

ANALYSIS 7
CONTROL MINDSET HURTS
PRIVATISATION PROCESS**MONEY 8**
GOVT WILL REMOVE BARRIERS IN
CREDIT FLOW TO MSMEs: VERMA**SPORTS 11**
STOKES' ENG SET
SIGHTS ON INDIA

VIJAYAWADA, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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'WANTED TO MAKE
A FUN MOVIE'

Page 12

**LOK ADALAT REUNITES COUPLE AFTER
50 YEARS, SETTLES 7.65 LAKH CASES**

A record 7,65,077 cases were settled in the Lok Adalats held across courts in the state, the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA) has said in a statement. The National Lok Adalat was conducted on June 25 in 20 benches of the High Court and 964 benches of the District Judiciary. These include the disposal of 2,64,464 pending cases and 5,00,613 pre-litigation cases. The highest single day disposal of cases by Lok Adalats was 6,16,715 on October 8, 2016. Among the success stories in the recent Lok Adalats was the reconciliation of a couple who were living separately for 50 years.

**G-7 PLEDGES \$4.5BN
TO TACKLE FOOD INSECURITY**

Group of Seven leaders have agreed to spend 4.5 billion on addressing food security issues around the globe exacerbated by rising grain and food costs following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The White House said Tuesday that the United States is pitching in 2.76 billion toward the effort. The funding will be used to assist 47 countries and regional organizations dealing with food insecurity and malnutrition. The White House says the most immediate needs are in the Horn of Africa, where the Russian blockade of grain from Ukraine has worsened an already desperate situation.

**DOG ENTERS HOSPITAL
IN PANIPAT, KILLS NEWBORN**

A stray dog entered a private hospital in Haryana's Panipat and mauled to death a newborn after dragging him out, police said on Tuesday. The incident took place on the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday when the two-day-old boy was sleeping next to his grandmother on the floor, they said. According to police, no one noticed the dog entering the hospital. Station House Officer (SHO), Sector 13-17 police station, Inspector Vijay Kumar said, "The dog entered the hospital, picked up the newborn sleeping on the floor with his grandmother with his mouth and took him out."

**SHOWING MORE EMOTIONS AT WORK
BOOSTS PRODUCTIVITY: REPORT**

Majority of employees feel that showing more emotions at work makes them more productive and boosts their sense of belonging, according to a report by professional networking site LinkedIn. More than 3 in 4 (76 per cent) professionals in India feel more comfortable expressing their emotions at work post-pandemic, the report, based on a survey conducted among 2,188 professionals in India between May 25-31, said. As per the report, almost 9 in 10 (87 per cent) of the employees interviewed agreed that showing more emotions at work makes them more productive and boosts feelings of belonging.

CM takes stock of 'Nadu-Nedu'**Tab for Class 8 students in September**

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy held a review meeting on the progress of 'Nadu-Nedu' works in schools and digital learning at camp office here on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Chief Minister said tabs will be distributed to Class 8 students in September and directed the officials to ensure Byju's content is uploaded in them and added that they should have appropriate specifications and features.

He instructed the officials to ensure quality and durability while tenders are being called for their procurement.

The Chief Minister said the

tabs being given to Class 8 students should be useful to them for next two years.

He said the maintenance of these tabs is very important and instructed the officials to focus on repairing them immediately in case of any problem.

He said to consider best companies for the procurement of tabs and directed the officials to ensure they are delivered to students in stipulated time.

The Chief Minister said to set up digital boards and TVs in classrooms and directed the officials to prepare an action plan in this regard.

2

Village clinics to be upgraded as referral centres

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy held a review meeting on Aarogya and 'Nadu-Nedu' in Medical and Health sector at the camp office here on Tuesday and directed the officials to strengthen Aarogya making it transparent and free from irregularities. During the review, he emphasised on reinforcing patient referral procedure under Aarogya and instructed the authorities to make village clinics as referral centres with continuous monitoring along with proper display of details. He said that a letter should be given to the beneficiaries on availing the scheme, mentioning the benefit received along with a confirmation? document with details of Aarogya Aasara. The officials were told to continue the DBT method for crediting Aarogya Aasara amount into the beneficiaries account.

Further, the Chief Minister advised the officials to open special accounts for Aarogya beneficiaries to directly credit the money provided under the scheme and then get transferred to the hospitals that treated them. In this regard, he asked the authorities to take a consent form the patient, clearly explaining to them that they can use it without any doubts or panic regarding their personal information. He said that transparency, accountability comes with such policies, where the beneficiaries can avail medical services at free of cost without any additional burden on the patient.

The Chief Minister said that Aarogya Mitras need to be more proactive, and stated that strict action must be taken if anyone demands additional money apart from what the government is spending towards patient treatment.

2

Top Maoist Vanthala Ramakrishna held**■ He was involved in killing of Araku MLA Kidari & ex-MLA Siviri Soma**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a prized catch, Vizag police arrested top gun Maoist, Pedabayalu-Korukonda Area Committee Secretary (ACS) Vanthala Ramakrishna alias Prabhakar was arrested by Pedabayalu police while he was proceeding from Kondrum to Injari of Pedabayalu, in Alluri Sitharamaraju district on Tuesday. He was involved in the sensational killing of the then Araku MLA, Kidari Sarveswara Rao and former MLA Siviri Soma. He was also involved in more than 124 different incidents from the exchange of fire, land mine blasts and also killings both in Odisha and Andhra Odisha Border (AOB) region.

After the arrest of Ramakrishna's supporters who worked under his supervision, 33 party members and 27 militia members including eight women, surrendered before Vizag range DIG S Harikrishna, and district SP S Sathish Kumar.

2

**60 Maoist Dalam members give up**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

After the arrest of Pedabayalu-Korukonda Area Committee Secretary (ACS) Vanthala Ramakrishna alias Prabhakar, his supporters who had worked under his supervision, 33 party members and 27 militia members, including eight

women, surrendered before Vizag range DIG S Harikrishna, and district SP S Sathish Kumar on Tuesday. They belonged to the interior and Maoist-affected tribal villages Kondrum, Thagupadu, Jumadam, Nanubari and Jadiguda.

2

**US' FDA exposed
drug fraud by
Jagan benami: TDP**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

TDP national official spokesman Kommareddy Pattabhi Ram on Tuesday slammed Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy for committing frauds even in life-saving medicinal drugs of the people.

Pattabhi Ram said that the latest reports revealed how the spurious medicine fraud of Jagan Mohan Reddy's benami company Aurobindo Pharma was exposed by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Addressing a press conference here, the TDP leader said that in its warning letter dated January 12, 2022, the FDA had taken serious objection to Aurobindo not making risk-free medicines. It was evident now that Jagan Reddy, who was squeezing money through his sand, liquor, and mining mafia, was also playing games with people's lives through his benami company, Aurobindo.

Pattabhi said that the FDA was a US Government's world renowned authority and it had made sensational revelations on the medicine fraud in Aurobindo. Incidentally, Aurobindo Pharma Chairman and Managing Director Ram Prasad Reddy was a close confidant of Jagan Reddy and he was also co-father-in-law of Vijay Sai Reddy.

2

**ABV suspended again for
'influencing' witnesses**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The State government again suspended senior IPS officer AB Venkateswara Rao on Tuesday. He was given a posting only recently following a direction from the Supreme Court.

Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma has issued an order suspending Venkateswara Rao citing that the government had noticed the senior IPS officer after getting posted was trying to influence witnesses in a criminal trial related to an alleged illegal purchase of certain equipment when he was State intelligence chief.

Tuesday's order also said that as his dismissal from services is already recommended his continued posting is likely to embarrass him in the discharge of his duties.



2

Pawan to launch 'Jana Vani' in city on July 3

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Jana Sena Party (JSP) is going to launch a new programme "Jana Vani" to provide a platform for the common men to point out the failures of the government and raise their voices on their grievances. The 'Jana Vani' programme will be held in Vijayawada on July 3.

Informing this in a statement here on



Tuesday, Jana Sena Political Affairs Committee chairman Nadendra Manohar said that as part of the programme, JSP chief Pawan Kalyan would be available to the public directly for the next five Sundays and would personally receive applications from the affected people who are facing problems.

2

**Vijayasai urges Sansad TV
to shun Raghurama Raju**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) general secretary and Rajya Sabha member, V Vijayasai Reddy, wrote to the CEO of Sansad TV of Indian Parliament to disallow Narasapur MP, Kanumuru Raghurama Krishna Raju from representing the party in the panel discussion.

In the letter, Vijayasai Reddy said he had observed that Raghurama Krishna Raju, participated in some of the shows telecast on Sansad TV as a member of the YSRCP.

"I would like to clarify that Raghurama Krishna Raju, does not represent the views of the YSR Congress Party or that of the Andhra Pradesh government in any manner whatsoever. He has a disqualification petition pending against him with the Speaker of Lok Sabha under the anti-defection law and therefore his views lack credibility and are biased. In light of the same, I would request that for the upcoming monsoon session of the Parliament and thereafter for the entire tenure of the 17th Lok Sabha, you may kindly actively disallow Raghurama Krishna Raju from participating in the telecasts of Sansad TV," Vijayasai Reddy said in the letter.

2

**Chiranjeevi gets invitation
for PM's function in AP**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Union Minister of Culture, Tourism and Development of North Eastern Region, G. Kishan Reddy, invited Chiranjeevi to Prime Minister Modi's programme on July 4 in Andhra Pradesh.

MINOR IAS RESHUFFLE**Katamaneni appointed Director of
Mission Clean K-Godavari Canals**

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The State government on Tuesday issued orders transferring a few All India Service (AIS) officers.

Transport Commissioner Bhaskar Katamaneni, is transferred and posted as Director, Mission Clean Krishna Godavari Canals. P Raja Babu, Special Officer, MIG & M.D., APUFIDC is placed in Full Additional Charge of the post of Commissioner, Transport, until further orders.

YVK Shanmukha Kumar, DFO, Nellore is transferred and his services are placed at the disposal of Revenue (Endowments) Department for posting as Chief Executive Officer, Sri Venkateswara Bhakti Channel.



Department and his services are placed at the disposal of Tribal Welfare Department for posting as Managing Director, Girijana Cooperative Corporation Limited.

B Sunil Kumar Reddy, Officer on Special Duty, Emerging Technologies Universities & Ex-Officio Deputy Secretary to Government, Information

Technology, Electronics & Communications Department is transferred and posted as Dy. CEO, APCF-SS.

He is also placed in Full Additional Charge of the post of Officer on Special Duty, Emerging Technologies Universities & Ex-Officio Deputy Secretary to Government, ITE&C Dept., until further orders.

B Sunil Kumar Reddy is relieved from Full Additional Charge of the post of Joint Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department. The Principal Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department, will make necessary in-charge arrangements to the post of Joint Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department.



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Month & Paksham:

Tithi: Amavasya: Jun 28 05:52 AM to Jun 29 08:22 AM

Sukla Paksha Pratipada: Jun 29 08:22 AM to Jun 30 10:49 AM

Nakshatram:

Ardra: Jun 28 07:05 PM to Jun 29 10:08 PM

Punarvasu: Jun 29 10:08 PM to Jul 01 01:07 AM

Rahukalam: 12:19 PM to 1:57 PM

Yamagandam: 7:26 AM to 9:04 AM

Variyam: 11:38 AM to 01:26 PM

Gulika: 10:41 AM to 12:19 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Scattered showers


Temp: 34°

Humidity: 74%

Sunrise: 5:38 AM

Sunset: 6:44 PM

Updated: JUNE 28, 2022 5:00 PM



Results of by-polls do not mirror real mood of people

Whatever be the reason necessitating by-polls, the ruling party will usually have the last laugh. If the ruling party gets one lakh plus majority of votes over its nearest rival, it might be seen as a comfortable win.

The case of the Atmakur Assembly segment that went to by-poll following the sudden death of the sitting legislator and a Minister in the Andhra Pradesh government is a bit peculiar.

These days, widows of deceased legislators are deemed to be political heirs. There have been many instances of opportunity being provided to the wives of deceased members in the Telugu states. On some occasions, sons and daughters are considered to be successors of departed leaders. After the sudden death of Mekapati Goutam Reddy (son of former MP M. Rajamohan Reddy),



PIN POINT

Chief Minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy, during his visit to the deceased members house, offered YSRC party ticket to the wife of Gowtham Reddy and assured her of a thumping victory. Both Jagan and his wife Bharati Reddy had jointly made this offer. But the family members of Gowtham Reddy had their way and chose to make the younger brother of Gowtham Reddy as YSRC candidate for the Atmakur by-poll.

The family members showed their aversion to the party falling back on their daughter-in-law for taking forward the legacy of the family. Normally, the Chief Minister's word is final in such matters. The Mekapati family succeeded in having their way in the selection of candidate for the Atmakur by-poll. All went well and the candidate emerged victorious with a

The case of the Atmakur Assembly segment that went to by-poll following the sudden death of the sitting legislator and a Minister in the Andhra Pradesh government is a bit peculiar. These days, widows of deceased legislators are deemed to be political heirs. There have been many instances of opportunity being provided to the wives of deceased members in the Telugu states

majority of 82,000 votes, though party leaders and cadre had been confident of getting a majority of one lakh votes.

The Atmakur bypoll was held without the participation of the principal opposition party on the understanding that, in the case of death of a Member of Legislative Assembly, the resultant by-polls should be held unopposed as per the 'custom' followed by political parties. Some say this practice only helps destroy the spirit of

democracy. The Telugu Desam Party showed its reluctance to participate in the Atmakur by-polls. But the Bharatiya Janata Party came forward to try its luck and lost its deposit. Losing deposit in any election is considered as the most humiliating defeat. Still, the BJP is crowing that it got a better tally of votes this time! The larger question is: What would have happened had TDP participated? In fact, the ruling YSRC did not get votes like on previous occasions. Polling



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

was peaceful and completed by 5.00 pm sharp. The outcome of this by-poll would have been seen as a precursor to YSRC retaining power in the 2024 General Election had the party won the seat by a majority of one lakh plus votes. The absence of TDP did not come in handy for the ruling party. Naturally the results of by-polls come in favour of the family of

deceased member. But on some rare occasions, there could be a tilt towards the Opposition. In March 1997, during the regime of N. Chandrababu Naidu in the combined state of Andhra Pradesh, Naidu's cabinet colleague Gottipati Hanumanta Rao, holding the Civil Supplies portfolio, died of illness. His son, G. Narasaiah, got elected from the Martur Assembly segment of Prakasam district, achieving one lakh plus majority. This victory had sent positive signals for the then government headed by Naidu.

The YSRC government is feeling the heat of its programme of bringing its achievements to every doorstep, with legislators being cornered by people over many grievances. Few members are exempted from this mass contact programme. This is causing a lot of uneasiness among leaders of the ruling party, some of whom are losing their

cool while facing irate members of the public. For example, a former minister (since dropped from the cabinet) recently reacted very seriously towards a youth for questioning him about the loans obtained by the AP government to the tune of Rs 8 lakh crores of rupees. The MLA issued a strong warning to that young man stating that it was unnecessary for the latter. He ordered the local inspector to file a criminal case against that youth for levelling corruption charges on him, after conducting an enquiry. This incident drew much criticism as questioning of the local MLA attracted such 'punishment' for a commoner. Pruning the list of beneficiaries of welfare schemes is also causing unrest among people.

Continuous rise in prices of essential commodities is becoming unbearable for the poor and the middle class people. The by-polls for two

Assembly segments of Kaikalur (Krishna district) and Kovur (Nellore district) in 1993 had created a sensation in the politics of AP in those days with the Congress as the ruling party. These by-polls had given signals to possible 'Tsumami' to be created by Telugu Desam Party in subsequent elections of 1994 in which then ruling Congress could not even get the status of principal opposition in the Assembly. The ruling YSRC, having expressed its resolve to be in power for 30 years, should have focused on getting majority of one lakh votes in Atmakur for sending positive signals to people. Now people excluded from the lists of lists of beneficiaries of various schemes are sore. About 51,000 mothers are unhappy at being excluded from the prestigious 'Amma Vodi' scheme. Such incidents will have a negative impact on the government in the days to come.

Kodali predicts Naidu's defeat in Kuppam in 2024 elections

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Former minister Kodali Sri Venkateswara Rao (Nani) has lashed out at all the opposition parties for spreading false propaganda against the 'Amma Vodi' scheme. Nani made a bold statement that in the 2024 elections, YSRC will defeat Chandrababu Naidu in the Kuppam constituency. The YSRC plenary was organised in Gudivada on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, Kodali Nani said that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is transforming government schools on par with corporate institutions across the State. Kodali asked, "Is there any chief minister in the country who has spent Rs 20,000 crore in three years on school development?"



Kodali Nani said that during 14 years as CM, Chandrababu could not get a medical college. However, soon after Jagan Mohan Reddy became the CM, 16 medical colleges were set up in the State.

Nani further said that social justice was done by giving posts to the BC, SC, ST and Minorities in the State. He said that during the TDP regime, not a single ZP chair-

person post was given to a BC leader. He further pointed out that TDP had never given priority to welfare schemes as done by the CM Jagan government.

CM Jagan has made BC leaders ministers and given key posts in line with TDP founder NT Rama Rao. Unable to face CM Jagan, the TDP was holding media debates.

Nani questioned why TDP did not contest the by-poll in Atmakur. Chandrababu had no guts and cannot defeat YSRC, said Nani.

He alleged that in 2019, Chandrababu's adopted son was defeated in two places and Lokesh was defeated in Mangalagiri. YSRC will defeat Chandrababu in the coming 2024 elections in Kuppam, he added. Former minister and

Krishna district YSRC president Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) came down heavily on TDP leader Nara Lokesh for comparing the houses given to the poor with bathrooms. He said that Lokesh will have big bathrooms built with corrupt money. CM Jagan has made the poor people's dreams come true by giving them their own houses.

Perni said that Chandrababu Naidu is having sleepless nights with the shock given by Kodali Nani and was challenging to defeat Nani in Gudivada in the coming elections which is impossible. He said that Kodali Nani is a Brand Ambassador in Gudivada and challenged Chandrababu Naidu to find a candidate to contest against Kodali Nani.

Rs 185 cr annuity paid to Amaravati farmers

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Municipal and Urban Development Adimulapu Suresh strongly condemned the remarks made by TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu that there is no right for the YSRC government to sell Amaravati lands. He said that the farmers will be benefited only from the YSRC which is a farmer-biased government. The minister said that the State government is paying annuity amounts to Amaravati under which Rs 185 crore was deposited into farmers' accounts on Tuesday.

The Minister asked what development Naidu did in the Amaravati lands and stated that he passed time with graphics terming Amaravati as temporary capital in his five years of tenure.



Collectors' panel meets on tahsildars' transfers

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Collectors' Committee meeting was held at the Collectorate in Machilipatnam on Tuesday to discuss transfers of tahsildars in Krishna, NTR and Eluru districts.

As per the guidelines, transfers of tahsildars and other

Revenue employees would be confirmed at the combined Krishna district-level.

Krishna Collector P Ranjith Basha, NTR Collector S Dilli Rao, Eluru district Joint Collector P Arun Babu and Krishna Joint Collector R Mahesh Kumar discussed the State government guidelines.

The committee verified the transfer applications, available vacancies and other matters.

Krishna district Revenue Officer M Venkateswarlu, NTR district DRO K Mohan Kumar and Eluru district DRO AVNS Murthy were present

CM takes stock of 'Nadu-Nedu' Village clinics to be upgraded...

Continued from Page 1

The officials informed the Chief Minister that they have taken the suggestions from experts and are planning to setup interactive screens in some class rooms and TV screens in other classrooms.

The Chief Minister instructed the officials to work out how to put digital screens and boards to optimum usage. He said to study the existing methods of usage of digital screens and boards and added that they will help the students to understand the subjects like mathematics and science better and added that the efficiency of the teachers would also increase.

The Chief Minister opined that it will be good if there is flexibility to highlight the content on the screen and set it to enlarge. He instructed the officials to focus on security of digital screens and panels and prepare an action plan in this regard by July 15.

Chief Secretary Sameer Sharma, School Education Special Chief Secretary Buditi Rajashekar, School Education Commissioner S Suresh Kumar, Sarwa Siksha Abhiyan SPD Vetri Selvi and other officials were present.

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Top Maoist Vanthala... 60 Maoist Dalam...

Continued from Page 1

Vanthala Ramakrishna, 35, a PTG was the resident of Kondrum village, Injari Panchayath, Pedabayalu mandal of Alluri Sitharamaraju District. With the inspiration of CPI (Maoist) Party leader Bhupathi, he joined as a militia member for Kondrum village and since then he has worked as Dalam member, party member, Area Committee Member and Area Committee Secretary.

He moved along with the Maoist party in Malkangiri, Koraput, East Godavari and Alluri Sitharamaraju districts which lie in the Andhra-Odisha Special Zonal Committee area (AOBSZC) and recruited many militia members.

He conducted meetings in the name of 'Praja Courts' and frightened the local people by killing innocent tribals, branding them as police informers, said DIG Harikrishna. He conducted unlawful meetings by threatening the tribal people against the government's developmental programmes such as roads, cell towers and government installations etc.

So far, he was involved in 124 cases in Odisha and East Godavari and Alluri Sitharamaraju districts. He was also involved in serious offences like 14 murders, 13 exchange of fire incidents, exploding landmines, arson of public and private property, kidnaps and 83 other offences.

Continued from Page 1

All of them joined the ultras and worked as party members and militia members. Among them, Anand Sireesha, Gangi, Jeevani, Srikanth, Srinu and some others moved along with the Maoist party, laid ambush and triggered landmines by targeting the Police parties which were combing and raiding them.

They resorted to setting fires to road laying machinery and cell towers, killing innocent tribal people in Praja courts in the name of police informers and etc., offences. Some of the Militia members resorted to arson of public and private property, obstructing surveyors who came for roads survey and extortion of their equipment, attending Maoist meetings and rallies, conveying the police movement information to the Maoists from time to time, doing sentry and patrolling to safeguard the Maoists, providing food & logistics to the Maoists and etc, offences.

DIG Harishkrishna said that after rationalising and introspecting about government developmental programmes and works in their area, they realised that the Maoists are the main deterrents to the development and they repented for their own actions like the killing their own tribal people in the name of police informers, setting fire to the machinery/equipment intended for roads laying for the sake of Maoists, in the interest of their area development, they surrendered before the police in the presence of their family members and village elders.

ONGC chopper crashes into sea, four dead

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A brand new Pawan Hans' Sikorsky chopper with 9 people on board crashed into the Arabian Sea, about 50 nautical miles from the Mumbai coast on Tuesday, killing four people -- including three ONGC employees.

The helicopter, which was part of the six Sikorsky S-76D helicopters that Pawan Hans had recently leased from Milestone Aviation Group, was about 4-5 minutes away from its destination - ONGC's Sagar Kiran rig - when the incident took place, company officials with direct knowledge of the matter said.

Chiranjeevi gets invitation...

Continued from Page 1

Kishan said in invite that on July 4 the country will be commemorating the 125th birth anniversary of revolutionary freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju. Alluri is revered across Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha and Karnataka as 'Manyam Veerudu' or 'Hero of Jungle' and is a household name in these states.

As part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, we have the opportunity to recognise the contributions of Alluri Sitarama Raju in uniting and training tribal communities of

the Madras Presidency to fight against colonial powers.

On July 4, Prime Minister Modi will be in Bhimavaram. The PM's schedule includes a public meeting at Pedamiram and unveiling the statue of Alluri Sitarama Raju in ASR Nagar, Bhimavaram. Kishan requested Chiranjeevi to attend the programme at Bhimavaram on July 4.

"I would like to inform you that the Union Ministry of Culture and the Government of Andhra Pradesh will be conducting various programmes to honour Alluri Sitarama Raju till July 4, 2023.

Pawan to launch 'Jana Vani' in city on July 3

Continued from Page 1

The event would be held on July 3 at the Makineni Basavapunniah Auditorium in Vijayawada. Previously, the governments used to stand by people and resolve their grievances.

The Chief Ministers used to listen to the grievances of people and take their applications to resolve them.

After the YSRC came to power, the common men had not got an opportunity to

give a petition on their grievance to the Chief Minister.

"The Spandana programme is being held in a formal manner. It is hoped the representatives of the people will listen to the grievances of the people during the 'Gadapa Gadapaku'. But cases were registered against those who raised issues and they were being harassed", he slammed.

Manohar cited that a physically disabled woman of Prakasam district tried to give an application to the Chief

Minister on the grabbing of her land but she was prevented from meeting the Chief Minister. Pawan Kalyan moved at the incident and wanted to organise a 'Jana Vani' programme to know the grievances of people, Manohar informed.

Manohar said that the first two Jana Vani programmes would be organised in Vijayawada in Makineni Basavapunniah auditorium and Pawan Kalyan would be accessible in the programme.

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL EDUCATION
Old Government General Hospital Premises, Hanumanpet, Vijayawada
NOTIFICATION FOR DIRECT RECRUITMENT FOR THE POSTS OF ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
(Notification No. 5/DR/2022 (June, 2022), Dated 28.06.2022)
No. of Posts - 59 - for further details visit DME website <https://dme.ap.nic.in> from 28.06.2022.
R.O.No: 5884/CADWT/11/2021-22, Dt. 28.06.2022 Sd/- Director of Medical Education

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
TRIBAL WELFARE ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTIFICATION
NIT No. 38 to 43/2022-23/SET/MD/1 Dated: 25-06-2022
Tribal Welfare Engineering Department is inviting tenders from e-procurement platform for execution of 2 road bridges and a market yard in Peduru division, complete the incomplete post-metric hostel (zone), execute four road bridge works in Araku division at a total cost of Rs. 1,119.00 Lakhs (SCA funds and strengthening of marketing and storage funds). Date and time of commencement of tender schedules: 4.00 pm on 04-07-2022. Date and time of submission of tenders: 4.15 pm on 11-07-2022. Contact www.apesprocurement.gov.in for more details and information. Ph: 0891-2783210.
R.O.No: 5884/CADWT/11/2021-22, Dt. 25.06.2022 Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Tribal Welfare, Visakhapatnam

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NTR dist tops the charts in MGNREGS person-days

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR district holds the first place in providing man-days under MGNREGS. As many as 47 lakh person-days have been provided so far, said J Sunetha, District Water and Management Agency (DWAMA) Project Director. Sunetha inspected the government building construction works taken up under MGNREGS at Gudavalli of Vijayawada rural mandal on Tuesday. She expressed satisfaction over the progress of the work.

The Project Director said that a record 47 lakh person-days had been provided under MGNREGA scheme to the Upadhi workers in the district, against a target of 30 lakh. As per the directive of Collector S Dilli Rao, Upadhi workers have been getting more and more work in the district, she added. She directed the officials



concerned to complete the government building works within the stipulated time. As many as six 'grama sachivalayams' were completed and the works on another six were in progress against the 23 sanctioned 'sachivalayams' in Vijayawada rural mandal,

she said. She said that four Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBK) had been completed so far and six buildings were in the finishing stage. Three YSR health clinic buildings have been completed, one is in the final stage, two are at slab level and 20 build-

ings are below basement level, she said.

Vijayawada Rural Tahsildar B Sai Srinivas Naik, Panchayat Raj DEE Srinivas, AEE N Siva Ramakrishna, Sarpanch K Samudravani and MPTC member G Venkata Reddy were present.

Liquor worth Rs 20 lakh destroyed

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Krishna district Special Enforcement Bureau (SEB) officials have destroyed liquor bottles worth about Rs 20 lakh at the SEB office in Gannavaram on Tuesday. Under the auspices of SEB Additional SP Asma Farheen, 8,129 liquor bottles worth about Rs 20 lakh smuggled from various places since 2019 were destroyed.

The excise police have seized non-duty paid liquor bottles smuggled from other states worth Rs 20 lakh from April 2019. Liquor bottles from other states seized since April 2019 have been destroyed in the presence of SEB officials. The value of the seized liquor bottles was around Rs 20 lakh, SEB officials said.



APSSDC MD seeks Centre's help for 'Skill Hubs' in State

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) MD & CEO S Satyanarayana met National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVT) Chairman,

Niramaljeet Singh and Ministry of Social Justice Secretary, R Subramanyam, in New Delhi on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the APSSDC MD & CEO discussed the establishment of 'Skill Hubs' and 'Skill Colleges' in Andhra Pradesh and

requested them to provide assistance from the Union government. The officials responded positively to extend their support on behalf of the Union government in the establishment of 'Skill Hubs' and 'Skill Colleges' in Andhra Pradesh.



MLA urges DRM to sanction underpass

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada-Central MLA Malladi Vishnu has requested Vijayawada Railway Divisional Manager Sivendra Mohan to take steps for the construction of a rail underpass connecting the New RR Pet and the Old RR Pet. He said people are suffering hardships due to the frequent closure of the railway crossing near the Old RR Pet.

MLA Vishnu along with the VMC commissioner Swapnil Dinkar met the DRM on Tuesday and sought the cooperation of Railways to address the long-pending

problems. He narrated the need for speedy construction of Madhura Nagar RUB, road repairs to Ayodhya Nagar-New RR Pet, to give permission for laying CC road along the Hanuman Nagar road. He also requested the DRM for the construction of limited subways near Karmel Nagar in Gunadala, Dal Mill near Madhura Nagar, etc.

Responding to it the DRM Sivendra Mohan said that he would look into the matter and take measures to solve the pending problems. Officials from the VMC and Railway attended the meeting.

AP Secretariat employees win silver medal in TT

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Section Officers at the AP Secretariat General Administration Department, S. Satyavathi and M. Baby Sarojini, have bagged the silver medal in the Table Tennis Women's Veteran Doubles. The finals were held at the Regional Sports Board, Ahmedabad.

All India Civil Services Employees organised the Table

Tennis Tournament at Ekalavya Sports Stadium, Agra Cantonment, from June 24 to 28.

Satyavathi and Sarojini expressed happiness over sportswomen getting jobs in the sports quota. They said they were proud to have competed with great athletes and won second place.

They thanked the Chief Minister and secretariat officials for their cooperation.



'Srinivasa Kalyanam' casts spell on devout

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The 'Srinivasa Kalyanam' performed at St Louis in the United States of America, has cast its divine magical spell over the NRI denizens who enjoyed the celestial fete. As a part of ongoing 'Srinivasa Kalyanams' in various cities of the United States, the divine wedding ceremony to the 'utsava' deities of 'Sridevi Bhudevi Sameta Srinivasa' was performed with religious fervour amidst chanting of 'Vedic Mantras' in the early hours on Tuesday as per Indian Standard Time.

The devotees participated with utmost enthusiasm and devotion and were entangled by the spiritual fervour.

TTD Chairman YV Subba



Reddy, AEO Venkateswarulu Naidu, AP NRT Chairman Medapati Venkat, State

Government Representative in North America Rathnakar, NATA President Sridhar

Reddy, SVBC Director Srinivasa Reddy and others participated.

TDP urges NHRC to probe Nellore Dalit's death

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP politburo member Varla Ramaiah on Tuesday urged the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to inquire into police beating allegedly leading to the death of a Dalit brick factory worker in Podalakuru police station limits in Nellore district.

Ramaiah wrote a letter to the NHRC Chairman here, stressing the need for the actual reasons for the 'suspicious death' of Udayagiri Narayana, 38 years, in Kandamuru village in Nellore rural mandal.

The TDP leader said that the dead body of Narayan was found hanging on a tree outside the village. The death took place after the police allegedly harassed him in the name of theft of electrical equipment from the Gayatri Sugar Factory.

Ramaiah deplored that contemporary Andhra Pradesh has become a hub for gross violations of fundamental rights and basic human rights by a section of police officials in connivance with the ruling YSRCP leaders. Violent attacks against Dalits have increased in number and they were ill-treated and man-handled by the police without any hesitation.

Expressing concern, the TDP leader said Udayagiri Narayana belonging to the SC-Madiga community came to Kandamuru village ten years ago to earn a livelihood. Earlier, he used to work as a truck driver. Due to an accident case two years back, Narayana has been working as a daily wage labourer. Prior to his death under suspicious circumstances, he had been working as a labourer at a brick factory that is near Gayatri Sugar Factory.



Ramaiah said that the police picked up Narayana, suspecting his hand in theft of electric material from Gayatri Sugar Factory. In the process, the Sub-Inspector of Podalakuru Police Station

beat Narayana during the inquiry. Later, on June 19, 2022, Narayana was found dead.

The TDP told the NHRC that there were visible marks of violence on the body of Narayana. His family has lost the sole breadwinner and is seeking justice. It is also learnt that the post-mortem report contains some visible injuries on the body of Narayana.

Ramaiah said that the family members allege that Narayana was beaten black and blue by the police on the pretext of eliciting the facts pertaining to the theft of electric material. The beating of Narayana is a gross violation of fundamental rights and basic human rights. Against this backdrop, the NHRC should direct the Government of Andhra Pradesh for an inquiry and provide financial compensation to the family of Narayana.

LOKESH CONDEMNS ATTACK ON SCRIBE

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP national general secretary Nara Lokesh on Tuesday condemned the latest attack made by a YSRCP leader on a journalist at Srikalahasti in Tirupati district.

Nara Lokesh said that the ruling party goondas were crossing all limits and became extremely arrogant with power. After attacking the opposition, common public, and officials, the YCP leaders were not targeting the media.

In a statement here, Lokesh



decied the attack made by YCP leader and Srikalahasti Temple Board member Jayashyam alias Bullet Jayashyam on journalist Eeswar. The attack took place at Srikalahasti Rajiv Nagar. Lokesh said that the YCP

leader had not only encroached on the journalist's land but also used abusive language and physically attacked him. The ruling party leaders were going to any extreme to terrify all sections of society with the media being no exception.

Nara Lokesh demanded the Government to take stringent action against Jayashyam for victimising the journalist. Also, the site encroached by the YSRCP leader should be handed over back to the mediaperson.

Jagan broke his promise on prohibition: Telugu Mahila chief

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

TDP Telugu Mahila state president Vangalapudi Anitha on Tuesday accused the Jagan Reddy Government of betraying women by not fulfilling his election promise on liquor prohibition in Andhra Pradesh.

Anitha said that the Chief Minister spoke one word during the elections and started speaking another word after coming to power. Jagan Reddy was bent on tearing apart the 'mangalsutra' of women with his countless

conspiracies.

Addressing a press conference here, the TDP leader termed it unpardonable that the CM had made liquor income as the main source of his Government revenue. For increasing liquor income, Jagan Reddy was offering little bits of welfare benefits as biscuits to cheat the poorer sections.

Anitha said that everybody expected Jagan to announce total prohibition on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. But, the CM began his new policy to squeeze the drinkers for

more liquor income. When liquor drinkers were dying with their families thrown on the roads, the YSRCP rulers were looking for more liquor income.

Anitha said that Jagan Mohan Reddy had such a dark history that his regime put teachers as supervisors at liquor shops. The poor drinkers were forced to take fatal and toxic liquor brands so as to enable the YCP leaders to fill their pockets. They were playing dangerous games with the lives of poor people.

Krishna boys emerge basketball State champs

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Combined Krishna district junior (under-18) boys team has clinched the 7th AP Junior inter-district Basketball championship organised by the Visakhapatnam Basketball Association. The tournament concluded at the Kodi Rama Murthy indoor stadium of GITAM (Deemed to be University) in Visakhapatnam on Tuesday.

In the finals, the Krishna district team beat Ananthapur by a 55-34 score and bagged first place. Earlier, the Krishna boys team beat East Godavari by 79-70 score and entered into finals. Meanwhile, in the girls' section, Ananthapur district beat East Godavari by a 34-22 score and bagged the girls' title.

Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP) NTR district Basketball coach S Santosh

Kumar has acted as coach for the Krishna boys and D Satyanarayana as an assistant coach and Rammohan Rao as the manager.

Later prize distribution function was held and GITAM pro-vice-chairman Goutam Rao presented winners and runners trophies. Krishna District Basketball Association secretary Ramachandra Rao, vice president Raja and senior coach Vaka Nagaraju attended.



City athlete selected for World Rly Games

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Divisional athlete Preethi Lamba, Junior Clerk, Engineering Department, Vijayawada Division, has been selected for World Railway Games (Athletic) to be held in Berlin, Germany, from July 17. Preethi Lamba will be representing the Indian Railway athletic team and taking part in the 10KM cross country event.

Preethi Lamba participated in the selection trials held in Kapurthala, Punjab, and got selected. Currently, she is under-

going training at the sports camp at Patiala for the World Railway Games Athletics Meet. Shivendra Mohan, Divisional Railway Manager, D Srinivasa Rao, ADRM, Infrastructure, M.Srikanth, ADRM, Operations, Valleswara B. Tokkala, Divisional Sports Officer & Sr. DSC, and E. Santharam, Sr DEN, Coordination, congratulated Preethi for her tremendous performance in the selection trials and wished her all the best at the World Railway Games.





BJP leaders injured in attack by YSRCP activists

PNS ■ ANANTAPUR

Three BJP leaders suffered bleeding injuries when they were attacked allegedly by the ruling YSRCP activists when they were going to address a press conference at the Press Club in Dharmavaram town in Sri Satya Sai district on Tuesday.

Police said that the BJP leaders, including Dharmavaram town president D Raju, town secretary Rapthathi Ramu, Rural president Ananda Reddy, SC Morcha president Tumpari Paramesh, Rajasekhara Reddy and Appala Swamy Naidu, were injured in the attack which took place in the Press Club.

When the BJP leaders were going to address the press conference, some people, said to be YSRCP activists, attacked the BJP leaders with sticks and iron rods. They hit them with sticks severely in which the BJP leaders suffered bleeding injuries and collapsed.

The police shifted the BJP leader to the government hospital. The injured BJP leaders were undergoing treatment in the hospital. Two of the injured



Jana Sena condemns attack on BJP leaders

VIJAYAWADA: The Jana Sena Party (JSP) has condemned the attack on the BJP leaders in Dharmavaram. Jana Sena Party Political Affairs Committee chairman Nadendla Manohar, in a statement here on Tuesday, said that the attack on the BJP leaders by the YSRCP activists exposed the anarchy which prevailed in the state. The attack on the BJP leaders in the full glare of all in the press club tells the lawlessness prevailing in the state. Those who follow democratic values should condemn the heinous act. If the police did not take stringent action against the leaders with criminal tendencies would go ahead unabated, he feared.

suffered major injuries and they were admitted to a private hospital for better treatment.

BJP leaders said that the victims vehemently criticised YSRCP MLA Kethireddy Venkatarami Reddy and for-

mer MLA Gonuguntla Suryanarayana yesterday. Irate over this, the followers of the YSRCP leaders attacked them, BJP leaders alleged. Police said that they had set up special teams to arrest the attackers

and all the check-posts were put on high alert.

Responding to the attack on the BJP leaders, BJP state president Somu Veerajulu said that he had spoken to the DIG and SP of Sri Satya Sai district and knew the details. He said that he had also spoken to BJP Dharmavaram leader Varadapuram Suri and inquired about the condition of the injured.

Veerajulu alleged that an MLA was responsible for the attack on the BJP leaders. He expressed shock over the attack on the BJP leaders during daylight in the press club. The BJP state president demanded that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy order an inquiry.

BJP State affairs co-in charge condemned the attack on the BJP leaders in Dharmavaram. He tweeted that "I condemn the attack by the YSRCP MLA Kethireddy followers. The BJP leaders were questioning the YSRCP's illegal land grabbing. This demonstrates YSRCP intolerance towards people who hold them to account. I demand the police to take action," he said.

I know who are conspiring against me: MLA

PNS ■ ONGOLE

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) MLA and former Minister Balineni Srinivasa Reddy said that he knew who all are conspiring against him and he would take the issues to the notice of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that some of his own party men are working against him.

The YSRCP held its plenary in the AI convention centre here on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that he knew the conspiracies being hatched against him to oppress him politically and he would take the issue to the notice of the Chief Minister. As long as his followers and admirers were with him, no one could do any harm to him. "My own party leaders are trying to create trouble for me and damage my political career," he said.

Balineni said, "I am indebted to all my followers in the constituency who stood by me. When the huge cash was seized in Chennai by the police that was linked to me. A malicious campaign was launched against my son. I am trying to get the call date which will expose who are conspirators. A false allegation was made against me that I telephoned a Jana Sena woman leader in an



inebriated state. If it is proved, I will stay away from the politics," he dared. "The TDP leader D Janardhan is resorting to personal abuse against me. I will not spare those who targeted me," he warned.

Jagan Mohan Reddy made only 15% of the debts while the TDP government made 19% of the debts but the TDP did not use the money for the implementation of welfare schemes, he criticised. He asked the TDP leaders what develop-

ment works were carried out in the Prakasam district during the 5-year TDP rule. The YSRCP government had sanctioned a mega project to provide drinking water to Ongole city, he claimed.

"If I do anything wrong I will bow my head in front of you and walk away from politics. I will eat salt and pepper and I also have emotions. Some in our party are conspiring against me. I will face them", Balineni said.

Former minister Sidda Raghava Rao said that Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy was working for the people with the aim of social justice. MP Magunta Srinivasa Reddy said that the benefits of welfare schemes are reaching all the eligible in the state. MLA Burra Madhusudhan Yadav, ZP chairperson Bucheelli Venkayamma, MLC Tumati Madhava Rao, and Mayor G Sujaga also spoke.



Security for PM's visit reviewed

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

Special Protection Group AIG Himanshu Gupta, Collector P Prashanti and SPs of various districts reviewed the arrangements being made for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit.

The Prime Minister will unveil the statue of freedom fighter Alluri Sitarama Raju on June 4.

The police officials, including Himanshu Shukla, Central

Cultural director Atul Mishra, DIG Pala Raju, Security IG Seshidhar Reddy, Eluru SP Rahil Dev Sharma, West Godavari SP U Ravi Prakash, Kakinada SP M Ravindra Babu, Konaseema SP Sudeep Kumar Reddy, Krishna district SP Jashuva, Joint Collector JV Murali and sub-collector C Vishnu reviewed the arrangements at a meeting held here.

They said that they had jointly inspected the venue, helpaid and other places.

SHORT TAKES

Three notorious thieves held, booty recovered

NARASARAOPET: The police arrested three notorious thieves and recovered gold jewellery worth Rs 1.68 lakh and four motorcycles from them. Palnadu district Superintendent of police Ravi Shankar Reddy told the media here on Tuesday that the thieves committed several burglaries in Vinukonda, Nekarikallu, Rompicherla, Iyanolu, and Kurichedu police station limits. They were experts in burglaries by breaking open the doors and steel almirah and decamp with booty. The police team led by Vinukonda police station SIs D Chennakeshavulu and G Rajyalakshmi at Good Shepherd School in Vinukonda recovered gold jewellery weighing 338 grams and silver ornaments weighing 333 grams worth Rs 1.48 lakh. The police also recovered 4 motorcycles from them. The arrested thieves were Mudavathi Chinna Brahma Naik, Bhukya Venkateswarlu Naik, and Bhukya Tulasi Naik. Chinna Brahma Naidu was involved in 36 burglary cases and Bhukya Venkateswarlu was involved in 28 theft cases. The SP appreciated Vinukonda CI and his team, CCS CI Vijay Krishna for arresting the notorious thieves. Additional SP (Admin) G Bindu Madhav, CIs Ashok Kumar, CCS CI Vijay Krishna, Sis Charan, Chennakeshavulu, and Rajyalakshmi were present.



National Stats Day observed

VIJAYAWADA: The 16th National Statistics Day celebrations were conducted at SRR & CVR Government Degree College in Vijayawada on Tuesday. Several competitions like essay writing, elocution and poster presentations were organised on the occasion. Speaking on the occasion, College Principal Dr K Bhagyalakshmi said that students should participate in every competition and prove their talent. "Winning is not important, participation is," she said. Head of the Department of Statistics K Ashok Kumar, lecturers T Ramesh, D Babitha, Dr K Lakshman Das, Dr Mid Mastan, Dr Lalith, Dr KV Ramarao, Dr Sk Sajana and others were present.

ACB nabs Jr Asst in GST

VIJAYAWADA: B Lakshmiipathi, Junior Assistant, Assistant Commissioner Office, GST, State Tax, Palasa-Kasibugga, Srikakulam district, was caught red-handed by the ACB officials on Tuesday. On the complaint given by V Suresh Kumar, Kusumapuram village, Kaviti Mandal, Srikakulam district, to the ACB toll-free number 14400 stating that B Lakshmiipathi demanded Rs 8,000 as a bribe to repay the extra tax which he had paid earlier. In this connection, a trap was laid on Tuesday against the accused officer B Lakshmiipathi, and was caught red-handed near the GST office, Palasa, while he was accepting the bribe amount. The accused officer was arrested and produced before the Court for SPE & ACB Cases, Visakhapatnam.

Jagananna colonies to get safe drinking water

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Jagananna Housing Colonies (JHC) in NTR district will get safe drinking water under the Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC) and the State government has sanctioned Rs.219.26 crore to the FHTCs under Jal Jeevan Mission. The State government aims to give FHTC to all the households and for retrofitting and augmentation of existing schemes in the district.

There are 446 layouts in the NTR district and the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWS&S) has proposed 878

works to provide safe drinking water infrastructure worth Rs.135.28 crore. Also, the department authorities have taken 432 works to improve the capacity of existing schemes and reinstallation worth Rs.83.98 crore.

Meanwhile, the RWS & S Department officers are providing FHTCs at the new Jagananna colonies in the district. There are 446 layouts across the NTR district and the authorities have proposed 878 safe drinking water projects at

the layouts.

As of now, all the 446 layouts have been set up in the five

Assembly constituencies in the district.

Nandigama constituency has 138 layouts, the highest among the five, and for that the RWS&S Department proposed 38 works worth Rs.37.52 crore.

Tiruvuru constituency has 124 layouts and 118 works worth Rs.13.99 crore, Jaggaiahpet has 110 layouts and 110 works worth Rs.16.37 crore and Mylavaram has 67 layouts

State
govt sanctions
Rs.219.26 crore
under Jal Jeevan
Mission



'Amma Vodi' a boon to the poor

PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

Minister for Water Resources Ambati Rambabu has said that the government is implementing the 'Amma Vodi' scheme to provide school education to the poor without hindrances. The minister participated in the 'Amma Vodi' programme at Market Yard here on Tuesday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that the 'Amma Vodi' scheme had become a boon to ensure financial security for the families of children studying at schools.

The scheme would help the poor students to continue their schooling without hindrances, he said.

Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, who saw the plight of the poor during the Padayatra promised to include the 'Amma Vodi' scheme in the Navaratnalu schemes.

Rambabu said the State had introduced historic reforms with a special focus on education, medicine, and agriculture. Jagananna Gorumudda and Jagananna Vidya Deevena help the students to study without any financial problems.

The Minister said that out of

the Rs 15,000 being disbursed under the Amma Vodi, Rs 1,000 would be used for the maintenance of school and Rs 1,000 for the maintenance of toilets and appealed to the beneficiaries to understand it.

Nimmakayala Rajanarayana also spoke. Later the minister released the replica of the cheque for the disbursement of money to the beneficiaries under the scheme. AMC chairman Rayapati Purushottam Rao, ZPTCs, MPTCs, municipal vice-chairman Sk Nagur, and commissioner Kolimi Shammi were among those who were present.

Tiger spotted by bus passengers

PNS ■ KAKINADA

The Royal Bengal tiger, which has been elusive to the forest officials and creating panic among the people in the Prathipadu region, was spotted by bus passengers while it was crossing the road at a Kummariyola village in Tuni mandal on Tuesday.

The passengers informed the matter to the forest officials who rushed there and collected the pug marks of the tiger. The tiger was spotted when it was crossing the road on Rowthulapudi-Tuni road. Yeleswaram forest ranger J Srinivas told the media all efforts were being made to cage the tiger and release it into the dense forest but it is still elusive. If it did not go towards Prathipadu mandal by two days, they had to understand that the tiger was going towards Visakhapatnam district, Kakinada forest ranger Dharma Raju said. The tiger strayed into the Kakinada district and has moved around the Prathipadu region for the last 36 days.



MLA Vishnu fumes at propaganda against 'Amma Vodi' scheme

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

MLA Malladi Vishnu has said that the goal of CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's government is to provide better facilities and governance to the people across the State. On Tuesday, the MLA, along with Deputy Mayor Shri Sailaja Reddy, corporator MD Shahina Sultana and party activists visited 59th Division, 235th Ward Secretariat as part of Gadapa Gadapa programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Vishnu said that CM Jagan Mohan Reddy launched the Amma Vodi scheme that would benefit the students in all aspects for their education.

However, the Opposition parties had been spreading false propaganda on the scheme for the past few days, sending the wrong message among the people. Through the Amma Vodi scheme, 82.31 lakh students across the State received Rs 6,595 crore. He warned the Opposition parties to stop false propaganda just for political gain.

Vishnu said that Chandrababu and the TDP leaders, who were involved in large-scale insider trading in Amaravathi, had no moral right to talk about the Amaravathi lands. He said that the TDP leaders should

not forget the grabbing of lands from Amaravati farmers and plundering thousands of acres to foreign companies. He said 1,600 acres had been handed over to a single Singapore consortium, and Amaravathihad been transformed into a hub of corruption. The TDP leaders and Chandrababu indulged in insider trading to the tune of 4,070 acres and made Amaravathi completely corrupted. He said that the YSRCP government was going ahead with e-auction as per law and the TDP should be ashamed to criticise this.

Malladi Vishnu termed 'ridiculous' BJP State president Somu Veerajulu's comment that the BJP would be the only alternative political party in the State, as it has not won a single seat in any election so far. "People of AP are laughing at the statements made by Somu Veerajulu. The YSRCP's vote share is increasing in every election and Atmakuru by-poll is the proof," he said.

Zonal Commissioner Raju, DE Ramakrishna, AMOH Rama Koteswara Rao, leaders Hafeezullah, Bhogadi Murali, Devireddy Ramesh Reddy, Nandepu Suresh, Nerella Siva, Sheikh Amit, Gallepogu Raju, Kondala Rao and others were present.

Two inter-district bike lifters arrested, 107 bikes seized

PNS ■ KAKINADA

The police arrested two notorious inter-district bike lifters and seized 107 bikes worth Rs 23 lakh from them by the Jaggaipeta police.

Talking to the media here Superintendent of Police M Ravindranatha Babu said that the prime accused Nadigatla Krishna hails from Yeleswaram village of Jaggaipeta mandal got used to a luxurious lifestyle and addicted to vices. To satisfy his vices, he started stealing bikes in April 2021.

The other accused Mangina Veera Venkata Satyanarayana alias Virababu, a resident of Govindapuram village of Jaggaipeta mandal used to buy the stolen motorcycles at a cheaper price and sell them to the gullible people at a cheaper price promising them that the records would be handed over



them on final payment. In the same manner, both had disposed of a total of 107 stolen motorcycles and spent the money.

The SP said that of the total 107 Motorcycles recovered, 17 were stolen from Krishna district, 32 from East Godavari district, 2 each from Vizianagaram and

Visakhapatnam districts, and 12 from Konaseema district, and one from Alluru Sitharama Raju district while the highest number of 41 are from West Godavari district.

The SP appreciated the police team comprising additional SP S Srinivas, SP Ambika Prasad, CI B Surya Appa Rao,

and Peddapuram sub-divisional police officer B Appa Rao. The SP said the total value of the 107 motorcycles recovered would be around Rs 23 lakh and the two accused were being produced before the Judicial first class magistrate court at Peddapuram for judicial remand.

INDIA CORNER

Thirty-seven inmates of jail near Patna test Covid positive

Nearly 40 inmates of the Baur Central Prison on the outskirts of the Bihar capital have tested positive for COVID-19, an official said on Tuesday. According to jail superintendent Jitendra Kumar, mass testing was ordered after one of the inmates, a former MLA, tested positive for the infection last week. "Ex-MLA Ranveer Yadav had developed symptoms. Rapid antigen test report was positive. Subsequently, mass testing was ordered. More than 800 inmates underwent RT-PCR test on Saturday and Sunday. Reports came out yesterday with 37 of them testing positive", the jail superintendent told PTI-Bhusha. The former MLA has since been shifted to a hospital while the other inmates who have tested positive were kept in an isolation ward inside the jail, Kumar said. The state has been reporting more than 100 cases for the past few days, more than half of these in the capital district. The state's active caseload had on Monday reached 774, according to the health department.



78 pc of institutions to adopt hybrid exam model: Report

There is a high preference for a hybrid test format even after the Covid-19-related disruptions, with about 78 per cent of the institutions surveyed plan to adopt the model, according to a report. A higher number of educators (78 per cent) in India are willing to incorporate digital into their exam preferences in 2022, given that there is a balance between center-based exams and remote online assessments, according to Mercer | Mettl annual 'The State of Online Examinations Report 2022'. The State of Online Examinations Report 2022 is based on data collected from over 150 deans, HODs, professors, and other important stakeholders across the country. The report further revealed that 75 per cent of the respondents prefer the ease of administration, scheduling and coordination offered by the online mode. According to the report, 72 per cent of respondents believe that online exams have improved their overall exam experience and 60 per cent would prefer the online model for semester exams, certifications and distance learning courses.



Edu Secretary calls for incorporating study of PM Gati Shakti scheme

Union Education Secretary Sanjay Murthy on Tuesday called for incorporating study of PM Gati Shakti scheme in academic programs. "The need of the hour is that academic institutions realise the importance of this Government of India initiative. Academic institutions have the power to play a significant role in bringing change through quality knowledge dissemination and relevant researches in logistics and infrastructure sectors," Murthy said. He was addressing an online workshop on "Leveraging Satellite communication, Geo-informatics, and Geospatial technology for urban planning and to promote multimodal logistics" organized by NITIE Mumbai in association with the Ministry of Education and Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N).



Modi meets UAE Prez Sheikh Mohamed in Abu Dhabi

PNS ■ ABU DHABI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday met UAE President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan here and conveyed his personal condolences on the demise of former president of the Gulf nation Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

"In a special gesture, UAE President and Ruler of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, accompanied by senior members of the Royal Family, was at Abu Dhabi airport for the interaction with PM," Ministry of External Affairs Sokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted.

Modi arrived here on a brief visit after attending a productive G7 Summit in Germany where he interacted with several world leaders on the margins of the summit and discussed issues aimed at furthering global well-being and prosperity.

During his meeting with Sheikh Mohamed, Modi con-



veyed his personal condolences on the passing away of Sheikh Khalifa, who died on May 13 at the age of 73 after a long illness.

This is their first interaction after the UAE leader's election as the new president of the Gulf nation last month.

Modi had expressed grief over Sheikh Khalifa's death, calling him a great statesman and visionary leader under whom India-UAE relations prospered. India had announced one day of state mourning following the demise of Sheikh Khalifa.

Sheikh Khalifa was the eldest

son of UAE's founder President Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. He served as the President of the UAE and ruler of Abu Dhabi from November 3, 2004 till his death.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu last month visited the UAE and offered condolences to the UAE leadership on the demise of Sheikh Khalifa.

The last visit by Modi to the UAE was in August 2019 during which he received the UAE's highest award, 'Order of Zayed' conferred upon him by the UAE President.

The UAE was India's third-largest trading partner for the

year 2019-20 after China and US, according to the Ministry of External Affairs.

The UAE is the third-largest export destination of India (after the US and China) with an amount of nearly USD 16 billion for the year 2020-21.

For the UAE, India is the third-largest trading partner for the year 2020 with an amount of around USD 27.93 billion (non-oil trade).

Indian expatriate community of approximately 3.4 million is the largest ethnic community in UAE constituting roughly about 35 per cent of the country's population.

Mumbai Press Club condemns Mohammad Zubair's arrest

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Mumbai Press Club on Tuesday condemned the arrest of Mohammad Zubair, journalist and co-founder of the fact-checking website Alt News, by the Delhi police.

Zubair was arrested on Monday over a tweet of 2018 for allegedly hurting religious sentiments.

In a statement, the Mumbai Press Club said, "Zubair should be released immediately. We also request Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah's immediate intervention in this matter." Many other journalists' organizations have also condemned Zubair's arrest by the police in the national capital.

Alt News co-founder Pratik Sinha has alleged that Zubair was arrested in a case for which no notice was given by the police, which is mandatory under law for the sections under which he has been held, the Mumbai Press Club noted in the statement.

States should ensure jobs for people joining mass gatherings

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has asked states and Union territories to ensure that people taking part in mass gatherings and undertaking pilgrimage are asymptomatic and preferably fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

In a letter to states and UTs on Tuesday, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said mass gatherings in context of various festivities as well as yatras are likely to be held in different parts of the country in the coming months, and that such congregations may potentially facilitate transmission of infectious diseases, including COVID-19.

While the trajectory of COVID-19 cases has declined significantly from levels that were observed in earlier part of this year, a few states and UTs across the country are witnessing a sustained upswing in the cases currently.

"During many such events/yatras lakhs of individuals undertake intra- and inter-state journey spanning hundreds of kilometres with halting points arranged by volunteers and community-



based social/religious organisations. Such congregations may potentially facilitate transmission of infectious diseases, including COVID-19," Bhushan said.

"All states and UTs where such mass gatherings/yatras are proposed to be held should widely publicise that all individuals planning to participate in such gatherings/events are asymptomatic and preferably fully vaccinated against COVID-19. If need be a special drive for primary vaccination and precaution dose administration to all eligible people may be taken by the administration at least a fort-

night in advance for those planning to join," he said in the letter.

The Amarnath pilgrimage begins on June 30 and the Rath Yatra is scheduled for July 1.

Bhushan said it was essential that the gains made so far by collaborative efforts of central and state governments are not lost and timely necessary public health steps are taken to minimise the risk of increased COVID-19 transmission.

Accordingly, there is a need to enhance focus on five-fold strategy of test, track, treat, vaccination and adherence to COVID-19-appropriate behaviour, Bhushan stressed.

NHRC for Rs 15 lakh accident cover for truckers

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Observing that the rightful entitlements of truck drivers do not get adequate attention, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued an advisory to the Centre, states and Union territories to protect their interests.

The advisory has recommended that the Motor Vehicle Act, 1988 be amended to provide for mandatory purchase of personal accident cover for an amount not less than Rs 15 lakh for each driver, co-driver and helper of a commercial truck.

The NHRC has written to the Union ministries and departments, chief secretaries of states and administrators of UTs, asking them to implement its recommendations in the advisory and has sought Action 'Taken Report' within three months.

Some of the other recommendations include providing cashless treatment to drivers, co-drivers and helpers injured or incapacitated in road accidents, establishing and regularly maintaining driver rest stops and lay byes consisting of parking area, furnished rest rooms, restaurants providing food and beverages at reasonable rates, mechanic shops, medicine shops, doctor's clinics, etc. at regular intervals, not exceeding 40 kilometres, along national highways and at prominent locations along the state highways and other major district roads.

"Establish fully equipped Trauma Centres at regular intervals along highways to extend emergency to victims of road accidents. Launch a special drive to create awareness and register all truck drivers, co-drivers and helpers on e-Shram portal to avail benefits of Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Jan Arogya Yojana as well as Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PM-SBY) and Old Age Protection under Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Mann Dhan," read the advisory.

Tech-driven approach, digital university key to enhance NEP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A technology-driven approach and initiatives such as digital university in line with the new National Education Policy (NEP) will be key to enhance access to quality education, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said.

"There is a need to adopt innovative and out-of-the-box methods to enhance access to quality and affordable education and to bring our vast population under the formal education and certified skills structure. Creating robust and resilient mechanisms for making education accessible to all is a priority for the government," Pradhan said in his address at India Today's Education Conclave.

"Technology-driven approach and initiatives like Digital University in line with the NEP-2020 will be key to enhance access to quality education. NEP sets the vision and path to cater to the

requirements of every learner right from Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and also for building a vibrant and equitable knowledge society. We are working to integrate skill education into school and higher education to boost employability," he said.

Speaking about future of jobs and skilling, he said that the nature of jobs is changing, and Industrial Revolution (IR) 4.0 presents us with both challenge and opportunity of skilling, up-skilling and re-skilling the country's vast demography.

"We must bring a paradigm shift in skilling and make it more aspirational to harness IR 4.0 as well as make our youth future-ready. NEP charts the course to develop our students and youth as global citizens with new-age ideas and skills and prioritises learning in Indian languages for establishing India as a knowledge economy of the 21st century," he added.



Registry not listing matters despite orders from SC benches

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Tuesday expressed its dismay over the registry not listing matters despite orders from its vacation benches and said that cases will be listed as per the set procedure.

A vacation bench of Justices Surya Kant and JB Pardiwala said that it has on Monday directed a matter to be listed for Tuesday but the registry has said that it will not be listed.

We didn't want to say it in open court but it's a fact. Yesterday, we made an exception. We had directed a matter to be listed for today but the registry said that it will not list the case. We don't want to say anything more, the bench told senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who was seeking urgent listing of a plea filed by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (Adani) against the Bombay High Court order.

The bench said that there is a set procedure in place for the listing of matters during vacations and asked Singhvi to approach the mentioning registrar for urgent listing and if the request is denied then it could look into it.

Singhvi said that the court's discretion cannot be circumscribed by the registry and it can make an exception for urgent listing of the matter. Significantly, the same vaca-



tion bench on Monday had ordered the listing of the Centre's petition for hearing on Tuesday against the Tripura High Court order passed on a PIL challenging the grant of security cover to industrialist Mukesh Ambani and his family members in Mumbai.

Despite the order of the bench passed after the matter was mentioned by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, the matter was not listed for Tuesday. Singhvi urged the bench to list the matter saying the Bombay High Court order was given to them on Monday in which it had dismissed a plea filed by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (Adani) challenging the disqualification of its bid in a tender issued by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) for up-gradation of a container terminal in Navi Mumbai.

He said that counsel for JNPA is in caveat the bench may grant status quo and

restrain the authority from proceedings with the bids.

Singhvi said, I am India's leading port manager and cleared the port trust bid in December 2021 but I was disqualified four months after that. I had challenged the disqualification before the Bombay High Court which passed the order on Monday evening. Now the authority is proceeding ahead with other bids.

The bench asked Singhvi what is the nature of the contract. The senior counsel said that the nature of the contract is the operation and maintenance of the Jawaharlal Nehru Terminal through public bids.

The bench said, We have already told you our difficulty. There is a procedure prescribed. You mention the matter before the mentioning registrar, he will examine the urgency. If the request is not accepted for urgent listing, then you can mention it before us. Let's see what the registrar has to say on this.

The Bombay High Court has on Monday directed Adani to pay a cost of Rs five lakh for bringing to court an "unmeritorious case." Of this, Adani had already deposited Rs 4,24,800 with JNPA at the time of submitting its bid. The high court has asked the JNPA to retain the amount and directed Adani to deposit the remaining amount.

AMARNATH YATRA

Unfazed by terror threat, hundreds arrive at base camp

PNS ■ JAMMU

Chants of Bam Bam Bhole and Jai Barfani Baba ki rented the air as hundreds of enthusiastic pilgrims unperturbed by the looming terror threat arrived at the Bhagwati Nagar base camp here amid tight security on Tuesday to set out on a journey to cave shrine in south Kashmir Himalayas on Wednesday.

The devotees said their unflinching faith in Lord Shiva and the security forces has encouraged them to be part of the annual Amarnath Yatra that is being organised this year after a gap of two years on account of the Covid pandemic.

The first batch of pilgrims will leave the Jammu base camp on Wednesday, officials said.

Multi-tier security has been put in place in and around the base camp, lodging centres, and registration and token centres amid deployment of over 5,000 security personnel in Jammu city, the officials said.

"Na chinta na bhay, Baba Amarnath ji kee jai (Neither worry nor fear, as Baba Amarnath Ji with us)," said Vinay Kumar, who was part of 12-member group from Lucknow arrived here for his onward journey to cave shrine of Amarnath in the first batch on Wednesday.

Lauding the authorities for the best possible arrangements

, Kumar, said, We have full faith in Lord Shiva and our security forces.

The group members have completed their registration and got tokens from Vaishnavi Dham near railway station for their journey to cave shrine in the first batch.

"Facilities are very good and the registration process is also smooth. We are very happy with the arrangements," Kumar said.

A Bengaluru resident, Upmata, who is here with seven other members of her family, said their fear disappeared soon after reaching the base camp.

Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) is pulling out all the stops to ensure smooth pilgrimage, scheduled to begin on June 30 from Kashmir, to the holy cave shrine housing the naturally formed ice-lingam in south Kashmir Himalayas.

Over 3,000 pilgrims have arrived in Jammu and have been housed in base camp and various lodging centres, the officials said, adding that about 400 sadhus' have also arrived in Ram Mandir camp for the yatra.

The first batch of pilgrims, including sadhus, will leave for the twin base camps of Kashmir a day ahead of the official commencement of the yatra which will culminate, according to tradition, on the day of Raksha Bandhan' festival on August 11.



PREPARING FOR BAN ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

Gave enough time to industry, people

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav on Tuesday said the government has given enough time to the industry and the general public to prepare for the ban on single-use plastic (SUP) items and it hopes for everyone's cooperation in implementing it from July 1.

Environment ministry officials said the notification to phase out 19 SUP items was

issued under the Environment Protection Act (EPA) and any violation will invite punitive action, including a fine or a jail term, detailed under Section 15 of the Act.

"The notification to phase out the 19 identified SUP items by July 1, 2022 was issued in August 2021. We have given enough time (to prepare for the phasing out of SUP items). We gave them (those dealing in SUP items) certainty for the future, made them understand



and the majority of them support it," the minister said in response to a question on some industry representatives saying they are not ready for the ban.

"I have met the industry representatives and the government hopes for their cooperation in phasing out single-use plastic items," he said.

On August 12 last year, the ministry had issued a notification prohibiting manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of identified SUP

commodities, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene from July 1, 2022.

The identified SUP items include earbuds, plastic sticks for balloons, flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, polystyrene (thermocool), plates, cups, glasses, forks, spoons, knives, straws, trays, wrapping or packaging films around sweets boxes, invitation cards, cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners of less than 100 micron, and stirrers.

G7 & the war

The grouping must act swiftly and effectively against Russia's barbaric invasion of Ukraine

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has rightly accused Russia of war crimes after a missile strike on a crowded shopping centre in Ukraine which killed 18 people and wounded over 59. He lashed out at Russian President Vladimir Putin's "cruelty and barbarism". In a joint statement issued on Monday, G7 leaders also remained "steadfast in our solidarity with Ukraine, and reaffirm our unwavering commitment to support the Government and people of Ukraine in their courageous defence of their country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and in their fight for a peaceful, prosperous and democratic future". This will enthuse Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy who, along with other Ukrainians, has been fighting valiantly against the much bigger and more powerful Russia. The US-led West's support for the besieged eastern European nation has been admirable; so also is the way they weaponised their financial dominance and used it against Moscow. Besides, their support to Ukraine by way of arming it with the latest arms and armaments is praiseworthy. The same, however, cannot be said about its effectiveness. Despite months of debilitating sanctions against Russia, its war machine is still buzzing. After over a century, Russia has defaulted over a \$100-million payment — not because it doesn't have money but because it is not allowed to pay its creditors. The default is likely to hurt the creditors rather than



Moscow; it won't surely hurt Putin enough to force him to call off the war.

G7 leaders are deploying other means to augment pressure on the Kremlin. They have agreed to study placing global price caps on imports of Russian energy to curb Moscow's ability to fund its invasion of Ukraine and to contribute up to \$5 billion to address global food insecurity, according to a *Reuters* report. However, they cannot be absolved of their role, though indirect, of enriching and thus emboldening Putin to such an extent that he could dare to attack Ukraine. Rich nations, swayed by the rhetoric of climate activists, became so obsessed with checking the use of fossil fuels that they discouraged production in their own jurisdictions. Under US President Joe Biden, for instance, the US has become a net energy importer, though his predecessor Donald Trump had ensured energy independence. This happened because Biden's Democratic Party has increasingly been influenced by the radical Left. Last year, Biden had also allowed Russia to sell oil to Europe. This is not to say that concerns about the environment should be ignored, but the action should be calibrated, not rash. Developed nations didn't realise that though climate change can end the world in a century, a nuclear war can do that in a day. Yes, that's a possibility! Frustrated that a small nation is not surrendering, Putin may decide to escalate his war. That may have calamitous consequences, not just for Ukraine and Europe but the entire world. G7 must ensure that its actions against Russia are not just effective but also non-escalatory.

PICTALK



A reveller at the annual NYC Pride March, in New York.

Stop messing with our military

It is the one institution the nation trusts; any efforts to tinker with its soul & ethos will certainly not go down well with the aspirants, the regulars or even the veterans

Thank the Almighty for minor mercies on Agniveer. After five days of avoidable all-India arson and damage (railways alone suffered losses of ₹1,000 crore), the Government has backpedalled. Some concessions have been made to Agnipath Yojana: One-time age waiver (21 to 23 years); unwritten reservation in Government jobs; promises of public and private sector employment for demobilised Agniveers, and skilling and higher education schemes — in short, they've been promised the moon when it is a distant crescent. The anger among youth is understandable as many have passed physical and medical tests. For IAF, aspirants had cleared even written examinations but were not called up. The charade of COVID was used to suspend regular recruitment and replaced with Agnipath. The youth were cheated.

Now that Agnipath has become irreversible, the merit of the scheme as youthful infusion into an aging Army was marked by colossal criticism including masking the real reason for its imposition, ie reduction of salary and pension bills. Hundreds of veterans including Param Vir Chakra winner, Capt Bana Singh, denigrated the project. He tweeted: 'save the country from Agnipath scheme as it would badly damage the youth'. Later, it seems he was forced to delete the tweet. Most former service Chiefs adopted *maun vrat*. Only former Naval Chief, Adm Arun Prakash, had the temerity to expose its infirmities. These days, it is dangerous to speak out or speak up lest you're targeted by one or the other public/private agencies. Not many veterans detected or objected to forcing down All India All Class (AIAC) recruitment on single class/caste regiments. But those who did made passionate appeals to spare the high-value regimental system in the fighting arms.

In final briefings to media by Additional Secretary (Department of Military Affairs) Lt Gen Anil Puri and Vice Chief of Army Staff, Lt Gen BS Raju, and NSA Ajit Doval allayed concerns about dismantling the reg-



imental system. This seems to be one more concession by the Government after the uproar. Lt Gen Raju told newspapers that Agnipath is in fact a pilot project and in response to pleas that it should be test-bedded, he said in four years Agniveer would be tweaked. This means the four year engagement could be increased and the number of re-enlisted could also be increased. The pay package offered to Agniveers is in fact less than what regular soldiers receive after enlistment. There are other anomalies, including severance package, which need to be scrutinised. Listening to youth on social media and TV, it is clear they cannot be duped as they are questioning all aspects of the project, including why not Agniveers for officers also?

In his briefing, Lt Gen Puri let the cat out of the bag. He said: "In the last two years, we got an opportunity and we stopped the recruitment process." So COVID was used as a pretext to stop recruitment when in fact Agnipath was being prepared. He also said: "The AIAC recruitment model will remain unchanged. 75 per cent of the Army is already AIAC except single-class regiments like Sikh, Dogra, Garhwal, Gorkha, Jat and the like. The regimentation (pre-



THE PAY PACKAGE OFFERED TO AGNIVEERS IS IN FACT LESS THAN WHAT REGULAR SOLDIERS RECEIVE. IT IS CLEAR THE YOUTH CANNOT BE DUPED AS THEY ARE QUESTIONING ALL ASPECTS OF THE PROJECT, INCLUDING WHY NOT AGNIVEERS FOR OFFICERS ALSO?

sumably meaning regimental system) will remain unchanged."

Doval said: "The policy on the recruitment will not affect the current regimental system. The concept of regiments, nobody is tinkering with. The regimental system has not ended." Doval insisted there will be no rollback of Agniveer. The good news is that a few single-class regiments which in 2032 will have 50 per cent Agniveer and 50 per cent regulars will continue and be exempt from AIAC. Doval is the highest-ranking Government official to confirm this and put worries of regimental diehards at rest.

In the future, when Agniveers are enlisted to full capacity of 125,000 annually and 100,000 will be demobilised, second careers will have to be found for the latter. Current assurances by all and sundry are unreliable. The problem is: Agniveers will not only be competing among themselves for re-enlistment, they will also be competing with fulltime regulars. Sporting their Agniveer badges (some are calling it a new rank?), singling out this group will create bad blood creating different types of soldiers. This is a bad idea and should be dropped.

As in the British military from whose sinews the Indian

system is derived, a military covenant is necessary between soldiers and the nation. The country should commit to taking care of them and their families through thick and thin as they put their lives on the block. Will the Agniveers qualify for this as the regulars do? The biggest challenge for Agniveers is their effective integration into the military system and assimilation into combat units imbued with regimental ethos, tradition and motivation which underline the ultimate test on the battlefield.

Varun Gandhi is the only parliamentarian who is deriding the new scheme. One has not seen such an enormous upheaval against what is ostensibly a transformative defence reform. Agnipath Yojana requires a transformation to ensure defence of the realm is not compromised. Given the backlash to Agnipath, Government is unlikely to pick a CDS anytime soon. It has turned it into a modern *swayamvar* with 150 people in the contest.

(The writer, a retired Lt Gen, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

US APEX COURT'S REGRESSIVE RULING

Sir —The US Supreme Court's ruling that abortion is no longer a constitutional right is a backward step. It represents an infringement of liberty to make personal choices; it strikes a blow against women's reproductive and physical autonomy. No wonder popular opinion in America is overwhelmingly against the ruling. US President Joe Biden has termed it a "tragic error" and warned that it risks the 'health and life of women'. Alas, American women are being denied the basic freedom to end a pregnancy. It is not explicitly stated if pregnancies resulting from rape and incest and detection of life-threatening or incurable deformities put no bar on women to seek an abortion.

Sometimes pregnancy poses a health risk to the mother and abortion is needed to save her life. There is also the danger of abortion going underground. The issue is far more complex and complicated than the six court justices have assumed it to be. Liberals look at the anti-abortion ruling as the beginning of a rightward shift in judicial pronouncements on issues that significantly affect the lives of millions. Laws governing modern societies need not be commensurate with religious fundamentalism or obscurantism.

G David Milton | Kanyakumari

NEXT STEP FOR SHINDE & CO.?

Sir — The question is being asked that why were the Shiv Sena rebels taken away from Assam and not to the BJP-ruled States of Goa, Karnataka or Madhya Pradesh? Why couldn't they stay in the BJP's citadel of Gujarat? And, finally why is Eknath Shinde still reluctant to return and demand a floor test? With parts of Assam reeling under floods, these MLAs in a five-star hotel come across as insensitive. The longer they stay there, the more the distance grows between them and their constituents. With Shinde facing much loss of face and capital, there is also the suspicion that many of the rebel MLAs may actually vote with Uddhav Thackeray in the House.

A bridge to development



The Padma Bridge inaugurated by Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is the country's biggest development project since the country's birth in 1971. It symbolises the country's transition from a poor country to a progressing one and substantiates Sheikh Hasina's commitment to public welfare and the country's development. The bridge, connecting India directly to Dhaka, will definitely boost Bangladesh's development. It is expected to impact the lives of 30 million people. What is so special about the bridge is that it was built entirely with domestic financing. It is a symbol

of the country's capacity, strength and dignity. Over the years, Bangladesh has made significant progress in different sectors.

Industrialisation, less poverty, improvement in human development, measures for gender equality, empowerment of women — all these achievements have changed the country. The opening of the Padma Bridge signifies the country's economic development. Bangladesh is smaller than India. On the other hand, the country is ahead of India in several development domains. India must take a leaf out of Bangladesh and take measures for her overall progress. One may argue that the construction of a bridge is only a small part of progress. However, the country's index of development substantiates the progress it has made. The success of Bangladesh shows that by focusing on infrastructure, education, gender equality, manufacturing and exports, a country can make great progress.

Venu GS | Kollam

The political drama enters the second week, possibly a decisive week, with time running out for the rebels. And with Sharad Pawar saying openly that it is his duty to protect his friend Bal Thackeray's son and political heir, emotions on the street are running high, something that the rebels will have to contend with. With this, it is sure that their political career is finished and they have become the enemy of the people of Maharashtra. Seemingly, they have dug their own grave.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

HISTORIC WIN FOR MADHYA PRADESH

Sir — History doesn't just happen by itself. The passion and drive of history makers write their own script. June 26, 2022 ... This date has become historic for cricket in Madhya Pradesh. For the first time, the Ranji team of Madhya Pradesh State has won the prestigious Ranji Trophy. The meaning of this achievement is even bigger because this team entered the field

without its five key players. Come to think of it, there was no famous player in the team. The final match was against a much stronger team like Mumbai, who have won the Ranji Trophy multiple times.

However, as they say, who can stand in front of an indomitable spirit? The passion to play the best, the will to win and the resulting stubbornness make players great. The team of Madhya Pradesh has proved this. Be it bowling or batting, the players proved their superiority on both fronts. The Madhya Pradesh cricket team has made a dream come true by winning the Ranji Trophy, which has been seen in the eyes of our State continuously for many years. After this victory, it is now expected that cricket will be taken more seriously in the State. This victory is historic.

Divyansha Sharma | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

I would reach out to my former colleagues in the BJP seeking their support (in the presidential poll).



Joint Opposition candidate —Yashwant Sinha



French President —Emmanuel Macron

Nothing has got delayed. No one needs to pick anyone up. I am a woman, not a parcel.



Actor —Alia Bhatt

It's everyone's worst fear that you get your period at Wimbledon. It shouldn't be embarrassing, but white makes it so.

Canadian tennis player —Rebecca Marino

We are in Shiv Sena... taking it forward. There should not be any doubt about it.



Maharashtra rebel —Eknath Shinde

Disintegrating?

The power tussle in the AIADMK threatens to break up the party and thrust it into oblivion

Modern-day politics in Tamil Nadu is intertwined with its films and cine stars. Starting with first DMK Chief Minister CN Annadurai to AIADMK's J Jayalalithaa and reigning CM MK Stalin, all had their moorings in films. The script and storylines of politics have a lot of similarities with films "assembled" in the studios of Kollywood. The tussle for power in the AIADMK, which is in a state of chaos following the demise of Jayalalithaa in 2016, resembles a comedy film. It has three leaders pulling the party in different directions and all of them are on a State-wide tour to drum up support. Last week's general council meeting in Chennai had a funny end with the participants unanimously shouting down the 23 resolutions introduced by party coordinator O Panneerselvam, who is out to take control of the AIADMK. Edappadi Palaniswami, leader of the Opposition and the party coordinator, wants a single leader to head the party and end the existing dual leadership system since it has not done the party any good since being introduced in August 2017. The AIADMK has not won any election since 2019, substantiating Palaniswami's reservations on dual leadership.



EPS, who was the CM from 2017 to 2021, has proved his mettle and capability. Panneerselvam's liaising with VK Sasikala, the former interim general secretary who was eased out of the AIADMK along with her family members in 2017 to facilitate unity between EPS and OPS, is being viewed with suspicion by party leaders. Sasikala, a close aide to late Jayalalithaa who was convicted with four-year imprisonment in a disproportionate assets case, is out to hijack the 50-year-old AIADMK. Sasikala is on a *Puratchi Payanam* (revolutionary journey) to influence party cadres and bring them over to her side. Chinnamma, as she is called by acolytes, had declared in 2012 that she would never aspire for any position or power in the party. In 2017, she was about to be sworn in as the CM but the Supreme Court verdict upholding her four-year term saved Tamil Nadu from that predicament. If these leaders fail to sail together, the golden jubilee year of the party could see the burial of the AIADMK. *The Pioneer* had forecast as early as December 11, 2016, that the AIADMK would disintegrate into fragments faster than it was formed. Is the AIADMK leadership reading this?

FIRST COLUMN

LOT NEEDS TO BE DONE FOR EASE OF LIVING

Challenge of living is a superset of ease of living



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Life is in a continuous dynamic mode. Among the more significant elements in the dynamic flow, there is the physical and the cognitive system. The periodic changes inside and outside the body are obvious indicators of change. Simultaneously, the intellectual and the emotional systems undergo a change. As it happens, most communities have little or no formal systems in assisting people to transit through this change.

Thus, the role of an individual in their own growth is a critical aspect of their coping with reality. This they learn through informal processes and from the environment in which they are embedded. This is an important element to keep in mind in studying how formal education through schools and colleges and informal learning from the context and the environment mutually support each other.

Thus, it is that learning that becomes a very important attribute of the act of living. The changes which one goes through physically, intellectually, and emotionally are significant to the very art of survival. This process is embedded in other features.

One grows up and gets married. Children are born out of marriage and the unit of reference changes. Like everything else, this too is a passing phase; children grow up and parents become again a unit of two.

All this is enmeshed in a dynamic social environment. The external governance systems evolve. This raises two important questions in the creation of civil society. One is access to resources and the other is opportunities for growth.



If there are too many moving parts then the challenge of living becomes bigger.

The challenge of living is a superset of the ease of living. Ease of living has to do, among other things, about forms and formats, screenings and verifications. The challenge of living has to do with the very act of availability of inputs such as energy, water, and security. In all this, the act of healthcare is fundamental.

Once this distinction between the challenge of living and ease of living is recognised, progress becomes simpler and therefore amenable to solutions to a higher degree.

Both the above issues, the challenge and the ease of living, cannot be handled without understanding the unit of reference. The unit of reference is often undefined. It can vary from community to community.

Consider the basic act of garbage collection. It is so basic that most people take it for granted. This is an oversimplification. In an upmarket colony of New Delhi, a little over a decade ago it was found that the sewerage pipe was laid parallel to the water pipe and during the monsoons, contamination of the flow in the water pipe took place from the flow in the sewerage pipe. Illness flowed.

Then proper garbage collection was started. One was the segregation of garbage, between the biomass type and the non-biodegradable type. Disposal of segregated garbage was recommended. This practice is yet to take root in many colonies of even the more evolved cities.

This recognition has to go hand in hand with which agency is charged with the level of collection of what type of garbage.

Illustrations can be many. The solutions will have to do with the recognition of the unit of reference: How is the agency for garbage collection decided? Who will be responsible for ensuring the fair distribution of energy, say, electricity? How will water supply be ensured? Put simply, there is a need to focus on identifying the basic unit of reference of understanding and operation of all systems at a local level, just as much as at any other level. Some work has begun, much more is needed.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal.)

Control mindset hurts privatisation process

The strategic sale of BPCL couldn't be carried out because the Government wants to regulate fuel prices



UTTAM GUPTA



PRIVATE PLAYERS CAN'T MATCH THE PRICES OFFERED BY HPCL, IOCL AND BPCL. EVEN THE LATTER WON'T BE ABLE TO ABSORB THE UNDER-RECOVERIES BEYOND A POINT, WHICH WILL MANIFEST IN REDUCED SUPPLIES FROM THEM SOONER RATHER THAN LATER

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around Rs 60,000 crore (prevailing share price multiplied by the number of shares corresponding to 53.29 per cent holding).

In that year, the market environment was favorable even as the international price of crude oil (fortunes of oil companies move in tandem with it) was hovering around \$70 per barrel. The Government could have got strategic investors willing to put the required sum for buying its entire stake. But the bureaucrats were not ready.

During 2020-21, thanks to the Covid pandemic causing large-scale destruction of demand globally, the average price of crude declined to just about \$40 per barrel (in April 2020, it had plummeted to a low of \$20 per barrel). This made the market environment highly unfavorable.

That apart, the entire Government machinery was too preoccupied with mitigating the consequences of the pandemic—protecting both lives and livelihoods of people.

During 2021-22, the price recovered and ruled above \$70 per barrel, most of the time leading to significant improvement in the market environment. But the officials were not ready yet again, leading to deferment of the sale to 2022-23.

During the current fiscal, the international crude price has zoomed because of the Ukraine war, economic sanctions imposed by the US and the European Union on Russia, and the resulting disruption in supplies of oil and gas. With crude price hovering around \$120 per barrel (at one point, it had even touched \$140 per barrel) and substantially higher valuations of oil

companies, this was a propitious time for carrying out the sale. But it was not to be.

The Government's decision to put BPCL sale on hold at this juncture—when market conditions are favorable and all procedures needed to conduct the sale already in place—may sound a bit puzzling. To unravel the puzzle, let us look at the following:

In theory, petrol and diesel prices were deregulated in June 2010 and November 2014, respectively, as the oil companies were given the freedom to fix their retail price, using a formula that combines their respective import parity price (IPP) and export parity price (EPP) in the ratio of 80:20.

But, in practice, political control over the retail prices of petroleum products is still there. The Government can do this because of the three oil marketing Central PSUs—Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), and BPCL—which account for around 90 per cent of the domestic fuel retail network. Well, technically HPCL is a subsidiary of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), but then ONGC is itself a Central PSU.

The managements of ONGC/HPCL, IOCL, and BPCL receive tacit instructions from their bosses to maintain the prices at the desired levels—that is, the levels that top politicians desire. These are often unrelated to the market determined-prices. For instance, the current pump price of petrol in Delhi is Rs 97 per liter which corresponds to a crude benchmark of \$90 per barrel—as against the current crude price of \$115 per barrel for the Indian basket. If these

undertakings were really free to fix the price based on the formula (linked to \$115 per barrel), the pump price would have been Rs 110 per liter.

Against this backdrop, if one of these oil PSUs (that is, BPCL), accounting for about 25 per cent of the retail outlets, goes into private hands, the Government's ability to influence fuel prices will be diminished significantly.

In the current scenario, when the international oil price is projected to remain high, Prime Minister Narendra Modi can't afford to allow an unrestrained hike in the retail prices of fuels—especially in view of a number of impending state elections. He would like to keep the leverage to influence fuel prices. Hence the decision to put the sale of BPCL on the backburner.

But this is a patently unwise move. Already, an artificial cap on retail prices has led to a drastic cut in fuel supplies from private firms such as RIL and Nayara Energy. They can't match the prices offered by HPCL, IOCL, and BPCL. Even the latter won't be able to absorb the under-recoveries beyond a point, which will manifest in reduced supplies from them sooner rather than later.

Besides, it will impact the valuation of BPCL as and when it is taken up for strategic sale in the future.

A big bottleneck that comes in the way of strategic sales is the desire of the establishment to remain in the driver's seat eternally. Until there is a change in the mindset, privatisation of BPCL or, for that matter, of any other PSU won't happen. And if it happens, it won't fetch a good price.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

WE SHOULD NEVER FORGET THAT DREADFUL PERIOD OF EMERGENCY.... WE MOVE FORWARD, LEARNING FROM EVERY IMPORTANT STAGE OF HISTORY.
—PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



THERE'S COMPETITION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE RUPEE AS TO WHOSE VALUE IS FALLING FASTER? ATTENTION MUST BE PAID TO GOVERNANCE.
—CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI

Agnipath good for modernisation but needs relook

The scheme is advantageous for youth and national defence but it should be changed with inputs from armed forces

The Government announced on June 14 that all soldiers below the officer ranks of the three wings of the military would be recruited through the Agnipath Scheme. The Government has taken this decision to keep the armed forces young, making the youth disciplined, and rendering them highly skilled after four years of service, besides of course saving money for the modernisation.

The Scheme has been praised by a large number of experts and veterans, but many in the defence community and also the Opposition parties and political observers have expressed their reservations about the scheme, resulting in protests and violent demonstrations all over the



PK VASUDEVA

(The author is a retired senior professor, International Trade.)

country. It is sad that the government property like railways, buses and cars have been burnt by the youth who should be debarred from the recruitment at one and made to pay for the damage to the public property. Nobody can be allowed to indulge in arson whatever the cause.

As opposed to the existing 15 plus years' service, followed by a lifelong pension, the new recruits, Agniveers, will have a four-year tenure, including six months' training. On completion of four years of service, 25 per cent of them will get the permanent cadre, while the rest will be given opportunities in other organisations at the national and state levels.

They will exit with a tax-free purse of approximately Rs

11.71 lakh and return to civil life. Excellent army training, food, clothing, boarding and lodging, a regimented life of four years, a disciplined lifestyle, and a matured mindset will be the hallmarks for the Agniveers.

Over the years, Agniveers would emerge as a strong second line of defence in the country.

The government has announced 10 per cent reservation packages for the retiree Agniveers in Police, Central Armed Police Forces (CARF), Ministry of Defence Undertakings, and Railways after the completion of four years term.

Overall, the scheme is excellent for nation building. It will help build a younger, healthier, and fitter defence military, high-

ly skilled in the changing technological environment. It will also inculcate military discipline, ethos and skilling as a value addition, improving the prospects for those who return to civil society. It will encourage youth to become entrepreneurs for the economic growth of the country.

Yet, it seems that the Centre was not thorough in its homework before launching this scheme. A study known as "Tour of Duty" (TOD) was carried out about two years ago at the Training Command; all stakeholders gave their inputs.

The scheme needed to be launched as India is emerging as a major pivot in the global order, being a key nation in two security arrangements—one in the Indo-Pacific and another with the US, the UAE,

and Israel. The Indian military has to adapt to the changing strategic interests keeping in view the threat perception from across the borders.

The presentations were made at the Ministry of Defence (MoD) level; the blueprint of the Agnipath Scheme was drawn out for implementation at a suitable time. The army recruitment methodology of leading military nations was kept in mind while framing it. The main planners of this scheme were Training Command, the late CDS General Bipin Rawat, NSA Ajit Doval, Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh, and Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar, along with the Finance Ministry.

The three service Chiefs had a very limited role to play in formulating the scheme. The committee so constituted

was bureaucratic in nature, which gave the recommendations for a younger and leaner force with reduced financial liability for modernisation.

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approved this Scheme. However, it was not put up in Parliament. The NSA, who is highly capable in security issues may not be well-versed with the nuances of the armed forces, represented the three services and CDS.

The whole scheme needs to be refurbished by an expert committee which must have members from the armed forces too. The government is making amendments to the scheme in a piecemeal manner. The youth of the country is completely confused.

Instead of strengthening the armed forces, the scheme

will weaken their strength if not implemented properly. The committee must go through the pensions of the defence civilians who get one-third of the total defence pensions. They need to be replaced by armed forces personnel.

Politician's pensions have a serious flaw. These also need to be looked into and pruned.

The violent reactions by the youth in the country could have been avoided and a number of lives saved if had been passed by Parliament and discussed at length at the Armed Forces Commanders Conference, before announcing it piecemeal.

The interest of the armed forces cannot be compromised at any cost.

MONEY MATTERS

DoT issues norms for captive private network licences

The telecom department has issued rules for enterprises setting up Captive Non Public Network (CNPN), stipulating a minimum network of Rs 100 crore for applicants seeking direct assignment of spectrum from the government. The applicant must be an Indian company registered under the Companies Act. Department of Telecom (DoT) said listing out the broad guidelines that would apply for CNPN licence, including rules for enterprises setting up such networks. The CNPN licensee would not be required to pay any entry fee or licence fee. "For seeking direct assignment of spectrum from the government, the network of the applicant shall not be less than Rs 100 crore," it said. On the scope of the CNPN licence for enterprises, it said such a licensee may establish indoor/within premise isolated captive non public network for own use within the areas of operation of licence.



Global Surfaces files IPO draft papers with Sebi

Global Surfaces Ltd, which is engaged in the business of processing natural stones and manufacturing engineered quartz, has filed preliminary papers with Sebi to mop up funds through an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO comprises fresh issuance of 85.20 lakh equity shares and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 25.5 lakh equity shares by promoters ---- Mayank Shah and Sweta Shah, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). Funds raised through fresh issuance of equity shares will be used for setting up the company's proposed facility -- Global Surfaces FZE-- in Dubai. For FY22, the company posted a profit after tax of Rs 35.63 crore as compared to Rs 33.93 crore in FY21 and its total income was at Rs 198.35 crore as against Rs 179 crore in FY21. Unistone Capital is the sole book running lead manager to the issue. The equity shares of the company will be listed on the BSE and NSE.



Digital ads dominate FY22, ASCI takes help of AI-based tracking system

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) on Tuesday said the regulator has set up a digital tracking system and is using Artificial Intelligence-based monitoring system to monitor advertisements for misleading content in a digital-first world. ASCI while releasing its Annual Complaints Report for FY 2021-22 said, sectors such as education, healthcare and personal care were found as the top three violative categories, in the digital space. Ads are increasingly being served and consumed on personal screens, making it difficult for regulators to truly understand the scale and impact, ASCI said, adding that "the volume of advertising creative units has exploded, and it is estimated that an average person is exposed to 6,000-10,000 ads per day." Now the digital ecosystem has taken centre stage with crypto and gaming emerging in the top five violative categories in FY22.



Govt will remove barriers in credit flow to MSMEs: Verma

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Emphasising the MSME sector's important role in making India a USD 5-trillion economy, Union Minister Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma on Tuesday said the government will remove all the barriers in credit flow to this sector.

The Union Minister of State for MSME also said that the government was also committed to develop a better system of redressal and debt facilities.

Verma was addressing a session - Making Indian MSMEs Globally Competitive through Trade, Finance & Investment Facilitation - on the second day of Uttar Pradesh MSME Convention 2022.

It was organised by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) in association with the central government and the MSME ministry.

The theme of this session was making the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises



(MSMEs) globally competitive through trade, finance and better investment facilities.

The minister said the MSME sector is being developed as a new engine of growth in the country and modernised through innovation and will be more competitive.

Verma said that the export business from the MSME sec-

tor is continuously increasing with the contribution to the country's exports now touching almost 50 per cent. "It also accounts for about 30 per cent of the country's GDP. In such a situation, the role of our MSME sector becomes important in strengthening India's position in the global trade," he said. The industry has to move with time and must focus on

adopting new-age technology, including digitising systems, processes and operations in all aspects of the business to save time and expenses, he said.

In his address at the session, Ravi Gupta, Co-Chairman of Assocham National Council on WTO Trade and Investment, stressed on MSMEs to keep their products eco-friendly and clean. He

said that the small-scale industries of the state can play an important role in the economic development of the country. Since Uttar Pradesh is renowned for its leather, carpets, handicrafts, milk, and milk products, which are produced on a large scale, the state can play an important role in making them self-reliant, he added.

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Credit card spend crosses Rs 1.13 lakh cr in May: RBI data

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Credit card spending has crossed Rs 1.13 lakh crore in May compared to Rs 1.05 lakh crore in the previous month according to official data. The month-on-month rise in spending through cards indicates a pick-up in economic activity. The latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) showed that 7.68 crore credit card holders spent about Rs 71,429 crore for buying online, while the amount was spent through swipes at Point of Sale (PoS) machines stood at Rs 42,266 crore in May. In terms of the number of transactions, credit card payments were marginally lower online at 11.5 crore against 12.2 crore off line or at PoS machines.



Sensex, Nifty end marginally up amid recovery in global markets



PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded from early lows to close marginally up on Tuesday following fag-end buying in energy, IT and auto stocks and a recovery in global equities.

Posting gains for a fourth session in a row, the 30-share BSE Sensex settled up 16.17 points or 0.03 per cent at 53,177.45. During the day, it had declined 389.75 points or 0.73 per cent to 52,771.53. The NSE Nifty gained 18.15 points or 0.11 per cent to 15,850.20.

In the Sensex pack, Mahindra & Mahindra, Reliance Industries, Dr Reddy's Laboratories, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel and

Larsen & Toubro were among the gainers. Titan, Asian Paints, Bajaj Finserv, Kotak Mahindra Bank and ICICI Bank were among the major laggards. Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Tokyo, Shanghai, Seoul and Hong Kong bounced back after initial decline and ended with gains. European markets were trading in the green in mid-session deals. The US markets had ended lower on Monday. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.58 per cent to USD 116.9 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital market, as they sold shares worth Rs 1,278.42 crore on Monday, as per exchange data.

Rupee tanks 46 paise to close at 78.83 against US dollar

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The rupee plunged by 46 paise to close at record low of 78.83 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, weighed down by persistent foreign capital outflows and a surge in crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened lower at 78.53 against the greenback and finally settled at 78.83, down 46 paise over its



previous close. During the session, the rupee touched an all-time low of 78.85 against the American currency. "The Indian rupee touched an all-time low

against the US Dollar amid weak domestic equities and a surge in crude oil prices. Sustained selling by foreign investors also put downside pressure on Rupee," Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas said. The rupee is expected to trade on a negative note on risk aversion in domestic markets and continued selling pressure from foreign institutional investors (FIIs).

SUPERCOMPUTING CAPABILITIES

India lags in AI research activities; needs to equal China

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Government think tank Niti Aayog's outgoing chief executive Amitabh Kant on Tuesday said the country lags in artificial intelligence research activities, and also needs to elevate its supercomputing capabilities to those possessed by China. Speaking at an Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) event virtually, Kant said Niti Aayog had come out

with a strategy paper on AI in 2018 itself, making India among the first countries to look at using the emerging technologies for social good. However, some challenges mentioned in the AI document continue to be pertinent, he said. "We lag behind in terms of core and applied research," Kant said, adding that in high quality research, India still trails behind US and China and will have to take efforts to catch up.

Mandaviya reviews preparations for India-Chem event

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chemical and Fertiliser Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday reviewed the preparation for the upcoming 12th edition of India-Chem to be held in October.

The three-day event beginning October 6, 2022 will be organised in association with industry body FICCI. Mandaviya also launched a brochure with the theme "Vision 2030 Chemicals and Petrochemicals Build India, an official

statement said. Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilizers Bhagwant Khuba, Secretary Arti Ahuja and members of FICCI were present in the review meeting.

"The event will showcase tremendous potential and supportive government policy for sustainable growth in the sector. It will also provide a platform for domestic and international investors and other stakeholders to interact and forge alliances...," Mandaviya said. While the government has been providing a favourable ecosys-

tem for global investors with its "ease of business" policies and incentives, the upcoming global event will showcase India as a favourable destination for investors and stakeholders in the chemicals sector, he added.

Currently, the market size of the Indian chemicals and petrochemicals sector is USD 178 billion. India is the sixth largest chemicals producer in the world and exports to more than 175 countries. It accounts for 13 per cent of India's total exports.



HOME TEXTILE MAKERS

Slowing exports, rising cost likely to limit profitability

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Lower export demand and a sharp increase in raw material and transportation costs are likely to result in moderate operating profitability for home textile makers at around 13 per cent in this financial year, according to a report.

Slowing exports growth and high cotton prices will hit the operating margins of home textile exporters by 150-200 bps or around 13 per cent this fiscal. The rupee's depreciation against the dollar and sustenance of the China+1 policy by global buyers will cushion the hit on profitability to some extent," Crisil Ratings Senior Director Mohit Makhija said.

The second half of this fiscal should gradually restore demand momentum and market share for



Indian home textile exporters as freight and raw cotton costs moderate, and ease pressure on profitability, he added. Exports

account for 60-70 per cent of the Indian home textile industry's revenue, of which over 58 per cent shipments are sent to the

US, according to the Crisil Ratings report. The report stated that global demand for home textiles is expected to be impact-

ed in the near-term by inflationary headwinds, with big-box retailers pruning inventory and consumers cutting down on discretionary spends.

A slowdown in the sales of key US retailers in the past 3-6 months has led to an on-year decline of 5-6 per cent in overall home textile exports from India between January and April 2022, it noted. Adding to the demand challenge, the price of raw cotton, a key input in home textiles, has more than doubled year-on-year in May to Rs 1,00,000 per candy (about 356 kg), it said.

This will remain a challenge for exporters till the new cotton crop arrives starting October, the report said. Supply-chain disruptions leading to volatility in ocean freight rates will also impact profitability, it added.

Billionaire Pallonji Mistry dies at 93; PM pays tribute

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Billionaire Pallonji Mistry, Chairman of diversified Shapoorji Pallonji (SP) Group, died in the wee hours of Tuesday here, company officials said.

Mistry, whose SP Group is the largest shareholder in the Tata Group with 18.37 per cent holding in the over USD 100 billion conglomerate, was 93.

India-born Mistry died mid-sleep at 0100 hrs at the family residence in South Mumbai, they said. He had acquired Irish citizenship.

Paying tribute to him, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted that he is saddened by the passing away of the billionaire. He made monumental



contributions to the world of commerce and industry, Modi said.

Born in 1929, Mistry headed the privately held, over USD 5-billion SP Group having its roots in the construction business, which had diversified into other businesses like real estate, textiles, shipping and

home appliances. The reclusive business icon, who was reportedly worth over USD 29 billion, was awarded with the Padma Bhushan, India's third highest civilian award, in 2016.

He is survived by four children, including Cyrus Mistry, who succeeded Ratan Tata as Chairman of the Tata Group before being ousted by the board in 2016. In the last few years, the going has been tough for the SP Group from a financial perspective and it also suffered difficulties with raising money by pledging its Tata Group shares. The Mistrys have been challenging the removal of Cyrus and in the process of the legal tangles, have also offered to exit their holding in the Tata Group.

Chris Hemsworth fanboys over *Thor: Love and Thunder* co-star Russell Crowe



Chris Hemsworth, who is set to headline the upcoming superhero film *Thor: Love and Thunder*, recently expressed his happiness on co-starring with Academy and Golden Globe award winning actor Russell Crowe in the film, who happens to be the latest addition to the MCU.

Speaking of acting alongside Crowe, Chris Hemsworth who plays the titular role of Thor in the franchise, said, "I never thought I'd see the day where Russell would appear on-screen with

hints at 'Gladiator' imagery, yet with a wink, totally self-deprecating. He didn't hold back."

In his own words, Hemsworth fanboyed over Crowe, who is former's childhood idol. "I'm such a fan. I have been since I first started acting. There's such a weight and a seriousness to his performances and to him, as an individual, from afar. But meeting him, he has a great sense of humour and did whatever Taika asked on set, which was mind-blowing," Hemsworth added.

Selena Gomez Is 'Just Not Happy' With Overturning Roe v Wade Decision By US Supreme Court

Singer-actress Selena Gomez has voiced her opinion on the recent overturning of the landmark Roe v. Wade by the US Supreme Court, reports 'Variety'. The recent verdict, which effectively ends federal protections for abortion access, has sparked protests across the US. Selena, who attended the red carpet premiere of her upcoming second season of the mystery comedy series *Only Murders in the*

Building, took a moment during the event to speak out against the Supreme Court's recent decision. Selena told 'Variety', "It's about getting men - men needing to stand up and also speak against this issue." "It's also the amount of women that are hurting. I'm just not happy and I hope that we can do everything in our power to do something to change that," she added. 'Variety' further states that Gomez

also pointed others to a recent post she shared on Twitter, in which she shared a link to Planned Parenthood's website, explaining it as a valuable resource on what people can do next to help defend abortion access on a state level. Earlier, Gomez had written on her Twitter, "Watching a Constitution I right be stripped away is horrific. A woman should have the right to choose what she wants to do with her own body. End of story."



Kabir Bedi honoured with lifetime achievement award

Veteran actor Kabir Bedi was honoured with a lifetime achievement award at the 5th edition of Filming Italy Sardegna Festival that took place recently in the spectacular location of Sardinia, Italy. Apart from Bollywood, Kabir Bedi is a famous personality in Europe, especially Italy where he has acted in popular productions. Tiziana Rocca, director of the festival said, "Kabir is receiving this award for his career and achievements in the movie industry. His incredible career made him an icon of international cinema, which made the world fall in love with him."

Tiziana also organises Cannes and Venice festivals. Kabir thanked Italy for all the glory it had given him over the years.

Other recipients of the award this year include Danny Glover, Winston Duke, Regina King, James Franco and Edgar Ramirez.

Later, Kabir was in Rome for a masterclass with Steven Gaydos, Vice President and Executive Editor of VARIETY at the historic location, the Museum of Ara Pacis, which was closed down while the masterclass was conducted. Kabir said, "The Ara Pacis Museum was a stunning setting for a masterclass. This has been a wonderful



culmination of my tour in Italy which started with the promotion of the Italian edition of my autobi-

ography and a fundraising tour for the Italian charity Care & Share Italia, which educates slum chil-

dren in India. I feel blessed by the recognition and love that I continue to get from Italy."

Red Giant Movies acquires TN distribution rights of Vikram-starrer *Cobra*

Actor and politician Udhayanidhi Stalin's Red Giant Movies has acquired the Tamil Nadu distribution rights of director Ajay Gnanmuthu's eagerly awaited action thriller *Cobra*, which features actor Vikram in the lead.

Making the announcement on its Twitter handle, Red Giant Movies said, "Thrilled to announce that Red Giant Movies has acquired the Tamil Nadu theatrical distribution rights for Chiyaan Vikram's *Cobra*. Save the date. *Cobra* from

August 11."

Cobra, which took close to three years to film, has triggered a lot of interest among audiences as it will mark the acting debut of former Indian cricketer Irfan Pathan, who plays the villain in the film.

Vikram plays a brilliant mathematician who uses numbers to solve crimes in the film, which features Srinidhi Shetty as the female lead.

The film has cinematography by Harish Kannan and music by A R Rahman.



FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



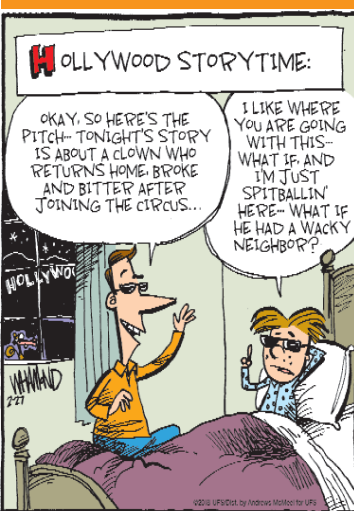
NANCY



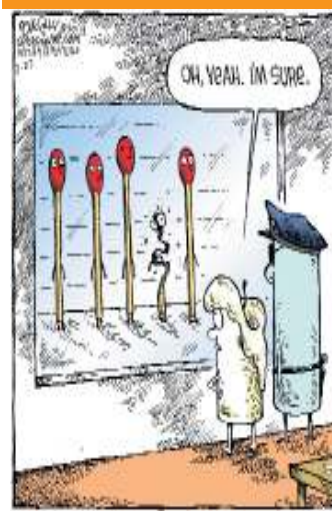
GINGER MEGGS



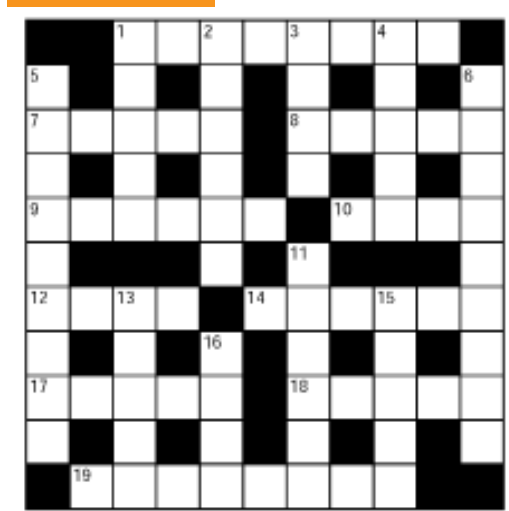
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Altering
- 7 To cook something in an oven
- 8 Last
- 9 Failed to remember
- 10 Injured by a bullet
- 12 Stink
- 14 An award for a successful university student
- 17 One of the planets
- 18 Lift up
- 19 Tree limbs

DOWN

- 4 Follows eighth
- 5 Favoured, liked better
- 6 Squashed
- 11 Look very carefully for something
- 13 Mistake
- 15 Straps controlling a horse
- 16 Part of the face



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution								
2	7	9	8	6	3	5	1	4
8	3	1	7	4	5	6	2	9
4	5	6	1	9	2	7	3	8
1	8	4	6	3	9	2	7	5
9	2	5	4	1	7	3	8	6
3	6	7	2	5	8	4	9	1
5	1	3	9	2	6	8	4	7
6	4	8	3	7	1	9	5	2
7	9	2	5	8	4	1	6	3

Rules

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



Mompreneurs in a battle to make a mark

A mompreneur is a common term used these days to address working mothers and women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs often have the toughest time to create the right work life balance between the workplace, home responsibilities and time with their family, children and importantly themselves.

The couple of variables that help them tide over this smoothly are time management and the art to prioritize between work and family over the course of the day.

"Even though women entrepreneurs as well as mompreneurs are becoming more common, there are still stereotypes circulating about them. These stereotypes of women entrepreneurs, and mompreneurs specifically, are blemishes and doesn't not reflect what it's like actually to be a working mother in the business world.

Mompreneurs are repeatedly facing stereotypes such as the men must go out and earn money, while women stay at home and raise the children. While this may have been the way it was in the past, but in today's times, both parents are going out into the workforce. However, it's the moms who gets the criticism," adds Ekta Mohanani Kamra, a mompreneur at Hop and Bop. She highlights that another one of the social stereotypes for mompreneurs is that one has to have complete balance in every aspect of their life. Which means they should spend half their waking hours running

the household chores and caring for their children, and the other half working.

"Striking a perfect balance between all chores isn't always possible. Depending on the season of motherhood one is, one will dedicate different amounts of time to different areas like work, family, and health. It's a harmful assumption that balance exists, and when you are a mother, it does not. Instead of trying to fit everything in and feeling bad if one can't get it all done one must prioritize time and energy based on the season of motherhood," she mentioned.

There is this stereotype too that mompreneurs are just bored housewives who don't have anything better to do with their day, so they run an online business and don't really do much. As more and more successful moms make a living from the internet and other ventures, people are realizing that the stereotype is proving to be extremely wrong.

One of the ways in which mompreneurs can fight back against this gender stereotype is to build successful businesses and get their names out there. She further ends saying, "If one is a working mom, they enjoy what they do and work a lot, and not put their children's needs first. This stereotype only justifies that a mother is the only one responsible for raising the child and places too much emphasis on the mother having to do and be all of the things. It is important to break these stereotypes and not give into what society has to say."

'Storytelling and technology go hand-in-hand'

TEJAL SINHA

Storytelling is an art in itself. With the introduction of film, the form of storytelling evolved, as the use of various visuals and audio began to create a much bigger impact than ever before. This is what Kartikye Gupta believes in.

Born in India and based in Los Angeles, Kartikye had a strong interest in visual storytelling at an early age. His journey began by exploring foreign cinema with films like Cinema Paradiso and In the Mood for Love. The stylistic visual design of each frame took the storytelling to another level.

It is generally believed that short-form content films are easier to make. However, he denies this and says, "I started out directing short-form content including films, commercials, and music videos. Short-form content is always more challenging than a longer format in terms of telling your story in the shortest amount of time. Introducing your hero, goals, conflict, and creating a fulfilling journey for a viewer is very hard to achieve in 10-15 minutes, but having two hats, as a director and editor, always helped me keep my films engaging and captivating. One may think it's easier to engage someone for ten to fifteen minutes than to do a two-hour film, but you also have to think that the platform viewer watching short form content is mostly on their home or phone screens where they have easy access to change or quit the programme rather than visiting a theater, buying popcorn, and getting yourself ready for two hours of entertainment." He has also directed some high-profile projects like *Dr. Elevator* with major names, and not only getting recognition from major film festivals, including Cannes, but also from Oscar winning actress Viola Davis, made him continue following his



dreams of storytelling.

He says, "Having a passion for editing, I found it as the magic wand to present much more cinematic stories. Editing is the uttermost end of the filmmaking process and the closest thing to what is presented to the audience. It's almost like you are rewriting a film on the editing table with the video and sound clips you are given. I've seen films that were completely changed on an editing table to achieve success and I've seen films that were compelling in the writing stage, but the pace of the editing ruined them."

He shares an example from a film that he has edited, *Mirage*. He says, "Despite the fact that the film is set in contemporary Los Angeles, as the editor of the film, I took the creative liberty to set the rhythm of the film similar to the 90s, highlighting the intimacy between the characters and underlining the complex world they lived in. With only two words of dialogue in the entire film, it was the pacing that was established editorially that drew the line

between the present and the past of its cinematic world. Things like these ended up scooping the film a qualification in BAFTA while it received three other film awards, including a well-earned nod for Best Film Editing."

Coming from a South Asian background, his films revolve around the immigrant experience of South Asians in the United States. His upcoming projects include Time's Studios documentary series, *Right To Offend*, and Showtime's documentary series, *Supreme Team*, premiering at the upcoming Tribeca film festival.

He says, "Stereotypes about minorities have been prevalent throughout history, and their portrayals in popular media have mostly been reductive. I'm a native South Asian filmmaker, who is crafting compelling stories that aren't just there to serve as diversity tokens but actually,

but cinematic experience through *Dr. Elevator* was no easy task."

He further adds, "I'm a filmmaker who wants to fully transfer the audience into the story, freeing themselves from their problems, and leave them laughing and able to see things through a different perspective

The Pioneer connects with filmmaker Kartikye Gupta, known for his award-winning productions like *Dr. Elevator* (2016) and *Please Don't Call The Cops* (2017), who shares with us some exclusive details about his debut in the *Metaverse*.

wards. Most of the Indians frantically mugged up textbooks. So I trapped an Indian mathematician with Asperger's in an elevator with a strange woman going into labor, and he had to rise to the occasion and deliver the baby. Locking characters in a closed environment like an elevator was very challenging at every level, be it writing, cinematography, or editing. The script had to be so tightly put together with a skosh of humour coming every minute. I was almost rewriting the whole story, characters, and conflict again on the editing table by creating a rhythm and relationship between three unknown characters."

"He believes that storytelling and technology go hand in hand. A few years ago, films were only entertained on a two-dimensional screen, at a conventional movie theater. But now, there's content specially made for your 32-inch home TV, and there's been progress in curating content on your phone screens directly.

He was instrumental in creating and piecing together the visuals for the trending *Metaverse* film, which was brought to the world

for the first time by Facebook at the connect. The film highlights the next evolution of social connection that the company is bringing. The event was watched by 15 million people globally.

Telling us more about it, Kartikye shares, "Back in 2014, I used to follow Google Earth a lot to explore. I learned that Facebook had acquired Oculus. I couldn't wait to buy and try virtual reality myself for the first time when it came out in 2018. Those days, there wasn't much content, but it was such a gripping experience to come across characters and build such an intimacy between the audience and the story. I had to dive into virtual reality and start exploring the best ways to tell my story on that platform. Until a well-known commercial agency based in Los Angeles was hired to showcase a futuristic virtual reality experience. We were looking to highlight futuristic themes but also retro, which people can relate to easily. After a while, I was surprised to know that I was making it to the biggest technological advancement that Facebook was about to make in presenting virtual reality, the so-called *Metaverse*, to the world. The project was heavily based on visual effects to enhance and take the viewer on a futuristic journey that they can experience sitting in their living room."

This year, three of the films he has worked on are premiering at Tribeca. Time Studios' *Right to Offend: The Black Comedy Revolution* explores the progression of black comedy and the comedians who have used pointed humour to expose, challenge, and ridicule society's injustices. *The Supreme Team*, which takes an in-depth look at the notorious Queens, New York gang and tells the real story from the mouths of its two leaders and family members, Kenneth Supreme McGriff and Gerald Prince Miller, and third is a short film, *Malleable*, where he helped his close friend Mario Fierro with creating and editing visual effects.

"I have edited one of the Arjun Kanungo music videos, which was released and went viral with 3M views in ten days. I'm also working at an Oscar-winning post facility, *Rock Paper Scissors*, in Los Angeles, on exciting projects there as well. And to further contribute to VR, I've been developing a lot of immersive experiences and games for various global brands in the so-called *Metaverse*," signs off the filmmaker.

cers and a delusional maid to survive. Can they do it? Or do they fall victim to the madness of the night! Directed by Sunil Manchanda, the series stars Rajeev Khandelwal, Manjari Fadnnis, Rushad Rana, Ashmita Bakshi and Prasad Khandekar in pivotal roles and will premiere on July 1, exclusively on MX Player.

Manjari Fadnnis reacts to the rumor of getting married to Rajeev Khandelwal

During the promotions of MX Player's Original Series, *Miya, Biwi Aur Murder*, Manjari Fadnnis revealed a weird rumor that had left her in shock. She revealed, "Someone randomly congratulated me on my wedding with Rajeev Khandelwal. And I was shocked to hear that. My instant reaction was like who, me, who got married and to who? I realized this much later that our names (mine and his wife is called Manjiri) are almost similar so the industry people got confused."

Talking about the bond between the two ladies with almost the same name, Rajeev Khandelwal said, "Manjari and Manjiri are both good friends now. I was apprehensive of what would media write as I was now working with Manjari Fadnnis and how would it be perceived as their names are so similar. But there was no stress. Manjiri is cool with me doing intimate scenes. Also, it was great fun to work with Manjari. It never felt like I met her for the first time."

The intriguing trailer of the show gives a sneak peek into the troubled married life of Priya and Jayesh and the strange events that unfold on one single night. As people are poisoned, shots get fired, and dead bodies keep piling on, the *Miya and Biwi* will have to stick together to take on devious thieves, dreaded gangsters, blackmailing police offi-



Dr. Veerendra Mudnoor MBBS, MS, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Apollo Spectra Hyd Kondapur

OSTEOARTHRITIS AT A YOUNG AGE? HERE'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Osteoarthritis is the most common type of arthritis. It strikes when the cartilage at the joint that cushions the bones from both ends begins to wear down.

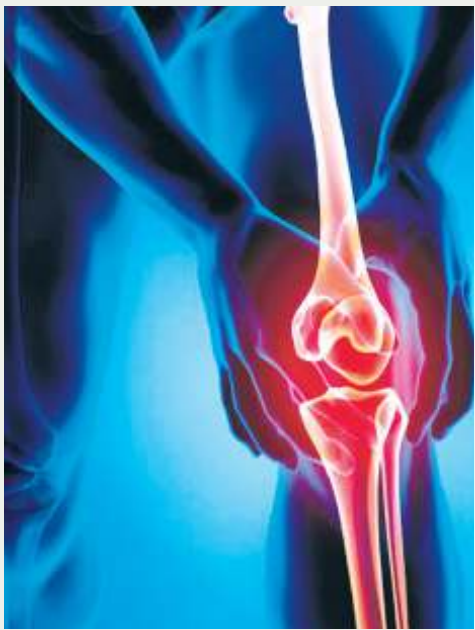
With the deterioration of the cartilage, the bone begins to rub against the other end. This occurrence causes pain, stiffness, and difficulty in movement.

Although Osteoarthritis is prevalent among the elderly population, it has become common among the 25-40 demographic in the recent past. Patients of Osteoarthritis are commonly found complaining about the pain in joints of the hands, Knees, spine, and hip. According to the Indian Institute of Medical Sciences, Osteoarthritis can be attributed to Vitamin D deficiency. Several factors influence the development of this form of arthritis, such as gender, genetics, and obesity.

Dr. Veerendra Mudnoor, MBBS, MS, Orthopaedic Surgeon, Apollo Spectra Hyderabad-Kondapur says, "Symptoms of Osteoarthritis are identifiable with the onset of pain and stiffness in joints; it causes discomfort upon exertion. Usually, after rest, the joints may feel stiff, but this may resolve as movement resolves. Other common symptoms may include external swelling indicating inflammation in the joints, clicking sound upon movement, and hard lumps on the joints, which indicate the development of osteophytes. The condition also strains daily activities as it causes hindrances in the movement of the muscles freely due to a lack of flexibility."

The most common causes of Osteoarthritis include obesity leading to extra pressure on the weight-bearing joints, a sedentary lifestyle, practicing regular impact sports such as football or hockey, or a job that puts continued strain on the joints and bone injuries. It is also found that women face a greater risk of having the condition. Some patients might have the condition transferred to them genetically as well.

Mostly the effects of Osteoarthritis can be managed in the case of mild symptoms in the early stage by opting for a healthy lifestyle. But



if the symptoms are prevalent for a long time, then it's advised to visit a doctor soon.

The diagnosis of the condition is done through X-ray, MRI, blood test, and Joint fluid test. These tests are not direct indicators of Osteoarthritis but provide the basis to rule out the possibility of other causes of pain to conclude the condition.

The doctors will prescribe medications and treatments based on the level of the condition. Although it can't be reversed completely in severe cases, the treatments reduce the pain and enhance the movement in the affected joints.

The standard treatment for Osteoarthritis is Physical therapy, Occupational therapy, and Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS).

Physical therapy: Exercising and an active lifestyle can go a long way in treating

Osteoarthritis. The physical therapist will suggest exercises to relieve pain and increase flexibility to strengthen the joint muscles. One can also engage in regular activities that increase body movement like walking, running, swimming, etc.

Occupational therapy: Occupational therapy can help in doing regular tasks, in a way benefiting the treatment. The therapists will suggest ways to alter the daily tasks to reduce strain on your affected joints.

Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS): This treatment is used for hip and knee osteoarthritis patients as a short-term pain-relieving technique. A low voltage electric current is passed through the affected joint for immediate pain relief.

The doctors might also prescribe surgery or other treatments like Cortisone injections, Lubrication injections, Realignment bones, and Joint replacement if the other treatments fail to show results.

STOKES' ENG SET SIGHTS ON INDIA

AP ■ LEEDS

England captain Ben Stokes has insisted there will be no let-up from his side when they face India just days after whitewashing Test world champions New Zealand.

A first series under the new leadership duo of Stokes and red-ball head coach Brendon McCullum, a former New Zealand captain, ended with an emphatic seven-wicket win in Leeds on Monday that sealed a 3-0 triumph over the Black Caps.

For the third time in as many matches, England made light of a potentially tricky run chase, with Jonny Bairstow ending a pursuit of 296 by smashing a six on his Headingley home ground.

England, however, have just a few days to savour their success before facing India at Edgbaston in a match starting Friday.

The fifth Test was rescheduled after the fixture was postponed last September following a Covid outbreak in the India camp.

India are currently 2-1 up in a five-match series following a 157-run win at the Oval but are now set to face a revitalised England side likely to feature only four survivors at most from that match — Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Bairstow and James Anderson — later this week.

"Regardless of the opposition, we're still going to have the same mindset," Stokes told reporters after stumps in Leeds on Monday.

The dynamic all-rounder, on a mental health break from cricket at the time of the fourth Test against India, added: "Obviously, it's going to be a completely different... different."



ent opposition, with their attack and players as well.

"We'll be concentrating on what we've done well over these last three games and look to continue that against India on Friday."

England had won just once in 17 Tests prior to the New Zealand series, albeit many of those matches were played under mentally-draining coronavirus restrictions that no longer apply.

'NEW MENTALITY'

But the shackles have been lifted in an exhilarating start to life under McCullum, one of the most attacking players of his generation.

"I knew that everyone would buy into the new mentality me and Brendon set out, but I didn't think it would go this well to be honest," said kindred spirit Stokes.

In the space of just over a week, Bairstow struck two remarkable Test hundreds, his 136 in a run chase at Trent Bridge was followed by an astounding 162 which rescued England from the depths of 55-6 in the first innings at Headingley.

Monday witnessed more blazing hitting from Bairstow, who struck England's second-quickest Test fifty of all time, off just 30 balls, on his way to an unbeaten 71.

Former England captain Joe Root

played second fiddle while making 86 not out as he shared an unbroken stand of 111 with his Yorkshire teammate.

Root was named England's player of the series after scoring 396 runs at an average of 99, in a continuation of the form that has taken him top of the Test batting rankings.

McCullum, however, has had a more immediate impact upon Bairstow.

"I've never heard a bloke get 130-odd off 90 balls like he did at Trent Bridge and then ask his head coach how to go out and play," said Stokes.

"Baz McCullum basically just said, 'Go and get your Sudoku book, sit next to me and shut up. Whatever you did last week, go out and do it again.'"

"With Jonny, it's just about making sure he knows what he's in the team to do."

New Zealand arrived in England with questions over how they would replace the retiring Ross Taylor and BJ Watling only for their effective replacements — Daryl Mitchell and Tom Blundell — to share four century partnerships.

But omitting frontline spinner Ajaz Patel — who in December became only the third bowler in Test history to take all 10 wickets in an innings, against India in his birthplace of Mumbai — for the last two matches of this series proved costly, with off-break bowler Michael Bracewell thrashed for 109 runs in 15.2 overs during England's run-chase at Headingley.

"We opted for the balance of the side to go with three seamers," said New Zealand captain Kane Williamson. "We were curious to whether it would turn but it's just one of those things."



India to tour NZ for limited overs series after T20 WC

PTI ■ WELLINGTON

India will be touring New Zealand for a white-ball series comprising three T20Is and as many ODIs after the World T20 in Australia, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said on Tuesday.

The series will be held between November 18 to 30 and New Zealand will return to India for a white-ball series in January next year.

"India will arrive in New Zealand at the conclusion of the world cup to play the Black Caps in three T20s at Wellington, Tauranga and Napier, and three ODIs at Auckland, Hamilton and Christchurch," NZC said in a release.

"The Black Caps will then depart for the sub-continent for a tour of Pakistan and a short form series in India, before returning in early February to

prepare for the two Tests against England — at Tauranga (D/N) and Wellington."

India will be playing a rescheduled one-off fifth Test against England beginning on Friday, besides featuring in three T20Is and as many ODIs at the Old Blighty.

India will then tour the West Indies for a white-ball series comprising three ODIs and five T20Is in July-August in the run-up to the T20 World Cup.

In a jam-packed international schedule, New Zealand will also play a day-night Test against England, while six teams will be touring the country in the 2022-23 home summer.

Besides India, the other touring teams include Pakistan, Bangladesh, England and Sri Lanka men's teams, and Bangladesh women.

FIXTURES

DATE	GAME	VENUE
November 18	1st T20	Sky Stadium, Wellington
November 20	2nd T20	Bay Oval, Mount Maunganui
November 22	3rd T20	McLean Park, Napier
November 25	1st ODI	Eden Park, Auckland
November 27	2nd ODI	Seddon Park, Hamilton
November 30	3rd ODI	Hagley Oval, Christchurch.

Radha Yadav moves up in Women's T20 rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

On the back of her splendid performance in the just-concluded T20 series against Sri Lanka, India's left-arm spinner Radha Yadav has moved up to the 13th spot in the ICC Women's T20 players rankings.

As per the latest rankings released by the ICC, Yadav has progressed seven places to the 13th among bowlers after bagging four wickets in the series against Sri Lanka, which India won 2-1.

In batting chart, Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu has moved up one place to a career-best seventh position after aggregating 139 runs in three matches. She had struck a match-winning 80 not out in the final T20I in Dambulla.

Athapaththu has also gained two slots to reach seventh in the all-rounders' list.

Indian batters Smriti Mandhana (fourth), Jemimah Rodrigues (14th) and captain Harmanpreet Kaur (18th) have retained their places in the batting list.

The other Indian bowlers who have advanced



in rankings are Pooja Vastrakar, who has moved up 30 places to the 32nd spot, and Renuka Thakur, who has jumped 83 places to reach the 97th spot.

Vastrakar clinched only two wickets in the T20 series, while she also scored 27 runs. Thakur was also able to clinch only two wickets in the three-match T20 series.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka's Anushka Sanjeevani has moved up four places to 60th among batters.

Sri Lanka spinners Oshadi Ranasinghe (up 11 places to 26th), Sugandika Kumari (up nine places to 40th) and Inoka Ranaweera (up 16 places to 47th) have also improved their rankings.

Hooda's 105 takes India to 227-7



PTI ■ MALAHIDE

Deepak Hooda produced a master-class knock, becoming only the fourth Indian to hit a T20 International century, as the visiting side posted a mammoth 227 for 7 against Ireland in the second and final match here on Tuesday.

During his maiden T20I ton (104 off 57 balls), Hooda showed he belonged to the big stage with his scintillating stroke play, both off the front and backfoot.

While Hooda was elegant and at ease on the frontfoot, he was equally good on the backfoot, dispatching the ball over the midwicket boundary for a

few sixes.

Hooda decorated his knock with nine fours and six hits over the fence.

He was ably supported by Sanju Samson, who, opening the batting in place of injured Ruturaj Gaikwad, played second fiddle but grabbed his opportunity with both hands.

Samson made 77 off 42 balls with the help of nine boundaries and four sixes.

Both Hooda and Samson's strokeplay down the ground were a treat for the eyes.

But India did not have the best of starts as they lost Ishan Kishan (3) early. The left-handed opener once again wasted an

opportunity, nicking a Mark Adair delivery to Lorcan Tucker behind the stumps in the third over.

Hooda and Samson joined hands and the duo batted effortlessly, albeit handing two difficult chances, to share 176 runs off just 85 balls to lay the foundation for India's huge total.

It was a one-way traffic after Kishan's dismissal as Hooda and Samson toyed with the Irish bowlers and did not let them settle down.

Except for a difficult chance which Paul Stirling dropped at extra off in the eighth over, Hooda played a perfect knock.

Samson too was handed a life in the ninth over when leg-spinner Gareth Delany dropped a difficult caught-and-bowled chance.

Samson too played some delightful strokes, particularly off the backfoot during his half-century knock. He, however, was cleaned up by Adair in the 17th over.

Hooda brought up his maiden T20I century off 55 balls with a single to join the likes of Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul and Suresh Raina in the elite club of only four Indian centuries in the format.

Once Hooda departed at the team score of 212, Surya Kumar Yadav (15) and skipper Hardik Pandya (15) tried to accelerate the scoring but failed as India lost three wickets for the addition of just 14 runs in the last two overs.

England World Cup-winning skipper Morgan retires from int'l cricket

AP ■ LONDON

Eoin Morgan may be England's all-time leading run scorer in one-day and Twenty20 cricket, but the World Cup's winner game-changing impact on the team was measured in more than just figures.

Morgan, 35, announced his international retirement on Tuesday at Lord's, where he captained England to their memorable World Cup final win against New Zealand in 2019.

That thrilling victory was the culmination of Morgan's white-ball revolution as he oversaw a complete change in attitude towards the limited-over game in his adopted country.

Always his own man, the Dublin-born Morgan rose rapidly through the ranks of Ireland cricket, becoming known for his unorthodox shot-making.

But with Ireland not then a Test nation, he made no secret of his desire to qualify for England and made his debut for Middlesex a week after his 19th birthday.

The left-hander was equally decisive when he stood down from Test cricket after playing the last of 16 matches in the longer format in 2012 when he realised there was no chance of a red-ball recall.

By concentrating on limited-overs internationals, Morgan became England's all-time leading scorer in ODI and T20 cricket with 6,957 and 2,458 runs respectively.

His tally of 225 ODI appearances and 115 T20Is is another England record, but it was as a ground-breaking captain that Morgan had his greatest impact.

Appointed on the eve of the 2015 World Cup after the selectors dispensed with Alastair Cook, he led England to a miserable first-round exit sealed with a woeful defeat by Bangladesh.

But inspired by the attacking approach of New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum, who



recently became England's red-ball coach, Morgan oversaw a remarkable revival.

Just under three months after being thrashed by New Zealand at the World Cup in a match where McCullum hit 77 from only 25 balls, England turned the tables on the Black Caps by smashing 408-9 in a 210-run win at Edgbaston.

Morgan, with the support of coach Trevor Bayliss — the Australian was drafted into the England set-up after the 2015 debacle — presided over 16 wins from 20 bilateral series during the four years between World Cups.

England in that time climbed to number one in the rankings, with the likes of Jos Buttler, Jason Roy, Jonny Bairstow and Ben Stokes buying into Morgan's policy of fearless attacking cricket.

Morgan was also adept in the field, his sensitive captaincy allowing leg-spinner Adil Rashid to flourish.

The skipper also wisely had a calming word with Jofra Archer after the fast bowler sent down a wide at the start of a Super Over that ended with England beating New Zealand in the World Cup final.

West Indies win by 10 wickets, seal series 2-0

AP ■ GROS ISLET

West Indies beat Bangladesh by 10 wickets in the second Test and took a one-sided series 2-0 at Daren Sammy Stadium.

Both Tests were won well inside four days.

A wet field washed out the first two sessions on Monday, but when Bangladesh resumed on 132-6, needing 42 more runs to make West Indies bat again, play lasted less than 10 overs.

Bangladesh's second innings extended nine more overs and 54 more runs before it was all over on 186. Nurul Hasan was stranded on 60 not out from 50 balls.

Needing 13 runs to win, West Indies openers John Campbell and captain Kraigg Brathwaite took 17 balls.

Bangladesh's 100th Test loss came after it scored 234 and 186 and West Indies 408 and 13 not out.



Bangladesh's 100th Test loss came after it scored 234 and 186 and West Indies 408 and 13 not out

When the day's play got underway, Mehidy Hasan Miraz got off with a mark with a boundary then was out next ball trying to block an Alzarri Joseph bouncer and edging behind.

Jayden Seales bagged in the one over Ebadot Hossain and Shoriful Islam for ducks.

Seales, Joseph and Kemar Roach each took three wickets.

Khaled Ahmed was run out for a duck from the non-striker's end when Nurul wasn't looking for a run.

Nurul resumed from 16 overnight and blasted two sixes and five boundaries for his third Test fifty — all against West Indies — and four runs short of his career best.

They start three T20Is and three ODIs from Saturday.

Oz pick Swepson for Sri Lanka spin battle

AP ■ GALLE

Australia's Mitchell Swepson will play the opening Test against Sri Lanka, with touring skipper Pat Cummins on Tuesday calling the leg-spinner an "important cog" in their bowling attack.

The 28-year-old Swepson will partner premier spinner Nathan Lyon at the start of the two-match series on Wednesday in Galle, where the pitch is expected to be a turner.

Cummins stopped short of disclosing the full Australian XI, with doubts over batsman Travis Head, who injured his hamstring during the team's loss in the one-day international series.

"Just want to see how Travis gets through, so we'll give him bit more time. But yes, Mitchell Swepson will be the second spinner in the Test match," Cummins told reporters.

Swepson made his debut in Pakistan earlier this year and was part of the visiting team's 1-0 Test triumph there. He took two wickets in two matches.

But Cummins insists the up-and-coming wrist spinner is ready for the Sri Lankan challenge as Australia look to avenge their 3-0 loss to the



hosts in 2016.

"We're really happy with Swepo. I think he is bowling beautifully and really ready for this one," said Cummins.

"I think his role here might be slightly different as well. Pakistan we knew was going to be a slow grind and I thought he did his job despite not

taking the wickets he would like. He was a really important cog in that bowling engine."

Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne said leg-spinners were a wicket-taking option and the hosts could hand a Test debut to wrist spinner Jeffrey Vandersay.

"Wrist spinner has more control

on these tracks," he said.

SPIN TO WIN

Veteran spinner Rangana Herath was the wrecker-in-chief with his 28 wickets in Sri Lanka's series sweep of the Australians six years ago.

Karunaratne insists the team's present spin group of Lasith Embuldeniya, Ramesh Mendis, Praveen Jayawickrama and Vandersay can match Herath's exploits.

"There are three spinners who can play that role, so whoever comes and bowls well he can do the job," said Karunaratne.

"Embuldeniya has good experience on these wickets, Mendis, Praveen and Vandersay also there. I think those are capable of doing Rangana Herath's job."

Cummins admitted Sri Lanka are a tough side to beat on home soil.

"I think Sri Lanka play really well over here, it's quite different from what we experience in Australia," said Cummins.

"They are going to pose a challenge but we are up for it."

All-rounder Glenn Maxwell could return to the Test team after a gap of five years since he last played a five-day game.

'Wanted to make a fun movie'

Gopinath Reddy, who made his directorial debut with *Sammathame*, talks about his upcoming films, how he's all excited about *Sammathame's* response and more

K. RAMYA SREE

Sammathame, a musical romantic entertainer directed by Gopinath Reddy and bankrolled by Kankanala Praveena under UG Productions banner, starring Kiran Abbavaram and Chandni Chaudhary opened in theatres worldwide on June 24 to positive reviews.

According to the traders report, *Sammathame* has collected Rs 2.10 Cr shares at the Worldwide box office in 3 days.

Gopinath Reddy who made his debut as a director with this film is all excited over the film's success and is already planning his next hit.

In the film, set in the urban backdrop, the director talks about the importance of consent in relationships and the director shares that it was important for him to mention a strong point while telling any story. Although people called it a flat narration because of the concept, the director says that is his style for this particular film to feel the emotions of the actor.

An MBA graduate, Gopinath did a three month film crash course after his intermediate and wrote this story of *Sammathame*, which he started filming after completing his MBA and he's happy that he took the right decision to get into filmmaking as his film fared pretty well at the box office.

He says, "It's good if the character says something. Highlighting it forcibly is like rubbing. I already knew that some dialogues would be strong. But casually it has an impact. That is the reason we are talking about it today."

When asked why he chose this film for his debut, he said, "Basically, movie stories

revolve mostly around money, murders, conspiracies, daydreaming, scams and what not. I wanted to make a fun movie that's like the cool breeze before it rains. Every person has lighter veins and I want to ease them with my story. My story had some strong dialogues, but those too I wanted to say in an easy way instead of rubbing them on the audience."

"Kiran and I are like brothers. We have been travelling with each other for a long time. Kiran was supposed to do this film after Raja Varu, Rani Varu but the script was not completely done then so he went ahead with SR Kalyanamandapam," said the director adding he respects Kiran as a writer.

For this film, a song was made on a huge scale but the director removed it from the film because he felt the song didn't go with the flow of the film and it seemed the song was placed forcefully in the film.

Speaking about the response for the film, Gopinath who is on cloud 9 said, "There is a good response from the youth. There is also an overwhelming response from the family audience that was a surprise. I also received praise from the industry. I got two to three offers for other films too." Meanwhile, the direc-

tor has a few subjects ready. "There is a female oriented story coming up. All the heroes in my mind are currently busy with their other projects. There is a lot to be said through stories and I want to do family-oriented movies that everyone can enjoy," he concluded.



Surreal experience working with Rana & Venkatesh: Mukul Chadda

Mukul Chadda, best known for his role of Jagdeep Chadda in the official Indian adaptation of *The Office* is gearing up for his next big release. The actor recently shot with the real-life nephew and uncle duo, Rana and Venkatesh Daggubati, for the official

will be directed jointly by Karan Anshuman and Suparn Verma.

Talking about the experience, Mukul said, "I'm really excited about my character in Rana Naidu. It's very different from the kind of roles that audiences have seen me in, and I hope this leads to even more diverse roles for me in future. Kudos to Karan and Suparn for trusting me with something so different."

On working with big names like Rana and Venkatesh, Mukul added, "Both Rana and Venkatesh Daggubati are extremely professional and down-to-earth stars. It was very relaxed and comfortable to

work with them. Especially with Venkatesh Sir, whom I had a lot more scenes with - I even went to Hyderabad to rehearse with him before we started shooting. I've grown up watching him in movies over the years. And here we were on set together, bonding over the fact that we both studied in Chennai, and tried our hands at something else before getting involved in cinema. It was surreal. But he was incredibly warm and friendly."

Interestingly, *Rana Naidu* will mark Mukul Chadda's first release on Netflix. The actor has had several shows and films on other leading platforms like Hotstar, Amazon Prime, and Zee5.

Indian adaptation of the popular American TV series *Ray Donovan*. The crime drama show, named *Rana Naidu* has been backed by Locomotive Global Inc, and

Entrepreneurship is a very courageous task: Rana Daggubati

PNS | HYDERABAD

T-Hub on Tuesday announced the inauguration of the world's largest innovation campus in Hyderabad.

Actor, producer and entrepreneur Rana Daggubati gave the keynote address during the inauguration.

He said, "Any city is known sometimes by the political leaders of the state, sometimes by celebrities when their movie becomes a success or sportsmen when they make it big but Hyderabad is exclusively known for its entrepreneurs. The entrepreneurs are the ambassadors of the city."

Rana congratulated Urban Development Minister KT Rama Rao and all the people from

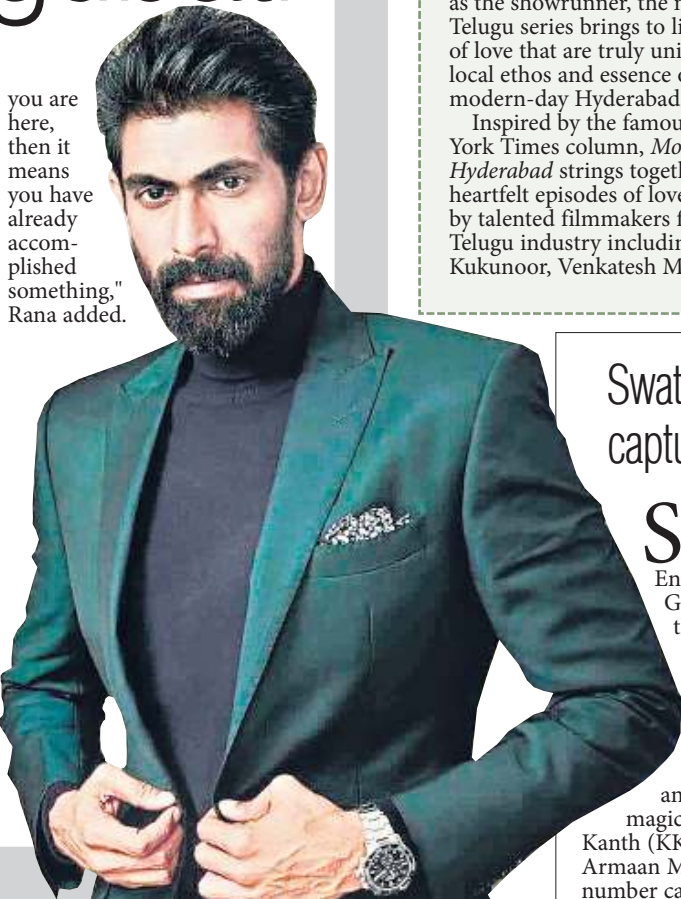
T-Hub Phase-1 for bringing in 4 billion dollar worth of investment.

Rana Daggubati during his address recalled his job where he worked at a desk for about 15 years in the media and entertainment industry.

While advising the entrepreneurs, he said, "Keep questioning yourself and keep doubting yourself again and again so that nobody doubts you in the future. Have patience, create great things and put Hyderabad on the map"

"It's considered as a proud moment when a person keeps working at the same company for 20 years but at the same time when one wants to spend 2-3 years on themselves, they are not given much support. People should know that entrepreneurship is a very courageous task. If

you are here, then it means you have already accomplished something," Rana added.



Love has the power to charm, to excite, to hurt, but more than anything, it has the ability to heal. Presenting a beautiful bouquet of love, exploring various emotions and relationships set in the culturally vibrant city of Hyderabad.

The heart-warming trailer for *Modern Love Hyderabad*, the second Indian adaptation in the series of three localised versions of *Modern Love*. A SIC Productions, produced by Elahe Hiptoola with Nagesh Kukunoor as the showrunner, the new Telugu series brings to life stories of love that are truly unique to the local ethos and essence of the modern-day Hyderabad.

Inspired by the famous New York Times column, *Modern Love Hyderabad* strings together six heartfelt episodes of love, directed by talented filmmakers from the Telugu industry including Nagesh Kukunoor, Venkatesh Maha, Uday

Gurralla and Devika Buhadhaman and features an eclectic cast including Nithya Menen, Revathy, Aadhi Pinisetty, Ritu Varma, Abijeet Duddala,



Malavika Nair, Suhasini Maniratnam, Naresh Agastya,

Ulka Gupta, Naresh and Komalee Prasad.

Producer and director Nagesh Kukunoor, who has also directed three episodes said, "Love is an emotion which had infinite expressions. For *Modern Love Hyderabad*, I have tried to focus

on how love helps us grow, learn to trust and forgive. Along with

being a love letter to love itself, it is also giving a peek into the extraordinary city of Hyderabad, which is steeped in culture and history yet pulsating with the vibrancy of youth. The city is the omnipotent character in all the stories of love of this incredible series. We have tried to capture the beating heart of Hyderabad through the myriad of people who call it home. I hope audiences relate to these stories and find themselves in the characters we have created for them."

Swathi Muthyam's first single captures the bliss of first love

Swathi Muthyam, a feel-good family entertainer produced by Suryadevara Naga Vamsi under Sithara Entertainments, marks the acting debut of Ganesh and features Varsha Bollamma as the female lead. Directed by Lakshman K Krishna, the film has music by Mahathi Swara Sagar. Nee Chaaredu Kalle, the first single from the film, was launched on Monday.

Nee Chaaredu Kalle is a musical journey through the bliss of first love and the many moments that make it a magical experience. Lyricised by Krishna Kanth (KK) and sung by *Butta Bomma* sensation Armaan Malik and Sanjana Kalmanje, the breezy number captures how the protagonists Ganesh and Varsha Bollamma are gradually smitten by one another.

The melody is easy on the ears and brims with a universal appeal that could resonate with music buffs across all age groups. Director Lakshman K Krishna says *Nee Chaaredu Kalle* has been the cynosure of all eyes on social media after the launch and that listeners just can't have enough of it.

Swathi Muthyam releases in theatres on August 13. The shoot is complete and the post-production formalities are progressing at a brisk pace. The supporting cast includes senior actors Naresh, Rao Ramesh, Subbaraju, Vennela Kishore, Harshavardhan, Pammi Sai, Sapthagiri, Goparaju Ramana, Siva Narayana, Pragathi, Surekha Vani, Sunaina, Divya Sripada.



There have been rumours about Prabhas working with director Maruthi Dasari for months. The curiosity has increased since Maruthi offered a clari-

fication on the film. It was reported that Maruthi had written a horror comedy just for Prabhas and that regular filming will start at the end of August or the first week of September.

Despite the rumours about the movie's genre being

untrue, Maruthi, who recently spoke with the media, insisted that he will reveal the details regarding his movie with Prabhas, soon. "Please refrain from believing any rumours

about the type of movie I'll be directing with Prabhas. The specifics will be revealed by me, but there is a timing and order involved," explained Maruthi Dasari. The tentative title for Prabhas-Maruthi's movie is *Raja Deluxe*, and is said to have three heroines, among whom is *Pelli Sanda* fame Sreeleela, while *Uppena* heroine Krithi Shetty is considered as another female lead opposite Prabhas.

Malavika Mohanan is said to be one of the women who will romance the *Radhe Shyam* actor.

Don't believe any rumours about my movie with Prabhas: Maruthi



Sobhita Dhulipala, who was most recently seen in the Adivi Sesh movie *Major*, shows her middle finger in a viral video ostensibly at those who are linking her up with Telugu star Naga Chaitanya.

Her detractors on social

media have accused Sobhita of being responsible for the much-publicised breakup between Naga Chaitanya and Samantha Ruth Prabhu, who's herself a popular actress.

The video clip of Sobhita showing her middle finger while on a flight has gone viral on social media.

Even though the video footage obscures the target of her gesture, netizens claim it is Sobhita's response to the rumours of her link-up with Naga Chaitanya. The upload time and

date haven't been made public, though.

Incidentally, Sobhita has denied the rumors, calling them 'baseless', whereas Naga Chaitanya has not responded at all. His PR team, however, has blamed the Samantha camp for the rumour.

Sobhita Dhulipala's middle finger gesture on video goes viral

Prithviraj's Kaduva release postponed

The release of director Shaji Kailas's upcoming mass commercial entertainer *Kaduva*, featuring actors Prithviraj, Samyuktha Menon, and Vivek Oberoi in the lead roles, has been postponed to July 7. The film was to be released in Tamil, Telugu, Hindi, Kannada and Malayalam.

The film, which has cinematography by Abhinandhan Ramanujam and music by Jakes Bejoy, was supposed to originally release on June 30. Taking to Instagram, actor Prithviraj, who is on a whirlwind tour to different cities to promote his film, made the announcement. Hours before this announcement,

Prithviraj had attended a promotional event in Chennai, where he said that his film, *Kaduva* will be a refreshing change. The actor had said that the only genre that the Malayalam film industry had slightly forgotten was the mass action entertainer genre and that his upcoming film *Kaduva* was a step in that direction.