chief Minister. On this occasion, the Chief Minister interacted with the students and also checked the kits to see whether all the contents were in place. Later, he announced plans to take up developmental projects in Adoni. Ministers Botsa Satyanara yana, Gummanuru Jayaram, MLA Sai Prasad Reddy, party leaders, and various other officials were present at the event.

and PMGKAY Distribution in the future. The Index for rank-**CHICKEN**

RATES ₹/KG

Continued from page 1

The present Index is largely

focused on NFSA Distribution

and will include procurement,

₹225 Dressed/With Skin Without Skin ₹235 Broiler at Farm



Pithapuram girl tops APPSC Group 1 exam

Continued from page 1

He said that the selected candidates will have to give the undertaking letter either through post or directly at the APPSC office. He said that APPSC has conducted a recruitment process for 167 Group 1 posts in 2018, including 30 Deputy Collector posts, and 28 DSP posts. Of the 167 Group 1 posts, 67 female and 96 male candidates have been selected for the jobs and four

posts could not be filled due to various reasons. As many as 9,679 candidates appeared for Group 1 Mains in December 2020 and the results were announced on April 28, 2021 after digital valuation, but this year, as per the orders of the High Court, manual valuation was done again and the results were released in May. According to the orders of the High Court, the interviews for filling the vacancies of 165 Group 1

completed. Group-1 interviews were conducted by appointing three interview boards. He said that the APPSC would issue a notification in the next month for 110 Group-I posts and also 182 Group-II posts. He said that the written test will be conducted on July 24 for Endowment department EO posts, and a written exam for 620 junior assistant posts on

ABV moves AP HC against...

Continued from page 1

He requested that the false case against him be dismissed and wanted that all the actions to be taken on the basis of the FIR filed by the ACB be suspended till the case is disposed of by the court. The senior IPS officer argued that he had absolutely no role to play in the government in purchase of any security equipment as there is a separate committee for the same. The State Trade Corpo ration of India Ltd had

returned Rs 10 lakh to the government, which had paid the money towards the transaction fee, he said. Last week, ABV was suspended for the second time within 10 days after giving posting orders as commissioner of printing and stationery. He said though the case was registered a year-and-a-half ago, no charge sheet was filed to date. He wondered how he could influence or threaten the witnesses charge sheet was not filed and the hearing did not begin in court at all.

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH AYUSH DEPARTMENT No. 33/GPNUI2015, NOTIFICATION Dated: 05:07:2022 Applications are invited for the following posts for project management unit of NAM

n the AYUSH Department on temporary basis for a period of one yea

1) PANCHAKARMA THERAPISTS; 2) YOGA INSTRUCTORS Candidates qualification, eligibility criteria & salary etc., are displayed in website hmfw.ap.gov.in. Interested eligible candidates may submit their applications as per the format shown in website. The applications should be sent to emai ayushpmu2022@gmail.com. Last date for submission of applications is 10 days from the date of notification issued. In case of any difficult in filling of application

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Benz Circle, Ramavarappadu Ring Road to be developed

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Municipal (VMC) Vijayawada Corporation Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar has said that the VMC will develop Benz Circle, Mahanadu junction, and Ramavarappadu Ring. He has directed the engineering department to prepare designs. He directed the officials to take necessary action to improve greenery on both sides of the national highway from Benz Circle to Ramavarappadu.
The VMC Commissioner

inspected the stretch from Benz Circle to Ramavarappadu, Bank Colony, and Pinnamaneni Polyclinic road on Tuesday.

He enquired the officials

about greenery and sanitation in the city. He also directed them to prepare a design for the development of the Benz Circle junction. "Set up a bus stop for the convenience of bus commuters between 13th and 14th pillars under the flyover,"

He further directed the officers to develop greenery in the



Ramavarappadu ring and remove the police box from there. The Engineering and Horticulture departments were asked to coordinate with each other to develop the ring. Remove encroachments and develop the 'Mana Vijayawada'

Later, he visited several areas and gave instructions to the Health, Engineering, and Horticulture officials on sani-

Jubin Siral Roy, Executive Engineers V Chandrasekhar, ASS Prasad, Health Officer He instructed that the con-Dr. Sridevi, ADH Srinivas, cerned departments should Zonal Commissioner Pardha develop the Mahanadu junc-Saradhi, and others accompation, which is the busiest juncnied the Commissioner.

Surprise checks at pilgrim centres, tourist spots

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In view of complaints that shopkeepers at pilgrimage centres and tourist places were selling food items to the public at prices exceeding MRP, surprise raids were conducted by the Vigilance and Enforcement officials along with the officers of the Legal Metrology Department across the State on Tuesday. Raids were conducted at 218 shops spread across different districts in

Andhra Pradesh. Following the surprise inspections, 136 cases were filed under section 18(2) of Legal Metrology Packaged Commodities Rule, 2011 and the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 for selling items at rates exceeding MRP and for com-

mitting various other irregu-

The Vigilance and Enforcement Department gave statutory warning that food and other business operators should not sell any item above MRP and strictly conform to law, rules and regu-



As much as 770 kg of ganja seized during the last three months was set on fire by the Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) officials in Vijayawada on Tuesday. The contraband was seized at various places by the police in Krishna, East and West

TTD plans Kalyana Mandapam

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) is planning to construct a Kalyana Mandapam at Nunna in the NTR district. Deputy Executive Engineer (DEE) Mallela Nagabhushanam inspected the government land at the Teachers Colony in Nunna, the site proposed for the Kalyana

Mandapam, on Tuesday. The engineering department of the TTD has prepared a rough estimate of Rs 2 crore for the Kalyana Mandapam, a longpending demand of the local people. The State government had acquired five acres of land in 2006 for the Indiramma housing scheme beneficiaries, but it was not utilised. Meanwhile, local people's representatives submitted a representation to MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry urging him to construct the Kalyana Mandapam. The MP sent a proposal to TTD chairman YV Subba Reddy.

Following the request of the MP, the TTD chairman directed the engineering department officers to inspect the land and send a report to him within a

Blood donation marks ban on single-use plastic

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Commemorating the ban on single-use plastic in the Smart City Visakhapatnam, Helping Hearts Foundation president and founder S Rajkumari and his team organised a blood donation camp at GVMC office on Tuesday.

GVMC Commissioner Lakshmisha and deputy mayor Jiyyani Sridhar inaugurated the blood donation camp.

The GVMC Commissioner donated blood for a social cause to save life and motivated other staff members of the GVMC to donate blood.

Many took this as an inspiration and all zones of GVMC staff came forward to donate blood. Around 300 units of blood were collected during the day-long camp from the donors.

Sha told the donors to donate blood every 4 months as it will help the needy and

blood donating is one of the holy forms of helping fellow humans. Redcross Society Chairman K Shivanagendra Reddy attended the program along with other members.

Visakha Women's College students participated as volunteers as a part of the NSS Awareness programme.

Redcross Society of Visakhapatnam and Rotary Blood Bank Visakhapatnam is the blood bank that participat-

ed in this GVMC mega blood donation camp.

GVMC Commissioner distributed mementos to the volunteers of Helping Hearts Foundation "Life Saver Award 2022" for their service by arranging blood for the needy at times of emergency across the country.

Deputy Mayor distributed mementos to the students of Visakha Women's College for participating as volunteers.

'Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' kits distributed

tion on the national highway.

VMC Deputy City Planner

Krishna and NTR District Education Departments organ-ised the third phase of the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka distribution programme at Penamaluru ZPH in Krishna and MK Baig Municipal Corporation High School, Ajith Singh Nagar, in

Vijayawada on Tuesday. Krishna ZP Chairperson Uppala Harika, Collector P Ranjith Basha, MLAs K Pardha Saradhi and K Anil Kumar distributed the books and bags to the students under Jagananna Vidya Kanuka at Penamaluru, while Vijayawada Central MLA Malladi Vishnu, NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao and Municipal Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar distributed the kits in Vijayawada.

Speaking on the occasion, Uppala Harika said that the State government had been setting up good infrastructure facilities in government schools to enhance the educational standards. The newly implemented English medium had



given fruitful results and several government high school students spoke in English very fluently. Under the Nadu-Nedu scheme, the government schools got a number of additional classrooms, she added.

Krishna Collector P Ranjith Basha said that Penamaluru ZPH School would be developed as a model to other schools in the district. "The State government is spending Rs.500 crore every year to develop the education sector. Students should utilise the facilities and get more results. As many as

1,29,921 students from 1,461

schools have got the Jagananna Vidya Kanuka kits," he said.

"Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy wishes that no student should be denied education because of financial problems and hence he introduced several welfare schemes for the benefit of students," said Penamaluru MLA K Pardha Saradhi.

APSRTC Vijayawada Regional Chairperson T Padmavati, APTIDCO Director P Ramarao, Sarpanch L Bhaskara Rao, DEO Tahera Sultana, SSA Additional Project Coordinator Dr A Sekhar, Vuyyuru RDO Vijay Kumar, Tahsildar Bhadru, MPDO J Vimala Kumari, MEO Kanaka Mahalakshmi and others were present.

In NTR district, Jagananna Vidya Kanuka kits distribution function was held at MK Baig Municipal Corporation High School. Collector S Dilli Ram, VMC Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar and MLA Malladi Vishnu distributed the kits to the students.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Vishnu said that CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy was taking utmost care on the education sector and he implemented several development and welfare schemes for the benefit of students. "Students should overcome all the hurdles to reach their goals by utilising the government facilities," he said.

Will solve land issues of Bobbillapadu farmers: Collector

PNS VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao has assured the farmers of Bobbillapadu Chandarlapadu mandal of sorting out the land issues by verifying the records. He said

he would be ready to solve the problems of farmers at any Bobbillapadu farmers, along with Bobbillapati Sai, met the

NTR Collector at his camp

office in Vijayawada on

Tuesday Bobbilapati Sai said that their lands had belonged to the Muktyala estate and later, they went into the hands of zamindari families in 1956. Later, the forefathers of the farmers purchased the lands from the zamindars and enjoyed full

rights on them, he said. He further said that, Bobbillapadu lands were reg-

missing at the sea for the past

two days. The incident came to

light on Tuesday when the family members approached

Viswanathapalli China

Mastan, 51, Ramani China Nancharaiah, 64, Chekka

Narasimha Rao, 51, and Moka

Venkateswara Rao, 44, along

the district administration.

istered, by mistake, in the name of zamindars after the completion of land re-survey. However, the Sri Vedadri Lakshmi Narasimha Swami lands were also registered in the names of zamindars. As a result, the farmers had been facing several problems. The District Collector should sanction a No Objection Certificate (NOC) to the farmers, he

urged. Later, the Collector said that the farmers should complain to the Land Settlement Court, which is under the jurisdiction of the Joint Collector. An inquiry would be conducted and orders would be issued under section

15 to solve the problems. Farmers' leaders Vasireddy Prasad, T Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy, M Srinivvas Reddy, G Naveen Babu and others were present.

nication between the fishermen

and their families since 7.30

p.m. on July 3.

INS Satpura participates in RIMPAC harbour phase

PNS VIJAYAWADA

INS Satpura is at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii, participating in one of the largest Exercises, the 'Rim of the Pacific' exercise, also known as RIMPAC since

During the harbour phase of the exercise, the ship has taken part in multiple symposiums, exercise planning discussions, and sports competitions. The ship's crew also vis-

ited the historic museum ship USS Missouri and paid homage to fallen soldiers who made the supreme sacrifice during World War II at USS

Arizona Memorial.

INS Satpura and one P8I maritime patrol aircraft are participating in the exercise which spans over six weeks of intense operations and training aimed at enhancing interoperability and building trust among Navies of friendly foreign coun-

As many as 26 countries, 38 warships, nine land forces, 31 unmanned systems, 170 aircraft, and over 25,000 personnel are participating in the multidimensional exercise. The sea phase commences on July 12 and will culminate with the closing ceremony







10th supplementary, betterment exams from today

PNS VIJAYAWADA

All arrangements are in place for conducting the advanced supplementary examinations and betterment examination for Class 10 students, which will be held from July 6 to 15 across the State. In all, 2,07,160 students who failed in one or more subjects

will take the advanced supplementary exam while 8,609 students are appearing for betterment examinations. The exams will be held from 9.30 am to 12.45 pm in 986 centres

Of the 2.07 lakh students appearing for the exam, 1,16,826 are boys and 90,334 are girls. Meanwhile, 8,609 students are appearing for betterment examinations, of which 4,737 are boys and 3,872 are

The District Educational officer who is presently working in the headquarters of the erstwhile 13 districts was

appointed as the Nodal Officer for that erstwhile district. District collectors and district magistrates will convene meetings with the Superintendents of Police of the concerned district, DEOs, and officials from the stakeholder departments such as

Treasury, Revenue, Police, Electricity, Postal, APSRTC and Health Department. Section 144 of the CrPC will be in force in the vicinity of the examination centres. Police have ensured security at

the centres. "All the examination centres shall be declared as 'no-phone zones'. Invigilators, departmental officers, non-teaching staff and other departmental staff on examination duty such as ANMs and police personnel including the Chief Superintendents cannot bring mobile phones to the examination centres," said Director Government Examinations Devananda Reddy.

PNS VIJAYAWADA problem. The only mobile Four fishermen belonging to phone they had was switched Cambelpet of Machilipatnam off as the battery was exhaustcity, Krishna district, have been ed. There has been no commu-

Agniveers recruitment rally in Vizag from Aug 14 to 31

to trace the missing fisher-He said one chopper was Manyam, Alluri Sitharama Raju,

(district of Union Territory of Puducherry) will be screened for categories that include Agniveer General Duty, Agniveer Technical, Agniveer Clerk / Store Keeper Technical,

rally is open till July 30. Only candi-

Anakapalli, Konaseema, Eluru, dates who apply online are eligible to Kakinada and NTR as well as Yanam (district of Union Territory of will be issued online with effect from August 7. The date of reporting at the rally site will be intimated on the Admit Card and the applicant can take a print-out of the Admit Card after August 7

> To avoid large gatherings at one place, candidates will be directed to

the vicinity of the main venue Indira Privadarshini Stadium, Visakhapatnam. The same will be coordinated by the recruiting staff at the venue when the candidates report.

The recruitment process is fully automated, fair, and transparent. Candidates must guard against touts/fraudsters who claim that they can help anyone pass or get enrolled. Only hard work and preparation will

ensure selection as per merit. Candidates can clarify all recruitment-related queries from the online mobile application 'Army Calling' which provides a live chat facility for aspiring candidates and can be downloaded from Google Play Store. Candidates may also call the Army Recruitment Office, Visakhapatnam on Telephone No 0891-2756959 & 0891-2754680 for further information.

registration number IND-APk2-Mo-60, file No AP 3469 went missing with the four fish-

pressed into service on Tuesday to search the missing persons with other fishermen ventured into the sea four days ago. However, one fiber boat with and the boat. He said the helicopter searched for four hours and would resume the search on Wednesday

Four fishermen go missing

Krishna District Collector Ranjit Basha, in a press release on Tuesday, said a massive search was launched in the sea

The recruitment rally for enrolment to the Indian Army as Agniveers will be held at Indira Priyadarshini Stadium, Visakhapatnam from August 14 to 31. Candidates from 13 districts of Andhra Pradesh, i.e., Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Parvathipuram

Agniveer Tradesman 10th pass and Agniveer Tradesman 8th pass. The registration for the recruitment

from www.joinindianarmy.nic.in. report to different Report Centres in





Novel protest by Kotamreddy for upgrading sewage drains

Kotamreddy Sridhar Reddy held a novel protest by sitting in a sewage drain in protest against the municipal authority's indifference to modernising the drainage system in the Ummareddy Gunta area of

Sridhar Reddy, along with his followers, went to the Ummareddy Gunta area on Tuesday. While questioning the officials why they had failed in modernising the drainage system at the place, taking everyone by surprise, he entered the drain and stood in the sewage water for some time. Later he sat on a boulder in the canal.

The MLA expressed anguish that though the YSRCP is in power, the construction of drainage canals and modernhave not taken up so far. He

The police seized 55 red

sanders logs worth Rs 9.05 lakh

and arrested seven red sanders

smugglers including notorious smuggler Fakruddin.

Superintendent of Police KKN

Anburajan said that the police

conducted raids at two places

and seized 55 red sanders logs

weighing over 2 tonnes and

worth Rs 9.05 lakh. The police

also seized four cars and mini

transport vehicle and a motor-

cycle from them. A police team

led by taskforce teams led by

CIs Nagabhusanam, Satyababu,

RSI Pothuraju and Ibrahim

conducted a raid and seized the

logs, and arrested seven smug-

glers including interstate smug-

Disclosing this to the media

Tuesday,



55 red sanders logs seized, 7 arrested

expressed anger over the railway and municipal corporation officials for not constructing a drainage canal at the place. He vowed to continue his fight for the construction of a drainage izing the system at the place canal at the place for the convenience of the people of the

He demanded the municipal corporation officials to give him a written assurance on by what time they would take up the works and when they could

The officials have given a

He demanded the municipal corporation officials to give him a written assurance on by what time they would take up the works and when they could complete it.

written assurance to the MLA that the works for the construction would begin by 15. With the written assurance by the officials, the MLA relented. Talking to the media he said that he fought for the construction of a drainage system at the place when he was in the Opposition party and fighting for the same cause though he is in the ruling party. Due to the lack of a proper drainage system in the area, the situation turned out to be miserable during the rainy season, he

was sent to prison many times.

He formed a gang with Jakhir, Latif, Raman, and Shiva Babu. He established contacts with

red sander smugglers in other states. He used to bring wood-

cutters from Tamil Nadu to cut

red sander trees here and

export the logs to neighbouring states. The SP Appreciated

the police for arresting the

notorious interstate red sander

smuggler and seizing red

led by S Kullayappa conduct-

ed a raid and seized 15 red

sander logs weighing 277 kg

which were loaded in a

Mahendra mini goods vehicle

to be transported at Kothapet

village in the reserve forest

In Khajipet, a police team

sander logs.

Check drunken driving: SP

PNS BAPATLA

Superintendent of Police Vakul Jindal has directed the police officials to conduct checks to curb drunken driving to curb road accidents.

The SP directed the police officials to conduct visible policing to give assurance to the people of protection. In visible policing, awareness should be created among the people about the crimes. He directed the officials to conduct checking of vehicles to contain the illegal transportation of ganja, liquor, banned gutka, and other banned tobacco products.

Police officials were also directed to intensify patrolling at women's colleges, girls' schools, bus stands, railway stations, and important intersections and take action against miscreants who misbehave with women.

"It is said that road accidents are caused due to some drivers driving under the influence of alcohol, due to which even the motorists and pedestrians who are following the rules and regulations are exposed to danger, therefore frequent drunk and driving checks are conducted and strict legal action is taken against those who drive under the influence of alcohol and counseling them not to drive under the influence of alcohol again", the SP told the officials. The officials were ordered to organize and register cases against those who drink alcohol in public





Over 2.40 lakh students to get 'Vidya Kanuka' kits in Prakasam

PNS ■ ONGOLE/ELURU

District Collector A S Dinesh Kumar has said that 2,40,129 students studying at 2473 government schools in the district would get the 'Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' kits.

The district Collector and ZP chairperson Buchepalli Venkayamma participated in the 'Jagananna Vidya Kanuka' programme here Tuesday and distributed Vidya Kanuka kits to some students. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that each Vidya Kanuka kit consists of a school bag, three pairs of uniforms, a pair of shoes and sacks, test books, notebooks, a belt and an Oxford dictio-nary. Each Vidya Kanuka kid is worth Rs 1,996, the Collector informed.

He said that Rs 47.95 crore worth of 'Vidya Kanuka' kits are being distributed free of cost to the students in the district during the academic year. The Collector explained that the government is taking these measures to increase the enrollment of students in schools, reduce dropouts, and increase the self-confidence of students to compete with private schools. Because of the measures being taken con-

yielded in the 10th class examination. He highlighted that the Prakasam district ranked first in class 10 examination

The Collector called upon the teachers to work in accordance with the aspirations of the government and strive to keep the district at the top in the tenth class results. "The government will provide the necessary support to the schools. In the coming days, the teachers should produce results in such a manner that the VIPs recommend for a seat in the government schools", he

Buchepalli Venkayamma said that all children should not be hindered by poverty in pursuing education and the government should take care of the education of poor students. He called upon the students. dents to utilize the opportunity and reach heights in life. Mayor Gangada Sujata Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy is committed to providing quality education to the students without putting the burden on the parents. DEO Vijay Bhaskar and SC welfare officer Lakshma Nayak were among those who were pre-

In Eluru, the Vidya Kanuka programme was held and kits were distributed to the students, Speaking on the occasion, Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh said that 1,87,050 students were getting Vidya Kanuka kits worth Rs 37.34

The Teachers should organize a special orientation for the children in their schools once a month to inform them about world knowledge and the need for education. He said that in order to recognize the talent in children and provide them with the necessary skills to excel in studies.

The Collector said that under Nadu Nedu government schools are being modernized on par with the private schools. The government is implementing 'Amma Vodi', 'Vidya Deevena', 'Vasati Deevena', 'Kanti Velugu', and 'Goru Mudda' for the students, he said.

MLA VR Elija and MLC Sk. Sabji were among those who were present. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector underlined the need of doing away with the memorized education system MPP Kodama Jyothi, and ZPTC Srinivasa Babu also spoke. Municipal chairman Battina Nagalakshmi and vicechairman M Veeranjaneyulu were among those who were

gler Fakuruddin.

The police team noticed five

cars at Maduru road in

Proddatur town near Krishna

Reddy oil mill. On suspicion,

the police checked the vehicles

and found 40 red sander logs.

On seeking the police, some

smugglers fled the scene in a



Seized 'gold' turns out to be gilt jewellery

BAPATLA: The seizure of what was thought to be gold jewellery by the SEB officials turned out to be gilt jewellery. The police on a tipoff conducted a checking of vehicles on the highway at Martur. They inspected an Innova car and found 2 kg of jewellery. The officials thought them to be gold jewellery and being transported without relevant documents including waybills. The officials got the seized jewellery tested by exports at a jewellery shop. After testing the jewellery the gold exports certified that they were gilt jewellery, made of copper but the gold layer was coated. With this, the SEB officials let the five people go with the gilt jewellery.



10 passengers injured as private bus rams into lorry

NALGONDA: Ten passengers suffered injuries when a private travel bus rammed into a lorry on a flyover on National Highway 65 at Narketpally in the early hours of Tuesday. A bus, owned by a private travelling agency, was on its way to Khammam from Hyderabad when the accident happened. The condition of two of the injured is said to be critical. The injured have been admitted to Kamineni Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) at Narketpally. The lorry fell on the road and the traffic on the busy national highway was hit. The

Police arrest two, seize 120 kg ganja

NALGONDA: Police on Tuesday arrested a two-member inter-state gang of ganja smugglers and seized 60 packets of marijuana weighing 120 kg. It is estimated to be worth Rs. 7 lakhs. Police also seized a car and two mobiles. District Superintendent of Police Rema Rajeshwari told media persons that the Nakrekal police, in coordination with the Task Force police, organised 'vehicle checking' on the highway. The culprits were caught. While of the arrested hailed from Andhra Pradesh, another from Telangana. The arrested were identified as Rathod Mohan from Wangdal village in Sangareddy district and Mandalanka Praveen from Sanath Nagar in Visakapatanam district in Andhra Pradesh State

NHRC DG lauds AP's secretariat system

PNS GUNTUR

Notorious

National Human Rights (NHRC) Commission Director-General Prakash Mehra has lauded the Andhra Pradesh government's secretariat system which is playing a key role to take welfare benefits to the eligible

car. The police seized the 40

red sander logs worth Rs 9.05 lakh and 4 mobile phones.

They tried to attack the police

with axes, hunting sickles and

stones but the police overpow-

Fakruddin was involved in 71

smuggler

Prakash Mehra visited the village secretary 5 of Pedakakani and Rythu Bharosa Kendra at Namburu village on Tuesday. State Human Rights Commission member Dr.G Srinivas Rao and Joint Collector G Rajakumar accom-

Mehra inquired with the ANM Mobina Begum about the responsibilities of the secretariats, its staff, and their duties. The ANM told him that from 8 am to 12 noon, she visits the village to find out whether the pregnant women, infants, children, and the elderly have received the necessary medicines and vaccinations, and they would be given to



those who need them.

Prakash Mehra examined the medicines available at the ANM. Panchayat Secretary and Digital Assistant Kakarla Sai Sneha informed Prakash Mohra about the services provided in the Secretariat. Later, Prakash Mohra told reporters that he would study the welfare schemes being implemented in AP and development being carried out here and submit a report to the central govern-

The secretariat system and the volunteer system which were introduced by Chief

submitted to the Central government, he informed. Mehra also praised the implementation of development and welfare programs in the state. He said that if the

entire country implements

Minister Y S Jagan Mohan

Reddy are working well and a

report in this regard would be

could be obtained. Later Prakash Mehra inspected Rythu Bharosa Kendra in Nambur village. District Agriculture Officer

such schemes good results

N Venkateswarulu told him that the state achieves progress when the farmers are prosperment is implementing revolutionary schemes for the development of farmers for the welfare of farmers.

He said that the agriculture department has made all arrangements to supply quality seeds and fertilizers through RBKs for the Kharif crop to the farmers. It was explained to him that in order to get the benefits the farmers have to register the details of their crops in the e-Crop app.

Earlier he was welcomed by JC Rajakumari, SHRĆ Srinivasa Rao. RDO Bhaskar Reddy, DRDA PD Harinath, Tahasildar Ratnam MPDO Vijaya Lakshmi, and sarpanch Golla Swaroop were among

those who were present.

Noted playback singer P Susheela felicitated

PNS ONGOLE

Noted playback singer P Susheela was felicitated by Vasavi Choultries president of the 90 birth birth anniver-Devaki Venkateswrulu cou-

Hyderabad on Monday night.
The felicitation programme

was organised on the occasion sary of former Chief Minister



Civic chief assures supply of potable water to denizens

Municipal Commissioner Keerthi Chekuri has said that all steps have been taken to provide purified potable water to the people of the city without compromise at any point. She said that the engineering official concerned would be held responsible if drinking water pollution is found anywhere in the city.

The Commissioner on Tuesday inspected the HLR reservoir and she saw the process of cleaning the tank from atop the tank. She went house to house in the Gunturvarithota area and inquired about the quality of water being supplied by the corporation.

She also saw the chlorination and pumping of water to various localities. She directed the officials that the chlorine level should not come down at the tail-end areas.

She directed the amenity secretariats to take some samples of water and register the



quality in the log book. She directed the officials to take steps to clean the reservoir every month and mention the date on the notice board. The chlorine should be laced to the water at the reservoir appropri-

Later Keerthi Chekuri interacted with the people of the locality and knew their problems in getting water. SE D Srinivas, EE Santhi Raju, and DEE Rafiq accompanied her.

Garagaparru victims take out rally demanding justice

The victims of Garagaparru village organised a rally demanding the government fulfil the assurances which were given to them and do them justice.

The victims holding flexi banners and raising slogans organised a huge rally on Tuesday. They said that in 2017 some Dalits were ostracized by the villagers. The Sanghika Baditula Garagaparru Bahiskarana Sankshema Sangam president Dr Raja Sundara Babu said that when some Dalits at Garagaparru village were socially boycotted the then government made some assur-

ances to the victims. They assured to fulfil five demands on January 19 but

not fulfilled the same. He said that they had been trying to meet the Collector for the last one month to explain their woes but they were not given permission. Ignoring fulfilling the assur-



ances amounted to not implementing the SC/ST Act, he opined.

He demanded that funds should be released to install the Ambudkar statue, and Ambedkar library and to construct a community hall at Garagaparru village. He also demanded to add some other sections in the charge sheet

pertaining to the social boycott case. He also demanded to allocate three acres of land to the victims.

If the demands were not conceded they would organise a siege of the Collectorate, he warned. Later they met Collector P Prashanti and SP U Ravi Prakash and submitted a memorandum

Free coaching for NEET, JEE launched for tribal students in J-K

he Jammu and Kashmir Tribal Affairs Department on Tuesday launched a first-of-its-kind initiative to provide coaching for meritorious tribal students preparing for NEET and JEE entrance exams, officials said. The course fee will be sponsored by the department and the candidates qualifying for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) and Joint Entrance Examination (JEE) after coaching will also be provided with a scholarship, they said. Tribal Affairs

Department Secretary Shahid Iqbal Choudhary said 100 tribal students are being selected for NEET coaching in government-empanelled coaching institutes, under two different subschemes. The two sub-schemes are 'Host-50' for hostellers and 'Top-50' for other tribal meritorious students in the first year under the scheme which is being implemented through the education wing of the Tribal Research Institute. Choudhary said the coaching fee for NEET and JEE at select institutions would be sponsored by the department after verification of attendance and evaluation



'Murmu will win Prez polls comfortably'

ihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday exuded confidence that NDA Presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu will comfortably win the election. Murmu visited Patna during the day and met NDA leaders, including legislators and parliamentarians from the state, seeking their support for the presidential election scheduled on July 18. "I am confident that Droupadi Murmu will comfortably win the presidential election. It is a matter of happiness that a tribal woman is running for the highest constitutional position of the country," Kumar told reporters after Murmu's

meeting with NDA leaders here. Murmu was given a rousing welcome when she reached Patna earlier in the day. Accompanied by Union ministers Sarbananda Sonowal and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, she arrived at Patna airport aboard a special flight at 11.13 AM. Deputy Chief Ministers Tarkishore Prasad and Renu Devi, Union minister Nitvanand Rai, state BJP chief Sanjay Jaiswal and several state ministers received her at the Jay Prakash Narayan International Airport



Kali is meat-eating, alcoholaccepting goddess: Mahua Moitra

rinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra on Tuesday stirred a controversy by saying that she has every right as an individual to imagine Goddess Kali as a meat-eating and alcohol-accepting goddess, as every person has the right to worship god and goddess in his or her own way. While the BJP went hammer and tongs against Moitra and wondered if

it was the official stand of West Bengal's ruling party to insult Hindu gods and goddesses, the TMC distanced itself from the comment and condemned it. While taking part in India Today Conclave East held in Kolkata, the Krishnanagar MP said it is up to individuals how they view their gods. "If you go to Bhutan or Sikkim, for example, when they do puja, they give whisky to their god. Now, if you go to Uttar Pradesh and say that you give whisky to your god as prasad, they will say that is blasphemous, she said. Moitra said that people have the right to imagine their gods or goddess in the way they want



'Modi's determination has shaped India's Pak policy'

PNS NEW DELH

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's determination that he would not allow cross-border terrorism to be normalised has helped in shaping India's

Pakistan policy since 2014. Speaking at an event at Delhi University, S Jaishankar noted that Prime Minister Modi is perceived abroad as "quintessentially Indian" and his intuitive feeling for diplomacy has led him to form a connect with foreign countries and their

Reading excerpts from the chapter written by him in the book 'Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery', Jaishankar said, "When I first met him (PM Modi) in China in 2011, I was the ambassador. Unlike many other chief ministers, he specifically sought political briefing". "I recall his (Modi's) emphasises that on the issue of terrorism and sovereignty, we needed to make sure that we speak with one voice abroad, especially in China.

"When it comes to terrorism, especially of cross-border nature, he has been crystal clear that he would not allow it to be normalised. This deter-

mination has shaped our Pakistan policy since 2014," he added. The minister highlighted that PM Modi looms large on the world stage as his policies and initiatives have had an

Peers perceive him as quintessentially Indian and respond accordingly. His language,

mannerism define a persona that a world has come to recognise," he said, reading another paragraph from the book

"Prime Minister Modi's intuitive feeling for diplomacy has led him to find connect with foreign countries and their leaders with India," he added.

Jaishankar was the chief guest at a special discussion organised by the DU on the

Speaking about the book, Jaishankar noted that a large part of the book has been written by people outside the government.

"Books are written about prime ministers. That is not unusual.... But to have a book where sitting foreign minister and Home Minister (Amit Shah), National Security Advisor (Ajit Doval) have written about the sitting prime minister, that is unusual, he

MP govt forms committee for G-20 conferences

PNS BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh government has constituted a committee of top officials to look after the hospitality and security for two conferences of G-20 countries to be held in Indore and Bhopal, an official said on Tuesday.

The committee, headed by the chief secretary, will look after the hospitality and security arrangements of the international participants during the two conferences of G-20 countries, a statement said. However, no dates for these events were mentioned in the statement.

The committee includes additional chief secretaries of the general administration and home departments, besides other senior officials, it said. The principal secretary of the tourism department will be the secretary and nodal officer of this committee, it was stated. As per the statement, India will host over 190 meetings and conferences of G-20 delegates from December 1, 2022 to November

BA.2.75 sub-variant of Omicron has limited circulation in India

PNS NEW DELHI

The highly transmissible strain of Omicron's BA.2 sub-variant BA.2.75 has been documented to have a limited circulation in India, official sources said on Tuesday, underlining that this lineage has so far not been recorded to have enhanced severity or the spread of the disease.

Currently, the predominant circulating variant of concern of SARS-CoV-2 is Omicron VoC and globally, the BA.2 Omicron lineage has been seen to replace the BA.1 lin-

eage, the sources said. In India, BA.2.75 has been documented to have a limited circulation and so far, this lineage has not been documented to have enhanced severity or the spread of the disease.

As the BA.2 lineage is evolving, many of its sub-lineages are now developing with a set of distinct mutations. B.2.75 is a similar sub-lineage of BA.2. The sources also said it is critical to continue to monitor

and also the other emerging sub-lineages of Omicron. The scale of genomic sequencing needs to be expanded and maintained for an early detection of the variant strains of SARS-CoV-2.

the spread of this sub-lineage

BA.2.75 -- the second generation of the BA.2 variants -- has high transmissibility and is being said to be behind the

recent increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in the country.

There has been an uptick in the number of Covid cases in India. The country recorded 13,086 fresh coronavirus cases on Tuesday, pushing its tally of such cases to 4,35,31,650, while the number of active cases of the infection climbed to



ED charge-sheet against Jharkhand IAS official Pooja

PNS RANCHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday filed a charge against former Jharkhand mining secretary Pooja Singhal and others as part of a money-laundering probe against her and those linked to the IAS officer, officials said.

The federal agency submitted the around 5,000-page prosecution complaint along with annexures and a list of witnesses and evidence collected before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Ranchi and has named Singhal, Suman Kumar, a chartered accountant allegedly linked to her, and few

The ED requested the court to take cognisance of the charge sheet and issue the process for a trial in the case, officials said

Singhal, a 2000-batch IAS officer, was arrested by the agency in May as part of a probe linked to alleged embezzlement of MGNREGA funds and some other alleged suspicious financial transac-

The 44-year-old bureaucrat was suspended by the Jharkhand government soon after her arrest. She was posted as the secretary of industries and was handling the charge of the secretary of the state mining and geology department in an additional capacity

Sumar Kumar was also arrested. They both are in judicial custody.

The ED had first raided the remises of Singhal, that of her businessman husband Abhishek Jha and the chartered accountant on May 6 in Ranchi and covered a few other locations in the state.

CPI(M) rejects opposition demand for Kerala Minister's resignation

PNS ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The central leadership of the CPI(M) on Tuesday rejected the opposition demand for Saji Cheriyan over his harsh criticism of the Constitution, terming it as just a slip of

CPI(M) politburo member M A Baby said an explanation was sought from the minister, who is also a member of the party's Kerala state secretariat, and he has explained that no criticism was made against the Constitution.

It would have been just a slip of tongue, Baby said. The minister has said what

he meant was the current socio-economic system prevailing in the country. Cheriyan said he has said nothing adverse against the Constitution, Baby said.

Saying that the minister's remarks might have been mis-interpreted, Baby, talking to Malayalam media persons in New Delhi, said there was no need to ask for his resignation on the basis of it.

Cheriyan, while addressing a party function in Pathanamthitta district, had harshly criticised the Constitution, saying it "condones exploitation" and is written in a way helping to "plunder" the people of the country, drawing sharp reaction from the opposition which sought for his immediate removal from the Pinarayi Vijayan-led LDF cabinet.

Mandaviya orders clearing pending

CGHS dues worth Rs 1,400 crore

BJP demands sacking of Kerala **Minister for criticising Constitution**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday demanded the removal of Kerala minister Saii Cherivan for his comments against the Constitution, saying he cannot hold an office enabled by the Constitution he has disrespected. Union minister V Muraleedharan, a BJP leader from Kerala, also said CPI(M) leaders such as Sitaram Yechury describe the Constitution as a template of Indian nationalism but choose to ignore this deliberate attempt to disregard it. This is shameful and proves their "so called respect for the Constitution is just for show", he alleged while demanding that In visuals aired by local TV channels in Kerala, the minister can be seen saying at a recent event that the Constitution of the country "condones exploitation" and is written in a way that helps to "plunder" the people of the country. "The @CPIMKerala leaders, including Ministers in @VijayanPinarayi's Cabinet, have crossed all limits of decency in public life. What can we expect from those who toe Chinese Line. CPM never cared or respected Indian Republic " Muraleedharan said

Maha: Boy falls into water-filled lift duct, dies

PNS THANE

A 6-year-old boy died after falling into a water-filled lift duct in an under-construction building in Thane district's Dombivali area on Tuesday, a police official said. Vedant Jadhav had gone missing at around 11:30am and a probe found he fell into the pit while trying to retrieve the ball with which he was playing, the Manpada police official said.

Govt plans spl remission for prisoners as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'

Good news is in the offing for the eligibility criteria will be thousands of women and released in three phases -- on the age of 50 with the government planning to commute their sentence over three phases subject to their behaviour

The scheme, part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plans to celebrate Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, will also cover male prisoners above the age of 60 and physically challenged convicts who have completed more than half their total sentence, the Home Ministry said.

Poor or indigent prisoners who have completed their sentence but are still in jail due to non-payment of fines imposed on them will benefit too with their fines being waived.

According to a recent Home Ministry communica-

tion to all states and union territories, prisoners who fulfil August 15, 202 2023 and August 15, 2023.

The scheme, the ministry said, does not apply to prisoners sentenced to death or life imprisonment, and convicted in rape, terror charges, dowry deaths and money laundering

Those convicted under the Explosives Act, National Security Act, Official Secrets Act, Anti-Hijacking Act as well as those convicted for human trafficking will also not be considered for remis-

According to a 2020 official estimate, jails across India continued to remain overcrowded, lodging about 4.78 lakh prisoners against an actual capacity of 4.03 lakh.

Of the total prisoners, nearly a lakh are women.



Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has reviewed the issue of outstanding CGHS dues of around Rs 1,400 crore and

ordered officials to clear those within a month, official sources said. According to officials, there are complaints of over 11 lakh bills pending for the last few months, forcing many empanelled hospitals to discontinue cashless treat-

PNS NEW DELHI



ment of Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) beneficiaries. At the three-hour-Monday, Mandaviya ordered

the health secretary, the CGHS director and the CEO of the National Health Authority to present a detailed report on the matter and the solutions to it, a source said. He instructed them to clear nine lakh pending CGHS bills within 15 days and repay all pending dues within a month. The health minister also ordered officials to increase the number of claim clearance officers immediately to clear the pendency,

official sources said. 'Will not allow terrorism to take root'

In a remote hamlet in the Mahore belt of Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district that was once a hotbed of militancy, villagers who displayed exemplary courage by overpowering two heavily-armed Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists say they are determined not to let mili-

tants regain ground. The terrorists who were later identified as the most-wanted LeT commander Talib Hussain Shah - the mastermind behind a series of explosions in his home district Rajouri - and his



associate Faisal Ahmad Dar of south Kashmir's Pulwama district were escaping the dragnet of security forces and had reached the village for shelter on Saturday night.

The six close relatives kept their wits about them as they took on the two armed terrorists bare-handed in an hourlong confrontation in the hilltop village that can be reached only after trekking for over two hours from the last motorable road.

When I returned to my 'dhok' (hamlet) in the evening (on Saturday) after work, I saw two unknown persons inside the house and got suspicious as they introduced themselves as businessmen. They ordered me to switch off the mobile and keep it on the floor. They also restricted me from going outside, Mohammad Yousuf said. As it was dark, Yousuf said,

he tricked the terrorists by keeping his mobile phone on the ground with one hand and swooping it up with the other before pleading with them to let him go outside to attend nature's call.

Outside the premises, Yousuf said he telephoned his brother and told him that this might be our last conversation as some people have come to my house and collected all the information about our extended family. They might kill us all.

Cong slams BJP's willingness to 'flirt' with anti-nationals PNS NEW DELHI

Accusing the BJP of showing a "disturbing willingness to flirt with anti-national forces", the Congress on Tuesday questioned the silence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah on the alleged links of two arrested terrorists with the ruling

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera alleged the BJP was indulging in "fake nationalism", remarks coming in the backdrop of alleged links of Udaipur tailor Kanhaiya Lal's



killer Riyaz Attari and Lashkare-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Talib Hussain Shah with the BJP. He said two incidents in the past week have exposed the "double-faced" BJP, after Attari and Shah, who was captured by villagers in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, were claimed to be associated with the Centre's ruling party. Their photographs with BJP leaders have gone viral on social media, he said.

Khera also asked how Talib Hussain Shah, who was allegedly planning to attack the Amarnath Yatra in Kashmir, was seen in a photograph with Amit Shah. He wondered whether it was not a security

A photograph tweeted by the Congress' Jammu and Kashmir unit showed a bearded man standing among peo-ple at a meeting attended by Amit Shah which some claimed was Talib, the alleged mastermind of serial bomb blasts in Rajouri. "It is shocking that the BJP,

a party that loses no opportunity to preach to Indians about nationalism, has members and office-bearers who are deeply implicated in violent antinational activities," Khera told reporters, adding these were disturbing instances.

PNS JAMMU

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

We can do better

The Government's desire to lead Industry 4.0 is there; it has even made efforts in that direction

rime Minister Narendra Modi's assertion that India is leading the fourth industrial revolution, or Industry 4.0, may appear to be an exaggeration to his critics. It is, however, correct that the country has made remarkable progress in the technologies that are the defining features of the fourth revolution. The World Economic Forum elucidates the concept as: "The First Industrial Revolution used water and steam power to mechanise production. The Second used electric power to create mass production. The Third used electronics and information technology to automate production. Now a Fourth Industrial Revolution is building on the Third, the digital revolution that has been occurring since the middle of the last century. It is characterised by a fusion of tech-



nologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological spheres." Are we even near Industry 4.0? Well, certain facts are indeed disconcerting. For all the talk about being an emerging economy or, as more enthusiastic souls call it, a rising economic power, the reality is that our per capita income is below \$2,300, below that of Bangladesh's. India is a poor country, placed at the 142nd rank in terms of per capita income. Besides, manufacturing has not been doing well since 2011-12. Its share in the country's gross value added (GVA) has come down from 17.4 per cent in 2011-12 to 14.5 per cent in 2020-21.

Yet, it would not be very correct to say that there is no hope. As Prime Minister Modi said, "All programmes launched today are going to strengthen Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Living. They'll give a fillip to India's startup ecosystem. India can proudly say that it is not just part of the Industry 4.0 Revolution but is actually leading it." He said this while launching multiple digital portals at the Digital India Week 2022 on Monday. All Industry 4.0 technologies are not only being used in India but are promoted by the Government. In February this year, for instance, the Government released a national strategy for additive manufacturing (also called 3D printing) to encourage interface between academia, Government and industry. The objective was to make India a global hub for design, development and deployment in the sector. The Department of Science & Technology is implementing the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) to promote research, train personnel, develop the relevant technologies, incubate entrepreneurship and promote international collaboration. As many as 25 technology innovation hubs have already been established in reputed institutes across the country in advanced technologies including machine learning and artificial intelligence. The Government's desire to lead Industry 4.0 is there; it has also made some efforts in that direction. What PM Modi has to ensure is that the scourges that plagued the earlier rounds of industrialization — statist policies, the institutionalised anti-business attitude, excessive regulation, red tape et al — don't beleaguer Industry 4.0. It will be a pity if that happens.



Students walk past as people try to repair an auto-rickshaw on a flooded road amid heavy rain, in Mumbai

Economy travails

There's a crying need for reforms to boost the pace of economic growth in India

eserve Bank of India's former Governor Raghuram Rajan has again warned that without the suitable aid of the much-needed reforms, the pace of economic growth is bound to slow down steeply. It is true, too. Without the right set of reforms and more of the political turmoil and infighting that always keeps happening in India, it is likely it'll grow too slowly. However, the big question still remains as to how the country gets to that higher pace of reforms. Rajan, speaking at a Standard Chartered event in Singapore recently, said: "We have in place a Government that's attempting those reforms. But unfortunately, perhaps because a consensus for those reforms hasn't been reached widely, there is a lot of opposition and those reforms haven't played out — for example, on agriculture these were effectively rolled back." On November 19, following months of massive and



nationwide protests by farmers to the three new farm laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Government would repeal them. Such ad hoc, kabhi haan, kabhi naa approach is bound to rattle the Government's reforms agenda and depict it in a rather poor light in the eyes of the electorate.

While India's GDP is estimated to have grown by 8.7 per cent in FY22, it was on the back of a low base, with the economy having contracted 6.6 per cent in FY21. Besides, growth is seen slowing down to 7.2 per cent in FY23 and closer to 6 per cent in the medium term. The former RBI boss,

however, pointed out to the recent reports of bank privatisation and said the Government may not be done yet with reforms. "If that can be done reasonably, it offers an opportunity because the banking sector at this point, on net, is holding back the economy rather than propelling it. Credit growth has to be much stronger," he added. But how is India seen abroad as an investment opportunity? Of course, it has a great deal of potential because of its young population and with a great need for infrastructure. However, a point of concern remains in terms of India's 'drag consumption' which could in the long term mean that while India may be a \$3-trillion economy, it is a long way from being a substitute for China, which is five times larger.

A bait to regime of blasphemy

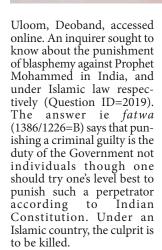


The Indian judiciary will do great disservice to a free nation by even remotely encouraging the blasphemous, unauthorised regime of Islam

ast Friday, a local court in Udaipur transferred the tailor-beheading case to the National Investigative Agency (NIA). Even the Rajasthan Government, otherwise accused of soft-pedalling Muslim fanaticism, is treating the case as an act of terror with foreign linkage. The same day, however, a vacation Bench of the Supreme Court held Nupur Sharma morally culpable for the Udaipur killing. The Bench, comprising Justices Surya Kant and JB Padrewala, orally observed that she was "singlehandedly responsible" for what was happening in the country like the "unfortunate incident" in Udaipur. One is sure that Riyaz Akhtari and Ghaus Mohammed, arrested on charges of Udaipur murder, will not fail to take advantage of the Supreme Court's observations during their trial.

Way back in September 1934, one Abdul Qayum stabbed to death Nathuramal Sharma inside the Court of the Judicial Commissioner of Sind. The latter was waiting for his turn to be heard under Section 195 of Indian Penal Code for publication of a pamphlet on the history of Islam. The case of Abdul Qayum was argued by Barkat Ali, a barrister from Lahore. "He went to the length of saying" — as BR Ambedkar informs — "that Qayum was not guilty of murder of Nathuramal because his act was justifiable by the law of Koran" (Pakistan or Partition of India, P147). It would be unsurprising if Riyaz & Ghaus also argue that they had done nothing wrong according to the laws of Islam by beheading Kanhaiya Lal Teli, the tailor.

Nupur Sharma has received a flurry of death threats, from India and abroad, most of which she possibly could not see as they clogged her email account. These death threats are not arbitrary, but there is a definite asis to them in Islamic law. This explains why a large number of Muslims thought the same way, despite the fact that intimidation is punishable under law of the land. The answer could be found in a *fatwa* of Darul Ifta of Darul



The acts of the enthusiasts, it is evident, are not without sanction in Islam. Those issuing death threats, or carrying out executions, feel self-righteous in doing so in the light of Islamic laws. Accepting even that Nupur had been wrong, no Maulana or Mufti has yet come forward to correct her on facts. Would that not have been the most civilised way of dealing with the issue? Only a Salafi school cleric from Pakistan, Engineer Muhammad Ali Mirza, was discerning enough to state that what Nupur said was evidently under provocation from the Muslim side. Her approach was that if Muslims wish to mock Hinduism on theological ground, they must not over-



THE DEATH THREATS TO NUPUR ARE NOT ARBITRARY; THERE IS A DEFINITE BASIS TO THEM IN ISLAMIC LAW. THIS EXPLAINS WHY A LARGE NUMBER OF MUSLIMS THOUGHT THE SAME WAY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT INTIMIDATION IS PUNISHABLE THE LAND

look their own Achilles' heel. It is speculative if Christians of India would

come out with kitchen knives if Nupur had expressed grave doubts on Jesus Christ's miracles of loaves and fishes raining from heaven. Or would the Indian ambassador to Israel Sanjeev Singla would have been hurriedly summoned to Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 9, Yitzhak Rabin Boulevard at Kiryat HaLeom in Jerusalem, if Nupur had expressed a negative opinion on certain acts of Moses or Prophet Isaiah in the *Old Testament*? Neither Judaism nor Christianity at present enforces blasphemy, which explains why no Christian or Jew views defending the honour of their Prophets with the aid of swords or guns as part of their religion. This allows critical and historical examination of those religions possible without any fear of lethal reprisal. Any such exercise with regard to Islam is fraught with mortal risk although, at the same time, Islam is being hailed as 'religion of peace. This dichotomy begs for an answer.

On June 8, 1992, prominent Egyptian professor, writer and human rights activist Farag Foda was assassinated in Cairo by the members of Al-Jamaa Al-Islamiyya. Foga often dared advocates of Sharia rule in Egypt to show how possibly they would deal with modern problems like housing shortage in Cairo. Foda had been accused of blasphemy by Al-Azhar University, though that did not authorise his assassination by member of an Islamist organisation. His killer Abu El'Ela Abdrabu, released from prison in 2012, later said in a television interview that the punishment of an apostate (one who leaves Islam) is death, even if he

In India, the emphasis has always been on tolerating Muslims. Going into fundamentals of Islam, therefore, appeared to be going for the jugular of the religion. Even the judiciary, the lighthouse of rationality, felt shaken by it.

In July 2009, Justices RV Raveendran and Markandeya Katju had buckled under Islamist pressure to withdraw a Supreme Court order (March 30, 2009) that equated Muslims insistence on keeping heard with 'Talibanisation" of India. May Peace be upon us!

(The writer is an author and independent researcher based in New Delhi. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GODS OF THE WAR CURSE

Sir — What a travesty it is of global leadership that keeps fanning the fire of war, this time in Ukraine? Whither the tenets of great thinkers and statesmen who helmed the destiny of nations and people across ages. History is no longer in the syllabus of modern-day politicians who stake false claims to statesmanship. Wars start small and then grow too big to be controlled by the comity of nations. The fickleness and vanity of nations had prevailed over human sanity in every major conflict. It is significant that Germany was at the core of both the World Wars and Russia, its opponent.

The Ukraine conflict now has Russia on the one side and Germany is rubbing shoulders with other Western nations at Nato. Nothing has changed except that technology has vastly upgraded weapons. But these nations and their leaders have not graduated from archaic mindsets, despite suffering miseries of large scale military engagements over many a modern decade. Going by precedents, the Ukraine conflict can only expand, perhaps exponentially, as the likes of Hannibal who swore eternal enmity to Rome or Hitler the visceral racist, keep reincarnating. Mankind is willingly propitiating the gods of war curse.

R Narayanan | Navi Mumbai

REACHING OUT TO MUSLIMS

Sir — It has come as a pleasant surprise that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has exhorted the party cadre to reach out to the "deprived, non-elite" Muslims. This is because he is not exactly known for his prominority or pro-Muslim utterances. His persona is one of a leader who refused to sport a skull cap and urged people to identify the anti-CAA protesters by their dress. One wishes that the BJP cadres abide by his call to care for the impoverished Muslims. It will improve the lot of the poor Muslims and strengthen inter-faith bonds. It doesn't matter whether it is known as 'Muslim appeasement' or 'politics of fulfilment'.

The Sachar Commission report gives an account of how the majority of Muslims live

Act against corrupt leaders



hough Chief Minister MK Stalin has been striving hard to implement the promises made in the electoral manifesto of his party and has also succeeded in implementing a sizeable number of their leaders' promises, it is a wonder why there is no progress in taking action against the former Ministers and partymen of the AIADMK alleged to have been involved in gargantuan corruption and amassing wealth disproportionate to their income,

in misery. It should not be reduced to a game plan to prevail on the impoverished Muslims to support the party and subscribe to its Hindutva ideology. Also, as a goodwill gesture, Modi can accept a skull cap from a member of the Pasmandas community or a non-Syed, OBC Muslim if he is more comfortable with it. This will dispel the impression that he embraces only the rulers of the affluent Arab nations and not his humble Indian Muslim compatriots.

G David Milton | *Maruthancode*

Sir — The Mumbai Congress strongly opposed the construction of the Metro rail car-shed in the green lungs of Aarey, with city unit chief Bhai Jagtap urging the Union Government and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to drop their "juvenile insistence" on going ahead with the plan. One of the first decisions taken by the Eknath Shinde Government was to

Even now we find former Ministers against whom such grievous graft charges were levelled by the DMK, particularly by the Chief Minister, moving around scot-free and even

challenging the Government. The people who voted the DMK to power with the hope that they would see that the corrupt politicians against whom they have even complained to the Governor to initiate action would be arrested and their ill-notten wealth confiscated, remain totally disappointed that no serious action has been initiated against them. This leads to lots of guesses and people have even started wondering whether the ruling dispensation itself is protecting them. It is time the Chief Minister looked into this burning issue and took appropriate expeditious action on war footing, lest the people come to a firm conclusion that the incumbent Government is trying to cover up their misdeeds and acts of corruption

Shalini Gerald | Chennai

NEED TO SAVE AAREY FOREST

allow construction of the car-shed for Metro Line 3 at Aarey, a move that has met with opposition from environmental activists and some political parties, overturning the previous Government's plan to build

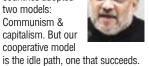
it at Kanjurmarg.

The Aarey forest is the breathline of Mumbai. It is basically the lungs of Mumbai. By destroying the forest and cutting down trees, the Centre and State are doing juvenile insistence to set up a metro car-shed there. This is a project that destroys the environment. It is being opposed at all levels. Mumbaikars don't want this project in Aarey. The Metro car-shed should come up in Kanjurmarg. With this, the legal dispute is expected between the Centre and the Mumbaikars with support of activists and the Opposition parties like the Shiv Sena, Congress and the NCP.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

In the last 100 years, different countries adopted two models: Communism & capitalism. But our cooperative model



Union Home Minister —Amit Shah





German Chancellor —Olaf Scholz

I want to do a film but whenever I get an opportunity to do a TV show. I can't say no



—Shaheer Sheikh



bullying. That's what he (Kyrgios) does. I don't like

Tennis player —Stefanos Tsitsipas

Gujarat can get cheap, 24x7 power... I'll be back on Sunday with a solution to the State's power issue





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RAJYOGI BHRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ JI**

hose who know driving are aware that we need to shift gears to change the speed of the vehicle. And when we stop the car, we bring the gear to neutral position. Just like the car, there is a neutral gear for everything. It is the gear that brings everything to stillness, neutrality, balance and renewal. When things are in neutral gear, they are at rest, and they get aligned properly. Neutrality brings balance and fairness in all actions.

In India at several places, especially in workshops, they have something called 'dharam kaanta', which is basically a device used for weighing goods in commercial vehicles such as trucks. It is believed that weighing at such a place assures accuracy in weighing standards. It is again a way to ensure neutrality and fairness in commercial transactions. Similarly, in political and social affairs, mediators play a vital role. That's because they act neutrally to find a solution for different parties or groups of people involved in a conflict or disagreement. Likewise, there are mediators even in families and communities who help to resolve family disputes.

Meditation helps in looking at a problem or dispute from a neutral perspective, which facilitates a balanced and unbiased decision and choices. In order for things to flow or move smoothly even speed needs to be controlled and brought to a neutral point. That is why we see how traffic signals ensure the smooth flow of traffic on roads. Similarly, a taxi meter is readjusted to neutral or zero and so is the petrol vending machine in order to ensure fair transaction. In the same way, when we need to change the colour of clothes, we have to first bleach and make them white, which is a neutral colour. There is a neutral power above all creation that acts neutrally to bring the creation to its best state.



HE, whom we know by different names, is both loving and detached. HE is always neutral - HE does not act out of bias, likes or dislikes. That is why everyone prays to HIM to solve their problems and to guide them to well-being. Hence, it is important for humans also to be detached whilst performing actions. For, it is only through spiritual awareness that one can act neutrally and be free from the bondage of 'Karma'. And, it is only when we perform neutrally that we can empower others or do welfare and constructive work. Remember! When we are too involved and attached to actions and roles, we cannot do good or empower others in spite of wanting to do so because attachment creates expectations and dependence on people and results.

So, in order to act and live neutrally, we have to come to the zero point, i.e., to a neutral position. We have to detach even from our body and become soul conscious. As souls we are the children of ONE Supreme, hence, we need to live in this world like a trustee who owns nothing. When we act in the remembrance of ONE, we accumulate tremendous power and fortune, which further adds the power of zero to our account of Karma like 10, 100, 1000.... One of the easiest and effortless ways to become neutral is to put a full stop. YES! Throughout the day while playing different roles, we just have to pause and stop thinking about external things and connect to our original state of being peaceful and pure for a minute and then come back to action. These full stops, applied periodically during the day, help us to become neutral, balanced and empowered to do our best. So, let's begin the journey to ZERO.

(The author is a spiritual educator.)

KCR for conscience vote in Prez election

VANAM JWALA NARASIMHA RAO & VJM **DIVAKAR**

KCR has sought conscience vote for Presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha to boost anti-Modi front

ray of hope for sustenance of democracy and for a bright and prosperous India emerged crystal Clear when Telangana Chief Minister and Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) president K Chandrashekhar Rao attacked the Union government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He pointed out how for the past eight years it has been bulldozing every institution, basic rights of democracy, the secular fabric of the nation, while ruthlessly, arrogantly and unethically trying to silence the opposition, and also immorally and illegally toppling the democratically elected state governments when its inability to face the aggression of the external enemies and becoming an agent of a few crony capitalists and so on. The platform was Hyderabad Jalavihar where a meeting of TRS MLAs and MPs was convened to extend support to the presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha.

Reminding the 1969 Presidential election contest between Congress' official candidate Neelam Sanjiva Reddy and the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi supported independent candidate VV Giri, when an appeal was made to the electoral college members to vote as per their conscience, KCR urged all MPs and MLAs to once again vote as per their conscience this time irrespective of party affiliations.

KCR argued that Yashwant Sinha would be a better choice when compared to NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu, in view of his ability to bring a qualitative change in politics. And thus, KCR had every reason to make an appeal for a conscience vote in favor of Yashwant Sinha, as he said "nothing in this country is going on in a rightful manner. KCR in his hour-long address to the Electoral College members cited a series of examples in support of his appeal for a conscience vote and also as to why there is a need for qualitative changes and why there is a need for electing Yashwant Sinha to the

Though PM Modi made tall promises soon after assuming office, pointed out KCR, he failed to fulfill even a single promise. In addition, he enacted three draconian farm laws, forcing the peasant community to sit on protests for over a year. Finally, Modi had to withdraw the farm laws after 700 farmers lost their precious lives. Also, neither the farmers' income was doubled nor Minimum Support Price (MSP) was increased.

KCR was sarcastic when he said that PM Modi thinks he is invincible though the 14 Prime Ministers who preceded him never thought so. Modi is under the false impression that he would be the PM of India permanently despite the fact that political change in a democracy is imminent.

KCR detailed how under PM Modi, the country's image all over the world lowered; how farmers, unemployed and employees have been facing problems; how price rise and inflation are uncontrolled; how the union government is abusing the Constitutional institutions; how opposition



CANDIDATES OFTEN APPEAL **FOR** CONSCIENCE **VOTE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL** ELECTION, AND THE **TELANGANA** CM KCR ARGUED IN AN ADDRESS TO MPs AND MLAs THAT **YASHWANT** SINHA'S **VICTORY** COULD HERALD MANY

CHANGES FOR

THE BETTER

parties are harassed and targeted, etc. This according to KCR is nothing

but murder of democracy.

Touching upon the aspect of how the BJP rulers are conspiring to destabilize the state governments, KCR said the Modi government has toppled nine Opposition-ruled

Taking serious objection to Modi's exerting pressure on Sri Lankan government to allot contract works to his favored persons, which was openly confessed by a Sri Lanka Electricity Board official, KCR demanded a clarification from PM. He also labelled that the present crisis in Sri Lanka is the handiwork of Modi and Sri Lankan economy's collapse hurt India's reputation. KCR hinted at fighting against this. KCR wanted Modi to disclose the inside story of the Sri Lanka crisis.

Criticizing the much-hyped 'Make in India' programme, KCR sought a clarification on job creation due to this, as well as industrial growth in the Modi regime. KCR also suggested to Modi to learn lessons from China where the rulers. speak less and work more.

While the country has abundant coal stocks, KCR asked why the Modi government forced Telangana to buy 10 per cent imported coal at a higher price. Charging that Modi is working like a salesman of big traders, KCR said that he should explain why the BJP government is promoting coal imports. KCR sought an explanation from Modi as to why many major international companies like Fiat, Ford, GM motors, Datsun, United Motors, Harley Davidson stopped their businesses in the country.

Asserting that the 130-crore population cannot be a spectator, KCR expressed concerns at black money doubling in the Modi regime, depreciation of rupee to an all-time low, privatization of profit-making public-sector undertakings, including LIC. The inference is that the Modi government played a major role in the decline of all sectors.

Referring to the period of corona crisis, KCR said that while the holy Ganga River was flooded with corpses, while the Modi government failed to provide any succor to the migrant labor, it was Telangana government that did its best in extending relief to one and all. Every policy adopted by the Modi government proved disastrous for the country.

With statistical data, KCR explained how under the Modi regime rankings in many sectors at the international level had fallen, be it Human Development Index, Human Rights, employment, happiness index, environment, etc. It President. shows the poor performance of the Modi government in the last eight

Asserting that the Modi government killed democracy and weakened federal structure, besides harassing state governments, KCR took serious objection to the statement of a Union minister that Telangana government would be toppled. He said if Modi's dictatorial rule dethrones Telangana government, his party would unseat the BJP government at the Center, hinting that Telangana is ready for another big fight.

Among others, KCR also cate-

gorically mentioned that India is being insulted on international platforms due to Modi's decisions and policies; India's Father of the nation is insulted repeatedly by the Modi's men; Modi is unnecessarily interfering in elections of other countries as he supported Donald Trump in the US elections; Harassment of states and exploitation of the constitutional bodies continue.

In his concluding remarks, KCR said that it is time for people in the country to wage another non-violent movement to dislodge the BJPled government at the Center and pave the way for a new, honest, peaceful, secular, democratic and progressive government. The first step in this direction is to get Yashwant Sinha elected as the President of the country. Hence, he made an appeal for a conscience vote for Sinha. In this context he made the timely reminder of the Presidential contest between Neelam Sanjeev Reddy and VV Giri, when the conscience vote gave India its

KCR's address has raised hones that Modi can be questioned, and his actions can be opposed. KCR's speech may well be the first step in the direction to restore the country back to its glorious past. It also is the beginning to lay a strong foundation for the country to once again stand tall with true democratic and secular values and become once again an economic power in Asia.

Though KCR demanded replies from PM Modi to the points he raised, PM remained silent in his address in the public meeting held after the BJP national executive committee meeting.

AS AN ORGANISATION, WE HAVE BECOME BIGGER THAN THE CONGRESS IN GUJARAT. IT EXISTS LARGELY ON PAPER HERE. —AAP NATIONAL CONVENER **ARVIND KEJRIWAL**





CONGRESS HAS BEEN WORKING IN GUJARAT WITH THE PEOPLE... YOU WILL COME ACROSS PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN OUR IDEOLOGY.

—GUJARAT CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

EPS, OPS slug it out for control over AIADMK

It's a challenge for AIADMK as to how to engage with ally BJP which is trying to use it as a counterforce to DMK

hile the Shiv Sena has split in Maharashtra, the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu is engaged in a power struggle with two former chief ministers, E. Palaniswamy (EPS) and O. Pannerselvam (OPS),

fighting with each other. In a fast-developing drama, the EPS camp would like to relieve OPS of his present post of party treasurer and Deputy Leader in the Assembly. After losing the Assembly elections last year, and successive local body polls, the EPS camp feels that the dual leadership has only hampered the working of the party.

Amid its golden jubilee celebrations, the AIADMK cadres are confused. Five years ago, when a relatively unknown EPS was chosen as



(The writer is a senior

journalist. The views

expressed are personal.)

general secretary V.K. Sasikala, EPS and OPS reached a truce in 2017 to establish dual leadership. Together they steered the party and government successfully for four years, braving a pandemic.

After five decades, the AIADMK is facing a bleak future. Carefully built by two former chief ministersfounder M.G. Ramachandran and his protege J. Jayalalithaa it is undergoing a bad patch. There is a disconnect between the leaders and cadres. Some of the party's challenges include factionalism and the approach towards the ally Bharatiya Janata Party, which is trying to replace the Dravidian party as

a counterforce to the DMK. post-Jayalalithaa era is amply different times, and became removed Sasikala from that and R. Vaithilingam.

share stands at 25.47 per cent in the urban local body election. It got 33.29 per cent of votes in the Assembly.

The charismatic matinee idol MGR established the AIADMK on October 12, 1972, two days after the parent party DMK expelled him. He served as the chief minister from 1977 till his death in 1987. He chose to be on the right side of the Centre and made compromises with the prime ministers, including Indira Gandhi.

The philosophy of DMK founder and former chief minister C.N. Annadurai became the founding principle of the AIADMK. MGR's successor Jayalalithaa aligned A gradual erosion in the with BJP and the Congress at

CM candidate by ex-AIADMK clear. The AIADMK's vote chief minister six times with interruptions.

It is not the first time the AIADMK is facing a split. Following MGR's death in 1987, there was a power struggle between one faction headed by MGR's wife Janaki and the other by Jayalalithaa. While Janaki succeeded MGR as chief minister for a short period, both sections lost miserably to the DMK in the 1989 polls. Then Janaki withdrew from politics, and Jayalalithaa became the sole leader.

OPS and EPS have taken their fight to the general council, which has the power to elect an interim general secretary, not a permanent one. That was how Sasikala donned the post following the death of Jayalalithaa. But EPS and OPS

post and created new positions such as coordinator and cocoordinator, which are also temporary.

In the current situation, OPS got a midnight hearing before the Tamil Nadu High Court to restrict discussion points in the general council meeting. He thus stopped the party from elevating EPS as the sole leader at the June 23 general council meeting. However, the discussion turned ugly when clashes broke out between the two camps.

Seventy-five district secretaries, headquarters functionaries, and general council members have moved to the EPS camp in the last few days. OPS has the support of just nine district secretaries and leaders like Manoj Pandian

OPS blamed vested interests and asserted that the general council and Mondav's meeting of top AIADMK functionaries were illegal. Similarly, a proposed GC on July 11 is also not legal. It is doubtful whether it will take place or OPS will move the

court to stop it. After Jaya, the BJP has remote control over the AIADMK from the Centre. The change was abundantly clear on issues like NEET, New Education Policy, threelanguage policy (giving the nod first and then withdrawing it after the protests), the CAA, farmers' law, handling of the pandemic, etc.

The BJP is not able to penetrate much because of its ide-

the BJP is riding piggyback on AIADMK. The Dravidian parties have had tie-ups with the two national parties at different times.

OPS tried to rope in the BJP, which had backed him earlier, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi refused to give him an audience last week. A disappointed OPS came back from Delhi and is resorting to other measures to survive.

In any political party, the cadres decide who gets to lead the party, and, in this case, Panneerselvam is certainly not their first choice. It is about time he accepted the fact and worked towards gaining acceptance of the large number of AIADMK cadre as their leader, ology. In Tamil Nadu, the as, after all, courts cannot get Dravidian-Tamil sentiment is him back to his workers.

Passenger vehicle retail sales up 40 pc in June as chip supply improves

assenger vehicle retail sales in the country rose 40 per cent in June indicating an improvement in semiconductor supplies even as demand, especially for SUVs, remained robust, auto dealer' body FADA said on Tuesday.According to the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), passenger vehicle (PV) registrations rose to 2,60,683 units last month, as compared to 1,85,998 units in June 2021, registering an increase of 40 per cent. The PV segment continued to see robust growth. An

increase in dispatches clearly shows that semiconductor availability is now getting easier," FADA President Vinkesh Gulati said in a statement. Due to chip shortage, however, waiting periods, especially in compact SUV and SUV segments, continue to remain high, he added.Despite long waiting periods, new vehicle launches are witnessing robust bookings thus reflecting a healthy demand pipeline, Gulati said. Two-wheeler retail sales last month rose 20 per cent to 11,19,096 units, as compared to 9,30,825 units in the year-ago period, FADA data



Marico reports mid-single-digit volume decline in domestic market

MCG major Marico on Tuesday reported a volume decline "in mid-single digits" in its India business, as the sector continued to witness "tepid demand" as rising retail inflation exerted pressure on the share of wallet. Current trends indicate that consumers "titrated consumption" in some nonessential categories and either "downtraded among brands or switched to smaller packs" in the essential categories said Marico."In the given context, India

husiness volumes declined in midsingle digits. The performance was particularly dragged by a sharp drop in Saffola Oils. Excluding Saffola Oils, the India business posted marginal volume growth. Parachute Coconut Oil recorded a minor volume decline," said Marico in its quarterly update for Q1 FY23. However, premium discretionary categories fared relatively better in the April-June guarter because of a lower base and lower consumption dip in the upper-income consumer seament



Bajaj Auto looks to sell Chetak from 75 locations in current fiscal

itnessing a robust demand for its electric scooter Chetak, Bajaj Auto plans to scale up the sales infrastructure for the model to 75 locations across the country in the current fiscal.The Pune-based firm had brought back its iconic Chetak scooter in electric avatar in October 2019. "Seeing the enthusiastic demand for this iconic model, the company has increased the touchpoints to 20 locations in FY 2022. This is expected to grow to 75 in FY 2023," the company said

in its Annual Report for 2021-22 Initially, Chetak was sold from only two locations, Pune and Bengaluru. The company noted that when bookings for the model were first rolled out in early 2020, it had to be stopped on account of COVID. "When we restarted online bookings on April 13, 2021, we had to stop 48 hours later, owing to overwhelming demand," it noted. During the last fiscal, the company said it has sold 8,187 units of the escooter."We are committed to the development of Electric Vehicles (EVs)



ED conducts raids against Vivo, related companies in money laundering probe

PNS NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday conducted searches at 44 places across the country in a money laundering investigation against Chinese smartphone manufacturing company Vivo and related firms, officials said. The searches are being carried out under sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) at locations in several states including in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya, Maharashtra and others.The agency is conducting searches at 44 places related to Vivo and associated companies, they said. A query sent by PTI to Vivo did not elicit a response. The news piece will be updated once the company issues a statement.The federal agency filed a money laundering case after taking cognisance of a recent Delhi Police (economic offences wing) FIR against a distributor of the agency based in Jammu and Kashmir where it was alleged that few Chinese shareholders in that company forged their identify documents.

India to be self-sufficient ONDC can become next in urea by 2025 end: Govt

India will not need to import urea by 2025-end as the domestic production of conventional urea and nano liquid urea is expected to be sufficient to meet the country's annual demand, Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilisers Mansukh Mandaviya said on Tuesday.

At present, the country's urea (conventional) production is 260 lakh tonnes, while around 90 lakh tonnes are imported to meet local demand.

"As per our estimate, we will be self-sufficient in urea by 2025-end and there will be no import dependence. Our domestic production of conventional urea and nano urea will be more than the demand," he told reporters

The minister said around 60 lakh tonnes of production capacity will be added for



conventional urea, while the output of nano urea is estimated to rise to 44 crores bottles (of 500 ml each) per annum, which will be equivalent to 200 lakh tonnes of conventional

Mandaviya said the adoption of nano urea by farmers has been very encouraging and highlighted that the liquid nutrient is effective for maintaining soil health as well as for

increasing crop yield. According to a ministry official, the government will save foreign exchange of about Rs 40,000 crore per annum due to a reduction in imports.

One bottle of nano urea is equivalent to one bag of urea. Its application can effectively lead to a reduction in soil, water and air pollution which happens due to the overuse of chemical fertilisers both at production and consumption

At present, the capacity of nano urea is 5 crore bottles per

Co-operative major IFFCO has introduced innovative nano urea in the market. The commercial production started on August 1, 2021 from IFFCO's plant at Kalol in Gujarat.

Śeven more nano urea plants are being set up by IFFCO as well as two stateowned firms RCF and NFL. IFFCO has transferred the nano urea technology to these two public sector undertakings free of cost.

On demand of nano-urea, the official said the total despatch of nano urea was 3,90,03,284 bottles and sales 2,87,25,822 bottles between August 2021 and June 2022.

Nano urea has been sold across various states. As many as 3,36,456 bottles have been exported as well.Explaining the benefits, the official said that nano urea is eco-friendly as it leads to less soil, air and water pollution.

UPI, says Ashwini Vaishnaw

PNS GANDHINAGAR

Union IT minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Tuesday exuded confidence that Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) can become the next UPI, one of India's most successful digital products.

According to Vaishnaw, ONDC can help entrepreneurs who are into either ecommerce, B2B or dealing directly with customers.

"Can we expand ONDC to make it the next UPI? I request all of you to have a serious look at it. We believe that ONDC can be the next UPI. Just look how you can leverage it for your business," said Vaishnaw in his address after inaugurating the 'National Startup Conference' at Mahatma Mandir convention centre here as part of the Digital India Week 2022.

In April, the Centre launched ONDC in five cities of Delhi NCR, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Shillong and Coimbatore in the pilot phase.



It is an initiative of the government to promote an open platform for all aspects of the exchange of goods and services through electronic networks. Through this platform, consumers can potentially discover any seller, prod-

uct or service by using any ONDC-compatible application or platform, thus increasing freedom of choice for con-In his address, Vaishnaw

also urged startup entrepreneurs to take the UPI (Unified

that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application, to the world in a very big way". "ÚPI is a fabulous solution.

Three countries have already signed up agreements with us to use it. But, can we take it to a large scale?" asked Vaishnaw, who handles Railways, Communications and Electronics as well as Information Technology portfolio as Cabinet minister.

On the occasion, he said when the Centre had launched the "Startup India" initiative, political opponents had predicted its failure saying it was just a slogan or "jumla". "Now, see the change which has hap-

India currently has nearly 70,000 startups and over 100 unicorns. The first question ministers of other countries ask is how we were able to create such a startup ecosystem in such a short time, because other countries took decades" said the minister.

NTPC mines 61 pc more coal at 42.20 lakh metric tonnes in April-June

PNS NEW DELHI

State-owned power giant NTPC on Tuesday said that its coal output grew by 61 per cent to Rs 42.40 lakh metric tonnes in April-June quarter from 26.40 lakh metric tonnes (MT) in the same period a

"The three operational coal mines -- Pakri-Barwadih (Jharkhand), Dulanga (Jharkhand), Dulanga (Odisha) and Talaipalli (Chhattisgarh) -- have contributed to achieving 42.40 lakh metric tonnes of coal production," an NTPC statement said.According to the statement, the coal production of 42.40 lakh MT in the first quarter of FY23 was 61 per cent more than the production of 26.40 lakh MT achieved in the same period last year.

The production of coal during the month of June 2022 almost doubled to 15.55 lakh



MT from 7.73 lakh MT in the same month a year ago.

Along with this coal production, the NTPC has also contributed to the removal of 106 lakh cubic metre and coal despatch of 41.74 lakh MT to NTPC power plants, in this quarter.NTPC said that it has also started mining operations in its Chatti-Bariatu coal

mine (Jharkhand) and has

already touched coal in May this year.

The coal from this mine will be supplied to Barh Power Station of NTPC.

NTPC was awarded the operation contract for Talaipalli (West Pit) (Chhattisgarh) on June 30, 2022 and the mining operations in this pit will commence

Bounce to sell its electric vehicle product offerings PNS ■ MUMBAI vehicle of the ministry of elec

Bengaluru-based electric vehicle startup Bounce on Tuesday announced its partnership with the central government's egovernance service delivery network CSC to strengthen its presence across rural markets.Under the collaboraell its prod uct offerings through the Common Service Centre (CSC) network, the company said.CSC, a special purpose

vehicle of the ministry of electronics and IT, allows Village-Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) the option to launch a rural estore.CSC Rural e-Mobility promotes the use of EVs (Electric Vehicles) and charging infrastructure across the country through a strong and vibrant network of VLEs.Initially, the company will offer Boi Infinity e-scooters, fleet rental service and two- and threewheelers retrofitting, Bounce said in a statement



Rupee plunges by 41 paise to record low of 79.36 against US dollar

PNS MUMBAI

The rupee fell by 41 paise to close at a fresh lifetime low of 79.36 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday amid a strong greenback overseas and unrelenting foreign fund outflows.

the interban market, the local unit opened at 79.04 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 79.02 and a low of 79.38.It finally settled at 79.36 (provisional), down 41 paise over its previous close. On Monday, the rupee had closed at 78.95 against the US dollar.The Indian rupee hit a fresh record low against the US Dollar on Tuesday on the back of stronger dollar and weaker-than-expected domestic data, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP



Public-pvt partnership projects can boost trade in ports sector

PNS MUMBAI

Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects in the port sector are of great significance in making Indian ports more competitive and strengthening the country's position in international trade, minister of state for ports, shipping Shrinac

The minister said that rop-

increase earnings.

Naik was addressing the Maritime Public-Private investments in major ports.

"PPP mode has become

off in 1997, the minister said, the port sector witnessed new investments including those

Naik said on Tuesday.

ing in private players has helped in improving the efficiency of the port sector and

Partnership Enclave 2022 here, organised jointly by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and Mumbai Port Authority (MbPA) on 25 years of PPP

the perfect mode of infrastructure development. While we celebrate these fruitful 25 years, we need to further strengthen the existing and future PPPs by providing a supportive environment," he

When the port privatisation programme was flagged

from overseas. "PPP projects in the ports

sector are of great significance in making Indian ports more competitive and thereby strengthening India's position in international trade," he said To drive the transformation through the modernisation of port infrastructure requires expansion and upgradation of berths, construction of new berths and terminals, automation of port operations, among others, the minister said.

"As we embark on a new era of economic resurgence, bolstered by port-led development, we look forward to streamlining initiatives to promote private participation," Naik said.He said the government is working on providing a conducive ecosystem by implementing policies to enhance the legal and political environment, improving the efficiency of the public sector, preparing a robust institutional framework, expediting the clearance processes and providing funding assistance.

Industry body CII pitches for simplification of GST

PNS NEW DELHI

CII's President Sanjiv Bajaj on Tuesday pitched for the simplification of Goods and Services Tax structure, and suggested that electricity as well as fuel should be brought under the GST ambit as that will help make the industry more competitive.He also suggested that the number of tax slabs under the GST should be brought down to three."Going forward, we believe that on GST further simplification, cutting some of the inconsistencies, there are sectors where there is inverted tax structure, bringing in items like electricity, fuel under GST will further help simplify, cut costs, make industry more competitive," he said in an interview to PTI.

Further, the president of the industry body said there is justification for keeping sin and luxury goods in the highest slab."We believe there is (scope for) simplification to probably three slabs. Now that five years have gone and there is experience over there, is what makes sense and that is something that should be deliberated upon," Bajaj, who is Chairman and Managing Director of Bajaj Finserv Limited, said.

Shoppers Stop to add 12 new stores in FY23; focuses on private labels

PNS NEW DELHI

Retail chain Shoppers Stop Ltd has plans to launch 12 new stores in FY23, primarily in tier-2 and tier-3 cities, and will continue to invest in store renovations.

Shoppers Stop plans to increase the share of new and refurbished stores to over 50 per cent in FY23, said the latest annual report of the com-The company will also

continue to invest in its private labels, including celebrity endorsements. Shoppers Stop is investing in the new-age technology and is backing its data analytics project Jarvis to max-

imise its understanding of

customer behaviour and pref-

erences.

"Project Jarvis, a massive data lake and analytics project, will significantly improve our overall analytical capabilities, enabling us to get 'closer' to our customers through the use of a propen-sity model and better mining of behavioural data and preferences," the report said.

This can then be translated into much more effective marketing and product recommendations, leading to greater customer accretion and stickiness.

'We are enhancing the supply chain function through an automatic inventory replenishment system that can trigger customer-centric product assortments to opti-

SHOPPERS STOP



Bombay HC upholds disqualification of Tata Motors from e-buses tender process

PNS MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday upheld the decision of the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST) Undertaking to disqualify Tata Motors from a tender bid for operating electric buses in the city. A bench of Justices S V Gangapurwala and Madhav Jamdar dismissed a plea filed by Tata Motors challenging the

disqualification. The bench held that BEST had been right in disqualifying the Tata Motors. The auto major had approached the HC challenging the BEST's decision to disqualify it from the tender process for operating 1,400 electric buses for Mumbai. Tata Motors had participated in the tender process, but its bid was disqualified by BEST following a technical suitability evaluation, the parties

had previously told the high court.It had argued that its technical bid was "arbitrarily" rejected to favour the company that won the tender process. As per the plea filed by the automobile company, BEST had published an e-tender notice on February 26 this year for twobid e-tender for the operation of stage carriage services for 1,400 single-decker AC electric buses for Mumbai and its suburbs.

PLI scheme can add 4% to GDP annually

PNS MUMBAI

The production-linked incentives (PLI) scheme, which seeks to boost manufacturing in key areas by offering nearly Rs 2.4 lakh crore in incentives over the next five years, can add 4 per cent to the GDP annually in terms of incremental revenue, says a report.

So far, the scheme has seen maximum response from the electronics, auto components, and pharma sectors, according Emkay Investment Managers.

The PLI scheme has the potential to add nearly 4 per cent to GDP per annum in terms of incremental revenue if fully realised, the report released on Tuesday said.

Manufacturing companies are adding capacities due to robust returns and this is evident from the number of new manufacturing companies reg-

Registration of manufacturing companies has shot up to the highest ever in the last seven years and the share of manufacturing companies in total registrations is also at almost highest level since the past decade.

Also, the number of environmental clearances sought and granted was the highest ever in



FY22, which was 10x of FY15, says the report and credits the same to the structural changes unveiled during 2018-21 which are reminiscent of the many such things that happened

prior to the 2003-06 boom cycle. The report said that domestic manufacturing was hit due to demonetisation, badly rolled out GST, and the pandemic apart from the miss-

ing consumer demand. As a result manufacturing companies have been reporting dismal RoCEs (return on capital employed) till FY18.

Since then the cash ROCEs have improved to almost 20 per cent driven by tighter working capital cycles and the cash return on capital employed was the highest in FY22.

The report goes on to add that the current difference between cash ROCE and comparable investment is one of the highest and the attractiveness of cash returns coupled with better capacity utilization has put manufacturers on the front

what's brewing?

James Cameron planning to leave Avatar franchise after third sequel



Cameron, who is awaiting the release of his upcoming fantasy

epic Avatar: The Way of the Water, has shared that he might possibly stop direct-ing the films in the franchise after the third sequel, reports 'Variety'.

The director told 'Empire' magazine that he's considering leaving the world of Pandora behind for other projects down the line and would pass on the baton to other deserving filmmakers in the process.

The first Avatar sequel, subtitled The Way of Water, is set to hit theatres on December 16. A third film in the Avatar series was shot back-to-back with The Wav



"I think eventually over

time, I don't know if that's

after three or after four. I'll

want to pass the baton to a

director that I trust to take

interested in. Or maybe not.

over, so I can go do some

other stuff that I'm also

I don't know," he said.

of the Water and is eyeing a release in 2024.

Cameron told 'Empire' magazine, as quoted by 'Variety', The *Avatar* films themselves are kind of allconsuming. I've got some other things I'm developing as well that are exciting.

expressed excitement about the potential to watch his grand plan for the Avatar

saga come to fruition.

He says, "Movie four is a corker. It's a mo********. I hope I get to make it. But it depends on market forces. Three is in the can so it's coming out regardless. I really hope that we get to make four and five because it's one big story, ultimately."
Cameron has stepped

away from the director's chair for projects that he has poured years into, starting with 2019's Alita: Battle Angel, which was ultimately helmed by Robert Rodriguez, although he stayed attached to the production as an executive producer and co-writer.

Men are less likely to misbehave, if raised in the same environment: Vidyut Jammwal

idyut Jammwal, has made a mark with his films including Force, Commando, and Khuda Haafiz among the rest. Vidyut is all set to be seen in his next film *Khuda Haafiz*

chapter 2 Agni Pariksha.

He has recently talked about how the society often restricts women from exploring certain areas, to assure their safety. He said that men and brothers, who

were raised in the same envi-ronment, are less likely to misbehave with women. Speaking about paternity, and how he would become a father, he said that he would give all the freedom to his daughter and added that we often limit our daughters. He says, "I would tell her 'do whatever you want, tumhara

baap hai na." Vidyut told Prabhat Khabar, "Since I was born, the scenario has been the same. It's not the government, but society that can change into this. I think if a sister and two brothers, a brother would turn out to be good. There will be rare cases where a sister is raised in an atmosphere of equal

treatment and a brother misbehaves with women outside the home. Basically, we must ensure the education of girls and boys is

done equally. Vidyut is currently busy promoting for the second installment of his action film, titled Khuda Haafiz Chapter 2 Agni Pariksha, which will be released in cine mas on July 8. The film was written and directed by Faruk Kabir, who had worked on the first film in the franchise. Apart from Khuda Haafiz

Chapter 2 Agni Pariksha, Vidyut also got IB 71 and Sher Singh Raana in the pipeline.



injuries from domestic abuse Prench actor Judith Chemla has shared pictures of her

injured face after she was hit by her ex last year. She did not reveal his name but opened up about such incidents in a long Instagram post late Sunday. The pictures, clicked on different days, show her with a cut injury on her cheek, a bruise on her eyebrow and a swollen eye. Judith wrote in French

along with the pictures, "A year ago my face was injured, blue, purple under my eye, I saw myself deformed. A year ago, I looked at my face in the mirror and I knew that I could no longer hide my face. My daughter's father. Those who are able to do this must be out of harm's way. But how? I'm not ashamed of this photo. But he should be ashamed, he should be ashamed today, a year later, instead of continuing to pressure me, to think that he still



Actor Judith Chemla reveals

has the means to manipulate me, instead of rotting my child's head he should be ashamed and quiet, really want to be forgiven. This is not the case."

Judith Chemla shared a

note and some pictures of herself on Instagram. She further wrote, "I have so much evidence that he continues to try and harm me. Should I go back to the police a third time? Filing a third com-

plaint in a year? To be in the film industry and have the sword of Damocles of eight months of a suspended sentence, isn't that enough? Really go to jail? He will still play the victim with my daughter and she will suffer from not seeing her father."

"Should I keep this to myself? He will still feel above the law, will continue to complain and challenge court decisions with

his 5-year-old daughter, who sees him as a normal father who he is not. He will continue to believe that he is able to pressure me and bully me morally. I can not stand it any-more. I demand peace. Is it clearer like this?" she

According to Deadline, Judith was earlier dating film director Yohan Manca, who was sentenced to an eight-month suspended jail sentence for domestic abuse against her in May. Variety had stated at the time that Judith had filed a police complaint against Yohan Manca in Paris after he reportedly hurled a cell phone at her in the street on July 3, 2021.

Judith was seen in Camille Rewinds (2012), Une Vie (2016) and recently released comedy Not My Type. She also starred in My Brothers And I which was screened in the Un Certain Regard section of Cannes.



Sona Mohapatra draws Twitter CEO's attention to sexism in his alma mater

Dlayback singer Sona Mohapatra, who has crooned hit numbers such as Bedardi Raja, Ambarsariya and Rangabati, has addressed a lengthy tweet to Parag Agrawal, CEO of the microblogging site, slamming the practice of not inviting women as headliners for cultural events at his alma mater IIT Bombay. In her tweet, Sona wrote, "Dear

@paraga, Ur alma-mater has for decades, mostly never hosted women as headliners in their cultural festival. IITB alumni. even CEOs slammed me on fb for writing this letter." Sona urged Agrawal to watch her documentary Shut Up Sona to get a glimpse of what female artistes have to go through to get equal respect, representation, and remuneration.

She added, "I hope U watch my film #ShutUpSona to see what our reality as female artists in the 21rst century is. Love & Light." She also attached screenshots of her viral open letter on Facebook. The tweet serves as a reminder to what even the most successful women have to face when they come up against systemic sex-

ARCHIE











CALVIN AND HOBBES







GARFIELD









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ACROSS

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9 Awful to look at

17 A short spell of very wild

18 Instructions for building

7 Memorise

10 Say again

14 Trip over

houses

4 Less hot 5 A flat dish

6 Zeros 8 Stinging plants 11 A hard safety hat

13 A large group of singers 12 A team game with sticks

15 Not asleep 16 Unlock

SOLUTION weather with wind and rain

GINGER MEGGS







the pioneer awaaa

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Wednesday

July 6, 2022



CREATING A HEMP ECO-SYSTEM

SHIKHA DUGGAL

he global trend of cannabis has shifted dramatically starting in the 1980s. Cannabis is legal in more than 30 states, and 18 have legalised cannabis for recreational use in many countries. Canada has also federally legalised cannabis both recreationally and industrially, as well as for medicinal use too.

However, these countries were the first countries to object to the use of cannabis because of its relevance and importance in different demographics where they had gone to establish sovereignty. But now, we have Loveena Sirohi . Co-Founder a Director at India Hemp Organics and the youngest female in this sector, who tells us all about how the entire tide is changing in support of cannabis.

"It started from a very personal journey. I had met with a chronic road accident that led me to being hospitalised in the ICU because I had broken bones, torn lips, and my face was unrecognisable. My life was turned upside down overnight, but I was keen to research alternative and holistic forms of healing that could speed up my recovery as the allopath-

ic medications being administered

came with a lot of side effects. My research led to the discovery of medical cannabis oils and their potential, and I haven't looked back since then. The healing that I underwent with the use of medical cannabis was remarkable. And coming out of the accident much stronger and feeling better than ever before, I knew this was an untapped opportunity in the country that could help solve the problems of many more individuals." But the question was, where and how would she start? So, she and her partner sat for months and worked closely with key stakeholders like the government, legal partners, farmers, and doctors to better understand the current scope and needs of the market. The combination of faith, a trans formational experience, and the strong will to help others in need in a market that is still at a very nascent stage in India, was what

kept them going, said Loveena.
"I knew there was immense value that was yet to be created through this plant in India, while global markets were already capitalising on this opportunity. I knew that building a new industry and category in a country like India isn't easy because of the many challenges it brings in terms



of awareness, legality, and operations. I can say it was the passion to be able to help others lead a through holistic medicine witnessed several rewarding stories of con-

that kept me going. I have

ing. For example, our oldest consumer today is 97 years of age and has been able to taper off her sleeping pills and switch to cannabis oils. She shares that this has greatly helped improve her quality of life. Till date, we keep reminding ourselves as to why we really started, and it helps us stay grounded and true to our vision at all times," she added. Legend has it that the shade of a tall cannabis plant once brought Lord Shiva relief from the blazing sun. But, there is a difference now. Millenials consid-

how they

have improved their health

through the range of products we offer, which

has been extremely fulfill-

er cannabis a means to get high, but this isn't just the case when it comes to cannabis because

there are a lot of benefits to this wonder crop. The young entrepreneur elaborated, "Cannabis offers several medical benefits. Many mis-perceive it to be only recreational in nature,

and that's what we are slowly changing. The plant has over 25,000+ uses and to recognise it for only one such use is unfair. It has been clinically verified to help with a wide array of ailments such as neurological problems, chronic pain, arthritis, PCOS, side effects of chemotherapy, etc. Since

it's also anti-inflammatory in nature, it's used to manage ailments such as Crohn's Disease and IBS. It's even been proven helpful in the management of epilepsy. Medical cannabis is also widely used for sleep management. The calming and relaxing effects of cannabis can help manage sleep

disorders such as insomnia." The plant and its forms are known by various names around the world, including marijuana, mary jane, weed, pot, hemp, and grass. The founder also draws its link to Ayurveda too and said, 'Cannabis has been a part of Avurveda for centuries. The avurvedic names of cannabis are Vijaya and Siddhi. Even as far back as 6 BCE, it was used to aid in digestion and appetite problems. It's been used in

Pioneer connects with Loveena Sirohi, the youngest female in this sector, who tells us all about how the entire tide is changing in support of space to treat pain-related cannabis. issues, sleep issues, neurologi-

cal problems, and more. In Avurvedic rituals, cannabis was also given orally to treat diseases like malaria and rheumatism. It is even mentioned in many of the ancient texts on Ayurveda, like the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Shargandhara Samhita. The Atharva Veda mentions cannabis as one of the five most sacred plants on Earth and says that a guardian angel resides in its leaves. So, given our ancient Indian connections with cannabis, we wonder why this herb has sparked so much debate and outrage in recent times. It

Cannabis is legal in more than 30 states,

recreational use in many countries. The

and 18 have legalised cannabis for

does have a future."

She continued, "As people gravitate towards a more natural, sustainable lifestyle, they are also looking for safer, natural alternatives to traditional allopathic medication. With clinical trials and scientific research proving the efficacy of the cannabis plant, it stands to reason that more people will be benefiting from its medicinal uses, and the industry will continue to grow. As far as regulations are concerned, we are seeing macro trends work in our favour. The industry, collectively, is also working towards advocacy, in line with the state and central governments for policy formation. Why don't we legalise cannabis and tax it like alcohol and tobacco? Cannabis is a product that's easy to integrate into your lifestyle as there are multiple ways to consume it with several benefits."

While the Act prohibits the sale and use of cannabis resin and flowers, it permits the use of their seeds, stems, and leaves. In effect, bhang is legal, while cannabis remains illegal. What's new is that now, nestled on the banks of the river Parvati in Kasol, a hamlet in Himachal Pradesh, a cafe is on a mission to normalise cannabis culture.

Role model's main role in curbing tobacco ground needs to be covered. One area

in need of immediate attention is sur-

sions to build associations and adver-

tise, as we have seen with the mouth

fresheners advertisements. These are

usually sold under the same brand

name and with very little differentiation. Consumers, especially young people, are subliminally lured and

convinced to make a positive association between the two. Meanwhile,

well-known personalities are misled

into believing that their endorsement

is for a tobacco-free sister product, so

no law being broken.
A simple endorsement can undo

their conscience can rest as there is

Manufacturers use brand exten-

rogate advertising and the role of

celebrity endorsements.

few years ago, many Indians woke up to the sight of a Respected Hollywood star on their front pages and on huge billboards across their cities, promoting a product that most of us readily know stands for a variety of smokeless tobacco products like gutka and pan

masala. No doubt cultural nuances were overlooked, as the actor later clarified that he was unaware of the implications of his actions and that, as an advocate for cancer awareness, he would never willingly promote anything tobacco-related after losing two family members to the disease. More recently (and culturally closer), some stars from Bollywood and Tollywood were in the news for disassociating themselves from tobacco product promotions. Increased knowledge about the deadly effects of tobacco aside, we can also attribute these acts to increased awareness about surrogate advertising. One may wonder why these public announcements by members of our entertainment industry are so deserving of our attention. Let us consider a few well-known facts available in the public domain.

The Indian government has instituted various laws to curb tobacco usage, including requiring larger graphic warnings on packs, prohibiting their sale near educational institutions or to minors, mandating Designated Smoking Areas (DSA) for certain places, banning smoking in public spaces, fining those who spit out chewed tobacco, and banning the direct or indirect

advertisements of

tobacco or tobac-

co-related prod-

ucts. While they

address key chal-

lenges, a lot more

vears of efforts and investments by governments in trying to control tobacco use prevalence, intended to save lives and families from the burden of deadly diseases. One may reasonably ask how a few actors can make millions of Indians overcome their habits. Popular culture and those at the top of it continue to have a strong sway over individual behaviours and choices. Especially when

you consider that more than 50% of smokers start using tobacco before the age of ten and that one-third of youth experiment with tobacco as a

Tobacco Advertising, Promotion, and

Sponsorship (TAPS). Dr. Pankaj Chaturvedi, Professor and Surgeon, Department of Head and Neck Surgery, Tata Memorial Centre, says, "We need to continue fighting against tobacco as it is still entrenched in our lives, especially through popular culture. Tobacco is the only consumer product in the world to kill every second user, according to WHO. As a cancer surgeon, I have seen first-hand the impact it has not just on patients but also on their families. The immense pain of avoidable deaths is compounded by the financial burdens and other challenges that come with it. Tobacco products are still being sold near educational institutions even as DSA norms are flouted elsewhere. While surrogate advertisements continue to thrive and prevail, and our movies and shows on silver screens and online streaming channels blatantly show the usage of tobacco products. Creative expression and freedom of speech should also be seen in conjunction with the right to life and good health. If we don't address tobacco use, we could be staring at death tolls higher than COVID-19 each year."

During peak COVID-19, we rose up as a society, displaying strong social, collective, and individual responsibilities that prioritised community health. Public role models from all walks of life used their platforms and influence to help further these objectives. The pandemic isn't entirely out of our lives, and yet we see a sustained momentum for pre-

vention and addressing the pandemic. Meanwhile, the much older tobacco epidemic, which worsens COVID-19 and other illnesses, continues unabated. In light of this, it is essential that we keep the spirit of collective action alive.

▼t's that season of the year when we crave those piping hot bhajjis and chatpata snacks. But at the same time, we definitely cannot ignore our health as this is also the same season when most of us fall sick.

Who doesn't love to munch on snacks? Pakoras, samosas, or bhajjis have remained our all-time favourites, though these deeply fried foods are quite bad for our health. High in trans

fat, these snack-

ing options lead to many lifestyle diseases, and then the feeling of that heavy guilt makes these snacks a burden on our psyche as well. However, many food and

beverage companies strive to provide snacks that are not only tasty but also healthy and nutritious. One such brand is Foodio Fit, which brings a wide range of healthy snacks to your

doorstep. The Bengaluru-based startup offers a complete range of healthy snack options consisting of high protein, low carb, multigrain, and keto products.

We connect with the founder, Apoorva Gururaj, who shares with us the importance of healthy high-protein

She says, "Nowadays, most consumers are well aware that good health and good diet and good diet are closely connected, but with the fast availability of highly-processed and cheap readymeals, it's simple for consumers to choose convenience over health. Adequate and proper nutrition is an important aspect of a sound way of life. Therefore, it is essential to spread awareness of the nutrients contained in



food in relation to their roles in body growth, health, and wellbeing. A diet deficiency in nutritive value can have a long-lasting impact on health, leading to diet-related disorders that result in low productivity and physical output and work-life imbalance. Individuals are more mindful of the need. Instead of adding actual work to their day to keep themselves fit, discussing nutrition is significant. In any event, with regards to pro in athletics, guaranteeing that Indian competitors get quality nourishment straightforwardly affects their capacity to contend on a global level."

As protein is an essential macronutrient, its lack can severely impact the growth and overall health quotient of the body. This offers a tasty range of high protein-coated peanuts, Madrasi mixture, and bhujia to help you supplement your protein requirements in a fun way. You can also shop from a wide range of high-protein atta, chakli, kodubale, and namakpara, all of which boast quite a high percentage of protein for building and maintain-

ing optimal health. The pandemic has led many people to become much more health-conscious and start effective dieting. This brand also provides a wide range of keto snacks.

The important role of the keto diet in reducing weight and burning fat deposits in the body is well-documented today. Keto diets are a scientifically proven way to lose weight in a healthy manner. The keto diet reduces the intake of carbohydrates and helps your body shed extra weight by burn-

ing the fat deposits to produce energy.
"We offer highly nutritious keto products which help you to satiate your cravings while keeping those extra kilogrammes at bay. The range of keto products includes coated peanuts, flour, chakli, murukku, kodubale, namakpara, bhujia, and Madrasi mixture. In addition, our vegetable snack options that come in the form of bhindi, sweet potato, beetroot, and available vacuumfried chips are loaded with the goodness of real vegetables. Further, you can enjoy the taste of real coconut water and sugarcane juice with the freeze-dried products," concludes the founder.

DJOKER BATTLES BACK TO BEAT SINNER

efending champion Novak Djokovic battled back from two sets to love down to defeat Jannik Sinner and reach his 11th Wimbledon semi-final on Tuesday.

Djokovic triumphed 5-7, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 and will face either Britain's Cameron Norrie or David Goffin of Belgium for a place in Sunday's final.

It was the seventh time in the Serb's career that he had recovered from two sets to love at the Slams.

"Huge congrats to Jannik for a big fight, he's so mature for his age, he has plenty of time ahead of him," said Djokovic.

"The first two sets compared to the next three were like two different matches. He was the better player for those first

"But at the end of the second set I took a toilet break, gave myself a little pep talk, tried to gather my thoughts.

"I broke early in the third set. I saw a little bit of doubt start to come into his movement. I have many years' experience of playing on these courts and coping with the pressure."

Djokovic is bidding to go level with Pete Sampras as a seven-time Wimbledon champion and stand just one off Roger Federer's men's record of

He appeared set for a routine afternoon when he swept into a 4-1 lead in the opener and had a break point for 5-1 against the 20-year-old Italian.

Sinner, the 10th seed, saved it and rallied to move 6-5 ahead, carving out an opportunity to serve for the set.

Djokovic saved a set point but a netted service return gave



HALEP DOWNS BADOSA

AP ■ LONDON

Former champion Simona Halep swept past fourth-seeded Paula Badosa to reach the Wimbledon quarter-finals for the fifth time on Monday.

Halep won 6-1, 6-2 in just one hour as her Spanish opponent's game fell apart with 21 unforced errors. The Romanian, who was

champion in 2019, has yet to drop a set at the tournament. Halep, 30, had to sit out Wimbledon in 2021 due to a



calf injury that sidelined her for three months.

Her build-up to this year's tournament was compromised

by a neck injury.

"It means a lot that I'm back in a quarter-finals after I struggled so much with injuries and self-confidence," said Halep.

"I'm working hard every day. I feel like if I do that, I will get better. I'm really happy with the way I'm playing. I'm really confident. It's a pleasure

Sinner, relentlessly unleashing winners from all corners of the court, stunned the top seed again with breaks in the third and seventh games on his way to a two-set lead.

However, Djokovic is no stranger to Grand Slam adversity, having twice come back from two sets to love down as recently as last year's French Open.

The second of those stunning recoveries came in the final against Stefanos Tsitsipas.

A break in the fourth game of the third set enabled Djokovic to cut his quarter-final deficit. In control, the 35-year-old levelled the tie with a double break in the fourth set as Sinner took a worrying tumble on his ankle scrambling to the Centre

Djokovic carved out two more breaks in the decider, the second off the back of a stunning, cross-court backhand on the stretch to go to 5-2 before calmly serving it out.

MARIA WINS

Germany's Tatjana Maria came from behind to beat compatriot Jule Niemeier 4-6, 6-2. 7-5 on Tuesday and reach her first Grand Slam semi-final.

The 34-year-old mother of two will play either third seed Ons Jabeur or unseeded Marie Bouzkova for a place in the

"I have goosebumps everywhere," said Maria, who returned from maternity leave just under a year ago.

"My two little girls, it's a dream to live this with my family, to live this with my two girls. Almost one year ago I gave birth, it's crazy.'

She said would like to face world number two Jabeur in the

Sania-Pavic in mixed doubles SF

PTI WIMBLEDON

Indian tennis ace Sania Mirza and her Croatian partner Mate Pavic advanced to the Wimbledon mixed doubles semifinals with a hard-fought win over fourth seeds Gabriela Dabrowski and John Peers.

Mirza and Pavic, seeded sixth, eked out a thrilling 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 win over Canadian-Australian duo in one hour 41 minutes on court 3 on Monday night.

The Indo-Croatian pair will take on the the winners of the quarterfinal between Robert Farah and Jelena Ostapenko, the seventh seeds, and second seeds Neil Skupsi and Desirae Krawczyk.



This is Mirza's best mixed doubles performance at the All England Club. She had previously reached the quarterfinals in 2011, 2013

A Wimbledon title is the

only mixed doubles Grand Slam missing from her trophy cabinet.

Mirza, a six-time Grand Slam winner, has already announced her retirement at the end of this season.

Rafa into 8th Wimbledon quarters

Rafael Nadal reached the Wimbledon quarter-finals for the eighth time on Monday with a straight-sets defeat of Botic van de Zandschulp.

Nadal, who has already won the Australian and French Opens to stand halfway to the first calendar Grand Slam since 1969, triumphed 6-4, 6-2, 7-6 (8/6).

Next up for the 36-year-old Spaniard is a clash against American 11th seed Taylor Fritz, who beat him in the Indian Wells final earlier "To be back in the quarter-finals after not

being here for three years is amazing," said the 2008 and 2010 champion,

"I expect a very tough match against Taylor — he won his first Masters title this year against

"The quarter-finals of a Slam are always very





HS Prannoy regains his place in world's top 20

PTI NEW DELHI

Star Indian shuttler HS Prannoy on Tuesday regained his place in the world's top 20, riding on his consistent show in the international circuit this season.

The 29-year-old from Kerala, who had played a pivotal role in India's monumental Thomas Cup win in May, improved two places to 19 in the men's singles rankings. Prannoy, who had reached

a career-best ranking of eight in 2018, has been one of the most consistent male shuttlers in the circuit with a series of quarterfinals and semifinals appearance this season.

He is now the third highest ranked Indian male shuttler in the world after Lakshya Sen (10th) and Kidambi Srikanth

Prannoy, who had reached

the finals of Swiss Open in March, surpassed Tokyo Olympian B Sai Praneeth

Two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu maintained her seventh spot in the latest chart, while Saina Nehwal also stayed static on 24th.

Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy were steady on eighth in the men's doubles rankings, while Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy dropped a rung to 24th

Among others, 2014 Commonwealth Games champion Paruppali Kashyap jumped three places to reach the World No. 36 ranking, riding on his second round appearance at the Malaysia Open Super 750 event.

The Verma brothers — Sameer and Sourabh — were the other two Indians inside the world's top 50.



Manchester United complet-ed their swoop for Feyenoord defender Tyrell Malacia on Tuesday as Erik ten Hag made his first signing since taking charge at Old Trafford. United landed Malacia in a reported £12.95 million (\$15.4

million) deal after making a late move for the Netherlands fullback, who had been close to

The 22-year-old has agreed a four-year contract with the option of a further 12 months.

It is a landmark deal for Ten Hag, who had been linked with a host of potential signings before finally making Malacia the first acquisition of his United

reign.
Ten Hag arrived at United in May after finishing his successful spell at Ajax, where he had plenty of opportunities to see Malacia's quality with Dutch rivals Feyenoord.

Malacia, who made 136 appearances for Feyenoord, said: "It's an incredible feeling to have joined Manchester United. This is a new chapter for me, a new league with new teammates and a tremendous manager leading us.

"I know from playing against his teams in the Eredivisie, the qualities that he has and what he demands of his

players.
"Whilst I know that I am still continue to young and will continue to



AP MILAN

Divock Origi signed for AC Milan on Tuesday after being let go by Liverpool at the end of last season.

The 27-year-old Belgian international Origi has joined Milan as a free agent after his contract was registered with the Italian top flight.

Origi arrives at the Serie A team after not having played enough matches to trigger an extension to his contract with

Liverpool.

He has reportedly signed a four-year deal which will net him four million euros (\$4.23 million dollars) a season.

He was largely a bit-part player at Liverpool but scored vital goals over his eight years on Merseyside which made him a favourite of fans and manager Jurgen Klopp. Those strikes include two

in an astonishing comeback against Barcelona in the Champions League semi-finals

in 2019, and the second is that vear's final as Liverpool lifted their sixth European Cup

against Tottenham. Origi made 176 appearances for the Reds after arriv-

ing in 2014, scoring 41 times. He has been capped 32 times for his country, but all three of his international goals came in 2014. Milan have brought in Origi to bolster a forward line which struggled for goals despite winning last season's thrilling Serie A.

develop, I can promise the United fans that I will leave everything on the pitch every time I pull on the red shirt."

Malacia, who plays largely at left-back, is expected to be part of the United squad that leaves for the pre-season tour of Thailand and Australia on

Capped five times by the Netherlands, Malacia is likely to compete with England left-back Luke Shaw for a place in United's starting line-up.

ROMA SIGN CELIK

Roma have signed Turkey international Mehmet Zeki

Richarlison was banned on Tuesday from his new club's English Premier League opening game after throwing a smoke canister when playing for Everton last season.

also going to Lille.

June 2026".

Richarlison admitted a charge of improper conduct and was banned for one game and fined 25,000 pounds (\$30,000), the English Football Association said in announcing the tribunal verdict.

Celik from Lille, the Serie A club announced on Tuesday.

The 32-times capped Celik arrives for a reported fee of seven million euros (\$7.2 million)

with 15 percent of any future sale

RICHARLISON BANNED

Tottenham

In his four years at Lille

forward

In a statement, Roma said the 25-year-old full-back "has signed a four-year contract with the Giallorossi that runs until 30

Tottenham start the league hosting Southampton on August 6. Richarlison should be available to play at Chelsea one week later. Richarlison scored in Everton's 1-0 win against Chelsea on May 1 that helped his then club avoid relegation. But a lit, blue smoke canister was thrown on the pitch by Everton supporters and Richarlison picked it up and threw it away from the field.

Badminton Asia Technical Committee apologises to Sindhu for 'human error'

Badminton Asia Technical Committee chairman Chih Shen Chen has apologised to two-time Olympic medallist P V Sindhu for the "human error" committed by the referee during the women's singles semifinal match of the Badminton

Asia Championships in April. Sindhu had been left in tears after an "unfair" call by the umpires midway through her semifinal match against Japan's Akane Yamaguchi saw her go down in three games and even-tually sign off with a Bronze medal, her second in the con-

tinental championship. "Unfortunately, there is no rectification at this time. However, we have taken the necessary steps to avoid a repetition of this human error," the



official said in the letter to

"We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience caused to you. We believe it is part of the sport and that it is accepted as

while Sindhu was leading 14-11 in the second game after having won the first game when the umpire handed her a one-point penalty for taking too much

time to serve between points. Sindhu, who turned 27 on The incident had happened Tuesday, lost her momentum

Treesa & Gayatri exits PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

India's Commonwealth Games-bound women's doubles duo of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand made a first round exit from the Malaysia Masters badminton tournament, losing to local pair of Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan here on Tuesday.

The Indian pair was outplayed by the Malaysians 14-21, 14-21 in the opening round match that lasted just 33 minutes.

None of the Indians won any match on Tuesday with two other women's doubles pairs also suffering first round

The combination of Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam lost 7-21, 10-21 to Yuki Fukushima and Sayaka Hirota of Japan while Pooja Dandu and Arathi Sara went down to Bulgaria's Gabriela Stoeva and Stefani Stoeva 17-21, 17-21.

In the women's singles, Malvika Bansod also suffered a 10-21, 17-21 defeat against host country's Goh Jin Wei in 33 minutes to exit from the Super 500 tournament.

Olympic medallists PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal will feature in the women's singles first round matches on

after that incident and lost 21-

13, 19-21, 16-21. The Indian was seen having an animated discussion with the chief referee after the chair umpire asked her to hand over the shuttle to Yamaguchi but it

all fell on deaf ears. "The umpire told me you're taking a lot of time but the opponent wasn't ready at that point. But the umpire suddenly gave her the point and it was really unfair. I think that was one of the reasons why I lost," Sindhu had said.

"I mean that is my feeling because at that moment it was 14-11 and could have become 15-11 but instead, it became 14-12 and she took continuous points. And I think it was very unfair. Maybe I would have won the match and played in the final.'

Sindhu, who is a member of Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission, had immediately written a letter to the world body and the Asia badminton confederation, protesting against the decision.

PSG sack Pochettino, appoint Galtier as new manager

AP ■ PARIS

Paris St Germain announced Christophe Galtier as their new manager on Tuesday, shortly after the Ligue 1 champions parted ways with Mauricio Pochettino.

Galtier joins PSG after leaving Nice last month, having guided them to a runners-up finish in the French Cup and

fifth place in Ligue 1 last season. The 55-year-old Frenchman oined Nice in 2021 after leading Lille to their first Ligue 1 title since 2011 in the previous campaign. Before joining Lille, Galtier spent eight seasons at Saint Etienne, where he won the

French Cup in 2012-2013. Galtier's appointment comes after PSG president Nasser al-Khelaifi put an end to speculation surrounding France great Zinedine Zidane, dismissing reports that PSG had been in talks with the 1998 World Real Madrid.



Cup winner about becoming their new boss.

Pochettino, who was appointed by PSG in January 2021, won the Ligue 1 title in 2021-22 and the French Cup in 2020-21 but failed to deliver in the Champions League, the only major trophy that has eluded PSG since Qatar Sports

Investment took over in 2011. PSG, eight times league winners since the takeover, were Champions League runners-up in 2020 but they were knocked out in the last 16 last season by

Ram Charan to film a peppy campus number for RC15

he latest schedule of the filming of RRR, actor Ram Charan's muchanticipated big-budget film, is about to begin under the

Shanmugham. Ram Charan is all set for the shoot of an upbeat song number, which is being choreographed on expensive sets and multiple locations. The college-themed track will feature close to

direction of Shankar

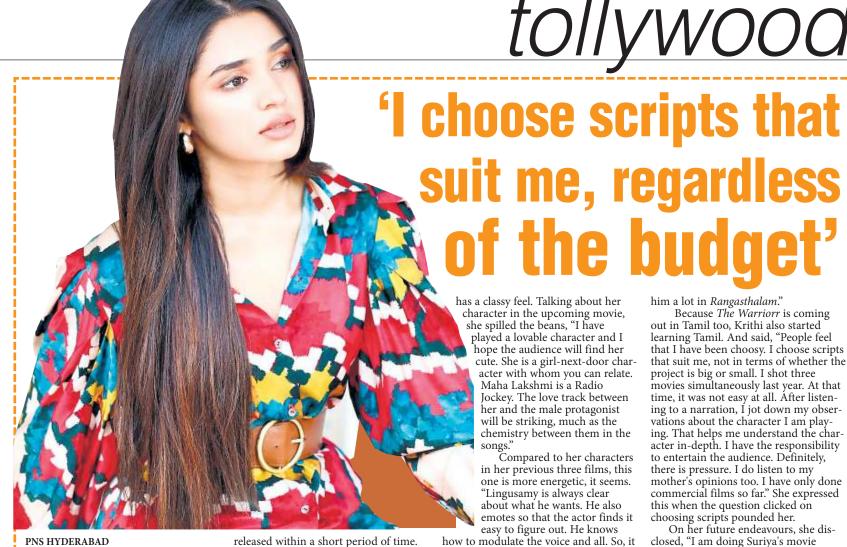
400 dancers. As reported earlier, the film, whose working title is *RC15*, will be shot in Amritsar, among

other places. Shanmugham is best known for the grandeur of canning visually extravagant songs, so this particular song is expected to be one of the major highlights of



the movie. In this song, which is being choreographed by Ganesh Acharya, Ram Charan will appear in a new look being billed as stunning by the makers. The

music is being composed by the everpopular Thaman. Kiara Advani plays the female lead opposite Ram Charan in RC15, which is being bankrolled by Dil



rithi Shetty awaits the theatrical release of The Warriorr this July 14. In this interview, the actress talks about her journey so far in the industry, working with actor Ram Pothineni and director N Lingusamy. Well, in the initial conversation in a chatty mood, she revealed, "My previous two films, Shyam Singha Roy and Bangarraju were released within a short period of time. The Warriorr is my second release of the vear. Director N Lingusamy is someone Í have admired ever since Í watched his Tamil movie many years ago. When an offer came my way, I was excited about doing an entertainer with him. His heroines are unique characters."

And you know what, she was very nervous while doing the bullet song given that Ram Pothineni is an energetic dancer. Once the shoot began, her him a lot in *Rangasthalam*." Because *The Warriorr* is coming

e budget'

Compared to her characters

was not highly challenging for me. I watched a number of podcasts of RJs

ly," she added.

before the shoot began. I worked on my expressions to play the role authentical-

tollywood

out in Tamil too, Krithi also started learning Tamil. And said, "People feel that I have been choosy. I choose scripts that suit me, not in terms of whether the project is big or small. I shot three movies simultaneously last year. At that time, it was not easy at all. After listening to a narration, I jot down my observations about the character I am playing. That helps me understand the character in-depth. I have the responsibility to entertain the audience. Definitely, there is pressure. I do listen to my mother's opinions too. I have only done commercial films so far." She expressed this when the question clicked on

choosing scripts pounded her.
On her future endeavours, she disclosed, "I am doing Suriya's movie directed by Bala. About 30% of the shoot is over. I am also doing Naga Chaitanya's movie directed by Venkat Prabhu. Both are bilinguals. Bala sir has been very easy to work with. He gives his artists the freedom to interpret a scene as they want. He suggests changes if any after seeing what the actor has to offer. Aa Ammayi Gurinchi Meeku Cheppali, starring Sudheer Babu and directed by Mohankrishna Indraganti, is among my other upcoming movies.

Actor Aadhi Pinisetty is not left behind, he's playing a crucial role too. But how well did the lead actress get along with him? "I have no scenes with Aadhi but all I can tell is he is a softie off-screen. In this film, though, he has nervousness abated because the song played a very aggressive part. I liked Nithya Menen

indulges in

Allu Arjun chills with his family in Tanzania

algonda MLA, Kancharla Bhupal Reddy and Nagarjuna Sagar MLA, Nomula Bhagat, along with Nalgonda municipal Chairman, Mandadi Saidi Reddy, graced the mahurat ceremony of Silly Monks Studios' "Production No. 09" at Chinna Madaram, Nalgonda District in Telangana. The film is directed by RG Gandikota. The music is given by Charan Arjun and Praveen K

Bangari is the DOP with a debut cast of Vignesh and Arshita. The movie is

tentatively scheduled to be released in the month of November 2022.



Hyderabadi delicacies of Modern Love Mumbai, tive of her dedication. Amazon Prime Video is gearing up for its second edition of the three localised and fictionalised

tional series. Modern Love Hvderabad. Set against the backdrop of the 'City of Pearls', the series features six heartening stories exploring different shades and relationships of love. One of the

versions of the interna-

episodes titled 'My Unlikely Pandemic Dream Partner' brings together two powerhouse actors, Revathy and Nithya Menen, in an episode directed by Nagesh Kukunoor. The

story explores a special bond between the lead actors. Set in the heart of Hyderabad, as the director Nagesh Kukunoor says, the

episode marries his two

loves, the old-world charm of Hyderabad and local cuisine. During a recent interaction, Nithya Menen revealed a detail that will leave everyone surprised and apprecia-

"I had been practising vegetarianism for a while, and when I told the team about it, they were amazed," said Nithya Menen, and elaborated that the special chef who was invited to cook the Hyderabadi delicacies also made vegetarian versions of those dishes for the shoot. There was so much Hyderabadi food... Finally, at one point, I was like, just give me the chicken, I'll just eat it, it's fine, I have to look authentic. So literally, I keep telling them, they turned me into a non-vegetarian. There was too much to eat," she

Interestingly, it was one of those episodes where the cast and crew would wait for the cut and run to the dining tables to gorge on the Hyderabadi feast. From the famous biryani to Khubanika-Meetha, you name it and

the delicacy was served.

Modern Love Hyderabad is set for a global premiere on Amazon Prime Video on July 8th. The anthology brings six stories revolving around the idea and facets of love. The cast of Modern Love Hyderabad also includes popular names like Suhasini Maniratnam, Naresh, Aadhi Pinisetty, Ritu Varma, Abijeet Duddala, Malavika Nair, Naresh Agastya, and Ulka Gupta, among others.



Bimbisara, a fourpart franchise?

he makers of Bimbisara released the trailer of their film on Nandamuri Kalyan Ram's birthday. The trailer for

the film was a visual treat and gave us a hint of the film's having wars and stunts. The movie is about the time travel of a great Magadha King, *Bimbisara*.

According to the latest update that was recently shared by Kalyan Ram himself, if things go well

with the film, Bimbisara might turn up as a three or four-franchise film. The first instalment will be released in theatres on August 5, and the second instalment will be released in 2023.Kalyan had also stated that his brother NTR might also be a pa of Bimbisara.

The film is directed by debutant director Mallidi Vashist. Meanwhile, Hari Krishna is producing the film under the banner of NTR Arts Banner.

Swetha Avasthi will play the lead in Veerabhadram's next

alented director Veerabhadram Chowdary, who directed several superhit movies like Poola Rangadu and Chuttalabbayi, among the rest, will next be directing young hero Naresh Agastya of *Mathu* Vadalara and Senapathi fame in a new film which was announced recently.

Nabishaik and Thumu Narsimha Patel will be producing the movie under the Deccan Dream Works and Jayadurgadevi Multimedia banners.

The latest update is the yet to be titled flick, which is billed to be a crime comedy and will feature Swetha Avasthi of Merise Merise fame playing the lead actress. The actress will join the shoot in the first schedule of the movie that com-

mences this month. Veerabhadram Chowdary has prepared an intriguing script with a different concept. Melody specialist Anup Rubens renders soundtracks for the movie that will feature some noted actors. Furthermore details will unveiled soon.



Abhay's next, a political drama

A Bethiganti, who rose to fame with the film George Reddy, is coming up with another entertainer in which he is both directing and acting. The film titled

Ramanna Youth, is produced by Rajini under Fire Fly Árts banner. On Tuesday, actors Priyadarshi and Rahul Ramakrishna released the first look of Ramanna Youth, an

entertaining political drama. Ramanna Youth is about the twists and

turns in the life of a young man aspiring to become a political leader. The story also deals with today's

social issues, with a different storyline, where Abhay Betiganti plays the role of youth leader Raju. My Village Show Anil is also said to play a key role in this film.