



India's domestic raw coking coal production may touch 140 MT by 2026

Will exchange views on energy, food security, counter-terrorism

From joy to anger, faith leaders react to Roe's reversal

In brief

'Promote consumption of lassi and sattu'

A top educational body in Pakistan has proposed a novel idea to boost employment and reduce the expenditure on tea imports in the cash-strapped country: promote the consumption of local drinks such as lassi and sattu. The Higher Education Commission's acting chairperson Dr Shaista Sohail, in a circular to the vice-chancellors of public sector universities has asked them to take a leadership role and think of innovative ways to provide relief to the lower-income groups and the economy as a whole, the Geo TV reported on Friday. In the circular, Sohail has suggested promoting local tea plantations and traditional drinks like lassi and sattu, which will increase employment and also generate income involved in manufacturing these drinks for the public.

Maha: 23 new cases of sub-variants BA.4 and BA.5 detected

Maharashtra on Saturday reported 23 cases of COVID-19 caused by sub-variants BA.4 and BA.5, taking the tally of such patients to 49, a state health department official said. As per the report of the Mumbai-based Kasturba Hospital Central Laboratory, which has been evaluated by the National Institute of Virology in Pune, the 23 cases comprise 17 infections caused by BA.5 and six by BA.4. It said one patient was below 18 years of age, two are in the 18-25 segment, nine are in between 26 and 50 years and 11 patients are 50-plus. Of the 23 patients, 12 are women and the rest men, the report added.

Coast Guard continues to monitor sunken vessel

Officials of the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) continued to monitor the situation around the grounded merchant ship MV Princess Miral off the Ullal shore near here for any probable leakage of oil from the ship. Along with the district administration and other stakeholders, coordination is being done for the shoreline clean-up in case of any oil spill, an ICG release here said on Saturday. Constant surveillance has been undertaken by Coast Guard aircraft and ships in the area around the vessel and onshore for pollution response since June 21 after the vessel ran aground.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Tithi: Trayodashi: Jun 26 01:10 AM to Jun 27 03:26 AM
Chaturdashi: Jun 27 03:26 AM to Jun 28 05:52 AM

Nakshatram:

Krithika: Jun 25 10:24 AM to Jun 26 01:06 PM
Rohini: Jun 26 01:06 PM to Jun 27 04:02 PM

Rahukalam: 5:12 PM to 6:50 PM

Yamagandam: 12:19 PM to 1:56 PM

Variyam: 07:03 AM to 08:51 AM

Gulika: 3:34 PM to 5:12 PM

Amritakalam: 10:26 AM to 12:12 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:52 AM to 12:44 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Mostly cloudy
Temp: 34°C
Humidity: 70%
Sunrise: 5:37 AM
Sunset: 6:44 PM
Updated: JUNE 25, 2022 5:00 PM

OBTUSE ANGLE



AMARAVATI CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

CRDA to auction land to raise Rs 2,500 cr

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (CRDA) is putting up 248.30 acres of land for auction in Amaravati to raise close to Rs 2,500 crore for taking up development works in the State's capital city, in line with a recent High Court order.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, during a review meeting of the state Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MAUD) Department here recently, gave the go-ahead for the land auction to raise required resources for the capital development, top official sources said.

The CRDA had in 2016 allotted over 100 acres of land in Amaravati to B R Shetty Group for setting up a Medicity and another 148.28 acres to the Indo-UK Institute of Health for establishing the King's Medical College and Hospital.

As the allotments were cancelled after Reddy assumed power in May 2019, these lands were lying vacant.

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on March 3 delivered a judgement directing the government and CRDA to continue with development work in state capital Amaravati and file an affidavit on the progress in six months.

The HC also ordered the govern-



“We are now putting up this 248.304 acres of land parcel for auction in July to raise financial resources for capital city development in line with the High Court verdict of March 3. Each acre could fetch about Rs 10 crore,” a top official of the MA&UD Department said.

ment to honour the agreement signed with farmers, who parted with their lands for establishing the state capital in Amaravati, and take up development activities.

"We are now putting up this 248.304 acres of land parcel for auction in July to raise financial resources for capital city development in line with the High Court verdict of March 3. Each acre could fetch about Rs 10 crore," a top official of the MA&UD Department said.

Auctioning of land to raise money was part of the Financial Plan drafted by the previous government, the official pointed out.

The MA&UD Department issued a Government Order related to the auction of 248.304 acres.

The CRDA has also drawn up a plan to sell another 600 acres of land in Amaravati at an estimated price of Rs 10 crore per acre.



MA&UD Minister Adimulapu indisposed

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Minister for Municipal Administration Adimulapu Suresh collapsed while he was on his morning walk on his college campus at Markapuram on Saturday.

He was immediately shifted to a hospital where the doctors conducted various medical tests on him. The doctors told the media that he fell ill suddenly due to fluctuations in blood pressure.

It may be mentioned here that recently the minister underwent an angioplasty operation. The doctors implanted two stents in his heart.

As the minister fell ill for the second time, his followers expressed concern about his health. The minister participated in the bus yatra recently and addressed the gatherings at various places. He fell ill in the middle of the bus yatra.

GO issued for regular pay scales of V/W secretariat employees

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The AP government on Saturday released a GO on the probation declaration of Village/Ward Secretariat employees. The GO MS No 5, authorises the district collectors to declare probation for those who have completed two years and cleared the department examination.

According to the order, the pay scale of village and ward secretariat employees has been revised as per the new Pay Revision Commission (PRC). The basic

pay for Panchayat Secretary and Ward Secretaries is Rs 23,120 to Rs 74,770 while the basic pay for other secretariat employees would be Rs. 22,460 to Rs 72,810.

After taking charge as Chief Minister, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy sanctioned 1.35 lakh posts and recruited about 1.21 lakh functionaries in two phases during the years 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 to work in Village/Ward secretariats. Within four months, the process of recruitment was completed.

CM Jagan has directed the

District Collectors and officials to complete the process of probation declaration by the end of June and implement the revised pay scale for the month of July (payable on August 1) to all the eligible employees.

The District Collectors have been instructed to declare the probation of all eligible functionaries forthwith and also to declare the probation of functionaries as and when they fulfill the eligibility conditions and come up for declaration of probation thereafter.



Double dhamaka for Jyothi Surekha in World Cup Stage-III

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Close on the heels of the Andhra Pradesh State Cabinet approving the Deputy Collector post under Group - 1 service, Vijayawada-based international archer Vennam Jyothi Surekha won two medals in the World Cup Stage - III Archery Championship being held in Paris on Saturday. She bagged a gold medal in mixed doubles and an individual silver medal in the compound event.

Vennam Jyothi Surekha, along with Abhishek Verma, won the gold medal in the compound mixed team event in the World Cup Stage-III Archery Championship. The Indian duo fought France's mixed team and defeated with a score of 152-149 and bagged the gold medal.

Jyothi Surekha also clinched a silver medal in the individual compound archery after a heart-breaking loss in the final to Great Britain's Ella Gibson in the shoot-off. Both of them scored equal points in the finals and later in the shoot-off, Great Britain's Ella Gibson clinched the gold.

Puttaparthi civic chief ends life

PNS ■ ANANTAPUR

Puttaparthi Municipal Commissioner Muni Kumar allegedly committed suicide by jumping before a moving train at Rayachoti in Kadapa district on Saturday.

Muni Kumar assumed charge as Municipal Commissioner of Puttaparthi in Sri Satya Sai three months ago. He was the resident of Prakash Nagar in Kadapa. He took three days' leave and went to his native village on Friday. He spent some time with his family members.

He jumped before a running train at the railway gate near Rayachoti at around 10:30 am today. The deceased is survived



by wife and two children.

Railway CI Mohammad Baba registered a case and began an investigation on the reasons for Muni Kumar's extreme step.

Telugu book without a single English word sets record

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

This is a new world record in literature, a matter of pride for India and Andhra Pradesh and all the Telugu-speaking people.

Speaking for two minutes without a single English word is a common challenge nowadays. 'Bharatavarsha', is a 1265-page book written using two lakh Telugu words without a single English word, in a short span of eight months.

Most people feel it is difficult to speak a language fluently. Most Telugu people are not good at their mother tongue.

Venkat Poolabala, a polyglot from Vijayawada is fluent in six foreign languages - French, German, Spanish, Italian, and English. He authored 'Notre

Ecole and our school, - a bilingual novel, and became the first Telugu author to write a French novel. Though Poolabala has written 60 books in six languages, 'Bharatavarsha' is the longest one written in Telugu.

Widely in the news, before it was released on February 14 in Vijayawada by Telugu Academy Chairperson Lakshmi Parvati, 'Bharatavarsha' was under the assessment of the Guinness Book of World Records.

Poolabala set a world record as the author of the longest novel written in the shortest time.

It took 10 years for world-renowned authors to write a novel of more than a thousand pages (French writer Victor Hugo's 'Les Miserables', Margaret

Mitchel's 'Gone with the wind' and Michael's Jurassic Park).

Poolabala used the Google transliteration tool and composed two lakh words on a Microsoft Word document and adjusted the entire script hundreds of times and printed the novel himself.

In these days, when people are leaving Telugu by taking up English for jobs despite being a foreign language professional, Poolabala kept his profession aside and remained clung to his novel for months. It shows his love for Telugu. With 200 poems set to meter and with classical Telugu language, he paraded Telugu in a golden palanquin, crowned Indianness to his novel, and named it 'Bharatavarsha'.



Poolabala, author of 'Bharatavarsha', shows the certificate issued by the 'Worldwide Book of Records'

Good response to YSRCP Mega Job Mela

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Mega Job Mela organised by the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) in Proddatur, YSR district, under the direction of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has received a good response, said YSRCP MP V Vijayasai Reddy. The MP extended his heartiest wishes on behalf of CM YS Jagan to the representatives from various companies and the aspiring job seekers who attended the job mela.

Speaking on the occasion, Vijayasai Reddy said that Chief Minister YS Jagan wishes that everyone in the state should be illiterate. Everyone should pursue higher education, especially students who study with a commitment to achieving higher positions in life. Women empowerment is the main aim of the YSRCP and the dream of



Chief Minister YS Jagan will be fulfilled. The state government was upgrading the government schools under the 'Nadu Nedu' programme to create a pleasant environment and improve educational standards. The MP said that in addition

to education, students should give priority to communication skills and strive to improve them. With the growing technology communication skills play a key role.

He said that most of the people from the YSR district pre-

fer Middle-East countries and get jobs. Similarly, in the days to come people prefer countries like the United States, Australia, Germany, Japan, and Europe for employment opportunities. He said that as per the directions of CM YS Jagan job

melas are being conducted to create employment opportunities in the private sector with the view that no one in the state should be unemployed. Job Mela is a continuous process and will provide job opportunities for everyone, said MP VijayaSai Reddy.

MP Avinash Reddy said that YSRCP was organising a Mega Job Mela for the unemployed youth across the state was very auspicious. The three Job Melas already organised across the state have created employment opportunities for over 40,000 unemployed. We are conducting the fourth job fair at the CBIT Campus in Proddatur, YSR District. More than 100 companies participated in the fair. Everyone should take advantage of this opportunity. Avinash Reddy congratulated all the candidates who attended the Job Mela.



Govt will march ahead with specific plan for women's safety: Vasireddy

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Women's Commission Chairperson Vasireddy Padma has said that the State government would go ahead with a specific plan for women's safety in the State.

Vasireddy Padma attended a seminar organised by the National Commission for Women in New Delhi on Saturday.

Speaking to the media persons at AP Bhavan, the APWC chairperson expressed happiness that the AP government had recently issued orders to set up Internal Complaints

Committees (ICC) in government and private offices.

She said that as part of the annual planning programme 'Sabala', regional conferences are being organised across the State on the solution to sexual harassment of women. She thanked the State government for the immediate response to the report prepared and submitted from various grievances and reports.

Vasireddy Padma said that she had briefed Rekha Sharma, Chairperson of the National Commission for Women about the action plan taken for the safety of women in the State. Internal complaints commit-

tees must be set up where there are more than 10 women employees.

She said that the Women's Commission will review the grievances at the local complaints committees (LCC) under the district collectors. She further explained that the Women's Commission would conduct programmes in coordination with the Police Department for the prevention of women trafficking.

Vasireddy Padma strongly condemned the comments made by director Ram Gopal Varma against BJP's Presidential candidate Draupadi Murmu.

IRCS mobile testing lab launched in Hanamkonda

PNS ■ HANAMKONDA

Government Chief Whip Dasyam Vinay Bhaskar on Saturday inaugurated a mobile testing lab along with District Collector Rajiv Gandhi Hanumanth. The vehicle is equipped with testing machines to test blood samples, including the Covid-19 test.

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), New Delhi, has allotted the vehicle exclusively for the IRCS, Hanamkonda. The vehicle is worth around Rs 50 lakh, according to officials. Speaking on the occasion, Vinay Bhaskar said that the mobile testing lab would help conduct tests during the outbreak of seasonal diseases, like dengue, malaria and other vector-borne disease during the rainy season. He said that they would soon prepare the schedule for conducting the tests in the West constituency, and appealed to the poor to avail themselves of the free service. He also appreciated the managing committee of the IRCS, Hanamkonda, for their successful efforts to help the needy by arranging the blood and also providing nursing and tailoring to the women. The IRCS, Hanamkonda, also received an Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance worth Rs 35 lakhs from Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) under Corporate Social Responsibility recently.

'AP liquor brands imperilling lives of alcohol lovers'

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP leaders and chemical experts on Saturday slammed the YSRCP government for selling spurious liquor brands that were taking the lives of people in Andhra Pradesh.

They released lab reports and showed them as proof that there were toxic and fatal chemicals in the liquor brands being sold in the State. Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy not betrayed his phased prohibition promise but he was playing dangerous games with the lives of people.

Addressing a joint press conference here, TDP state general secretary Panchumarthi Anuradha said Jagan Reddy was tearing 'mangalsutras' of women on the one hand and counting his illegal liquor income by sitting in his Tadepalli palace on the other hand. Chandrababu and Lokesh had rightly advised the CM not to do business over the dead bodies of drinkers.

Anuradha deplored that instead of properly advising the 'criminal spurious liquor CM', the then excise commissioner Rajat Bhargava spoke about technology to divert public attention. Lab reports were saying that those drinking spurious liquor were suffering from brain and mental disorders. Their descendants would



face the risk of being born with polio, lame, blindness, deafness, and dumb illnesses.

Chemical expert Varun said that those drinking harmful liquor brands in AP would face deterioration of physical and mental health. Genetic diseases and respiratory illnesses would affect the next generations. When lab reports exposed fatal chemicals in AP brands, the then excise commissioner asked whether samples were taken in Andhra Pradesh or not? Whether they were authorised or not?

Varun said that the liquor samples were taken from Government liquor shops using geo-tagging at Ananthapuram, Gutti, Chilakaluripet, North Andhra, Coastal Andhra, and Rayalaseema. The lab tests were held on brands like

'Andhra Gold', 'Silver Stripes whiskey', 'Nine Seas Horse' and so on.

The chemical expert said that these brands contained harmful and toxic chemicals like Pyrogallol, Iso Fluoric Acid and Diethylphthalate. These toxins would cause cough, throat ache, redness in eyes, vomitings, diarrhoea, erratic breathing, fall in BP, nervous disorders, dizziness, headache, mental imbalance, convulsions and fits.

TDP state official spokesperson Anam Venkata Ramana Reddy asked why Jagan Mohan Reddy ignored prohibition when he treated his election manifesto as the Bible, Quran and the Gita. When illegal liquor was seized, the police were letting go of the actual smugglers but arresting salesmen.

TDP rally to mark 3rd anniv of 'Praja Vedika' demolition foiled

Continued on Page 1

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, addressing his first district Collectors conference in June 2019, decided to demolish the 'Praja Vedika' convention centre which was constructed by the Chandrababu Naidu government to organise government programmes. The Praja Vedika convention centre used to be located adjacent to Chandrababu Naidu's riverfront residence. On the directions of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, the demolition of 'Praja Vedika' Convention centre began on June 25, 2019.

Though the Praja Vedika was demolished the debris is yet to be cleared from the site. The TDP planned to highlight the demolition of Praja Vedika convention centres on the occasion of the completion of three years.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/kg	
Dressed/With Skin	₹293
Without Skin	₹312
Broiler at Farm	₹160

EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	411
VISAKHAPATNAM	420
HYDERABAD	346
RETAIL PRICE	₹4.11

CM 'demolished' development: Naidu

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP national president and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday described the three-year YSRCP regime as a 'rule of destruction and demolitions' in Andhra Pradesh.

Naidu strongly criticised the Jagan Government on the occasion three years of the completion of the demolition of Praja Vedika in Amaravati Capital City.

In a tweet here, the TDP chief said that Jagan Reddy demolished Praja Vedika immediately after coming to

power so as to give an indication of future destruction all over the State. The demolition of Praja Vedika was the first demolition carried out by Jagan Mohan Reddy after taking over as the Chief Minister.

Naidu said that the CM had clearly indicated to the people how his destructive rule would be by razing to the ground public property that was worth several crores of rupees. There was destruction all along but no construction in the past three years.

Chandrababu Naidu accused the Chief Minister of having demolished the devel-



opment of AP, overall economic standards, and all the democratic institutions in the State. Jagan had demolished the shelter and livelihoods of Dalits, the future of youth, Polavaram, and Amaravati projects.

Naidu deplored that Jagan

Reddy derived sadistic pleasure by demolishing Praja Vedika. By doing so, he had done severe injustice to the people of the State. Not a single project was developed nor a single building was constructed in three years.

The TDP chief said that the Chief Minister was running his administration from the same buildings constructed during the previous TDP rule. This was enough to say that Jagan Reddy was not capable of doing anything.

At least now, the CM should realise how construction was more difficult than destruction.

Fake currency racket busted: Three arrested

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR BHUPALA PALLY

Three persons, who allegedly circulated counterfeit currency in a bid to make easy money, landed behind bars at Mahadevpur in the district on Saturday. The Mahavepur police apprehended the alleged culprits and seized from them fake currency with a face value of Rs 2,98,300 from them. District Superintendent of Police J Surender Reddy told the media persons that the suspects had started the racket of circulating fake currency in a bid to make easy money.

'Covid getting cured in two to three days'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The increasing cases of Covid-19 in the state are not severe. People who test positive are getting cured in two to three days, say doctors.

Speaking to 'The Pioneer', Dr Raja Rao, the Superintendent of Gandhi Hospital, said that while the numbers appear to be rising, admissions of Covid-19 patients in hospitals is almost zero.

"There are only five covid patients in Gandhi Hospital now. These patients were critical and were admitted to the ICU. After testing positive they were brought to Gandhi Hospital. Their condition is not because of covid, but due to other reasons," he said.

Dr Raja Rao also said that the new covid cases are caused by a milder variant and that is why there are very less hospitalisations.

He listed two reasons for the increasing number of cases.

One is people with co-morbidities are at higher risk of getting infected and secondly people with post-Covid complications also have a greater chance of testing positive as the complications are severe. "These two types of people have to take care and follow all precautions," Dr Raja added.

Doctors say that the BA.5 strain of the Omicron variant is currently increasing in Telangana and will be the



most dominant strain in a few months. The advantage here is that the strain causes less severe symptoms compared to previous ones.

Dr Kiran Madala, the HoD of Critical Care, Government Medical College, Nizamabad, said, "BA.5 is the culprit in most covid cases across Telangana as well as India. Currently, one in eight cases in Telangana is caused by the BA.5 strain."

A recent report which analysed about 1.6 lakh covid deaths in India revealed that 55 per cent of the deaths were of people who were aged above 55. Even though the general public is not at higher risk, as the number of infections increases there is a possibility of further mutation of the virus resulting in a new variant which may not be as mild as the current one." The doctor asked people to follow all the precautions they have been following in the last two years and to adhere to the recent guidelines issued by the health department.

‘Nisha’ more dangerous than Covid: Collector

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Drug consumption is more dangerous than Coronavirus and every student should make efforts to curb the drugs menace, NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao has said.

Participating in the ‘Choose Life’ symposium on the occasion of the International Day Against Drugs Usage & Illicit Trafficking” organised by the Indian Red Cross Society at PB Siddhartha College auditorium in Vijayawada on Saturday, Dilli Rao said that using drugs and intoxicants is more dangerous than the Coronavirus as society would face serious consequences. Drug consumption is a big challenge to society and hence everyone should take the responsibility to check their usage, he said.

He further said that awareness activities have been conducted in society to avoid drug usage through the ‘Nisha Muktha Bharat’. The State government had identified that ganja usage has been high in Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, and the NTR district in the



State, he said.

“Bad friendship will spoil everyone’s future and life. Parents, relatives, and friends should take care of the youth to ensure that the latter would not become addicted to drugs,” the Collector said.

He said that if one is addicted to drugs, one’s brain would be affected. The youth cannot achieve anything if they are addicted to drugs, he said and urged the parents to take good

care of their wards.

Later, the Collector appealed to the management of educational institutions to appoint a psychologist to counsel students.

He called upon the people to dial the toll-free number 14500 when they find anybody using or selling drugs, he said.

He made it clear that without a change fin the individuals, the drug menace cannot be controlled.

He said that the Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) is taking steps to eradicate drugs.

MLC KS Lakshmana Rao, Vijayawada DCP Venkataratnam, Excise superintendent T Showry, District Legal Service Authority (DLSA) representative A Padma, psychiatrist Vijayalakshmi, Indian Red Cross Society district president G Samaram and secretary I Ravi participated.



City boxer to represent AP in national event

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Ganji Pavan Kumar from the city has been selected for the National Youth Boxing Championship to be held in Chennai from July 5 to 10. He won gold medal in the light weight category at the state-level Youth boxing championship which was conducted at Visakhapatnam recently.

According to Krishna District Boxing Association secretary YV Uma Maheswara Rao, Pavan Kumar would represent the Andhra Pradesh State in the National Youth Boxing Championship.

NTR district chief coach SA Azeez and boxing coach K Moses appreciated Pavan Kumar.

PK’s mother donates Rs 1.5L for cause of tenant farmers

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan’s mother K Anjanadevi has donated Rs 1.5 lakh for the Jana Sena Party’s programme ‘Koulu Rythu Bharasa’.

On the occasion of the birth anniversary K Venkata Rao, father of Pawan Kalyan, Anjanadevi donated Rs 1.5 lakh for the tenant farmers’ welfare on Saturday. She also gave Rs 1 lakh for the Janasena party. She handed over the cheques in this connection to Pawan Kalyan on Saturday.

Speaking on the occasion, Pawan Kalyan said that his father worked in the AP government and her mother is getting a pension. She gave her pension amount to help the families of tenant farmers.

“My father worked in the Abkari department. We used to depend on his salary only. He died in 2007. Since then my mother has been receiving a monthly government pension and she gives the money to various welfare programmes. Today she gave her money for the welfare of tenant farmers’ families,” Pawan Kalyan said.



Pawan Kalyan said that his father worked in the AP government and her mother is getting a pension. She gave her pension amount to help the families of tenant farmers.

4 more new Rythu Bazaars in Vijayawada

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector S Dilli has said that four more rythu bazaars will come up in the city soon. They are being set up to cater to the needs of the people who were earlier using the Swaraj Maidan rythu bazaar which has now been removed, he said.

Dilli Rao visited the temporary rythu bazaar, which is being organised at the PB Siddhartha Arts and Science College ground in Vijayawada on Saturday. He interacted with farmers and enquired with them about the prices of vegetables.

Speaking on the occasion, the Collector said that due to the construction of Dr BR Ambedkar Smriti Vanam at Swaraj Maidan, the Marketing department authorities had shifted the Swaraj Maidan rythu bazaar to four areas in the city as an alternative arrangement. The four rythu bazaars were arranged at Krishnalanka, PB Siddhartha, Satavahana College and GS Raju Road on temporary basis for the convenience of people, he added.

He further said that the new rythu bazaars at Bandar canal bund near Krishnalanka police station, Sambamurthy Road, GS Raju Road and APIIC Colony near Autonagar are ready to be inaugurated. All these four are permanent and would come into use shortly, he said. As of now, 11 permanent rythu bazaars are functioning in the NTR district and the number would come to 15 with the addition of four more. The Collector further said that the State government had established the rythu bazaar system to avoid middlemen at the market. Quality vegetables should be provided to the customers at reasonable prices.

He made it clear that eligible farmers and self-help group members would get stalls in the rythu bazaars.

“Vegetables prices are monitored by the Marketing department under the guidance of a joint collector. All the estate officers shall organise the rythu bazaars without any complaints,” he said.

‘DGP must probe Chittoor police excesses against ex-Mayor’

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP national president and former chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday urged the DGP of AP to take action against the police for their ‘excesses’ against Chittoor ex-mayor Katari Hemalatha.

In a letter to the DGP here, Naidu said that the Chittoor police were intimidating witnesses and filing false cases in order to cover up the murder of Katari Mohan and Katari Anuradha, ex-mayor of Chittoor. Appallingly, a section of police were blatantly siding with the ruling YSRCP goons and they were harassing key witnesses in various cases.

The TDP chief condemned the police jeep running over the legs of Katari Hemalatha, who was injured. Lavanya, the sister-in-law of Hemalatha, complained to Addl SP Chittoor P. Jagadeesh and also to Chittoor DSP on 22nd June 2022 about extending protection to witnesses in the gruesome murder of Katari Anuradha and Mohan, who



are parents-in-law of Hemalatha.

Chandrababu Naidu said that on June 23, 2022, it was learned that Chittoor II Town Police were inquiring about the whereabouts of Satish Naidu, a key witness in the murder case of Katari Mohan and his wife Katari Anuradha. The police threatened Prasanna, an aide of Hemalatha, to reveal the whereabouts of Satish Naidu.

Naidu said at around 9 PM on 23rd June 2022, the police raided the house of Purna, brother of Prasanna, in order to threaten Prasanna to tell the whereabouts of Satish. As part of this, the police have foisted a false case of marijuana against Purna and planned to

arrest him in order to threaten Prasanna.

Naidu said Hemalatha rushed to the place of the incident along with her supporters to rescue Purna. However, the police forcibly pushed Purna into the jeep and manhandled Hemalatha. Circle Inspector Yatindra pushed away Hemalatha and she fell down, sustaining grievous injuries. Further, the police, while reversing, ran their jeep over her, causing fractures in her legs. Hemalatha is admitted to the hospital and is currently under treatment.

The TDP chief objected to the police foisting a false case related to marijuana against Purna by showing a pack of green grass in the police jeep. CI Yatindra falsely admitted the jeep driver to the hospital to claim that Hemalatha and her group had attacked the driver.

Naidu urged the DGP to inquire and take stringent action against the erring police officials in foisting false cases against Purna and for manhandling Hemalatha.

Govt schemes for Non-Resident Telugus explained

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YV Subba Reddy, TTD Chairman, and M Gnanendra Reddy, Advisor to Govt of AP (NRI Affairs) were felicitated at a programme organised by the Non-Resident Andhra people and representatives of American Telugu Association (ATA) in Dallas on Saturday on their arrival to the USA to participate in the Srinivasa Kalyanam Programme on behalf of the State Government.

During this meeting, M Gnanendra Reddy briefed the gathering about various welfare schemes being carried out by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for the welfare of Non-Resident Telugu people. He also explained various steps taken by the State government for the promotion of investments including investment subsidies, power subsidies, and land rebates under the Industrial Policy.



He further asserted that the state government was giving more than 90 regulatory clearances in 21 days through a single-window portal. The State government was giving priority to Health and Education, as these were the key Indicators for Human Resource Development.

Further, the Non-Resident

Andhra people and the representatives of the American Telugu Association expressed their gratitude to the government of AP for arranging Srinivasa Kalyanams in nine cities in the USA. They felicitated YV Subba Reddy, Chairman TTD, and M Gnanendra Reddy on the occasion.

CS urged to take action against police for not sharing FIR copies

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP politburo member Varla Ramaiah on Saturday urged the Chief Secretary of AP to take action against the State police for committing ‘contempt of court’ in sharing FIR copies. Ramaiah wrote a letter to the CS here, saying that the AP government was encouraging ‘secret FIRs’ just like secret GOs in violation of principles of natural justice. This was also in violation of the Supreme Court judgment. The TDP leader said that the Government was deliberately not issuing First Information Report (FIR) copies to the accused contrary to the spirit of the laws of the land. It appears that the Government is proceeding on the lines of secret Government Orders (GOs) with regard to FIRs. Ramaiah said that interestingly, the present Government has become ‘infamously famous’ for its mid-



night secret GOs. Secret FIRs were a symptom of the fascist regime. Sections 154 and 207 CrPC clearly stipulate the authorities to share FIR and other relevant documents of the case with the accused. The TDP leader stressed the need for ensuring principles of natural justice to provide a chance to the accused for a fair trial. Also, the Supreme Court of India categorically stated: ‘An accused is entitled to get a copy of the first information report at an earlier stage than as prescribed under Section 207 CrPC.’ Ramaiah pointed out that the court while pronouncing the judgment in the case cited above

has specifically stated that all the FIRs registered by the police shall be kept in the public domain as early as possible, i.e., within 24 hours unless they are highly sensitive in nature. Still, the Government of Andhra Pradesh appears to be reluctant to oblige with the instructions of the Apex court. The Supreme Court also stated that any violation of these orders shall be treated as contempt of court. The TDP leader termed it very surprising that a number of FIRs are being registered against a senior Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader, former Minister, and a Politburo member of the party, Chintakayala Ayyanna Patrudu, but no FIR seems to have been kept in the public domain. Every day, a posse of police has been visiting the house of Ayyanna Patrudu at Narsipatnam on the plea of serving notices under 41A CrPC against him.

CPI demands white paper on AP’s financial position

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

CPI State secretary K Ramakrishna has asked Minister for Finance Buggana Rajendranadh Reddy if he is ready to release a white paper on the State’s debts and financial position. In a press release here on Saturday, he said that Buggana’s claim that the State’s financial condition is good is not correct.

Ramakrishna alleged that the debt of Andhra Pradesh is Rs 8 lakh crore while it was Rs 1.28 lakh crore during the previous government. The finance minister claimed that the previous government had made 19 percent debts while it is just 15 percent after the YSRCP came to power.

He commented that the Union government warned the State government about its loans which exceeded the permitted quota and later the CAG identified several violations in the calculations and expenses.

TDP demands continuation of 200 units of free power to SC/ST households

Politburo member Bonda Uma burns electricity bills

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP politburo member and former MLA Bonda Uma Maheswara Rao and his party leaders staged a protest demanding sanctioning of self-employment loans to the SC, ST youth and continuing free power up to 200 units in the State, at the Dharna Chowk in the city on Saturday.

TDP Vijayawada-Central constituency organised the dharna programme and the leaders and cadre raised slogans against the State government. They demanded the continuation of free power up to 200 units in the State under the Jagiwan Ram scheme. The leaders burned the electricity bills as the government stopped free power to SC and ST people.

Speaking on the occasion, Bonda Umamaheswara Rao



said that all categories of people are being troubled by the State government. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy used SC, ST, BC, and Minority votes to form the government and later he neglected these sections of people by stopping welfare and financial

schemes, he alleged.

He said that no one got a loan from SC, or ST financial corporations during the three-year rule of YSRCP. The State government had cancelled several schemes which were implemented during the TDP regime, he said.

He further said that TDP would conduct door-to-door campaigns and explain the government’s ‘anti - people’ policies. TDP State secretary Navaneetham Sambasiva Rao, leaders N Prem, B Jayapal, D Jayaraju, Ch David, P Rajesh and others participated.

Quiz contest on official stats in city tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Ministry of Statistics will conduct a nationwide quiz contest at Vijayawada on June 27. R Kiran Kumar, Deputy Director-General of Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Vijayawada Regional Office here on Saturday said that as a part of celebrations on the eve of ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’, they are organising a Nationwide Quiz Contest on Official Statistics on 27 June at Seminary Hall, Andhra Loyola College in Vijayawada for the

college students pursuing Statistics and Economics of various colleges located in Andhra Pradesh State.

He said that this quiz competition will be in Physical Mode at the state level in which nearly 50 colleges and a number of students will be around 200 along with respective faculties, Central and State Governments officials are going to participate.

He added that the top 3 teams will be awarded cash prizes and the college first prize winner will be awarded with a trophy.

Cycle rally flagged off in city

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector S Dilli has appreciated the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) for setting up a cycle track available to the public in a bid to curb the growing air pollution in the city. The collector said that there is a need for people to show passion for cycling.

As part of the National Clean Air programme, VMC has organized a cycle rally from Lemon Tree Pask hotel to Kshetraya Kalakshetram on Saturday. District Collector Dilli Rao, Vijayawada-Central constituency MLA Malladi



Vishnu, City Mayor Rayana Bhagyalakshmi, VMC Commissioner Swapnil Dinkar Pundkar, Deputy Mayors Bellam Durga, Avuth Shri

Shailaja Reddy, YSRCP leader Devineni Avinash and several corporators participated in the cycle rally.

Commissioner Swapnil

Dinkar said that they are moving ahead with a special campaign to increase the use of bicycles and electric vehicles in the city with the aim of reducing pollution, thereby creating awareness among the people about cycling.

He said cycling is a good exercise for people in the present changing lifestyle. He said that the use of bicycles in our city should also increase like in European countries. At present, people are cycling in gyms but they should do cycling in a natural environment for at least 30 minutes a day that will burn maximum calories and keep them fit.

MLC hails CM for renaming Konaseema district

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

MLC Dokka Manikya Vara Prasad hailed Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy for naming Konaseema District after Dr. BR Ambedkar and termed it a historic moment.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, he said that the decision of naming the Konaseema district as Dr. BR Ambedkar Konaseema district is exactly reflecting the constitutional spirit. He said Ambedkar was a great leader, who is not confined to any particular region or caste but a notable figure to the entire country.

Speaking regarding chaos in Amalapuram, he said some vested interests were responsible for the violence in Konaseema and slammed Pawan Kalyan for not condemning the attack on the houses of the Dalit Minister and BC MLA. He stated that people knew who was behind the attacks and advised both TDP and Jana Sena leaders to refrain from cheap politics. The MLC stated that it was evident from the reaction of Opposition TDP and Janasena over violence in Amalapuram that it was their conspiracy and questioned their stand on naming Konaseema district after Dr. B R Ambedkar.

‘Vidyalaya Puraskar’ awards presented to teachers

PNS ■ ELURU

Eluru District V Prasanna Venkatesh here on Saturday gave away the mementos and certificates to the teachers who won Swachch Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22 awards.

Teachers of 38 schools in the combined West Godavari district were selected for the awards. The Collector gave away mementos and certificates to teachers of 24 rural schools, and 14 secondary and elementary school teachers.

Collector Prasanna Venkatesh congratulated the headmasters of the schools who received awards at the district level. Speaking on the occasion, the Collector exhorted the teachers to strive hard to win state level and national level awards in the future.

He said that cleanliness should be a routine process in schools. He said the state government was now giving more priority to education development and education than ever before and was providing quality education by providing infrastructure in schools through the 'Nadu-Nedu' scheme.

The Collector said that under the 'Nadu-Nedu' scheme



toilets were constructed in all the government schools and drinking water is being provided. The new classrooms were constructed and existing classrooms were modernized. A very pleasant environment in all the government schools is being created, he explained.

The Collector asked the school students to work with the school teachers once a

month to learn about school hygiene, and personal hygiene in addition to education. He said the rest of the school teachers should visit the school to find out the spirit of the school teachers selected for the Awards and work hard to make their schools aware of what they are doing and get awards for their schools.

Prasanna Venkatesh said

that the habit of cleaning hands emerged after the Covid-19 pandemic. The Collector asked to observe cleanliness like Swachch Sankalpam in the same way. On this occasion, the Collector asked the headmasters about the exemplary work in the field of sanitation, drinking water, and sanitation in the schools selected for the awards.



Tiger spotted in village

PNS ■ KAKINADA

The Bengal Royal tiger, which has strayed into the Kakinada district, is playing a hide and seek game with forest officials. The big cat was spotted on Saturday at S Paidapala village in Rowthulapudi mandal.

The forest officials have installed a large number of CCTVs and placed 10 cages at various places but the tiger could not be captured. The wise tiger reached very near to a cage on June 4 but it did not enter it.

A cattle grazer Appala Naidu saw the tiger from very near S Paidapala village in Rowthulapudi mandal when it was drinking water at a tank today at about 9:30 am. He informed the forest officials. The forest officials rushed there and four the pug marks of the tiger in the tank.

It is suspected that the tiger is moving around Pothuluru, Podarupaka, Pandavulapalem, and Sherabavaram villages where there are dense casuarinas orchards and the tiger conveniently hiding.

‘No sign of development in State’

PNS ■ ONGOLE

Telugu Desam Party leader and MLA Gottipati Ravi Kumar has alleged that anarchic rule is prevailing in Andhra Pradesh.

Addressing a press conference here on Saturday, he said that except for destruction, there is no sign of development in the state.

“The YSRCP-led government demolished the Praja Vedika convention centre in Amaravati within a few days after coming to power. Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has started his disastrous rule by demolishing the Praja Vedika convention centre. The YSRCP leaders are plundering the resources which should be useful to the future generation”, he slammed.

Ravi Kumar said that the state had progressed during N Chandrababu Naidu-headed regime but now the state is on a regressive path. Many chief Ministers thought of how to develop the state but Jagan Mohan Reddy thinks of how to destroy the progress, he slammed.

“The YSRCP government has done away with the Anna Canteen which used to provide food to the poor at Rs 5. Jagan Mohan Reddy has no right to rule the state. Except for anarchy, nothing has been left in the state. Jagan Mohan Reddy



CM Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy has started his disastrous rule by demolishing the Praja Vedika convention centre.

Gottipati Ravi said that CC roads were constructed in every village but now in the YSRCP regime all roads were full of potholes and bumps and they are beyond use by motorists, he regretted. The Polavaram works were carried out expeditiously during Chandrababu Naidu-led TDP regime now they are going on a tardy manner, he lambasted.

The TDP MLA deplored that the six decades dream of AP people about the Polavaram project has become uncertain now. Many major industries like KIA were established when Chandrababu Naidu was the Chief Minister but now the industries like Holitech had gone to UP from Tirupati. The TDP MLA found fault with the YSRCP government for doing away with the Dulhan scheme meant for Muslim girls.

“Chandrababu Naidu-headed government had spent Rs 2,346.65 crore during the five years rule for the welfare of minorities. The TDP government had given Rs 50,000 to Muslim girls under Dulhan scheme”, reminded.

The YSRCP government has also cancelled the foreign education schemes for the underprivileged sections. The TDP had given Ramzan tohfa which was also withdrawn by the YSRCP government, and Gottipati Ravi Kumar criticised.

BJP leaders lodge police complaint against RGV

PNS ■ ONGOLE

BJP leaders, led by State executive committee member Juvvignunta Koteswari, lodged a police complaint with the One Town police station against popular film director Ram Gopal Varma for his obnoxious comments against the BJP's presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu.

Ram Gopal Varma in his tweet sarcastically asked where Pandavas are. The BJP leaders vehemently condemned the

objectionable tweet of RGV. Talking to the media, Koteswari took strong exception to the comment of RGV against the presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu. She demanded the arrest of Ram Gopal Varma.

She also appealed to the police to book cases under the SC/ST Atrocities Act against the film director.

BJP leaders including district secretary Rayapati Ajay, city president Gurram Ranganath and other leaders were present.



6,850 BOTTLES OF LIQUOR WORTH Rs 15.50 LAKH DESTROYED

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Police destroyed 6,850 liquor bottles worth Rs 15.50 lakh, which were seized while being brought illegally, were destroyed by crushing with a road roller at Yanamadurru

drain bridge on Saturday.

SEB inspector VVVS N Varma said that on the directions of DGP K Rajendranath Reddy, SEB Commissioner Ravishankar Ayyannar, and WG district SP U Ravi Prakash 6,650

litres of liquor bottles worth Rs 15.50 lakh were destroyed.

The police said that a total of 6,850 liquor bottles (2944 duty paid liquor bottles) and 3906 bottles (non-duty paid liquor) were destroyed on Saturday.

Officials asked to send road repair proposals

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Roads and Buildings Department Principal Secretary MT Krishna Babu has directed the officials to send proposals for repairs to the damaged roads in the district.

The Principal Secretary held a review meeting with the officials in the Collector's camp office located at Peda Amiram here on Saturday.

Speaking on the occasion Krishna Babu directed the officials to submit proposals to carry out repairs to the damaged roads on a priority basis. He instructed them to complete the repair of the roads which are connected to National Highway 216 and 165.

“Proposals should be sent to take up repairing works of roads which lead to various places from Bhimavaram”, he told the officers.



The officers apprised the Principal Secretary that though tenders were invited for the road repairing works there is no response from contractors. He asked the officials to speak to the contractors and convince them to file tenders for road repairing works.

District Collector P Prashanthi underlined the need of carrying out road repairing works to the damaged roads in the district at the

earliest. She told the Principal Secretary that some of the road repairing works had halted in the middle due to some technical reasons and steps should be taken to complete the pending road repairing works.

Joint Collector JV Murali, chief engineer Srinivas, R&B chief engineer PC Ramesh Kumar, R&B engineer Nirmala and RDO Dasi Raju were among those who were present.

Three notorious bike lifters arrested

PNS ■ BAPATLA

The police arrested three notorious bike lifters and recovered 17 motorcycles worth Rs 11.90 lakh from him.

Superintendent of police Vakul Jindal said that on May 13 this year, Siddhala Bullabai a resident of Donepudi village of Kolluru mandal came to Repalle Town to buy seeds and parked his motorcycle in front of the Fertilizer shop near the government hospital and went to the shop.

When he came back he found his motorcycle was missing and he lodged a complaint with the Repalle town police station.



The police conducted a checking of vehicles near Penumudi check post, Repalle mandal, and arrested the accused Thota Rajesh, Repudi

Srinivas, and Chedalavada Dilli Poleswara Rao on June 25, 2022, and recovered 17 motorcycles from them. The trio, addicted to bad habits and ful-

filling their vices, decided to earn money in an easy way and started committing motorcycle thefts which were unlocked.

The modus operandi of their crimes is that they would identify the unlocked motorcycles and commit theft. After committing thefts they tried to sell the stolen motorcycles without proper documents but none was purchased and mortgaged the motorcycles. Then the accused prepared fake documents using technology and prepared fake number plates and tried to sell the motorcycles. The SP appreciated the police team for arresting the notorious bike lifters.

MP Nani makes sensational comments against Naidu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP MP from Vijayawada Kesineni Srinivas (Nani) has made sensational comments during a media conference after meeting TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu. “I will encourage your opponents if you support my enemy”, he said reportedly targeting Naidu.

According to reports, the TDP has been encouraging Nani's brother Kesineni Sivanath (Chinna) after the

MP became inactive following the defeat of the TDP in the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) elections.

Nani impressed Chandrababu and made the TDP announce his daughter Kesineni Swetha as the party's mayoral candidate. But the TDP suffered defeat in local body elections. He is of the view that senior TDP leaders Bonda Uma and Nagul Meera were responsible for the party's loss. Even, he complained to the TDP chief but no action

was taken against them. He expressed his anger by removing Chandrababu's photo from his office.

The MP is not keen on strengthening the TDP in Vijayawada. Rumours are rife that Chandrababu has been supporting his brother. Nani and Chinna have turned into rivals because of a property dispute between them. MP's brother is in the real estate business and took an active role in the recently-concluded Mahanadu.

APIIC drive to improve industrial environment

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The APIIC's Industrial Environment Improvement Drive (IEID) is in full swing in AP and is scheduled to be complete by July 5 in all Autonagars, Industrial Parks, and SEZs of the State. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy sought to conduct a cleaning drive in the industrial areas under which APIIC started the programme.

The APIIC officials stated that APIIC has cleared 100 km of bushes accumulated in industrial parks as per the orders of CM Jagan. Repairs and marking of internal roads in industrial parks have been completed by 13,503 meters. In addition to installing 529 street lights along the entire power lines, it has completed repairs in several places and further planted 1750 saplings plants in Auto Nagars and industrial parks.

The officials said that APIIC initiated steps to transform 3,949 square meters of vacant land into parks for the sake of the public. It has also set up 42 sign boards across the State with full details of industrial parks and lanes indicating boards and completed 32,735 meters of sanitation work related to critical sewage and flood water management in industrial parks. APIIC has allowed IALA (Industrial Area Local Authority) to call for tenders for the completion of various modernisation and development works in more industrial parks with funding from local bodies.

Cadre of IAS officer changed from Odisha to AP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

An Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer hailing from Telangana, who was posted in the Odisha cadre, has finally ended up in Andhra Pradesh to work in the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government. Pediti Dhatri Reddy, who belongs to Gundlabavi village of Chouttuppal mandal in Yadadri Bhongir district, got selected to the IAS in 2020 and was allotted Odisha cadre.

Recently, Dhatri Reddy opted for the Andhra Pradesh cadre on the ground that she got married to an IPS officer of Andhra cadre Kommi Pratap Shiva Kishore of the 2019 batch. She placed a request with the Centre as well as the state governments of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

Following an agreement between both the state governments, the Union ministry of personnel and training granted her request and transferred her to the Andhra cadre on Thursday.

“Welcome home @ Dhatri Reddy P. Congratulations on your transfer to Andhra Pradesh cadre,” her husband tweeted on Friday. Reacting to his tweet, Dhatri Reddy said: “Now officially borne to Andhra Pradesh Cadre. Forever indebted to Odisha and the numerous seniors there who stood by side as mentors and my support system.”

In fact, Dhatri Reddy had been a classmate of Shiva Kishore in the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur. Both of them got selected to the

Indian Police Service in 2019. While Shiva Kishore, who hails from Atmakur in Nellore district, preferred to remain an IPS officer of Andhra cadre, Dhatri wrote the Civil Services again and got 46th rank in 2020. She was selected to the IAS but in the Odisha cadre. Before joining the Civil Services, she worked as an investment banker at Deutsche Bank. She got married to Shiva Kishore in December 2021.

In fact, Shiv Kishore is close to the Mekapati family, who also hails from Atmakur. He studied in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayam at Krishnapuram, which was set up due to the efforts of Mekapati Rajamohan Reddy. The couple got married in the presence of Rajamohan Reddy and his son Mekapati Goutham Reddy.

Rs 20 lakh donated to Vizag zoo

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Dr Nandani Salaria, Curator, Indira Gandhi Zoological Park, Visakhapatnam said that Deccan Fine Chemicals India Pvt Ltd as part of its CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activity came forward to sponsor funding for the construction of a new enclosure for a new exotic species Red Necked Wallaby and also adopted few animals in the Indira Gandhi Zoological Park, Visakhapatnam.

Deccan Fine Chemicals India Pvt Ltd allocated Rs 16.80 lakh for constructing a new enclosure for “Red Naked Wallaby” which is to be brought to Vizag Zoo in a few months from Zoo Zlin, Czech Republic and also Rs 3.20 lakh for adoption of 2 Leopards, 1 Zebra, and 1 Ostrich for the period of one year.

KVLP Raju, Plant Head and



Director – Technical handed over the cheque for Rs 20 lakhs to Dr. Nandani Salaria, IFS, Curator, IGZP. Curator thanked the management of Deccan Fine Chemicals India Pvt Ltd for coming forward for the welfare of the wildlife. The Curator Nandani Salaria requested them to continue

their contribution to IGZP in the future as well. He thanked the Curator, IGZP for giving them the opportunity to sponsor the construction of a new enclosure as well as adopting animals in the Zoo.

Deccan Fine Chemicals HR, PVSS Raju said that wildlife is very important in nature and

hence they are very happy to allocate their CSR funds for the animals at the Vizag Zoo for their conservation. They will do their part to further contribute to the Zoo Park in the future. They have visited the site of the proposed work and also posed for pictures with the adopted Zoo animals.

INDIA CORNER

Narayana Murthy, Padukone selected for 'Kempegowda International Award'

Former Karnataka chief minister S M Krishna, Infosys founder and IT industry veteran N R Narayana Murthy, and former badminton player Prakash Padukone, have been selected for the 'Kempegowda International Award', which has been instituted beginning this year. Karnataka Higher Education Minister C N Ashwath Narayan, who is also the Vice-President of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda Heritage Area Development Authority, made an announcement to this effect on Saturday. He said Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai will present the awards to recipients during the grand celebration on the 513th birth anniversary of Kempegowda, the architect of Bengaluru city, on June 27 at Vidhana Soudha. The minister said all the three achievers have contributed in their own unique way for the development of Bengaluru and the fame it has garnered. The award carries a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh along with a plaque.



Massive searches carried out along IB ahead of Amarnath Yatra

Security forces on Saturday carried out a massive search operation along the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir to detect cross-border tunnels and prevent any infiltration attempts by terrorists during the Amarnath Yatra, officials said. The search operation was jointly carried out by Police, CRPF, and BSF in the forward villages in Samba, Kathua, and Jammu districts, the officials said. The 43-day-long Amarnath Yatra is scheduled to start on June 30 from two routes -- the traditional 48-km Nunwan in south Kashmir's Pahalgam and a 14-km shorter route from Baltal in central Kashmir's Ganderbal -- after a two-year break forced by the COVID pandemic. Various intelligence inputs suggest that terrorists are planning to infiltrate from across the border to disrupt the yatra, Deputy Superintendent of Police (operations), Samba, G R Bhardwaj said.



Punjab in economic morass, debt trap: White Paper

Punjab is in an economic morass and debt trap, said the White Paper on state finances presented in the state Assembly here on Saturday. The document presented by Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema blamed previous governments for the fiscal mess. According to the document tabled two days ahead of the presentation of the state budget in the House, "Today, Punjab is in an economic morass and debt trap." "The previous governments, instead of applying necessary correctives, continued to slip into fiscal profligacy, as evident from unchecked increase in unproductive revenue expenditure, freebies and unmerited subsidies, virtual collapse in the capital and social sector investments vital for future growth and non-realisation of its potential tax and non-tax revenues," it said.



PM MODI AHEAD OF G7 SUMMIT

Will exchange views on energy, food security, counter-terrorism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of his visit to Germany for the G7 summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said he will exchange views with the leaders of the bloc and its partners on issues such as energy, food security, counter-terrorism, environment and democracy.

Modi is visiting Schloss Elmau in southern Germany on June 26 and 27 for the summit of the G7, a grouping of the world's seven richest nations.

The G7 leaders are expected to focus on the Ukraine crisis that has triggered geopolitical turmoil besides fuelling a global food and energy crisis.

Modi is attending the G7 summit following an invitation by German Chancellor Olaf Scholz.



The summit is being hosted by Germany in its capacity as the chair of G7.

"In an effort to strengthen international collaboration on important global issues impacting humanity, Germany has also invited other democracies such as

Argentina, Indonesia, Senegal and South Africa to the G7 Summit," Modi said in a statement ahead of his visit.

"During the sessions of the Summit, I will be exchanging views with the G7 countries, G7 partner countries and guest

International Organisations on topical issues such as environment, energy, climate, food security, health, counter-terrorism, gender equality and democracy," he added.

Modi said he was looking forward to meeting leaders of some of the participating G7 and guest countries on the sidelines of the summit.

The prime minister said he was also looking forward to meeting Chancellor Scholz again after the "productive" India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) last month. "While in Germany, I also look forward to meeting members of the Indian Diaspora from across Europe who are contributing immensely to their local economies as also enriching our relations with

European countries," the prime minister said. Modi leaves for Germany on Saturday night. From Germany, Modi will travel to the United Arab Emirates on June 28 to pay his condolences on the passing away of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the former president of the Gulf nation.

"On my way back to India, I will make a brief stopover in Abu Dhabi, UAE for a meeting with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and Ruler of Abu Dhabi, on June 28 to convey my personal condolences on the passing away of Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the former UAE President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi," Modi said. Zayed Al Nahyan passed away on May 13 after battling illness for the last several years.

'India emerged successfully in management of Covid-19'

PNS ■ PUDUCHERRY

Union Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Saturday said the country has successfully spearheaded the fight against covid-19 pandemic under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The country also developed a "robust and strong mechanism to counter the public health issues," he said.

"The country has emerged successfully in the management of the pandemic," the Health and Family Welfare minister said. Declaring open the Jipmer International School of Public Health here, Mandaviya said the dedication of the institution to the nation marks an important event.

The school will help India as well as the world in efficiently tackling various global public health issues and challenges. "It will also provide the highest level of education in public health, generate sustainable value-based



solutions and strengthen the capacity for services and research in the health sector," he said.

He said the Central government had allotted Rs 66 crore for the construction of the infrastructure to house the school. "The school would meet the health care requirements of people of not only our country but also would serve the entire world. This is in tandem with the Indian philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (whole world is one family)," the

Minister said, calling upon students and health administrators to be ambassadors of health care and provide services with compassion.

Lt Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan presided over the event and said the Ayushman Bharath scheme was a very effective health initiative and that the Prime Minister had introduced the scheme to enable the poor to get medical care for various ailments.

10 women held for clashing with liquor shop staff

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ten people, all women, were arrested after a clash broke out between a group of women protesting the opening of a liquor shop in south Delhi's Tigr area and the shop's staff, police said on Saturday.

The incident happened Thursday around 8.30 am before the shop was opened.

The quarrel started with a protest staged by a group of local women, who were apparently against the opening of the liquor shop in the area, police said. Officials said that the police was already brought in at the spot, as they had got to know about the protest, besides the female staff, who were deployed by the owner of

the shop. As their demonstration got heated, the protesters got into a fight with the women staff of the shop, roughing up a male police too.

Head Constable Ranjeet, the beat officer of the area, got caught in the fight and his uniform was also torn by those in the crowd, the officer said.

The situation in the area was brought under control and medical of the injured staff was conducted at AIIMS Trauma Centre, the officer added.

According to police, a case under several sections, including 146 for rioting, was filed against the 10 offenders booked. "Ten accused have been arrested in this case.

Historians, scholars oppose move to demolish Sultan Palace in Patna

PNS ■ PATNA

The Bihar government's proposal to demolish the historic Sultan Palace in the heart of the city has shocked historians, conservationists and ordinary citizens who have vehemently opposed the decision and appealed for preserving and restoring the "architectural icon" instead of razing it.

The Nitish Kumar government recently announced that the state cabinet had given its nod to build three five-star hotels in Patna, including one at the site of the 100-year-old Sultan Palace on Beer Chand Patel Road.

As the decision was made public, protests erupted on



social media, with many citizens calling it 'absolutely shocking' and "a hare-brained decision" even as some of them cited the Bihar government's earlier decision, taken a few years ago, to convert the palace into a "heritage hotel" and asked

why has it discarded the widely-reported old plan.

Ordinary citizens, scholars and activists from different parts of the country have appealed to the government to not demolish the Sultan Palace, one of the last surviving palaces

in Patna, and instead convert it into a heritage five-star hotel, which would only enhance its value and attract more tourists.

The palace, located on the historic Gardiner Road (now Beer Chand Patel Road), was built in 1922 by the legendary barrister of Patna, Sir Sultan Ahmad, who also briefly served as a judge in the Patna High Court and as the first Indian vice-chancellor of the Patna University from 1923-30. He later became a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council for law and information and broadcasting, and was part of the delegation of India for the historic Round Table Conferences in 1930s in London, along with Mahatma Gandhi.

Sadhus upbeat over Amarnath Yatra, say terror threat 'non-issue' for them

PNS ■ JAMMU

Scheduled to start next week after a break of two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual Amarnath Yatra is expected to witness large participation of devotees including sadhus and sadhvis who have started arriving here from different parts of the country.

Hundreds of the holy men and women are camping at the base camp Ram Mandir in the old city's Purani Mandi area and are upbeat over the resumption of the pilgrimage to finally have

darshan' of Barfani Baba', pointing to the naturally formed ice-shivlingam at the 3,880-metre holy cave of Amarnath in south Kashmir Himalayas.

The 43-day-long yatra is scheduled to start on June 30 from the twin routes -- traditional 48-km Nunwan in south Kashmir's Pahalgam and 14-km shorter Baltal in central Kashmir's Ganderbal. The first batch of pilgrims including sadhus will leave for the twin base camps of Kashmir from Bhagwati Nagar and Ram Mandir in Jammu, a day ahead

of the start of the yatra.

Unprecedented security arrangements have been put in place at the base camps and all along the route from Lakanpur -- the gateway to J-K -- to the cave shrine to thwart any terror attack and ensure peaceful yatra.

Staying in small groups inside a large hall at the temple complex and chanting praises of the Lord Shiva like Bham Bham Bhole' and Har Har Mahadev', the sadhus who have renounced the worldly life are least bothered about the terror threat and said it is a non-issue for us.

19 SFI activists held in Rahul Gandhi office vandalism case

PNS ■ Wayanad

Nineteen activists of the Students' Federation of India (SFI), the students wing of the ruling CPI(M), have been arrested and remanded so far in connection with the attack on Congress MP Rahul Gandhi's office here, even as opposition Congress-led UDF targeted Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan over the incident saying the attack was held with his knowledge.

The Marxist party's students' cadre attacked the Wayanad MP's office as part of a Sangh Parivar agenda with the knowl-



edge of Vijayan to please the Narendra Modi government at the Centre, the Congress alleged. Sharpening their attack, the opposition also charged

that a personal staff of Health Minister Veena George, identified as Avishith, was among the assaulters involved in the office vandalism but the minister

quickly rejected the allegation claiming that he was no longer her staffer.

He had relieved himself from the duty earlier this month citing personal reasons, the minister claimed.

Though the SFI activists held a protest march to Gandhi's office and allegedly vandalised his office on Friday alleging his inaction in the issue of buffer zones around forests, the Chief Minister's office on Saturday clarified that the Wayanad MP sent a letter to Vijayan seeking his government's urgent intervention in the matter. The CMO also said Vijayan, in his

reply, had requested Gandhi to raise the issue in the upcoming Parliament session.

Police, meanwhile, said all the arrested persons were identified as local SFI activists and they were remanded for two weeks by a local court.

"The arrest of 19 people have been recorded so far. Some more persons were taken into custody and more arrests are expected to take place today. At present, the case is investigated by the Mananthavady Deputy Superintendent of Police and it will be handed over to the ADGP-led special investigation team soon," he told PTI.



Mehbooba urges Kashmiri youth to shun militancy

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti on Saturday appealed to the youth of Kashmir to shun militancy and save their lives, claiming security forces were getting incentives for killing them.

Mehbooba said Jammu and Kashmir was going through a tumultuous phase and in the times to come, it will need its youth. "I hear every day that three or four youths have been killed, which means the local recruitment here has increased," she told reporters here.

"It is my request to the parents and the children to save their lives because killing you is an incentive for them

(security forces). They get money and promotions for that, she alleged. So, do not pick up arms. They kill four-five (militants) every day... I appeal to you this is not right and you should leave it, the PDP president said.

VHP will reclaim original sites of Kashi, Mathura temples

PNS ■ CHENNAI

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) will strive to reclaim the original sites of Kashi Vishwanath temple and the birth place of Sri Krishna in Mathura within the framework of law and constitution through peaceful means, its working president Alok Kumar said on Saturday.

However, since the matters are in the courts, it would be appropriate if both sides await the court verdict, he said. Speaking to reporters at the venue of the VHP central governing council meeting being held at Kanchipuram near here, Kumar said the VHP condemned the recent violence unleashed by "religious fanatics" across India and damaging



properties, government institutions and attacking police while reacting to the comments made by Nupur Sharma and

Naveen Jindal, against whom the police have filed FIRs. "They issued threats to cut their heads and gouge their eyes

and damaged properties of the Hindus and unleashed violence on the streets instigated by the enemy country propa-

ganda and certain anti national groups," the VHP working president claimed. "Vishwa Hindu Parishad condemns such heinous acts and expects the State governments to handle these perpetrators with iron hand and bring justice to the Hindus who were impacted by this fanaticism," he said. Also, he called upon the Hindu society to stand up for their rights and resist the violence.

"India is run by its constitution and not by Sharia Laws. No crowd has right to declare anybody guilty much less to pronounce punishments," he asserted. The VHP would intensify its agitation to liberate the temples from the clutches of the State governments and hand over the administration to the larger Hindu society.

UPA govt neglected agriculture

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar on Friday blamed the UPA government for not giving adequate priority to the farm sector and said the Centre in the last eight years has taken steps to empower farmers. Tomar said this at the India Sustainability Conclave.

The minister stressed on all round development that should bring about positive change in the lives of the most vulnerable sections of the society. Tomar said that India being an agricultural country, the role of farming is important. "If we move away from the agriculture sector, even if we have money, agricultural products will not be available." At the



time of India's independence, the contribution of agriculture sector in GDP was 50 per cent, which gradually decreased. He pointed out that eighty-six per cent are small farmers, for whom it is necessary to adopt technology into farming, increase production quality at par with global standards and also make it a remu-

nerative avenue. Tomar said agriculture sector is being upgraded through technology like drones, digital agri mission and promoting private investment etc.

During the previous governments, agriculture did not get the required priority and the attitude towards agricultural development remained subdued, due to which the income of the farmers did not increase and adequate resources were not available to them, but now under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi, farmers are being empowered, he said.

Tomar highlighted that Rs 6,000 is credited every year into the bank accounts of 11.5 crore farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme.

India's domestic raw coking coal production may touch 140 MT by

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Saturday said the country's domestic raw coking coal output may touch 140 million tonnes (MT) by 2030 from the present 51.7 MT.

Coking coal is an essential raw material for the production of iron and steel.

"With...transformative measures taken by Ministry of Coal under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative of PM, domestic raw coking coal production is likely to reach 140 MT by 2030," the coal ministry said in a statement.

To further increase the output of raw coking coal, the Centre has auctioned 10 coking coal blocks to the private sector, with a peak rated capacity (PRC) of 22.5 MT during the last two years. Most of these blocks are expected to start production by 2025.

The ministry has also identified four coking coal blocks and the Central Mine Planning and Design Institute (CMPDI) will also finalise geological reserves (GR) for 4 to 6 new coking coal blocks in the next two months, the statement said.

These blocks may be offered in subsequent rounds of sale for the private sector to further



step up domestic raw coking coal supply in the country.

Coal India Ltd (CIL), which accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal output, has planned to increase raw coking coal production from existing mines up to 26 MT and identified nine new mines with peak rated capacity of about 20 MT by FY25.

Also, CIL has offered six discontinued coking coal mines, out of the total 20 such mines, on an innovative model of revenue sharing to the private sector with an expected PRC of about 2 MT, according to the statement. The country pro-

duced 51.7 MT of raw coking coal during 2021-22, which is 15 per cent more compared to 44.8 MT during FY21.

Domestic raw coking coal production continues to witness an increasing trend in the current fiscal as well with the production of 8.3 MT, as per the figures up to last month, which is 20 per cent more compared to 6.9 MT during the same period of the previous year. At present, the domestic raw coking coal washing capacity is about 23 MT per annum.

CIL plans to set up and operationalise nine more new

washeries with a capacity of 30 million tonnes per annum (MTPA).

With the setting up of new washeries, it is estimated that CIL will be able to supply about 15 MT of washed coking coal to the steel sector, thereby reducing the import of coking coal. There is a need to set up more washeries to enhance capacity to meet the fast-increasing demand for coking coal in the country. During FY22, CIL supplied 1.7 MT of washed coking coal to the steel sector and has set a target of 3.45 MT for FY23, as per the statement.

Hindustan Copper board to consider proposal to raise Rs 500 cr via debentures next week

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Hindustan Copper Ltd's board will meet next week to consider a proposal to raise up to Rs 500 crore by issuing debentures.

"A meeting of the board of directors of Hindustan Copper Ltd (HCL) will be held on 30th June 2022 to inter alia, consider and recommend resolutions seeking approval of the shareholders of the company to authorise the board of directors...to offer, issue and allot secured or unsecured non-convertible debentures or bonds on a private placement basis up to Rs 500 crore," the PSU said in a BSE filing. The board will also consider raising funds through a qualified institutional placement method, it added.

NBFCs should diversify risks across sectors: ex-SBI chief

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Non-banking financial companies need to diversify risks across sectors and geographies, as well as maintain capital adequacy norms and introduce core banking solutions going ahead, former State Bank of India chairman Rajnish Kumar said.

Kumar also said the risk-taking abilities of NBFCs are higher than banks, and that the regulatory stance will become tougher, with the regulation arbitrage between lenders and non-banking entities ceasing to exist.

"Regarding asset quality review (AQR) of lenders, as pointed out by former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan, the NPA problem started



with the NBFCs. The whole issue boils down to risk management and governance.

There is a need for NBFCs to take a diversified approach across sectors and geographies and also be mindful about the risk matrix, he said during an event organised by micro-finance institution VFS Capital here on

Friday evening.

Kumar said the NBFCs will have to maintain capital adequacy norms, introduce core banking solutions and make adequate disclosures by 2025.

Nearly 23 per cent of lending in the financial sector happens through the NBFCs, he said.

OIL completes beta demo of hydrogen-powered SNEH bus

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Oil India Ltd (OIL) on Saturday said it has completed a beta demonstration of the hydrogen-powered bus developed by Ohm Cleantech under the 'Startup Nurturing, Enabling and Handholding (SNEH)' programme of the company.

The 9-meter bus built on a 60kW PEM fuel cell engine will provide for a minimum range of 450 km while emitting water in the exhaust, the company said in a statement.

"The demonstration adds another feather to the green hydrogen hat of OIL as the company has already commis-

sioned a 99.999 per cent pure green hydrogen plant in Jorhat, Assam in April 2022," it said.

On the occasion, SC Mishra, Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of OIL, said this is a major step towards zero-emission mobility within OIL and also in northeast India. "With technology partners like Ohm Cleantech and

h2e Power, who can set up manufacturing plants for electrolyzers and fuel cells in the North East, OIL will play an important role in fulfilling India's energy targets. We intend to deploy this bus for Green Kaziranga Tourism by the end of this year to welcome tourists to this zero-emission travel experience," he said.

GST compensation cess levy extended till March 2026

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has extended the time for levy of GST compensation cess by nearly 4 years till March 31, 2026.

As per the Goods and Services Tax (Period of Levy and Collection of Cess) Rules, 2022, notified by the finance ministry, the compensation cess will continue to be levied from July 1, 2022 to March 31, 2026.

The levy of cess was to end on June 30 but the GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising state FMs, decided to extend it till March 2026 to repay the loans taken in the last two fiscal years to make up for the shortfall in their revenue collection.

After the 45th GST Council meeting in Lucknow in September last year,



Sitharaman had said the regime of paying compensation to states for revenue shortfall resulting from subsuming their taxes such as VAT in the uniform national tax GST, will end in June 2022.

However, the compensation cess, levied on luxury and demerit goods, will continue to be collected till March 2026 to repay the borrowings that were done in 2020-21 and 2021-22 to compensate states for GST revenue loss.

In order to meet the

resource gap of states due to short release of compensation, the Centre has borrowed and released Rs 1.1 lakh crore in 2020-21 and Rs 1.59 lakh crore in 2021-22 as back-to-back loan to meet a part of the shortfall in cess collection.

The Centre has repaid Rs 7,500 crore as interest cost for the borrowing in 2021-22 and Rs 14,000 crore is to be paid this fiscal year. From 2023-24, the repayment of principal amount will start which will continue till March 2026.

Infosys gives capital return of over Rs 24,100 cr in FY22

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT services firm Infosys gave capital return of over Rs 24,100 crore (about USD 3.1 billion) in 2021-22 with a total dividend of Rs 31 per share along with share buyback of over Rs 11,000 crore, company's co-founder and chairman Nandan Nilekani said on Saturday.

While speaking at the 41st Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the company, Nilekani announced that the 2021-22 fiscal has been a year of exceptional growth 19.7 per cent in constant currency bringing in USD 16.3 billion, which is the fastest growth that Infosys has recorded in 11 years.

He said that the company's board has recommended a final dividend of Rs 16 per share which along with the interim dividend of Rs 15 per

share leads to a total dividend of Rs 31 per share in FY2022.

"With this, the company has announced a total dividend of approx. Rs 13,000 crore for FY22. Along with the share buyback of over Rs 11,000 crore completed in September, the total capital return in FY22 is over Rs 24,100 crore," Nilekani said.

He said that the board of directors has recommended the reappointment of Salil Parekh as Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Infosys, for a second term of five years, from July 1, 2022, to March 31, 2027. "Salil has delivered industry-leading performance for the company, and it is in the interest of Infosys and its stakeholders to secure the continuity and stability of the current leadership."

RBI approves Axis Bank Deputy MD's reappointment

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Axis Bank on Friday said the Reserve Bank has approved the reappointment of Rajiv Anand as the Deputy MD for a period of three years until August 2025.

In January this year, the private sector lender had reappointed Anand as the Deputy Managing Director for a further period of three years, from August 4, 2022, to August 3, 2025 (both days inclusive). It was subject to the approval of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). "In this regard, we wish to inform you that the RBI vide its letter dated June 24, 2022, has approved the above re-appointment," Axis Bank said in a regulatory filing. Earlier in late December 2021, RBI had approved re-designation of Anand as the Deputy Managing Director of the bank till August 3, 2022 (both days inclusive).

NTC Group unveils two new businesses

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Diversified business conglomerate NTC Group under its flagship company NTC Logistics has unveiled two new verticals -- Boxory Logistics Pvt Ltd and Cargonix Xpress Pvt Ltd -- as part of consolidating its operations in the country, an official said on Saturday. Boxory Logistics would focus on freight services like air freight, multi-city transportation, warehousing, while Cargonix Xpress would be focused on same day delivery, milk run among others. At an event here, the company unveiled a 70 metre truck trailer for the first time in the country which would be used for transporting windmill blades.

NTC Group company MAHA Auto Components has manufactured the truck trailer



er to serve the renewable energy logistics space, a company statement said here.

Equipped with advanced features like load sensing valves, anti-lock braking systems among many others, the trailer ensures safety and reliability by providing more

thrust to logistics of windmill blades, company chairman K Chandramohan said in a company statement. Tamil Nadu Industries Minister Thangam Thennarasu formally unveiled the truck at an event held here in the presence of Chandramohan among senior

officials. According to Chandramohan, the company has been taking up projects in the renewable energy sector under its entity -- Evergreen Energy -- which offers logistics to site construction activities for wind and solar projects.

WallMantra targets to reach Rs 100 crore turnover by 2025

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Home decor products manufacturer and retailer WallMantra on Saturday said it aims to reach the Rs 100-crore turnover mark by 2025 on the back of offline capacity expansion and e-commerce.

Innovative home decor startup WallMantra has seen its turnover going up from Rs 2 crore to Rs 20 crore since lockdown. It now aims to reach the Rs 100-crore mark by 2025.

"When we started in 2017, our goal was to give a trendy decor option - wall decal - at an affordable cost. Last year, our revenue touched Rs 18 crore, which is 10-times more than what we normally make. This has encouraged us to aim higher and reset our goals, we are now aiming to become a

100-crore brand in the next three years," WallMantra CEO Jitesh Agarwal said in a statement.

The plan also includes opening two stores in the National Capital Region (NCR) and increasing the number of online sellers on the website, it added.

"We are currently looking for funding and we require around USD 2 million, which is around Rs 15 crore. Early this year, we had raised Rs 1.95 crore from Fluid Ventures, which we will use for marketing, publicity and hiring people," Agarwal stated.

The new plans also include upgrading the numbers of their online sellers and expanding their manufacturing unit. "We already have 50-plus sellers who are live on our website."

Future Enterprises defaults on Rs 4.10 crore interest payment



Debt-ridden Future Enterprises Ltd (FEL) has defaulted on interest payment of Rs 4.10 crore for its non-convertible debentures. The due date for payment was June 24, 2022. FEL said in a regulatory filing "The Company is unable to service its obligations in respect of the interest on Non-Convertible Debentures was due on June 24, 2022," it said. This is the fourth default in June by the Kishore Biyani-led Future group firm. Earlier this week, FEL defaulted twice on interest payments of Rs 85.71 lakh and Rs 6.07 crore for its non-convertible debentures. FEL had made another default on the payment of interest of Rs 1.41 crore, earlier this month. The latest default is on the interest of securities issued for a sum of Rs 40 crore. FEL has defaulted on interest payment for the period between June 24, 2021, to June 23, 2022, it said. The debentures are secured and have a coupon rate of 10.25 per cent per annum. In April, FEL had informed the exchanges about a default of Rs 2,835.65 crore towards its consortium of banks. Its due date was March 31, 2022. FEL was a part of the 19 group companies operating in retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing segments, which were supposed to be transferred to Reliance Retail as part of a Rs 24,713 crore deal announced in August 2020. The deal was called off by the billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries Ltd in April.

Dish TV EGM: 79 pc voters reject proposal to reappoint Jawahar



A total of 78.94 per cent of the votes polled in the Dish TV extraordinary meeting (EGM) were against the resolution to reappoint Jawahar Goel as the Managing Director. Goel, who represents the promoter group in Dish TV, could get only 21.05 per cent in favour of his reappointment for three more years, said a regulatory filing by the DTH operator, updating disclosure of voting results of EGM. A total of 128.54 crore votes were polled in the EGM, which was held on Friday through video conferencing and other audio-visual means. This is a major victory for Dish TV's largest shareholder and private sector lender Yes Bank Ltd (YBL), which holds over 24 per cent share in the company. It was seeking board restructuring of the Zee group patriarch Subhash Chandra-led Essel group's DTH arm by removing his brother Goel from the driving seat of Dish TV. Presently, the promoter group has a 5.93 per cent stake in the company as of March 31, 2022, and had voted 100 per cent in favour of Goel's reappointment. However, public institutions and non-institutions, which own 94.07 per cent of Dish TV, voted against it.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Power Solar Systems on Saturday said it has commissioned India's largest floating solar power project of 101.6 Megawatt Peak (MWp) in Kerala backwaters.

The project is installed on a 350-acre water body in Kayamkulam, Kerala, a company statement said.

The installation was completed within the stipulated period, despite the arduous challenges of variable water depths, high sea tides, and severe water salinity concerns, it stated.

Tata Power Solar is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Power.

This project is the first in the Floating Solar Photovoltaic (FSPV) through power purchase agreement category, the



company said.

"The commissioning of India's first and largest floating solar project is an innovative and incremental step toward meeting India's sustainable energy goals," said Praveer

Sinha, CEO, and MD, Tata Power.

A power purchase agreement has been signed with a PSU client, wherein the entire power generated from this plant will be used by Kerala

State Electricity Board (KSEB).

Interestingly, all the solar modules used in this plant were safely transported, unloaded, and stored on a limited parcel of land for about 35 days by Tata Power Solar, it

The project is installed on a 350-acre water body in Kayamkulam, Kerala, a company statement said.

said. Ashish Khanna, President Renewables, Tata Power, said the project reinforces Tata Power Solar's commitment to leading India's transition towards a greener future and achieving the collective vision of realizing 500 GW of energy through solar power by 2030.

A SEARCH FOR SELF-FULFILLMENT

Review by
NAVIN UPADHYAY

Kashmir has been a favourite destination for moviemakers, writers, and poets. Before the militancy set in and Kashmir became a graveyard of artistic aspirations and dreams, the pristine valley with its sentinels of age-old chinar and fragrant saffron-inspired celluloid fantasy and small screens blockbusters. Its landscaped charms also wooed poets and writers from far and wide.

After the place turned into a theatre of prey and predators, where guns and grenades, death and decay, grief and torture dominated every aspect of living, the valley provided different types of ingredients to fuel artistic aspirations. The stories that came out of Kashmir were now laced with grief, sadness, nostalgia, and longings. Tarannum Riyaz's BIRDS OF THE SNOW is a similar yarn.

Originally published in Urdu as Barf Aashna Parindey, the book explores the transformative aspect of Kashmir, the rapid urbanization of the valley, and its impact on the people who have grown up hearing: ar Firdaus bar-rue zamin ast, hami asto, hamin asto, hamin astnot (If there is a heaven on earth, it's here, it's here.)

The book deals with the struggle of a sensitive college student Sheba to strike a compromise between her inner yearnings for freedom and the values and norms her family and society expected her to embrace. It's the story of a girl's poignant struggle to overcome the burden of conditioning and traditionality. The story explores our deepest emotions—love, fear, insecurity, and longing in a way that is both evocative and original.

Sheba wishes to be free, just like the birds that she likes observing, but understands the need to live within social conventions and accept life's responsibilities.

When Sheba returns to the valley after years spent studying outside, she is struck by a pang of sadness. Tarannum has captured Sheba's feeling in a poignant passage:



The journey to the village has been her favourite journey but today, waves of sadness washed over her mind time and again. She occasionally looked at the reflection of Amki, Baaji, and Parkhanda in the rear-

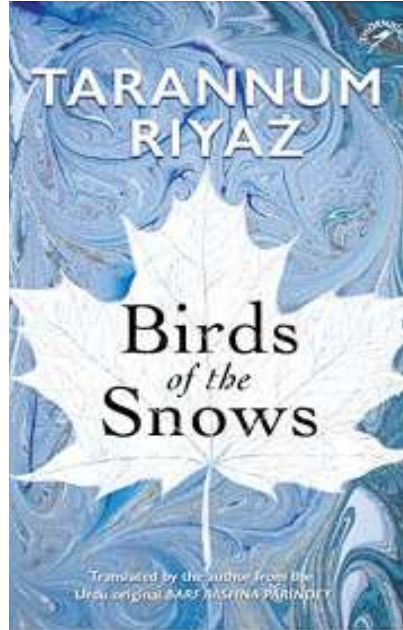
view mirror. Baaji's husband was driving and no one to talk to anyone."

Passages like this dominate the book, in which the author makes a genuine effort to bring alive the life and time of the

Kashmir valley in her own inimitable style. After reading the book, it'll be easy to understand that Tarannum wrote this story not just to fulfill some personal dreams, but to give voice to tens of thousands of

Shebas who are struggling to discover the meaning of their lives in a fast-changing society.

In the word of the publisher the Niyogi Books, This deftly translated novel



depicts the changing times in Kashmir, from a rural to more urban life, the impact of modern thinking, and through its portrayal of female characters explore their compassion and resolves, as well as their search for self-fulfillment."

The editing part of the book is fine as far as grammar is concerned. But errors on the craft side disrupt the smooth flow of the story. The writing is full of unwanted adverbs, (She walked quickly... Abbu smiled pleasantly), avoidable exclamations marks, and stilted dialogues. Paragraphs after paragraphs are littered with "hads" and "ing", the two nemeses of literary writings.

These flaws apart, which are the bane of most English books published in India, BIRDS OF THE SNOW is a poignant story that delves into the human relationship and social and moral values of a strife-torn landscape.

The Reviewer is the Executive Editor of The Pioneer

The Trail of Buddha is like a fascinating train journey

Review by
RAJ KANWAR

A senior officer in the Indian Revenue Service, Deepankar Aron was posted in Hong Kong as a Consul way back in 2012. It was just a happenstance that he noticed a 35-meter high Tian Tan Buddha statue standing right next to the Hong Kong Airport that put him "On the Trail of Buddha: A Journey to the East". However, his initial inspiration had come three years before when he was on a Kailash Mansarovar Yatra in Tibet in 2009.

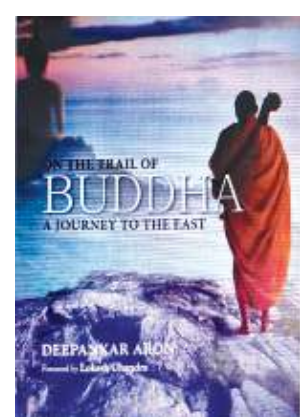
Deepankar writes about two octogenarian Japanese pilgrims who had stood with folded hands before an old and dilapidated structure that seemed to be 'sanctum sanctorum of a temple'. It was somewhat surprising that they should have travelled thousands of miles as pilgrims to a non-descript corner of China called Karakhoja. Even more surprising was the fact that one was a Buddhist priest and the other a worshipper of Lord Krishna - the Hindu Lord whose sacred message forms the essence of Bhagavad Gita.

"It is the story of these two unlikely Japanese pilgrims that epitomizes the theme of this Book - exploring the richness, depth and breadth of the spiritual, philosophical and cultural linkages that bind India to the East Asian civilizations of China, Japan, Korea and Mongolia," writes Deepankar.

The Book straddles between the various regions of East Asia, from Kashgar in Xinjiang in the West to Koyasan in Japan in the East; from Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia in the North and to Kaohsiung in Taiwan in the South. It is as much about the discovery of a tremendous unity in diversity, as it is about hopping between different time zones separated by 2000 years of history.

SIX CHAPTERS IN THE BOOK

THE BOOK is divided into six chapters for ease of navigation. The first covers the ancient cities along the Silk Road in China that were significantly responsible for the spread of Buddhism from India not only into China but also in much of the East Asia. The second covers the North-South trade axis that connects China with Mongolia. The third one moves from Sichuan in South-Western China to the primordial Kailash Parvat or Kang Rinpoche and the lake, Mansarovar or Mapham Yumtso in Tibet. The fourth moves to the South-Eastern coastal China and Taiwan from Hong Kong to



Title: On the Trail of BUDDHA: A Journey to the East
Author: Deepankar Aron
Pages: 308
Publisher: NIYOGI BOOKS
Cover Price: ₹1995/-

Shanghai touching Hangzhou, Suzhou and Nanjing. It then moves from Taipei to Kaohsiung passing through the city of Tainan, dotted with temples. It is possibly one of the most prosperous regions of China with many modern cities. It is thus not a surprise that most of the grandest and tallest statues of Buddha have come up there in the recent past. The fifth one meanders inside the calmness of Korea, and last but not the least comes the land

of the Rising Sun - a place where history, tradition, religion and culture are seen most beautifully preserved. The author also highlights five to 10 representative cities in each of these regions.

Writing a book of such magnitude was not an easy task. Initially the author did not undertake all those journeys with the object of writing a book. However, "a propitious chain of circumstances, made the way from one place to another starting with the longest pilgrimage in the world - KAILASH." He faced numerous challenges such as language, distances, permissions, paucity of time, and resources of course, but luckily all those were sorted out. Interestingly, these journeys were undertaken in all modes of transportation - both animal and mechanized - riding camels, mules and horses; walking and trekking, especially in Tibet. The most exciting of the travelling modes for Deepankar was the high speed trains in Japan, China and Taiwan.

JOURNEY ON SLOW MOVING TRAIN RATHER A BULLET TRAIN

EMINENT Indian Vedic scholar Prof. Lokesh Chandra is all ecstatic about Deepankar Aron's book "On the Trail of BUDDHA: A Journey to the East". "The Book is fascinating in its flowing diction and minimum of technical details. It celebrates the last two millennia when

the Asian Nations together made the journey of the Mind, serene depths of thought, art, piety confluence in the rapture of the roots," Chandra writes in his Foreword. "The living monasteries in East Asia and the desolation of the ruins in Central Asia due to theistic violence become the fascination of eyes in the evocative narrative of Deepankar. He opens up the immensity of our lost heritage, like the grandeur of Colossi in the Yun-Kang caves that are visive symbols of the majesty of the Avatamsaka tradition, reminiscent of the Bamiyan Buddhas," Prof. Chandra adds.

On the Trail of BUDDHA: A Journey to the East takes the reader on a slow-moving train journey rather a Bullet train. The author has chronicled the spread of Buddhism, as preserved in the traditions of these countries, binding them with India. Though somewhat smaller in size than the standard Coffee Table Book, On the Trail of BUDDHA with its 308 pages illustrated with bountiful photographs indicative of Deepankar's expertise with camera and printed on art paper provides an easy read.

The reviewer is the Commissioner, Goods & Services Tax in Uttarakhand. He is an intrepid traveller, ace photographer and a prolific writer. He has also received the Presidential Award for his distinguished contributions as an Indian Revenue Service officer.



The art of job-hunting

"JOB SEARCH SECRETS – Master the art of getting the job" co-authored by SUBIR VERMA and SAGARIKA SAHU VERMA has come at the right time as the issue of unemployment has begun to make headlines in the country. Subir works as Chief Human Resource at Tata Power DDL, and Sagarika Sahu Verma is a CEO of an edutech company.

Review by
DEEPAK KUMAR JHA

This book is an effort to bring all aspects of job search to one place with various supporting tools to provide complete theory and practice to master the art of searching for a job. Free tools shared in the book can give results in the shortest possible time.

Starting from how to choose the right career, the book covers how to find a hidden job, how to find people who can help in finding job and build long-time relationships with them, what to do to crack campus, virtual and other interviews, salary negotiation, and using social media for the job hunt.

Each chapter has practical tips with examples of real students and job aspirants for each one to relate to and use. For each of the areas, free tools exercise has been recommended which anyone can use without any cost seating at home. There is a general perception that you need to relocate to bigger cities to get a job. What about those who cannot relocate themselves? The book has the answer to many such issues faced by candidates and offers solutions.

"Use of social media and job portal to find a job and also use them in such way that one can easily get a job of his/her choice has been lucidly explained in the book," says Dr Sagarika.

"Not only what one needs to do, but how to do it, sample script, how to practice and implement are



Title: Job Search Secrets – Master the art of getting the job
Authors: Subir Verma and Sagarika Sahu Verma
Publisher: PENGUIN INDIA
Price: ₹250/-

what has been shared in details in very simple and easy to understand language", adds Dr Sagarika.

Job seekers have qualifications, skill but they are not effectively use them during their job search and interview, she said.

The book talks about the problem of largescale unemployment. India has over five crores of educated unemployed youth. Every year more than 50 lacs of educated youth gets added into the list. Educated youth is frustrated, dejected, and is losing hope. Even professionally qualified youth who have engineering, management, and graduate

degrees are not getting job. The situation is so grim that highly educated people are taking up odd jobs.

On the other hand, companies always complain that they are not getting the "right talent". They have vacancies but are not able to hire. When there are crores of educated youth are available, why companies are not able to hire them? Where is the gap? Companies have the resources to hire talent. But crores of youth need help to find employment. The biggest gap is that job seekers search jobs based on what they need rather than what companies want.

"I feel sad when I read in the newspaper that for one vacancy for the post of peon, thousands of people, including highly educated with MBA and Ph.D. degrees as well as engineers, apply. We thought to find a way to help such youth to make them know how they can find a job. This book is an effort to help these educated unemployed youth", Subir told the Pioneer.

Not all jobs are advertised. In fact, more than 50% of jobs are not advertised by companies and they recruit through other channels. Now, students or job seekers are missing half of the available job if they do not know how to reach them.

The book has received excellent responses from not only students, job seekers, and working professionals but also industry senior professionals.

The Reviewer is Special Correspondent of The Pioneer

Failure is a great
teacher and, if you
are open to it, every
mistake has a
lesson to offer
—Oprah Winfrey



Thousand Pillar Temple, Warangal

RELIGIOUS INTERACTIONS — A REAPPRAISAL

As Indians, we must take pride in being a Secular nation and as citizens promote an environment devoid of religious antagonism for the greater good of humanity, writes SUSAN MISHRA

As we stand in the 21st century and witness bitter inter-religion intolerance, a peek into the past is imperative to understand the present. There are numerous instances from the medieval to the modern era in the south, north, and eastern India where Hindu and Muslim communities lived side by side without a feeling of animosity and antagonism. In Malabar, Islam probably arrived in the 7th century CE along with the Arab traders, and by the 12th century CE, a strong Muslim community existed here. The Zamorins were Hindu rulers of the Kingdom of Calicut (now Kozhikode). They maintained elaborate trade relations with the Muslim Middle-Eastern sailors in the Indian Ocean as Calicut was then an important trading entrepôt on the western seaboard of India. Under the Zamorins, the Muslims enjoyed many commercial, political and religious privileges. The very fact that Zamorin rejected Vasco da Gama's request to banish all Muslims from his kingdom clearly speaks of the significance accorded to Muslims in a Hindu kingdom. In fact, it is the Portuguese who became the common enemy of the Muslims and the Zamorin. The latter received full support from their Muslim populace in terms of mobilization of manpower, resources, and funding of wars against the Portuguese. The Muchundi and Mishkal mosques in Kozhikode are living examples of assistance provided by the Hindu Zamorin rulers to their Muslim community. The 13th century CE inscription in Muchundi mosque in Kuttichira, Kozhikode records the establishment of the mosque by certain Shahab al-din Raihan, and the Zamorin ruler granted some land to it for certain daily expenses incurred at the mosque. The Mishkal mosque is also located in Kuttichira, Kozhikode, and was built by a merchant ship owner in the 14th century CE. This mosque was attacked, destroyed and burnt in 1510 by the Portuguese. The Zamorin was furious at seeing the devastation of the city and the destruction of the mosque. The combined efforts and firm determination by the Nairs and Muslims shattered the dreams of the early colonizers in Malabar. Post the victory of the Zamorin in the battle of Chaliyam, the ruler supported the restoration and reconstruction of the Mishkal mosque. It is believed that the stones and the wood from the Chaliyam fort were carried and placed in the yard at Mishkal to be used in the reconstruction of the mosque. The Khasi Foundation of Kuttichira commemorated 500 years of the grand gesture of the religious harmony of the times by honoring the Zamorin. In remembrance of the great harmony between the two communities and for thanking the 'Zamorin King' for his solidarity with the Muslims, the representatives of the Khasi Foundation visited the residence of the current descendants of the erstwhile Zamorin kings and presented him a painting of the Mishkal Mosque. Turning the focus on 21st century Kerala, at Ponnani a 16th century CE mosque, known as

Misri Palli preserves its original structure due to the efforts of a non-Muslim speaker and legislator. When the work of its demolition began for the purposes of constructing a new mosque, some people contacted P. Sreeramakrishnan, who rushed to the site and stopped the work. He called a meeting of the mosque committee and convinced its members not to dismantle it so that it is preserved under the Muziris- Ponnani heritage conservation project. Erumeli/ Erumeli in the Kottayam district of Kerala is a living example of how myths and legends can bind two religious communities and assimilate a mosque within an important Hindu religious pilgrimage. The Mosque here is dedicated to Vavar who is considered a companion of Lord Ayyappa. Every year multitudes of Hindu pilgrims worship at this mosque before they embark on the arduous trek to the holy shrine of Sabarimala Ayyappa Swami. There are many legends about Vavar and according to one, Vavar was an Arab commander who was defeated by Lord Ayyappa. Impressed by Vavar's valor, he became Ayyappa's close associate and aided him in the wars in the mountainous region. According to belief, Vavar protects devotees who make the difficult trek through the forests to the main temple at the top of the hill that houses the Sabarimala Temple. The Hindu Vijayanagara Empire's 14th century CE capital of Hampi and its monuments is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Legends and inscriptions speak of Hindu support to the Muslim populace of the kingdom. At Sindhaghatta in Mandya district of Karnataka, the Muslim community did not have a mosque and Babu setti, a local merchant, built a mosque to which the local officer Rangayya Nayaka gifted a village. What is of interest is that the mosque was not built at a site away from a Hindu settlement, but was located amidst villages granted as gifts to learned Brahmins. Legend has it that Babbaya, a Muslim Fakir, established himself at Penukonda and had a strong following. After the death of the fakir, a dargah was erected, and the grant of Venkata II records the restoration of certain villages originally granted by Vira Narasingha Raya, Sadashiva, and Venkata I, to the dargah of Babayya in Penukonda. Mangammal, a Hindu Nayaka queen made a gift of some villages in 1701-02 CE in Tiruchirappalli to the dargah of Babanatta. The other contemporaneous dynasty ruling at Deccan was the Muslim Adil Shahis of Bijapur (1489 to 1686). A Farman of Muhammad Adil Shah dated to 1653 CE records a grant made by the ruler to Namdev Vitthal, a Brahmin from Mubarakabad. Namdev was the head of Joshis and had approached the ruler for royal favours and the Sultan obliged by granting land at various localities. He also received a tanka (gold coin) from highway and food grains and was also exempt from payment of taxes. Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580 CE to 1627 CE) was a great patron of music and is credited with the composition of the book Kitab i Nauras a book of couplets and verses dedicated to Hindu

IBRAHIM ADIL SHAH II (1580 CE TO 1627 CE) WAS A GREAT PATRON OF MUSIC AND IS CREDITED WITH THE COMPOSITION OF KITAB I NAURAS, A BOOK OF COUPLETS AND VERSES DEDICATED TO HINDU DEITIES AND MUSLIM SAINTS. WHAT IS OF INTEREST IS THAT MOST ARE DEDICATED TO SARASWATI, GANESH, AND OTHER HINDU DEITIES. THE TEXT BEGINS WITH AN INVOCATION TO GODDESS SARASWATI FOR HER BLESSINGS AND FAVOURS. DESCRIPTIONS OF LORD GANESH AND LORD SHIVA HAVE BEEN BEAUTIFULLY DESCRIBED BY THE SULTAN IN HIS COMPOSITIONS



Hanumangarhi Temple, Ayodhya

deities and Muslim saints. What is of interest is that most are dedicated to Saraswati, Ganesh and other Hindu deities. The text begins with an invocation to Goddess Saraswati for her blessings and favors. Descriptions of Lord Ganesh and Lord Shiva have been beautifully described by the Sultan in his compositions. In the modern epoch of South India, the seventh Nizam of Hyderabad- Mir Osman Ali Khan (ruled from 1911-1948) deserves special mention. He had a liberal outlook toward religion and provided financial assistance and donations to temples and Brahmins in his kingdom. Mir Osman Ali Khan tended to the repair, and maintenance of the conservation of the Thousand Pillar Temple at Warangal. The Nizam also donated liberally donated to various temples in his dominions. Turning towards the region of eastern India, in Orissa Salabega occupies a permanent position among the devotional poets of Odisha. He lived in the first half of the 17th century and was the son of the Mughal Subedar. According to folklore, he was held up on his way while returning from Vrindavan to Jagannatha and he prayed earnestly to the Lord to wait for him on the Nandighosha chariot so that he could see his Lord. The Lord waited there and gave darshan to Salabega, his dear devotee on the Bada Danda, near Balagandi. An ardent devotee of Shri Krishna and Jagannath, Salabega devoted his life to composing bhajans, hymns, and devotional songs in praise of the Shri Jagannath and Radha Krishna. In Ahom kingdom, the Muslim populace was well assimilated into the Assamese society and the army included many Muslim soldiers and officers who fought against the Mughals. Ismail Siddique, popularly known as Bagh

Hazarika played a significant role in the Battle of Saraighat in 1671. An inscription of Ahom king Lakshmi Singha issued around 1780 CE records a grant in favour of Hazi Anwar Fakir. Ahom king Kamaleswar Singha reconfirmed all earlier grants made by the Mughal and Ahom rulers in favour of Khadim of Hajo Dargah. In the context of north India, in the erstwhile region of Awadh, in 1855 at the Hanumangarhi temple at Ayodhya conflict arose between the Hindus and the Muslims. Wajid Ali Shah is said to have appointed a Committee to investigate the matter, and the decision went in favour of the Hindus. On learning about an imminent attack on the temple, Wajid Ali Shah ordered a regiment to guard the temple. Other instances include the 250-year-old Hanuman temple of Lucknow which is believed to have been constructed by Nawab Asaf-ud-Daula's mother Alia Begum. The mosque, popularly called as Padain Masjid in Aminabad was built by Rani Jai Kunwar Pandey, a Brahmin as a gift to her close friend - the Begum of Nawab Saadat Ali Khan. When we try to look at the past from a 21st-century lens, we will inevitably see Hindus and Muslims as polar opposites. While there are challenges in Hindu-Muslim relations, it would be naive to dismiss the relative social harmony in which the two communities have coexisted in India. As Indians, we must take pride in being a Secular nation and as citizens promote an environment devoid of religious antagonism for the greater good of humanity. (The writer is a research scholar and recipient of the Devangana Desai senior Fellowship CSMVS Mumbai. She is also the author of two books

Indo-Pacific Eco Framework: Concept to strategy

The genesis of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework can be traced to October 2021, during the East Asia Summit held virtually. At the East Asia Summit, the US President enunciated his plans to unveil a US-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF).

Following the initial announcement, the Biden administration released an Indo-Pacific Strategy in February 2022, which saw a formal iteration of the IPEF. As such, it bears no surprise to see US President Joe Biden officially launched the IPEF on May 23, 2022, in Tokyo before the QUAD leaders' Summit.

In addition to the four Quad members, leaders from 9 other nations namely Brunei, Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam participated virtually. These countries became the founding members of the IPEF initiative making a "baker's dozen". Out of the thirteen participating countries in the IPEF, seven are also part of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, three ASEAN countries — Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar — have refrained from participating in the IPEF.

The partial overlap of the IPEF with ASEAN reflects that the economic strategy has factored in China. The seven countries in IPEF which have overlapping membership with the ASEAN will help the US and its Quad partners to further consolidate the "ASEAN centrality" principle of the Indo-Pacific strategy.

Both Laos and Cambodia have perhaps been left out due to their proximity to Beijing, while Myanmar has paid the price for a non-democratic political functioning that continues in the country since the military junta grabbed power. That creating competitive structures against China lies at the heart of the IPEF has become clearer with the engagement of Taiwan in a similar bilateral engagement, albeit outside the IPEF.

In many ways, the IPEF is an offshoot of the re-invigorated America's "Pivot to Asia"



strategy launched in 2011 during the Obama administration. The strategy aimed to relocate the strategic focus of the US from West Asia to the Pacific theatre, primarily because of the competition and threats it faces from China. Besides, it also sought to advance the US' economic and geopolitical interests through wider engagements with the Asia-Pacific region.

The two important constituents of this strategy were the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor. However, the US' withdrawal from the

TPP during the presidency of Donald Trump in 2017 deteriorated the progress made in terms of coalition-building and intensification of geopolitical and geo-economic ties with allies in the Indo-Pacific region.

The "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" strategy released in 2019 during the Trump administration gathered inimical reactions from the allies and partners in the region. It was perceived as a confrontational narrative rather than a regional strategy.

Therefore, the return of a new collective strategy by the US to collectively compete

with China, at a time when the US dominance on the trade and investment is facing intense competition from Beijing in the region, may be a timely and well-calibrated step to instil fair and principled regional competition which is consistent with climate goals and predictable supply chains. China is the leading trade partner of almost all the IPEF member countries. As such, the IPEF initiative outlines the underlying thrust in building partner coalitions, developing a collective response and preventing the growing Chinese influence in the region.

Broadly, the evolving predicament within the IPEF countries is China using its economic heavyweight for achieving its security and diplomatic goals. The IPEF could present an opportunity for like-minded countries of the Quad to find new and reliable alternatives to their current dependencies on China, especially in trade related infrastructure and supply chains. In particular, for India, which is not part of the China-led Regional Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP) trade agreement, the IPEF might emerge as a more reliable and

credible alternative in creating alternate mechanisms in the Indo-Pacific. India's own FTA being negotiated with ASEAN could be consistent with some of the objectives of the IPEF.

Much of how the IPEF will unravel remains to be seen. The IPEF countries that are already part of some sort of Free Trade Agreements such as CPTPP and RCEP would require "substantial incentives" from the US to diversify their ties from any such already existing arrangements in the region.

Also, the four focus areas of the IPEF: trade, supply chains, clean energy, decar-

bonisation and infrastructure; tax and anti-corruption need to be implemented and assessed. While executing these focus areas, climate, labour and data localisation standards in the IPEF countries (which are not as per the US standards) might turn out to be prominent irritants.

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For India, which is not part of the China-led Regional Comprehensive Partnership (RCEP) trade agreement, the IPEF might emerge as a more reliable and credible alternative in creating alternate mechanisms in the Indo-Pacific



VIVEK MISHRA



MRITYUNJAYA DUBEY

PERSPECTIVE

Hate speeches malign the idea of India

It is high time the Government cracked down on all fringe elements and renewed its focus on 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas'

The contemptuous and abominable remarks of the BJP leaders on Prophet Muhammad unleashed strong reactions not only in India but also in the Islamic countries, including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Iran, etc, resulting in calls to ban Indian products.

Though the BJP has strongly denounced the remarks and said that insult to any religious personalities is not permissible, and immediately suspended its leaders from the party's membership for not toeing the official line on sensitive matters, it has become an international issue in no time. However, for consolation, the action taken by the BJP has been welcomed by many Muslim countries.

Provocative speeches are not a new phenomenon in India, irrespective of whether it is Congress regimes or the BJP's. However, the intensity of such communal sledging from both sides has increased during the BJP's regime.

Why did it happen?

The role of the mainstream and social media has been questionable over the last few years as they have often been found adding fuel to the fire. India's splendid past is full of glory and wonders. History develops the ability to avoid mistakes and create better paths for societies. Nevertheless, some of the media houses delve into the history and spoil all its might to prove that rottenness is actually producing high quality of fragrance. The uproar on TV channels on religious lines has mostly been provocative and derogatory. Allowing fringe elements to dis-

respect religions and make controversial statements on TV shows with impunity put the anchor's role in question.

The 200 million Indian Muslims who have been living here have opted to live in India in the hope that this country will give them more respect and freedom than the neighbouring Muslim countries. Then the moot point is what purpose the provocative speeches serve.

Although there are some differences between the Muslim aspira-

tions and the BJP's ideology, but these are ideological which is permissible in a healthy democracy. The nation is already facing numerous problems, people themselves are fighting against poverty, environmental degradation, joblessness and various health problems, but some media houses for their vested interest, instead of raising the genuine issues, have deliberately been dividing and creating gulf in society in the name of religion, and this is the greatest obstacle in the way of development.

Possible trade threats

India's overall economy during Mughals was several times more than many European countries which attracted many Europeans to India. It is believed that the only reason of this richness and prosperity was peace and tranquility. However, economic destruction began during the British rule. They divided people along religious lines in order to loot India's resources. People were dying in starvation but the British were busy draining the wealth of India.



An artisan prepares eco-friendly idols of god Ganesha for Ganesh Chaturthi festival in Hyderabad on Saturday

History is evident that peace, brotherhood and justice bring prosperity and development, and on the contrary hatred ruins and destroys nations. Therefore, it is required that the Government crack down on fringe elements and renew its focus on 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas'.

The recent reactions from Muslim countries will further damage the Indian economy if no quick remedial action is taken. As per media reports, the Gulf countries account for almost one fifth of India's total trade. For instance, in the year 2020-21 the total value of the goods imported from the GCC countries was worth \$110.73 billion. India imports 40 per cent of crude oil, 18 per cent of petroleum gas and 8 per cent of diamond from the Gulf countries, while it exports 14 per cent of refined petroleum, 8 per cent of jewellery and 7 per cent of rice. In other words, India imports 72 per cent worth \$111 billion and exports 28 per cent worth \$44 billion.

It is noteworthy that the UAE and Saudi Arabia are the third and fourth biggest trade partners of India. The UAE alone is accounted for 6.6 per cent of India's total export, and 7.3 per cent of imports last year touched about \$73 billion. Saudi Arabia on the other hand is accounted for almost 80 per cent of import worth \$34.1 billion and 20 per cent of export worth \$8.75 billion. Other GCC countries trade volumes are: Iraq 34.3 per cent, Qatar 15 per cent, Kuwait 12.2 per cent, Oman 10 per cent and Bahrain 1.7 per cent.

Gulf countries are well known to

be the second home of almost 10 million Indians making it the largest Indian diaspora across the globe and contributing immensely in the foreign reserves of India.

As a matter of fact, India is the largest recipient of the foreign remittances. As per last year's World Bank report, India received \$87 billion foreign remittances in 2021, half of these foreign remittances was sent from just five Gulf countries i.e., UAE 26.9 per cent, Saudi 11.6 per cent, Qatar 6.5 per cent, Kuwait 5.5 per cent and Oman 3 per cent. In view of the emerging trade and cultural ties between India and the Arab world, it shall be disastrous if the differences aggravate further and no remedial and timely actions taken.

It's a well-known fact that India and Arab world have very strong trade and cultural relations for centuries. They believe in coexistence and mutual cooperation. It is the responsibility of the Government of the day to be accountable for both the successes and failures. Hence it is high time for India to work on the immediate corrective measures both internally and externally to fight the true evil of the society i.e hatred, poverty, unemployment, etc, and have proper control on the fringe elements and the media houses that are trying to divide and damage the true spirit of India.

(The author teaches at King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, KSA. He is founding Chairman of Indo-Arab Helping Hands and the International Adviser to Millennial India International Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture.)



ASIF RAMEEZ DAUDI





Throwback to a golden period

"A picture speaks a thousand words," goes a maxim. Although mobile phones have made photography a click away on one's palm and that too in true-to-life colours, there is nothing to match a black-and-white photograph in terms of its fidelity to detail. Yesteryear photographers who had struggled for hours in dark rooms to get the right shade of light on the photographic paper will vouch for this. Delhi-based PHOTOINK recently organised an exhibition that threw the spotlight on time-honoured tradition of street photography. A collection of 23 photographs, the black and white streetscapes were shot by Ketaki Sheth, Pablo Bartholomew, Raghu Rai and Sooni Taraporevala, among the country's most celebrated photographers. The stunning photographs, spanning between 1970 and 2000, reflect the golden period of street photography in India. The Pioneer presents the choicest ones among them.



Two men, old Delhi, 1970



Women of Kamathipura red light district, Bombay (now Mumbai), 1987



Cart pusher, Delhi, 1979, Raghu Rai



Siesta for taxi drivers, Kolkata, 1990



Family on a scooter, Bombay, 1976

Mother and child at Mt Mary Fair, Bandra, Mumbai, 2002.

To some defenders, gun ruling could right a racial wrong



envision more arguments turning into deadly confrontations at a time when the nation is already beset by gun violence.

Some civil rights leaders agree. The Rev. Al Sharpton called the Supreme Court ruling devastating, and the National Urban League and the NAACP Legal Defense Fund said it was particularly so for Black people.

In a friend-of-the-court brief, the two groups pointed to statistics showing that Black Americans, particularly Black male teens and young men, die from gunfire at a higher rate than do whites or the general population.

If the Supreme Court actively were seeking out a way to make the nation more volatile and dangerous, it could not have devised a more damaging scenario, league President Marc Morial said after the ruling.

But attorneys from nearly a dozen New York public defender agencies and organizations cited other statistics.

Black people faced 78% of felony gun possession charges in the state last year, while making up 18% of its population compared to 7% of prosecutions and 70% of the population for non-Hispanic whites, the defenders said in their own friend-of-the-court brief. Over 90% of people arrested in New York City on charges of possessing a loaded firearm are Black and/or Latino, according to the filing, although non-Hispanic whites comprise nearly 1/3 of the city population.

The defenders argue that the numbers are rooted in a history of racist anxieties about racial and ethnic minorities having firearms and are furthered by an expensive and onerous discretionary licensing process.

According to New York Police Department statistics, about 3,500 civilians in the city of 8.5 million have business carry licenses, and another 2,000 guards have permits to carry guns while working. About 15,000 retired law enforcement officers have a type of license that's specific to them. The department didn't provide a breakdown of licensees by race.

While white people throughout the nation amass firearm arsenals even as hobbies, Black and Latinx New Yorkers are arrested, prosecuted and imprisoned for simply possessing a single pistol for self-defense, several of the brief's authors wrote in an October article on Scotusblog, a legal news site. One defendant was a working father and college student who carried a gun to a neighborhood where he'd been slashed in the face; he ended up serving eight months in jail and dropping out of college, according to the defenders. Another man contracted COVID-19 and died last fall while jailed on 100,000 bail in a case alleging he had a gun in his car, which he denied.

Religious Americans are deeply divided in their views on abortion, and reactions from faith leaders ranged from elation to anger after the US Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade, the landmark 1973 decision that made abortion legal nationwide.

The ruling issued Friday was hailed by leading Catholic bishops, even though a majority of US Catholics support abortion rights. I recognise there are people on both sides of the question in the Catholic Church, said Baltimore Archbishop William Lori, who chairs the US Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities. What we are finding though is that when people become more aware of what the church is doing to assist women in difficult pregnancies hearts and minds begin to change.

The ruling also was welcomed by many evangelical Christian leaders, including Bart Barber, newly elected president of the the Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant denomination. Southern Baptists rejoice at the ruling, he said.



From joy to anger, faith leaders react to Roe's reversal

However, the decision expected to lead to sweeping abortion bans in more than 20 states was decried by some mainline Protestant leaders, including Michael Curry, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. I am deeply grieved, he said. Several Jewish organisations said the decision infringes on Jewish traditions that accept the need for abortion. Nadiah Mohajir, co-founder of Heart Women and Girls, a Chicago nonprofit that works with Muslim communities on reproductive rights, expressed dismay: More than half of American Muslims support safe access to abortion. What we're seeing here is a very small minority of privileged people who are trying to impose a narrow Christian understanding of when life begins. Here are some more reactions from faith leaders:

The release of the Dobbs decision marks a true turning point in the pro-life movement, a moment that Christians, advocates and many others have worked toward tirelessly for 50 years. ... As this chapter comes to a close, we must understand this is not the end of our important work.

The issue of abortion has now been turned over to the states, many of which have either imple-

mented or are considering some of the most abhorrently permissive pro-abortion proposals ever. Brent Leatherwood, acting president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, in a statement.

Today's Supreme Court decision ... discarding nearly 50 years of precedent, will endanger the lives and well-being of birthing people who do not choose to continue pregnancy. God loves and cares for people who have abortions, and so does the United Church of Christ. General ministers of the United Church of Christ, in a joint statement.

Abortion bans place greater value on the life of the fetus than on the pregnant person, a violation of both Jewish law and tradition and of American religious liberty. Now, it seems only certain people are entitled to religious liberty, which renders the entire concept meaningless. Sheila Katz, CEO of the National Council of Jewish Women, in a statement.

This is a historic day in the life of our country, one that stirs our thoughts, emotions and prayers. For nearly fifty years, America has enforced an unjust law that has permitted some to decide whether others can live or die; this policy has resulted in the deaths of tens of millions of preborn children.