

ANALYSIS 7
NATURE: THE BHARATIYA
BIOCENTRIC DISCOURSE**MONEY 8**
GLOBAL SHARES RISE BROADLY
CHEERED BY US EARNINGS, RALLY**SPORTS 12**
AN EVENING
IN PARIS

HYDERABAD, SATURDAY, MAY 28, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

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'MY ROLE
TAUGHT ME TO
IMPROVE MY
ACTING SKILLS'

Page 11

**BABY BORN WITH "PERMANENT SMILE"
DUE TO RARE CONDITION**

A baby born with a rare congenital anomaly is putting the smile on the faces of millions on social media users. Ayla Summer Mucha, born in December 2021, was diagnosed with bilateral microstomia, an ultra-rare condition, which affects the aesthetics and function of the oral cavity. This has given the baby a "permanent smile", which has made her a star on TikTok and Instagram. Her parents Cristina Vercher, 21, and Blaize Mucha, 20, were given the news by the doctors in Australia, who said Ayla developed this condition in the womb. Blaize and I were not aware of this condition nor had I ever met someone born with a macrostomia.

**HINDU MAN KILLED OVER RELATIONSHIP
WITH MUSLIM WOMAN IN KARNATAKA**

The murder of a 25-year-old Hindu man over a relationship with a Muslim woman has prompted authorities to step up security and call in additional forces in Karnataka's Kalaburagi district. Vijaya Kamble, a resident of Bheema Nagar Layout in Wadi town, was waylaid by a group of men near a railway bridge on Monday night. An argument is said to have ensued before they attacked him with sharp weapons, leaving him bleeding profusely. Vijaya died from the injuries on the spot. We were sitting and having a chat. And they suddenly appeared from nowhere. There were two people standing before us. We are not aware of who they are.

**"NOTHING CAN CHANGE SPECIAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH AFGHANISTAN"**

India was and is an important stakeholder in Afghanistan, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval said today and called for enhancing the capability of the war-torn country to counter terrorism and terrorist groups which pose a threat to regional peace and security. Speaking at the 4th Regional Security Dialogue on Afghanistan in Tajikistan's capital Dushanbe, Mr Doval said that India has historical and civilisational relations with Afghanistan and New Delhi has always stood by the people of Afghanistan and it will continue to guide India's approach.

**FOR "SHODDY" ARYAN KHAN PROBE,
ACTION ORDERED AGAINST OFFICER**

Anti-narcotics officer Sameer Wankhede, who initially investigated the Mumbai drugs-on-cruise case, faces action for allegedly submitting a fake caste certificate and "shoddy investigation" into the drugs case, people familiar with the matter in the Home Ministry have said. "The competent authority has been asked by the government to act against Sameer Wankhede for shoddy investigation. Action will be taken against him for his fake caste certificate," a Home Ministry officer with direct knowledge of the matter said.

KCR halts Bharat yatra

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao's trip to Ralegan Siddhi to meet Anna Hazare has been postponed.

Without giving reasons for the postponement, sources said the trip was only postponed and not cancelled. The Chief Minister will meet Anna Hazare eventually.

The CM was also supposed to visit Shridi Sai Baba and pray as well. After this, the CM was supposed to go to Bengal or Bihar.

Sources said that there is no travel schedule until Sunday. This change comes a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Telangana. The PM also took potshots at the TS government.

Meanwhile, as the TS government couldn't raise loans in the last two months, a financial crisis is



looming large.

Everything was going well as per the initial plan as KCR met Arvind Kejriwal in New Delhi, Bagwant Mann in Chandigarh and HD Deve Gowda in Bengaluru. The CM also distributed cheques to farmers who died protesting against the Bill.

However, this sudden change in

"This time, I assure you, there will be change at the national level. No one can stop it." The Chief Minister declared that there will be a sensation in the next two or three months in the country.

plan raised eyebrows, especially after the CM said, "This time, I assure you, there will be change at the national level. No one can stop it." The Chief Minister declared that there will be a sensation in the next two or three months in the country.

**RBI barred TS from
raising loans for 2
consecutive months**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has not allowed the Telangana government to participate in the auction for open market loans scheduled for May 27.

Even though as per the loan calendar Telangana was scheduled, it didn't give permission for two months in a row.

As per the loan calendar, on May 31, Telangana is supposed to raise Rs 3,000 crore. Oral permissions, written letters and the TS Finance Secretary visiting New Delhi last week did not yield any result. On the other hand, Andhra Pradesh got approval to raise a loan of Rs 2,500 crore.

2

**Cong questions
silence of PM, HM
on Guj drugs haul**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat has become the "gateway of drugs" to the country under his watch, the Congress alleged Friday, questioning the "silence" of the PM and Home Minister Amit Shah and demanding answers agencies tasked to control narcotics smuggling.

Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera told reporters there has been a series of recoveries of drug consignments starting from July, 2017 right up to this week from several ports including Mundra and Pulpav in the state.

Just on Thursday, 52 kilograms of cocaine, worth Rs 500 crore, was recovered from Mundra Port that had come from Iran, he alleged.

2

KTR brings investments worth Rs 4,200 crore from UK, Davos

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The 10-day trip of the Telangana delegation to the UK and to the World Economic Forum summit in Davos has concluded successfully.

IT and Industries Minister KTR who led the delegation attended a series of meetings, interacted with top executives of global corporations, and participated in panel discussions.

KTR Tweeted, "An extremely productive trip comes to an end. It's a fruitful and fulfilling 10-day trip to the UK & the World Economic Forum in Davos, 45 business meetings, 4 round table meetings, 4 panel discussions, and around Rs 4,200 crore of investments."

KTR thanked his team and the Telangana diaspora for making the trip a huge success.

The primary aim of the trip was to showcase Telangana as an investment destination for global companies, bringing investments to the state and thereby creating jobs.

After attending back-to-back meetings with various business



leaders in the UK, KTR reached Davos in Switzerland to attend the World Economic Forum (WEF) summit where he met representatives of several renowned companies.

Many companies have come forward to invest in Telangana after their meetings with KTR.

The Telangana pavilion at WEF, displaying the slogan 'India welcomes the world, Telangana First Stop', was very attractive and stood out from the rest.

Apart from attending business meetings, KTR participated in panel discussions. The Minister impressed a large group of global executives with his grasp of major contemporary issues.

German auto parts maker ZF is all set to inaugurate its latest facility in Hyderabad. The ZF facility which was constructed at Nanakramguda at a cost of Rs 322 crore, will be inaugurated on June 1. The facility will create jobs for around 3,000 people.



Insecure BJP netas blocking turncoats

K VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

BJP leaders JP Nadda and Amit Shah have advised their party leaders in Telangana not to dissuade leaders from other parties who want to join the BJP.

The BJP's Joint General Secretary (Organisation), Shiv Prakash, at a recent meeting with Telangana BJP leaders, asked them to explain what was happening in the state party. Why are leaders from other parties not joining? What's going wrong in the party although it has secured very good momentum in the state?

It is learnt that Shiv Prakash pulled up state leaders who gave an impression that leaders from other political parties will join in a big

way, and asked them why they are not joining.

It is learnt that Telangana BJP leaders have an 'insecurity' complex about leaders from other political parties who join the party. The 'insecure' leaders fear that they may not get tickets if leaders from other parties join the BJP and that they may also lose their importance.

Due to these apprehensions, they are exerting pressure on the state leadership to ensure that the party does not induct leaders belonging to other political parties. They are also discouraging leaders interested in joining the BJP in all possible ways. The leaders have been behaving like this due to their 'insecurity', it is learnt.

2

Political parties
run by families
driving
corruption:
Kishan Reddy

Page 2

**Guv hails banks'
role in ensuring
nation's progress**

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Governor Dr Tamilisai Soundararajan said that the services of banks in ensuring the country's progress are commendable. Bankers are trying hard to improve the nation's economic condition, she added.

She said that the services of banks to ensure healthy economic policies during the Covid-19 pandemic are commendable.

Participating as chief guest at the All India UCO Bank Officers Federation's 11th tri-annual conference held on Friday, Dr Tamilisai said that banks have an important role in achieving Prime Minister Modi's aim of a five trillion dollar economy.

She said that nations across the world are looking at India. India faces many challenges to grow as a global economy.

Dr Tamilisai praised UCO Bank's old age care, safe drinking water, plastic-free environment, and education.



have stopped meeting people!

Every day around 3:00 pm visitors

queue up at the gate of BRKR

Bhavan with appeals in their hands.

2

STRATEGY FOR 2024

BJP to name Pawan as CM candidate

KRISHNA PRASAD
■ HYDERABAD

In a strategic move, the Bharatiya Janata Party's national leadership has decided to name Jana Sena Party president and popular film actor Pawan Kalyan as the alliance's chief ministerial candidate for the upcoming Assembly elections.

The rider for this announcement would be that both the parties would not join hands with the Telugu Desam Party.

This key decision was taken after the Jana Sena Party reportedly threatened to call of the alliance in case the national party fails to give clarity on the future of the alliance.

An announcement in this regard would be made by BJP national president JP Nadda during his forthcoming tour of Andhra Pradesh, according to reliable sources.

The crucial decision will put

an end to speculations that the Jana Sena Party would move towards the Telugu Desam Party and dump the BJP.

The Modi-Amit Shah-led BJP leadership still has strong expectations from Pawan Kalyan when it comes to the impact he can make at the hustings.

So, the saffron party wants to sail with him without there being an iota of doubt among the party cadre.

To give a clear message to its cadre and its associates like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and Bajrang Dal; the BJP will make some more announcements with regard to the BJP-JSP alliance.

To appease the 'Power star', the BJP is also planning to prepare a road map to involve Pawan more in meetings and some of the public meetings in the coming days. What is interesting here is whether Pawan will accept the BJP's proposal and go with the

saffron party or continue with his efforts to 'unify' opposition forces against the ruling YSRC Party. As Pawan's fight would be incomplete without the TDP joining the opposition group, his reaction will decide the contours of the political scene in Andhra Pradesh in the coming days.

The BJP's decision is bound to cheer up the ruling YSRC as it does not want to fight a united opposition comprising all major political parties in the state.

Once Jana Sena, which has gained significant ground in the state in recent times, refuses to join the TDP-led alliance, the electoral dynamics would quickly change and the BJP-Jana Sena alliance will gain greater leverage in the post-poll scenario, according to BJP strategists.

Even if the alliance gets past 50-seat mark, it would become the king-maker and will decide the political agenda for the next government in Andhra Pradesh.

TS spent Rs 30,155cr on power subsidy

Electricity consumption up 150 per cent in 8 years in TS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana ranks numero uno in the country in per capita electricity consumption. The installed capacity of the state was 7,778 MW on June 2, 2014. It has increased to 17,305 MW as of April 1, 2022, a government press release said.

Solar power generation has grown at a record level from 74 MW to 4,431 MW in the last eight years.

The maximum peak demand increased from 5,661 MW to 14,160 MW. This is 150 per cent more than the power used in 2014 in TS. Grid power consumption increased from 128 mega units to

283.83 mega units

In Transco, in 2014, there were only six substations of 400 KB which has now increased to 23. Likewise, the number of 220 KV sub-stations has increased from 51 to 98 and the number of 132 KV sub-stations has increased from 176 to 247.

The total number of EHT substations increased from 233 to 368. The total EHT length was only 16,379, but the KCR government increased it to 27,375 km. The capacity of transformers has increased from 14,973 MW to 38,426 MW in the last eight years, the release said.

2

A 'CLASS' APART!

'Students' of politics getting hands-on experience of 'Mana ooru Mana Badi' at Aliya School

Home guard collects grievances at BRKR Bhavan!

Babus yet to put Covid behind, refuse to meet people

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

The Secretariat is supposed to function like the eyes and ears of the state government.

In Telangana, where a new Secretariat complex is coming up, the existing Secretariat is not in one place, but dispersed in various parts of the city.

At the ad-hoc Secretariat at BRKR Bhavan -- the main functional unit -- these days a home guard collects grievances and representations from people who come from various parts of the State since all the officials, taking advantage of Covid-related curbs,

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham:

Tithi: Trayodashi: May 27 11:48 AM to May 28 01:09 PM

Chaturdashi: May 28 01:09 PM to May 29 02:55 PM

Nakshatram:

Bharani: May 28 02:26 AM to May 29 04:39 AM

Krithika: May 29 04:39 AM to May 30 07:12 AM

Rahukalam: 8:59 AM to 10:36 AM

Yamagandam: 1:50 PM to 3:27 PM

Varjyam: 05:56 PM to 07:42 PM

Gulika: 5:45 AM to 7:22 AM

Amritakalam: 11:25 PM to 01:09 AM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:47 AM to 12:39 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Sunny

Temp: 34°C

Humidity: 29%

Sunrise: 5:45 AM

Sunset: 6:41 PM

Updated: MAY 27, 2022 5:00 PM

Decoding Modi's speech at Begumpet

A kin to an incident that changed the political discourse of the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh state four decades ago at the Begumpet airport, a speech by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the same venue on Thursday is all set to bring in a world of good for the people of Telangana.

While the 1982 incident at Begumpet, in which Congress scion Rajiv Gandhi publicly humiliated a Dalit Chief Minister reflecting the arrogant behaviour of the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty, Modi's highly electrifying speech exposed the threat posed by 'Pariwarvadi' (family-centric) parties to the democratic fabric of the nation.

Here is another parallel related to the pride of Telugu! In the 1982 incident, the then Congress general secretary Rajiv Gandhi humiliated AP Chief Minister T.Anjaiah calling him a 'buffoon'. Now, the Chief Minister of Telangana K.Chandrashekar Rao tried to inflict humiliation on the most popular Prime Minister Narendra Modi by violating protocol norms.

The people of Telangana

are known for their hospitality and grand reception. But KCR, true to his reputation for arrogance and ego, is spoiling age-old customs and practices by deliberately trying to humiliate the Prime Minister and the Governor. As they say, the only thing more dangerous than ignorance is arrogance.

Having been a technocrat who had worked in the Silicon Valley for over a decade, I can vouch for the importance of high-quality management education for the progress of any country.

The Indian School of Business (ISB), which celebrated its 20th anniversary in the presence of Modi on Thursday, stands tall among the best management institutes in the world.

The then Chief Minister had taken initiatives with the backing of the Vajpayee government to get ISB established in Hyderabad. But the present Chief Minister of Telangana appears to be clueless about the significant contribution of such great institutions to the state's progress and standing.

As far as I know, KCR has never visited the interna-

In the 1982 incident, the then Congress general secretary Rajiv Gandhi humiliated AP Chief Minister T.Anjaiah calling him a 'buffoon'. The CM of TS K.Chandrashekar Rao tried to inflict humiliation on the most popular Prime Minister Narendra Modi by violating protocol norms.

tionally-acclaimed management institution. To know the difference between pebbles and pearls, you need not be a B-school grad. A bit of common sense is more than enough.

The speech delivered by Modi, before taking part in ISB's celebrations, is of huge significance for Telangana for more than one reason. The speech's themes of misadministration, ill-impact of 'family rule', 'sticking' of central schemes, and superstitions costing development are indeed clarion calls to the people of Telangana -- a people, who lost hundreds of their beloved sons and daughters to realise their aspirations for self-respect and self-reliance through a separate state.

Twelve days after Union

Home Minister Amit Shah assured the people of Telangana that only BJP can achieve 'Banguaru Telangana' by fulfilling their agenda of Neellu, Nidhulu and Niyamakalu, at a mammoth public meeting in Tukkuguda to conclude the 31-day second phase of 'Praja Sangrama Yatra' undertaken by the state BJP under the leadership of BJP state unit president Bandi Sanjay Kumar, Modi explained what has been ailing the newest State in India and what people can expect once the BJP forms the government in Telangana.

Modi has a reason for underlining the disastrous impact of family rule. We are witnessing how family rule ruined Sri Lanka, once a prosperous country.

A landlord family of



KISHORE POREDDY

Rajapaksas occupied all the important positions in the Sri Lankan government and created political, social and financial havoc over the last two decades. You have a big list of family members at the helm of key affairs of the nation. The Presidency, the Prime Ministership, the Finance, Irrigation, Defence and many other ministries were all occupied by the members of the Rajapaksa family.

Be it in Colombo or Hyderabad, family rule breeds nepotism, despotism and corruption -- the three dangers for democracy.

Family rule is the root cause of inefficient administration, unprecedented debt burden, unemployment, and many other ailments that are troubling every section of society.

During his two terms in power, KCR fully institutionalised his family rule by sidestepping the real fighters of the Telangana movement.

He made a travesty of the anti-defection law and ridiculed parliamentary democracy by directly inducting opposition party MLAs into his cabinet. There is a core family circle which totally controls the reins of power in the state. He, his son, daughter and two nephews form the core family clique.

Electional verdicts are no reason for keeping family members out of power. For example, the daughter was made an MLC after her electoral defeat at the hands of the BJP.

The son and the heir apparent KT Rama Rao is omnipotent and omnipresent even as the remaining ministers in the cabinet have been reduced to dummies. Dad made his son all-powerful within the government

and the party.

Taking a cue from the Big Boss, almost all top leaders in TRS brought their sons and sons-in-law into the party fold by 'pleasing' the working president, leaving no room for new leaders to emerge.

That is what exactly Modi said in his Begumpet speech: "Statehood certainly is not for a single-family."

As he said, "Pariwarvadi party is not just a political problem, but the biggest enemy of democracy and the youth of our country. India has seen how corruption becomes the face of those political parties that are dedicated to one family and its welfare.

Modi hinted at how determined efforts of the Telangana people have gone waste under KCR's rule and gave a clarion call to show their valour and throw KCR and his party out of power.

He, that is why, at the outset, hailed the determination and valour of Telugus in chaste Telugu: "Pattudalaku, pourushaaniki maaruperu ayina Telangana prajalaku namaskaramulu".

Among the many impor-

tant issues raised by Modi in his succinct speech is the issue of KCR's superstitions that proved to be detrimental to the State. I wonder why KCR announced so confidently in Bengaluru, after meeting the former PM Deve Gowda and his son Kumarasamy, about a sure shot 'change at the national level in the next two to three months.'

If the political grapevine is to be believed, an astrologer hailing from Andhra Pradesh made KCR believe so.

What can you do with a leader who demolishes the Secretariat, confines to his farmhouse, and avoids paying visits to the great spiritual town of Bhadrachalam at the behest of astrologers?

The only way out is to throw him out of power, as called by Modi.

Whenever political leaders failed to recognise Telugus' pride and self-respect, they taught such leaders a bitter lesson. The Begumpet airport remains a testimony to such political transformations.

(The author is BJP TS spokesperson)

One-third of BJP MPs hail from political families: TRS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TRS leaders continued to attack Prime Minister Modi for speaking against dynasty politics, superstition, development and protocol issues during his visit to Hyderabad.

The TRS continued to attack Modi during the three press meets held at the Telangana Bhavan in New Delhi.

Planning Commission Vice Chairman B. Vinod Kumar said, "Out of the 300 BJP MPs, 100 are having a political family background. We never questioned the BJP since it was quite natural for the children of senior politicians to enter politics."

Animal Husbandry Minister Talasani Srinivas Yadav recalled that Modi was the first one to give protocol the miss during his Bharat Biotech visit.

"The BJP leaders should be ashamed of themselves for

trying to blame the state on protocol issues that never occurred. Instead, the fault lies with the Prime Minister for changing established practices," Talasani said.

Everybody said that the PM instead of speaking about the Centre's contributions to Telangana was only spewing venom.

Minister Gangula Kamalakar advised Modi to fix his own party which was filled with the scions of dynasty politics.

Government Whip Balka Suman said that while the TS Chief Minister spoke about development, Modi spewed only hatred.

TRS spokesperson Krishank Manne said the BJP office is being built according to Vaastu guidelines and that it is ironic that they are now talking about superstition.

TRS leaders also asked who is Jay Shah to control the cricket game in India.

Congress leaders direct flak at Modi, KCR

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

Congress leaders have criticised both Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao for different reasons. They directed flak at Modi for visiting Telangana and at KCR for fleeing to a neighbouring state when the PM came.

Congress leaders asked KCR whether he didn't have the responsibility of exposing the PM when he came to Hyderabad. They pointed out that Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Stalin had exposed the PM's policies before the public.

Expressing doubts about the trips of Modi and KCR, Congress leaders asked the

Congress leaders asked the Prime Minister to prove his sincerity by ordering a probe against KCR instead of just confining himself to issuing statements about KCR's alleged corruption

Prime Minister to prove his sincerity by ordering a probe against KCR instead of just confining himself to issuing statements about KCR's alleged corruption.

TPCC Working President T. Jagga Reddy said that KCR and Modi have a political understanding and that it is not proper for the BJP to incite religious hatred.

He said that Modi coming to Telangana and KCR going

to Karnataka were all part of their game plan.

Former TPCC president Ponnala Laxmaiah said it was atrocious on the part of Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to flee to a neighbouring state when Prime Minister Modi came to Hyderabad. He said that May 26 was a dark day in democracy.

The Prime Minister himself commented on KCR's corruption but the PM has to

prove his bonafides by ordering a probe into KCR's corruption instead of confining himself to statements, he said.

Ponnala demanded that the Prime Minister should order an inquiry into KCR's corruption if he had evidence about that after imposing President's Rule in the state.

TPCC PAC Convener Mohammed Ali Shabbir accused Prime Minister Modi and Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao of giving more importance to politics instead of public welfare.

"Modi confined his visit to Hyderabad on May 26 to just politics and by skipping the PM's visit KCR also gave importance to his political ambitions. Both Modi and KCR gave no importance to the people of Telangana.

Cong files plaint against Bandi Sanjay's speech

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Congress filed a formal complaint in police stations across Telangana demanding the booking of a criminal case against Telangana BJP President Bandi Sanjay Kumar for the alleged hate speech he made in Karimnagar on May 25.

Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) Minorities Department Chairman Shaik Abdullah Sohail filed a complaint at the Habeeb Nagar Police Station in Hyderabad. Similar complaints were filed in local police stations by the heads of the DCC Minorities Department in the remaining 32 districts.

"Sanjay made a highly provocative speech to incite communal hatred among Hindus and Muslims while addressing a public meeting in Karimnagar on May 25 during the 'Hindu Ekta Rally.'



"Sanjay used foul and derogatory language against Islam and Muslims. Making baseless allegations that thousands of temples were demolished in the past, Sanjay tried to inflame the religious sentiments of Hindus. Asking for the excavation of masjids if there were Shiva Lingams under them, he provoked Hindus to resort to violence and demolish mosques," Shaik Abdullah Sohail alleged in his complaint filed with the police.

KCR recalls services of Suravaram

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

On the occasion of Suravaram Pratap Reddy's birthday on May 28, Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao recalled the yeoman services rendered by the former.

CM KCR praised Suravaram as Telangana 'Vaitalikudu' for playing the role of a Writer, Research Scholar, Editor, Fighter and a multi faceted personality. He said that Suravaram was a proud son of Telangana as he launched Golkonda News daily to uphold the self respect of the Telangana's literature and fought against the discrimination on Telangana. The inspiration of Suravaram was also embedded in the Telangana Freedom struggle. KCR said that the state government is celebrating Suravaram Pratap Reddy's birth anniversary every year.

Cong to build a house for oustee

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

As assured by TPCC Chief Revanth Reddy, on Friday the Medchal district Congress leaders laid the foundation stone for the construction of a house for Kummari Yellavva who lost her house during road widening in the Lakshmapur village of Muduchintalapalli mandal.

TPCC senior official spokesperson and Zilla Parishad Congress Floor Leader Singireddy Harivardhan Reddy came forward to construct the house with his money.

Medchal district Congress leaders asked Kummari Yellavva's son and daughter-in-law Kavitha Mahesh to conduct a pooja on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Harivardhan Reddy said that they will complete the construction of the house soon and will invite Revanth Reddy for the house warming ceremony. He said that they will also organise a grand house warming ceremony and will ask Kummari Yellava to offer dinner to Revanth Reddy.

It may be recalled that Revanth, who visited Lakshmapur village on May 24 to participate in the Congress party's Rachabanda programme had assured Kummari Yellavva that Congress leaders will construct a house for her in case the government or the local minister failed to respond on the issue.

'Political parties run by families driving corruption'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Corruption has increased across the nation due to family-based political parties, Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy said here on Friday.

He said that the BJP is ideologically against family-based political parties. Family-based political parties have been destroying the nation. Corruption increased across the nation due to family-based parties, he said.

Addressing the media at the state BJP office, Kishan Reddy made it clear that a change would certainly take place in Telangana. He said that the people of Telangana observe



everything keenly.

Kishan said that the people of Huzurabad voted for the party they liked even though the ruling TRS spent billions during the by-election.

The Union Minister asked KCR to reveal whether he will make a Dalit the CM as he had promised. He asked KCR to

give the TRS president's post at least to a Dalit.

He said that election results would go against the TRS. The people won't vote for the TRS even though the TRS is spitting venom on the BJP, he added. The BJP is a democratic party and it has spread from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, he said.

Kishan reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's words that Telangana's future is being held hostage by the KCR family. KCR is now more concerned about TRS getting defeated, he said and challenged KCR to come forward for a discussion on the role of the Centre in Telangana's development.

RBI barred TS from raising loans...

Continued from page 1

On Friday, the RBI gave permission only to the 11 states of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal.

The auction will be conducted on the Reserve Bank of India Core Banking Solution (E-Kuber) system on May 31 (Tuesday). The above state governments have offered to sell stock through auctions for an aggregate amount of Rs 21,450 crore. According to the indicative calendar shared by

Telangana with the RBI, the total money to be raised through loans in April and May was Rs 11,000 crore.

Telangana was supposed to raise Rs 1,000 crore on April 11, Rs 2,000 crore on April 26, Rs 3,000 crore on May 2, Rs 2,000 crore on May 17 and Rs 3,000 crore on May 27.

As per the loan calendar, Telangana was planning to raise Rs 15,000 crore in the first quarter of this fiscal. In June, the state planned to raise Rs 4,000 crore. Highly placed sources indicate that the TRS government is miffed over the loan ban.

Home guard collects grievances...

Continued from page 1

From 3-5 pm there will be a big queue many times. One home guard has been deputed who will come and take all the public grievances.

He will give acknowledgement on receipt of the application".

Visitors at the Secretariat are anxious if their issues really reach the departments concerned.

People are shocked that they come from far off places, but cannot even meet the officer in person. Even if one is a retired bureaucrat, police official or

other employee, he has to stand in the line. Many of the visitors are sick of this process.

A retired government employee, who visited BRKR Bhavan recently, said: "I wonder for whom these officers are serving. We come from very far-off places. People just want to share the importance of their issue and how it is affecting their day-to-day life to explain the gravity of the situation. It will be just another application in the lot".

In April 2021, when novel coronavirus were on the rise, the State government imposed restrictions on people's entry into the State Secretariat.

TS spent Rs 30,155cr on power subsidy...

Continued from page 1

Coming to DISCOMS, the number of 33 KV sub-stations increased from 2,138 to 3,159. The length of 33 KV, 11 KV, and LT increased from 4.89 lakhs to 6.58 lakhs. The government increased the number of PTR lines from 3,272 to 5,598. The number of DTRs has increased from 4.67 lakhs to 8.09 lakhs.

On the other hand, the number of consumers has also increased significantly. Agricultural consumers increased from 19.03 lakhs to 26.45 lakhs, an increase of 40 per cent.

The total connections in the state increased from 1.11 crores to 1.71 crores, an increase of 54 per cent. The distribution system can now withstand the maximum demand of 17,000 MW.

The Telangana government will provide free electricity in 2022-23 to 26.60 lakh agricultural and household consumers by paying a subsidy of Rs 10,602 crore to distribution companies. Nearly 40 per cent of the electricity is supplied to farms in TS.

After the formation of Telangana, the government has provided 6.39 lakh new agricultural electricity connections at

a cost of Rs 3,196 crore. The number of electricity connections has increased to 25.63 lakhs after the formation of Telangana.

The government has significantly increased the capacity of power substations, lines and distribution lines after the state's formation. It has invested over Rs 35,000 crore to strengthen infrastructure, the press release said.

The Power Finance Corporation and REC provide loans at 12 per cent interest. This interest rate is higher than the interest rate charged by banks on personal loans.

TRS declares decline in FY 2020-2021 income by 71%

The audit report of the BJP for FY 2020-21 was unavailable on the ECI website

NAVEENA GHANATE
■ HYDERABAD

TRS party has witnessed decrease in income between fiscal year (FY) 2019-20 and 2020-21 by nearly 71 per cent. According to ADR's latest report, in FY19-20 TRS declared that it got income of Rs 130.46 crore, but in FY20-21 the party declared that the income came down to Rs 37.654 crore. This decrease by nearly 71 per cent comes to Rs 92.802 crore less than previous year.

Across parties, SHS declared the maximum decrease in income between FY 2019-20 and 2020-21 by Rs 97.562 crore followed by TRS (Rs 92.802 crore) and TDP (Rs 88.278 crore). The total income of 29 out of the 31 parties decreased from Rs 800.26 crore in FY 2019-20 to Rs 520.492 crore in FY 2020-21, a fall of 34.96 per cent, it said. However,



Across parties, SHS declared the maximum decrease in income between FY 2019-20 and 2020-21 by Rs 97.562 crore followed by TRS (Rs 92.802 crore) and TDP (Rs 88.278 crore).

it is among the top five regional parties to have got highest income that year. DMK reported having the highest income of Rs 149.95 crore, followed by YSR-Congress with an income of Rs 107.99 crore and BJD whose income was Rs 73.347 crore, JDU Rs 65.34 crore and TRS 37.658 crore of the 31 regional parties analysed by

ADR Top five parties that have incurred highest expenditure are DMK which had spent Rs 218.49 crore, followed by TDP which spent Rs 54.769 crore, AIADMK which spent Rs 42.367 crore, JDU which spent Rs 24.347 crore and TRS which spent Rs 22.348 crore.

TRS had 15.13crore excess of income over expenditure i.e. 40

per cent of income has not been spent. Of the total expenditure of Rs 22.348crore, Rs17.014crore was spent on Administrative and General Expenses, 4.797crore for election expenditure and 0.5 crore was declared under Depreciation and Amortisation Expenses Under Fees and subscriptions, TRS collected

17.267crore in 2020-21 which is 45.85 per cent of the total income. The party has Rs 15.737 crore through deposits with scheduled and non-scheduled banks which is 41.79 per cent of the total income.

Through voluntary contributions, TRS collected Rs 4.18 crore or 11.10 per cent of their income from donations through electoral bonds, while other donations and contributions amounted to 0.474 crore.

Only five out of the 31 regional parties that were analysed declared donations through electoral bonds. Of the total income of the 31 regional parties during FY 2020-21, Rs 84.64 crore or 15.99 per cent was interest income, the report said.

Among the national parties, the audit report of the BJP for FY 2020-21 was unavailable on the ECI website at the time of preparation of this report, it added.

PCCF Dobriyal inspects greenery restoration works

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) R A Dobriyal has inspected the forest and conservation works being carried out in the areas of Bhadradi-Kothgudem.

According to officials, Dobriyal found the restoration works satisfactory. He was touring all the forest protection, restoration, greenery preparations and wildlife conservation areas.

He appreciated the officers and asked field level for-

est personnel to work with commitment. He said that if there are any challenges, they should be brought to the notice of the superiors. As he examined trees grown in restoration areas, rehabilitation measures, prevention of forest fires in summer, establishment of fire lines, water set up for animals. He went to the accommodation centres himself and said that the action team is working well. He visited Sandilapadu nursery and asked the municipalities to grow trees as big as they can for supply purposes.



Principal Chief Conservator of Forests R A Dobriyal inspecting restoration works in Bhadradi-Kothgudem area

Congress stages sit-in for speedy procurement of paddy



Congress leaders and activists staging sit-in on Siddipet-Hanamkonda main road on Friday

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Farmers, led by the Congress, on Friday staged a sit-in on Siddipet-Hanamkonda main road in protest against delay in starting paddy procurement centres by the government and expressed concern over the officials not procuring even half of the paddy brought to the procurement centre even after 15 days of paddy brought to the procurement centres. On the

one hand the monsoon season is arriving and on the other, procurement of paddy is not yet through, they lamented.

They charged the rice millers with robbing the farmers by deducting the grain weight by 2 to 3 kg per bag of paddy.

They demanded that the government bear with hamali charges and other incidental expenses for the benefit of the farmers. Revenue divisional

officer Jayachandra Reddy, who is passing by the road, spoke with the protesting Congress leaders and farmers. He told them that he attributed the delay in procuring paddy to the delay in loading and unloading activities and asked them to bring to his notice if millers were to deducting the weight of paddy more and more. He assured them that the administration would ensure procurement of paddy speedily.

Vinod Kumar slams PM for his remarks against KCR, family

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Telangana State Planning Board Vice-Chairman B Vinod Kumar on Friday deplored Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his remarks against Chief Minister K Chandrasekhra Rao and his family. The Prime Minister made an objectionable statement that the Telangana State was not meant for a single family, he said. It was not proper on the part of the Prime Minister to make such statements against the Chief Minister and his family, Vinod Kumar pointed out. Reacting to the Prime Minister's remarks about family politics, he said that as many as 100 BJP MPs came from political families. It was natural that the children of politicians at times would enter politics, he said.

Anti-human trafficking unit constituted in Jagtial

PNS ■ JAGTIAL

Jagtial district police on Friday constituted anti-human trafficking unit (AHTU) to check human trafficking and sexual violence against women and children. An Inspector of Police rank officer has been tasked with the responsibility of monitoring the AHTU activities. District Superintendent of Police Sindhu Sharma said the AHTU would effectively check the human trafficking and sexual violence against women and children. She appealed to the people to inform the AHTU if they notice human trafficking, sexual harassment of women or children offline or online, child labour, bonded labour, forcible begging, illegal adoption of children and domestic violence. She also said the harassment of women and complaints related to NRIs and cybercrimes too can be reported to AHTU, she said. The women and girls are asked to dial 100 or contact AHTU officer by dialling 9440795588 if they face any kind of harassment.



Sindhu Sharma

ed to AHTU, she said. The women and girls are asked to dial 100 or contact AHTU officer by dialling 9440795588 if they face any kind of harassment.

Apart from it, Sindhu Sharma said the She Teams would continue to work vigorously for the protection of women and girls. The She Teams were also creating awareness among the girl students, she said.

Officials told to ensure delivery of PDS rice to shops on first of month

PNS ■ NAGARKURNOOL

Additional Collector (Revenue) S Motilal on Friday directed the officials concerned to ensure that the rice meant for public distribution reaches fair price shops by the first day of every month.

Holding a review meeting with the officials of District Civil Supplies Department, rice millers, transport contractors and stage-1 and stage-2 warehouses in-charges, Motilal sought an explanation from the officials as to why the rice was distributed to the poor on 10th day of every month. The Additional Collector took the officials to task for the delay in delivering the rice to the fair price shops on the first day of every month. Why should a poor man should go round to the fair price shop every day to find out whether the rice is available



Nagarkurnool District Additional Collector S Motilal interacting with farmers at a procurement centre in Nagarkurnool district on Friday

for distribution to card-holders, he asked. He made it very clear that the delay in delivery of rice to the fair prices shops would be viewed seriously.

He said the transporter, according to an agreement with the district administration, should deploy 25 lorries to transport rice to the fair price shops. But the transporters were violating the

Need to increase normal childbirths stressed

Minister for Health T Harish Rao announces Rs 3,000 to ASHA workers for motivating expectant mothers to ensure normal deliveries

PNS ■ MEDAK

Minister for Health T Harish Rao has called upon Accredited Social Health Activist (ASHA) workers to safeguard the health of the people. He also urged them time to ensure normal childbirths in all government hospitals.

He was addressing a gathering after inaugurating the 100-bed Mother and Child Health Centre in the town, built at a cost of Rs 17 crore. He felt very happy at the inauguration of the 100-bed facility for mother and the child. He said that the hospital would take care of the maternity needs of women and desired that the hospital would provide good healthcare to children.

He appreciated MLA Padma Devender Reddy for showing initiative in establishing the hospital, which has a maternity ward, labour room, operation theatre, paediatric ward, PICU, SNCU and so on.

He announced that he would hold video conference with ASHA workers on the third of every month to enable them to get their doubts cleared. He wanted them to come prepared to attend the video conference.

He said the normal delivery rate has increased to 56 per cent from 30 per cent and desired that it should increase further. He wanted ASHA



Minister for Health T Harish Rao inaugurating 100-bed mother and child hospital in Medak on Friday

workers to take responsibility to increase normal deliveries in government hospitals further by counselling expectant mothers.

He offered to give an incentive of Rs 3,000 to health staff for encouraging normal childbirth. If the number of cases in private hospitals under the jurisdiction of the ASHA workers increases, disciplinary action is inevitable, he warned.

Chief Minister K Chandrashekhar Rao has been providing all amenities in government hospitals, he said.

He recalled how hard ASHA workers worked during the pandemic. But, if a small error takes places anywhere in the system, it will have a cascading effect. That is why, everyone should work with responsibility. Otherwise, action against them will be taken,' he said.

Padma Devender Reddy

conveyed her special thanks to KCR and Harish Rao who worked hard for establishing the hospital.

MLC Seri Subhash Reddy urged Harish Rao to pay attention to developing Medak district on the lines of he developed Siddipet district.

District Collector Harish, Zilla Parishad Chairperson Hemalata, Municipal Chairman Chandrapal, Joint Director of Health Padma, DMHO Venkateswar Rao, Additional Collectors Pratima Singh and Ramesh, Zilla Parishad Vice chairperson Lavanya Reddy, AMC

Chairman Batti Jagapati, Municipal vice chairman Mallikarjuna Goud, MPPs, Area Hospital superintendent Dr. Chandrasekhar, Medical Officers and TRS leaders and others were present on the occasion.

TS Sishu Vihars adjudged the 'best' in the country

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has recognised the efforts of the Telangana State government in protecting the health and well-being of children in the Sishu Vihar. The Sishu Vihars are the best in the country and the officials of National Institutes directly visiting to study this is proud moment for Telangana, said Satyavathi Rathod, Minister for Women and Child Welfare. The National Institute of Mental Health

and Neurosciences (Nimhans) and Dialogue team will visit the Sishu Vihar in Hyderabad. The Minister congratulated the officers and employees of the Department of Child Welfare on the occasion. The panel will visit the Sishu Vihar for three days on June 22, 23 and 24 to do the documentation.

She said the fact that the Department of Women Development and Child Welfare was performing as well as other States in the country was a testament to the administrative efficiency of

the Chief Minister K Chandrasekar. The Telangana State government has been instrumental in the care of infants from birth to six years of age, providing them with nutritious food, providing pre-school education, access to specialised medical professionals for the physically and mentally handicapped, and providing a play area and a pleasant environment. The state government is ready to provide more facilities for the welfare of women and children in the coming days, she added.

Sridhar Babu condemns demolition of houses at midnight



Congress MLA D Sridhar Babu, along with oustees of Singareni open cast project, staging a sit-in at Ladanpur in Jayashankar Bhupalapally district on Friday

PNS ■ JAYASHANKAR BHUPALAPALLY

Congress MLA from Manthani D Sridhar Babu on Friday condemned the demolition of houses at open cast project at Ladanpur under Ramagiri mandal. He said the Singareni Collieries authorities and the Revenue officials had conducted raids at midnight and demolished houses. Sridhar Babu along with the oustees staged a sit-in at the open cast project. The MLA deplored the officials for demolishing the houses at midnight

without giving notice to the poor people. He deplored the action on the part of the police to arrest the oustees for staging a sit-in. He questioned the authorities whether the oustees have the right to register their protest over the demolition of their houses. The MLA demanded that the government pay compensation to all 283 oustees immediately. He appealed to the authorities to stop demolition of houses of the poor people on humanitarian grounds. He urged the Singareni Collieries authorities to address the issue immediately.

CPI blocks roads to protest rising prices

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

In response to a call given by the CPI national council, the CPI activists here on Friday consigned an effigy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to flames to lodge their protest against spiralling prices of essential commodities and tax burden on the common people. The CPI activists staged a rasta roko at Gandhi Centre here for about one hour disrupting the movement of the vehicular traffic.

The CPI State committee leaders Gadipe Mallesam and CPI executive body member Ande Ashok charged the BJP government at the Centre with increasing petrol, diesel and LPG prices and also that of the

essential commodities thereby burdening the common people. The government is giving away the public sector undertakings at a throw-away prices and opening the doors for the overseas investors, they said.

Moreover, the Centre is passing anti-people's laws and pursuing the anti-people policies, they said.

They demanded that the Modi government, which failed to rein in inflation, should step down. Otherwise, the CPI would embark on a nationwide movement against the BJP, they warned.

CPI divisional leaders Valaboju Narsimhachary, Pullani Venu, M Sankaraiiah, B Balaraju and others took part in the protest programme.



CPI activists staging road blockade in Siddipet on Friday

Moneylender allegedly drives youth to suicide

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

In a heart-rending incident, a 26-year-old Marka Prashanth committed suicide by consuming pesticide as he was unable to bear the harassment by a moneylender at Annaram village under Manakondur mandal on Friday.

He left a purported suicide note in which he said he had to resort to the extreme step because the moneylender Mudrakonda Ramanjaneyulu had been mounting pressure on him to repay the loan borrowed from him. Though he had borrowed just Rs 2 lakh from the moneylender, he had already paid Rs 10 lakh to him. The moneylender, he said, had been charging interest on the loans at the rate of 10 to 15 per cent, he said. The



moneylender, he said, had been demanding Rs 20 lakh more toward repayment of loan.

Prashanth said, in the purported suicide note, that he was forced to commit suicide because he

had committed a 'sin' by borrowing money from Ramanjaneyulu. He expressed apologies to his wife and parents for leaving them alone. His wife is five months pregnant. Prashanth's borther Srinias said his brother had already paid Rs 10 lakh to the moneylender for Rs 2 lakh he had borrowed. On Thursday evening also, Prashanth had paid some money to the moneylender. Ramanjaneyulu has been harassing the people by charging high interest rates. In the suicide note, he asked his brother not to pay a rupee to the moneylender. He, however, asked his brother to pay Rs 3 lakh each to his brother-in-law Vikram and nephew Srikanth Rs 1.50 each to his two friends. The police registered a case against the moneylender on charge of abetment to commit suicide.

INDIA CORNER

Delhi court awards 4-yr jail term to O P Chautala in DA case

Delhi court on Friday awarded a four-year jail term to former Haryana Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala in a disproportionate assets (DA) case. Special Judge Vikas Dhull also imposed a fine of Rs 50 lakh on the convict in the case of acquiring disproportionate assets from 1993 to 2006. The judge also directed the authorities concerned to confiscate four of his properties. The court had last week convicted Chautala and said the accused had failed to satisfactorily account for such disproportionate assets by proving his source of income or means by way of which, he acquired assets during this period. The CBI had filed the case in 2005, and a charge sheet was filed on March 26, 2010, accusing him of amassing assets disproportionate to his legitimate income, between 1993 and 2006. According to the CBI's FIR Om Prakash Chautala in collusion with his family members and others, accumulated assets, immovable and movable.



Delhi HC seeks Centre's stand on challenge to provisions of surrogacy law

The Delhi High Court Friday sought the Centre's stand on a petition challenging the exclusion of a single man and a married woman having a child from the benefit of surrogacy as a reproductive choice as well as the requirement of the exercise being an altruistic surrogacy only. A bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Vipin Sanghi and Justice Sachin Datta issued notice on the petition by Karan Balraj Mehta, a single unmarried man, and Dr. Pankhuri Chandra, a married woman and a mother of one child. The court granted six weeks to the central government to file its response to the petition and listed it for further hearing on November 29. "This requires consideration", said the court on the petition which assails the validity of certain provisions of the Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021 and Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021.



2 Congress workers held for circulating fake video on LDF candidate Jo Joseph

Kerala police on Friday said they have arrested two Congress workers for allegedly circulating a fake video targeting the Left candidate for Thrikkakara byelection Dr Jo Joseph. Congress Amayur Mandalam president T K Sukkur and a former office-bearer of the party Sivadasan were held for 'sharing, liking and commenting' on a video which portrays Joseph in a poor light, the police said. "Both were arrested from their residences at Palakkad," they told PTI. Earlier, LDF election committee secretary M Swaraj had filed a complaint against certain "Congress-affiliated social media handles" for circulating the fake porn video targeting Joseph. Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition V D Satheesan rejected the Left party's charges. Satheesan said the police should arrest those who made the video and uploaded it on social media rather than arresting those who shared it.



High death toll during 'Char Dham' yatra this year cause of concern

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Resumption of 'Char Dham yatra' after a gap of two Covid-marred years is a welcome development for thousands of people whose livelihoods depend on it, but the death of 78 pilgrims on way to the Himalayan temples in less than a month is causing concern.

Though the death of pilgrims on way to the high altitude shrines in Uttarakhand due to cardiac problems is something which happens every year, the toll is unusually high this season after the yatra commenced on May 3 with the opening of the Yamunotri and Gangotri temples.

A look at the data of pilgrim deaths in previous years shows that over 90 Char Dham devotees died in 2019, 102 in 2018 and 112 in 2017 during the entire season which lasts nearly six months from April-May to October-November every year.

Pradeep Bhardwaj, who heads Six Sigma Healthcare that provides free medical facilities in Kedarnath, attributed the high number of deaths to a combination of factors, including absence of an acclimatisation mechanism, weak immunity of pilgrims most of whom have Covid history, precarious weather and inadequate arrangements considering the heavy rush of pilgrims.



"As most of the pilgrims are not used to such high altitudes they should be given a break in their journey at lower heights to help them acclimatise themselves with the kind of weather they are going to confront in higher altitudes."

"They are not able to cope with the abrupt climatic change that they experience after coming from lower altitudes to the Himalayan temples located

averagely at a height of 10,000 to 12,000 ft," Bhardwaj, a qualified doctor told PTI.

He said many pilgrims do not come with proper clothing as they are not aware of the extreme cold conditions prevailing in the high altitudes.

"We have noticed that many of those who died on way to Kedarnath died of hypothermia which is caused by extreme cold conditions," he said.

The weather in Kedarnath often turns bad in the afternoon. A bright sunny day in no time gives way to overcast conditions with isolated rains. As there are no rain shelters

within three km radius of Kedarnath, pilgrims often get drenched and are finally down with hypothermia, he said.

Of the 78 deaths so far, Kedarnath has reported the highest number of pilgrim casualties with 41 fatalities.

Weak immunity of pilgrims who have Covid history is another reason for the high number of casualties, he said. Health checks before the pilgrims begin the arduous trek to the temples is also a must.

There should be more community kitchens on way to Kedarnath than there are,

Bharadwaj said, adding that 50,000 pilgrims are coming in place of 10,000 and there are just three community kitchens to cater to them.

Drawing a comparison, he said there are 130 community kitchens on way to the Amarnath temple which is also visited by people from across the country like Kedarnath.

Health screening of pilgrims before they undertake the journey to the high altitudes should be done on a larger scale, Bhardwaj said.

Kedarnath-Badrinath Mandir Samiti chairman Ajendra Ajay said the pilgrims have ignored the health advisory issued by the state government.

"Pilgrim footfall at the Himalayan temples is much higher than their carrying capacity which is causing inconvenience to them."

"Despite the government's advisory that they should not undertake the journey if they have Covid history and suffer from post coronavirus complications, they are setting out on the pilgrimage throwing all cares to the wind. It is proving fatal especially in case of the elderly," Ajay said.

Maha: Sambhaji Chhatrapati pulls out of RS poll race

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Sambhaji Chhatrapati, a descendant of Shivaji Maharaj and prominent Maratha leader, on Friday pulled out of the race for the upcoming Rajya Sabha polls, days after he announced that he would contest the election as an independent candidate.

Speaking to reporters here, he claimed that his decision to not contest the election was aimed at preventing 'horse-trading', and accused Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray of breaking his promise on providing Shiv Sena's support for his second term in the Upper House of Parliament.

Sambhaji Chhatrapati had announced that he would contest the Rajya Sabha polls as an independent candidate and sought the Sena's help, but the party insisted that he contest as its official candidate, which he did not agree to.

His announcement of not contesting the Rajya Sabha election comes a day after Sena candidates Sanjay Raut and Sanjay Pawar filed their nomination papers.

The former MP said, "Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had given his word of support to me, but he later went back on it. I am extremely sad about it."



I am no longer in the race for the Rajya Sabha seat now." Six Rajya Sabha seats from Maharashtra will go to polls on June 10, with the opposition BJP having the numbers to get two of its candidates elected.

Sambhaji Chhatrapati was nominated to the Rajya Sabha in 2016 from the President's quota and his term ended recently. This time, as the BJP had less number of MLAs, he had approached the NCP and later the Sena for their support. The Sena and NCP share power in the state with Congress as part of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government.

"The Shiv Sena gave me an offer that if I join the party, I will get a ticket for the Rajya Sabha. But I have already announced that I will not be a part of any party. Hence, I did not accept

the offer," he said. "My decision to not contest the election is not a retreat. This is my pride," he claimed. Sambhaji Chhatrapati had joined the NCP in 2009 and contested the Lok Sabha elections from Kolhapur, but lost the seat to an NCP rebel.

"I was expecting the support of MLAs across the parties for my clean image and my work. However, I realised one thing later that there could be horse-trading if I contested as an independent candidate. To avoid it, I have decided not to contest the elections," he said.

The last date for filing nominations for the Rajya Sabha polls is May 31 and the scrutiny of papers will take place on June 1. Nominations can be withdrawn till June 3. Results will be announced on the day of the polling on June 10.

Who is to blame for trauma Aryan suffered, asks NCP



PNS ■ MUMBAI

Hailing the clean chit given by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) to Aryan Khan, son of Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, in the 'drugs on cruise' case, the ruling NCP in Maharashtra on Friday asked who would be held responsible for the trauma he suffered.

It also said that the then zonal director of the NCB, Sameer Wankhede, was answerable to the people of this country.

Ally Congress alleged that the entire case was part of a "larger conspiracy" to topple the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, in which it shares power with the Shiv Sena and NCP.

The NCB on Friday gave a clean chit to Aryan Khan in the October 2021 'drugs on cruise' case in which he was

arrested last year. Officials of the NCB, which filed its chargesheet in a Mumbai court, said Aryan Khan and five others had not been named due to "lack of sufficient evidence".

Asserting that its Special Investigation Team (SIT) carried out its probe in an "objective manner", the federal anti-drugs agency said in a statement in Delhi that "the touchstone of the principle of proof beyond reasonable doubt has been applied".

Reacting to the development, NCP spokesman Clyde Crasto said, "If Aryan Khan was clean, why was he tainted? What was the motive? Who will be held responsible for the trauma this young man suffered? Many questions arise."

Congress spokesperson Atul Londhe said truth has ultimately prevailed.

Sr journalist Sat Soni passes away

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran journalist and author Sat Soni has died at a private hospital in Gurugram, his family said on Friday. He was 89. Born in Mandalay in Myanmar, he had moved to Punjab in 1944 in the wake of the Japanese invasion during the Second World War. He was educated in Jalandhar, where he learnt Urdu and Hindi for the first time, a family member said. "Sat Soni, one of the most senior Hindi journalists of the nation, breathed his last on Thursday at Medanta Hospital in Gurugram," the family said in a statement. He began his career in language journalism in 1951 by joining the Urdu daily, "Milap". He later joined Bennett Coleman and Co.

'Over 27 cr unorganised labourers, migrant workers registered on portal'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has told the Supreme Court that approximately 27.45 crore unorganised labourers or migrant workers have been registered on a portal developed in consultation with the National Informatics Centre (NIC) on the basis of information given by states.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Central Government, told a bench comprising Justices M R Shah and B V Nagarathna that a portal has been developed in consultation with the NIC for registration of workers. "She has stated at the Bar that approximately 27.45 crore are



registered in the portal on the basis of the information given by respective states concerned. How the Central Government and states concerned are going to take

advantage and/or the benefit of the registration of the unorganised labourers/migrant workers to protect the interest of unorganised labourers/migrant workers?."

MNRE cautions against fake websites for PM-KUSUM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) has cautioned the public against fake websites for PM-KUSUM scheme and has advised them to not click on any unverified link received via WhatsApp or SMS for registration.

MNRE is implementing Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan



Mahabhiyaan (PM-KUSUM) scheme, under which subsidy is provided for setting up stand-

alone solar pumps and for solarization of agricultural pumps. The ministry said in a statement that it has observed that some fraudulent websites have claimed to be the registration portal for PM-KUSUM scheme. Such unauthorized websites are collecting money and information from individuals interested in the scheme, it stated. In order to avoid any loss to the general public, MNRE has issued pub-

lic notices in the past, advising the public to not deposit any registration fee or share any personal information on such websites.

On receipt of complaints, action has also been taken against miscreants and several fake registration portals have been blocked, it added.

In addition to fraudulent websites, WhatsApp and other means are also being used to mislead potential beneficiaries.

Man who pointed pistol at cop gets grand welcome

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shahrukh Pathan, whose photograph of pointing a gun at an unarmed policeman during the communal riots in Northeast Delhi went viral, received a grand welcome during a visit to his home on parole, according to a video.

The footage, which has gone viral on social media, purportedly shows Pathan being cheered by a huge crowd as he walks through a lane in the presence of security personnel to meet his ailing



father on Monday. A senior jail officer said Pathan

was sent to his home by a court order on a four-hour

custody parole. BJP leader Kapil Mishra posted the video on his Twitter account and rued that a person who pointed a gun at the police was being made a hero.

"The person who pointed a gun at the police is being made a hero. In Delhi, several places have become mini-Pakistans. This mentality has become Delhi's and the country's enemy. I want to clearly say that we Delhiites are not afraid of them and this mentality will be crushed in Delhi," Mishra tweeted in Hindi along

with the video. In the photograph that went viral a couple of years ago, Pathan could be seen pointing his country-made pistol at a policeman on the Jaffrabad-Maujpur road. He also allegedly fired several rounds.

The violence, which erupted on February 23, 2020, in Jaffrabad, Maujpur, Babarpur, Chand Bagh, Shiv Vihar, Bhajan Pura, Yamuna Vihar and Mustafabad areas of northeast Delhi claimed at least 42 lives and left over 200 injured.

'Online portal for notaries to usher in more transparency'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Seeking to usher in more transparency and reduce the use of paper, Law Minister Kiren Rijiju on Friday launched a dedicated portal for receiving applications online from those applying to become notaries.

Union Minister of State for Law S P Singh Baghel was also present at the launch of Notaries Online Application Portal. The portal will lead to



a paperless regime by receiving applications online, processing payments, online certificate

generation, uploading seal and stamp and annual returns, officials said. This will reduce paper work and cut the cost on account of postage and other related expenditure.

This endeavour is in line with the concept of Digital India as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, they said. The portal will facilitate maintenance and retrieval of records relating to appointment of notaries.

Getting their due

The SC has finally validated prostitution as truly a ‘profession’, not just ‘dhandaa’

Patriarchy is the last bastion women have to fell to feel truly empowered and liberated. Before that, however, the second-last bastion — prostitution — needs to be vanquished. The Supreme Court helped women do just that by declaring this Thursday that the “oldest profession in the world” is legally a profession. Not many countries, not even the United States, have done that. The apex court said the practitioners are entitled to dignity and equal protection under the law. It protected the women’s natural right to liberty and choice by declaring that where sex workers are adults and participating with consent, the police cannot take criminal action against them. The order also addressed the ambiguity of Indian legislation that deals with the business of sex. Prostitution is not illegal in India, but soliciting and public prostitution are. It is also illegal to own a brothel. Brothels are the best-kept open secret of a hypocritical India where the business of sex is freely practised with the laws enforced rarely or the enforcers bribed to look the other way. The court’s decision addresses the moot question: Prostitution is legal, but how can the sex workers practice if it is illegal to have an office to conduct sex work? The court decision settles the issue. Parliament should now bring the existing legislation in line with the new ruling. There is a lot left for the Government to accomplish.

The priority is to extend labour rights to sex workers and recognise their associations. That will help in two ways. It will call for a gradual end to the exploitation of sex workers by brothel owners and pimps and unsafe and unhygienic working conditions. Two, it can pave the way for sex workers to organise themselves into a registered body to fight for their rights and rightful wages. Just because their ‘work’ has become a profession does not mean they will no longer be stigmatised or oppressed and exploited. Social acceptability campaigns should become an integral form of the affirmation process. Deeper reforms are necessary to give them access to health, social, economic and cultural benefits. However, changes cannot come about till the lawmakers lose their patriarchal hangover. A sex worker, it must be understood, is not a victim who needs to be rescued and rehabilitated. Except where a person is not forced into the profession through trafficking or exploitation, the sex worker is on a par with any other service professional. The Supreme Court order is a call for the United Nations to reframe its sex worker narrative. For the UN, paying for sex is a form of “sexual abuse”. It prohibits the purchase of sexual acts. It calls for abolishing prostitution. It believes the profession is an obstacle to the dignity of the human person. Such a patronising attitude cannot sell any longer. Look at Germany where prostitution jobs are freely advertised and processed through HR companies with no eyebrows raised.



Fans at the Narendra Modi Stadium for the quarter-final match between RR and RCB, in Ahmedabad

Throes of despair

The Congress has badly fallen from its position of strength in Tamil Nadu

The Congress, which ruled Tamil Nadu continuously for almost two decades after Independence, is now virtually on its last breath in the State. The party, once led by titans like C Rajagopalachari, K Kamaraj, S Satyamurti and C Subramaniam, is now run by minnows who would not be able to win even a civic body election without the DMK’s support. The Dravidian major has literally sucked out the blood from the ‘grand old party’ that once had a commanding presence in the State. The Congress has been made to eat humble pie by the DMK, which has thrown its way just a single Rajya Sabha seat from the State in the upcoming biennial election. And it’s not new; just another episode in the series of humiliations heaped upon the Congress by the DMK since the parties forged an alliance in the State in 2004. Since the DMK was launched in 1949 as an offshoot of the Dravida Kazhagam led by EV Ramasami Naiker, a self-proclaimed backward community leader from then Mysore Province, the DMK had only one mission and that was to annihilate the Congress.

The first time the DMK joined hands with the Congress in modern times was during the 2004 Lok Sabha election which saw the Front consisting of other fringe parties like the MDMK and PMK, obliterating the AIADMK by winning all the 38 seats. The DMK, sulking from an unexpected defeat in the 2001 Assembly election, was striving to register a win in 2004 and had allotted nine seats to the Congress, which won all of those. But the DMK, which had won 16 seats, used the opportunity to extract the maximum benefit from the Congress by demanding the most “healthy” Ministries (which were known by the acronym ‘ATM Ministries’). The DMK had even threatened to walk out of the UPA if its demands were not met. The rest is history. The infamous 2G scam was DMK’s major contribution in the UPA Government’s downfall. The party also played a major role in vitiating the ties between India and Sri Lanka, putting Tamil chauvinism to good use. The Congress leadership in the State comprises political migratory birds who return to Sathyamurthy Bhavan, the TNC headquaters, for nesting. The party needs a thorough overhaul and freedom from the colonial rule of the Dravidian major.

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Justice delayed is justice denied

It’s time that the Supreme Court put a strict end to the vicious practice of lawyers striking work on the flimsiest of excuses in their own interest

Over the years, the disruption of work in trial courts due to strikes by lawyers in western Uttar Pradesh has put thousands of litigants to financial hardship and untold inconvenience. The gravity of the matter can be gauged from the fact that in Uttar Pradesh, more than 51 lakh cases are pending in trial courts which is over 25 per cent of total pendency in all States taken together. A report prepared by a panel of experts and submitted to the Allahabad High Court listing 10 districts where lawyers disrupted work for more than 100 days on an average every year for five years (March 1, 2010, to March 31, 2016) is an eye opener.

During these five years, in Muzaffarnagar district, 753 days were lost due to lawyers’ strike, at an average of 150 days a year. In Aligarh, the figure was 697 days (140 days a year), followed by Agra 690 days (140 days a year), Faizabad 693 days, Sultanpur 603 days, Moradabad 596 days, Mathura 591 days, Ghaziabad 573 days, Balrampur 560 days and Chandauli 524 days. Although the latest data is not available, the situation has gone from bad to worse in the last five years. Taking into consideration the weekly and religious holidays, trial courts generally work for an average of 250 days a year. If over 100 days are lost due to strikes, one can well understand the reasons for higher pendency of cases.

Now, the pertinent question is who benefits from these strikes? Certainly not the litigants. As it is, it is difficult to get your case heard, and then there are frequent adjournments. So it is deeply frustrating to find the courts shut on the appointed day of hearing. There are a large number of petitions that require immediate hearing every day. The foremost examples are bail applications. If the courts don’t work, thousands of citizens are deprived of their right to resume their freedom. Urgent interim orders are sought to protect persons and properties; cause lists show



hundreds of cases where parties seek interim orders. Even a day’s delay is crucial for individuals and causes them irreparable loss. After all, courts are the institutions where complaints and grievances are taken for resolution and lawyers are the experts who provide services to resolve disputes. So, it is a reflection on the honesty and integrity of lawyers if they hold courts to ransom and cause inconvenience to their clients by boycotting courts over petty demands.

The report, prepared by the Allahabad High Court and submitted to the Law Commission of India, states that the strikes based on resolutions passed by Bar associations were called on “unacceptable and flimsy grounds”. In addition, the report says: “Some of the common causes for strike in all UP districts were non-declaration of holidays like Agrasen Jayanti, Basant Panchami, etc.” It adds: “In most districts, the strike is virtually institutionalised. Often these strikes are called for specific actions, where a group of lawyers either do not want a particular case to be taken up or they



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desire a particular matter to be adjourned.”

However, it is observed that most lawyers are opposed to boycotts and do not approve or support stoppage of work in courts, except in extreme cases of threat to the legal profession or the independence of judiciary. They prefer to keep silent in the face of a vociferous minority that commands proceedings at the meetings of Bar associations and takes arbitrary decisions on behalf of all advocates. Judges are forced to adjourn cases when lawyers do not appear in the courtroom. The lawyers who wish to appear fear obstructive and violent behaviour from those on strike. The vicious circle goes on and the situation has exacerbated over the years.

The Supreme Court of India took the initiative of stemming the rot by instructing the Bar Council of India to suggest ways and means of putting a stop to these incidents of strikes in courts. The issue of whether lawyers can go on strike was dealt with by the Supreme Court in Common Cause vs Union of India (AIR 2005 SC 4442).



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

The court held that it is unprofessional for a lawyer to strike and boycott the court. The Bar associations should not permit meetings calling for such strikes. It is the duty of the State and National Bar Councils to take action against striking Bar associations and sponsors of boycotts. The courts must hear matters posted before them undeterred by boycotts and it is only in the rarest of rare cases that abstention from court is justified, such as dignity, integrity and independence of the Bar and Bench, which must be decided by the judge. Even this must be allowed for only one day, the apex court said.

As the saying “Justice delayed is justice denied” goes, the legal professionals should be aware that with each boycott, they erode their image in the eyes of the public and the institution that protects the rule of law. The Supreme Court should take steps to seriously enforce its ruling. (The writer is a senior journalist and Chairman, Panwar Group of Institutions, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SENSELESS KILLING OF SCHOOLCHILDREN

Sir — The senseless killing of 19 children in a class of innocent kids needs to be condemned in the strongest terms and the US flag should be flown at half mast round the year. Now is the time for the US to realise its own folly rather than giving lessons to other countries. We feel sadness and pity for the young children. But we have come to the conclusion that shooting in schools there is a regular feature and there is no Government control over such killings. It was pathetic to know that the children were made to die in this fashion.

But in the name of God, the brewing up of vengeance made the matter worse and needs to be condemned at all levels. School security must be beefed up in and around sensitive places to avoid recurrence of such merciless killings. It was pathetic to know that the children killed were aged between seven and 10. It was notable that the slain children and teachers were barricaded in a single classroom by the gunman. It is a regular feature in the US and the gun culture has spoiled the future of schoolgoing children rather abruptly.

Krishnan S Maniam | Calicut

PM SHOULD DELIVER ON HIS PROMISES

Sir — It is appreciable that Prime Minister Narendra Modi who visited Tamil Nadu to launch multiple infra structure projects said to be worth over ₹31,500 crore has been accorded a deserving welcome by the Tamil Nadu Government and its people. In his address, Chief Minister MK Stalin spoke in detail the expectations of his Government in the Centre-State relationship and reiterated emphatically that his Government will extend all support to the Centre and, at the same time, will never fail to raise its voice for the rights of the State.

He also explained what is meant by the Dravidian model his Government is pursuing. The Prime Minister touched upon various infra structure projects in

Sibal’s exit will hit G-23 camp



The move by renowned lawyer and former Union Minister Kapil Sibal to resign from the Congress is not surprising at all, particularly when he openly admitted to his intentions earlier: “Everyone has to think about themselves.” For Sibal, Congress was in power for 65 years. Now when it is not in power, many who don’t want to struggle and just want power, like him, are leaving for greener pastures. Sibal is not a mass leader and, without the help of any party, he cannot fight any

election. For him, the chances of getting a Rajya Sabha (RS) seat from the Congress were bleak after criticising the Gandhi family.

Hence, after Mamata and Abhishek Banerjee’s refusal, Sibal refused to join the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and, therefore, the only plausible option left for him was to join the camp of SP chief Akhilesh Yadav. Though, for Sibal, politics is a part-time job to enjoy perks and to be relevant in the contemporary political scenario. Not only was his exit “amicable”, but the Congress has stayed soft on Sibal after his exit. Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera rightly commented: “We admired Kapil Sibal for his commitment to the ideology (of the party) and I hate to believe that he took this decision just for a Rajya Sabha seat.” Whatsoever, Sibal’s exit will also have a huge impact on the G-23 camp, rather than the Congress.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

the State and other developments that have taken place under his leadership. It is, however, a great disappointment that he failed to touch on any of the requests made by the Chief Minister and went to continue to recite his prepared speech! While it is laudable that the PM has announced schemes worth ₹31,500 crore for TN, one only hopes that all of them will be implemented soon.

Tharcus S Fernando | Chennai

GOVT MUST ATTEND TO INFLATION

Sir — As the disruption in global supply chains on account of the Russian invasion of Ukraine is driving inflation across the globe, pragmatic protectionism appears to be a safe bet for India in the short run. The decision to put a cap on sugar exports reflects the lessons learnt to avoid the problems faced by wheat traders. With India recording highest global sales for the first time in six years, forcing the Government to restrict exports to the tune of 10 million tonnes

till October 2022, it is a pragmatic step to ensure that the Government does not end up buying expensive sugar in future to meet domestic demand, considering the current geopolitical uncertainties.

As food inflation is showing an upward trajectory jumping from 7.68 per cent in March to 8.38 per cent in April 2022, duty-free import of crude soyabean and sunflower oil until 2024 follows similar relief on crude palm oil and lentils to ease retail prices. Given the fact that this grim geopolitical scenario is unlikely to subside soon, increased prices, aggravated by high energy costs and supply side bottlenecks are here to stay. Easing the pain by whatever means should drive the Government’s policies. Fiscal policy can be used to top up support prices and enhance procurement by the Government.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

The Tamil language is eternal and the Tamil culture is global.



Prime Minister — Narendra Modi

As a nation, we have to ask when in God’s name we’re going to stand up to the gun lobby.



US President — Joe Biden

Like our Mumbai industry, the South industries also try to make different kinds of films.



Actor — Raveena Tandon

All the 23 players are different characters, they bring different things to the table.



Indian cricketer — Hardik Pandya

Our country is unique... Unlike America, we are different. We speak different languages but are united.



Makkal Needhi Maiam leader — Kamala Haasan

FIRST COLUMN

PUTIN SACKS TOP GENs FOR KHARKIV FAILURE

Agreeing to a ceasefire is the only way out for Russia



PK VASUDEVA

President of Russia Vladimir Putin has sacked a top General who failed to capture Ukraine's key city of Kharkiv, blaming him for botching his war. Lieutenant General Serhiy Kisel was the head of the elite 1st Guards Tank Army, charged with taking Ukraine's second biggest city. But he has now been suspended for his failure to capture Kharkiv. Vice Admiral Igor Osipov, the commander of Russia's Black Sea Fleet, has also been suspended following the sinking of the flagship Moskva last month. This was one of the greatest successful events of the Ukraine's Navy. It seems that Putin is very upset in losing battles but still not agreeing for a ceasefire, which may salvage his prestige. Putin may have also lost the confidence in General Valery Gerasimov, his senior-most general in Ukraine, as his campaign faltered. As a matter of fact Putin has fired a number of senior commanders who have performed poorly and failed to capture of Ukraine's important strategic military establishments. A culture of cover-ups and scapegoating is prevalent within the Russian military system. Many officials involved in the invasion of Ukraine are likely to be distracted by efforts to avoid personal culpability for Russia's setbacks. This is likely to place further strain on Russia's centralised model of command and control, as officers are increasingly seeking to defer key decisions of their superiors resulting in unrest among the officers and soldiers. However, Russian forces have been forced to withdraw



from around Kharkiv after months of heavy bombardment failed to break stiff resistance, leading to Moscow's second major defeat during the war. It has been reported that a number units have revolted the higher command orders. Chances of a military Coup cannot be denied if the present defeats of Russian troops persist. At the end of March 2022, Russian forces carried out a tactical retreat from the capital city of Kyiv, after a sustained bombardment. Kyiv was considered to be the main objective of the Russian Army. Intelligence sources indicate that Russia might have pulled back its forces from Kharkiv to relocate them to the eastern Donbas region now a priority target.

The poor performance of the mighty Russian Army has shocked the Western strategic analysts who feel that the Russian troops had lacked direction, motivation, intelligence failure, poor strategic vision and the proper equipment to achieve its objective of capturing Ukraine. A lack of experience and empowerment among Russian army's cadre of noncommissioned, and junior commissioned officers so important in world armies and battlefield tactical tinkering by Putin, has also hampered the performance of the Russian troops. Despite their reinforcements, there is widespread scepticism that Russian forces will achieve any breakthrough fast. Russian forces have already sustained high losses after nearly three months of conflict and morale is thought to be low. Their units are made up of men enlisted from the local separatist areas, many under duress, as well as the broader Russian army. The US Senate on May 19 approved a \$40 billion emergency and humanitarian aid package for Ukraine, as the US deepens its support for an increasingly costly and protracted fight against Russian invasion. The measure would bring the total investment in the war roughly \$54 billion in just nearly three months. The Senate approved it overwhelmingly on a vote 86-11, in the latest reflection of the remarkable bipartisan support on Capitol Hill for a massive investment in Ukraine's war effort, which propelled the spending package through the House. The US and EU military aid to Ukraine has shown good results of repelling attacks in Ukraine and Russia is now feeling the heat even as Putin continues his belligerence against the Ukrainians.

(The writer is former Senior Professor, International Trade and Member, Vivekananda International Foundation. The views expressed are personal.)

Nature: The Bharatiya Biocentric Discourse

In the Vedic culture, plants are believed to have consciousness like humans and can feel pain as well as happiness



RAGHAVENDRA P TIWARI

The United Nations proclaimed May 22 as 'The International Day for Biological Diversity' (IDB) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. The focal theme of IDB 2022 is 'Building a shared future for all life'. For actualizing this noble mission of the United Nations, it is of paramount significance that we revisit the past civilizational discourses that we have had in protecting nature in its totality.

The Civilization heritage of ancient Bharat is well documented in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Puran as and several other scriptures. The preaching in these scriptures are the set of norms governing our cultural and social lives. One of the greatest and unique strengths of the Sanatan Dharmahas been its adoration for nature in its entirety for preserving all possible and probable habitats for all forms of life to flourish on the 'Mother Earth'. Perhaps, no other civilizational discourse, attached so much significance and interconnectedness to various facets of nature as the Sanatan way of lifestyle, values and virtues.

In Vedic culture, natural resources have never been considered commodities to be consumed for enjoyment and worldly pleasure as are viewed now. Contrarily, people were outlawed from the over exploitation of natural resources. They were mentored to worship the divinity that exists in the animate and the inanimate world including plants, animals, water, air, soil, fire, stones, hills, mountains and planets etc, necessary components for sustaining biodiversity. Hindus recognised, appreciated and preserved the purity of varied facets of nature in all their life activities. In essence, they practised nature-centric civilisational and development discourse that ensured the longevity of all forms of life. The degree of respect and interconnectedness that Sanatan is had with nature is amply demonstrated by the Yajurveda sloka necessarily recited on rituals 'Om dyauh shanti rantariksham shantih, Prithvi shanti rapah shantih Oshadhyah shantih; Vanaspatayah shantih, vishvedeva shanti Brahma shantih; Sarvam shantih, Shantireva shantih, Saamaa shantiredhih; Om shaantih, shaantih, shaantih' meaning that 'May peace radiate there in the whole sky as well as in the vast ethereal space everywhere; May peace reign all over this earth, in water and in all herbs, trees and creepers; May peace flow over the whole universe; May peace be in the Supreme Being Brahman; And may there always exist in all peace and peace alone'. All sphere of human activities centred on the purity of nature and were zero-emission and zero-waste based.

Vedic people had a co-existential frame of mind with the lithosphere, hydrosphere, biosphere and atmosphere. They knew that life originated in water and cannot be sustained without ensuring its



THOUSANDS OF SPECIES HAVE ALREADY BECOME EXTINCT AND THOUSANDS ARE ON THE VERGE OF EXTINCTION. EMISSION OF GREENHOUSE GASES, TEMPERATURE RISE & CLIMATE CHANGE HAVE CROSSED ALL LIMITS. WE NEED TO RESTORE VEDIC CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND WAYS OF INTERACTION WITH NATURE IN ALL SPHERES OF HUMAN DOMAIN

(The writer is Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. The views expressed are personal.)



purity. Hence they worshipped various forms of water bodies including clouds, rivers, lakes and oceans for securing their purity. Vedic people appreciated that mountains, hills, grasslands and riverine regions are repositories of biodiversity and there was utmost necessity for preserving and sustaining life-supporting ecosystems; hence they worshipped these landforms as well. We have been worshipping trees, herbs and creepers since Vedic time in recognition of the fact that all animal forms depended on these for food, fodder, fuel and medicine besides their utility in maintaining carbon neutrality and enriching biodiversity.

This belief ensured that the plants and their products became an integral part of our rituals and ceremonies. Plants like peepal, banyan and neem (Triveni), kadamb, bael, tulsi, aonla, mango, banana, coconut, lotus, paan, sandalwood, rudraksha, camphor, parijaat, asoka, etc., were revered on various occasions. Vedic people were conscious of their nutritious, environmental, medicinal and ornamental values. Even several forms of animals and birds were worshipped to showcase their usefulness to the ecosystem. Vedas accorded the status of GOD to all forms of natural energy including Agni and Vayu. Yagnas were performed for the purification of air. All of these created a conducive environment for all forms of life to flourish resulting into great biodiversity all around.

'Less is More' and ethical use

of natural resources were two among the several civilization traits that governed our lives. The first sloka of Ishopnishad taught us 'Isavasyam Idam Sarvam, yat kinca jagatyam jagat; tena tyaktena bhunjitha, magadha? kasyasvidhanam' implying that every animate and inanimate entity in the universe is controlled and owned by the Almighty. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his share, and one must not accept other things, knowing fully well to whom it belongs.

For the previous few centuries, especially during the foreign rule, Vedic culture, traditions and value system underwent stark departure and erosion. Our holistic world view became fragmented; 'Less is More' became 'More is Less', 'Sarve Bhawantu Sukhinah' became 'I Bhawantu Sukhinah', 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' became 'Live in Relationship' 'Not Me but You' became 'Not You But Me', 'Nature Centric' became 'Self Centric' and 'Environmental-friendly' became 'Environmental-enmity'. Vedic philosophy that 'Objects around are the extension of the Self' is vanishing now from our thought and action process and as a consequence, we do not stay connected with the outside world. We have embraced an individualistic and consumerist mindset and lifestyle resulting into the over exploitation of natural resources.

Every facet of nature has now become fragile and vulnerable. Water bodies are silting-up and

becoming dry, hills are being destroyed, trees are being cut for paper and napkins, soils are under stress to produce more, and environmentally friendly dwellings and things of daily use are replaced by concrete structures and plastic made materials, respectively. The health of soil, water and air has become extremely vulnerable owing to pollution and excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides. As a result, the great biodiversity that 'Jammu Dweep' Bharat Khande supported is dwindling fast. The plants, invertebrate and vertebrate species inhabiting the land, water and soil, so essential for building a shared future for all life-forms, are under ever-increasing threat as their habitats are fast becoming unsuitable for survival and proliferation of biodiversity. Several thousands of such species have already become extinct and several thousands are on the verge of extinction. The emission of greenhouse gases, temperature rise and climate change have crossed all limits.

Under the circumstances, should we wish to build and secure a shared future for all forms of life on the planet Earth including Homo sapiens, we need to restore our Vedic culture, traditions and ways of interaction with nature in all spheres of the human domain. Everyone's commitment is a must for saving mother earth and nature. Let us accept the fact that we have become cruel to mother Earth and are inflicting irreparable damage to its life support system for actualizing our limitless greed.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

I HAVE FILED NOMINATION (TO THE RAJYA SABHA) AS AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE. I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE AN INDEPENDENT VOICE.
— CONGRESS EX-LEADER
KAPIL SIBAL



HE HAD ALREADY WRITTEN TO PARTY PRESIDENT (SONIA GANDHI). PEOPLE COME AND GO FROM OUR PARTY. THIS IS A BIG PARTY.
— CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY
KC VENUGOPAL

Taiwan: The Codger Misspeaks Again - or Does He?

Joe Biden did not actually promise to commit American forces to defend Taiwan against a Chinese invasion

Well, my dear, we didn't know where to look. The old codger was getting away with it again, fielding the questions like a man only nine-tenths of his age, and then somebody asked him about Taiwan. He must have rehearsed that one, but still he blew it - big time. We'll be picking up the pieces for weeks."

President Joe Biden was speaking at a Tokyo press conference, looking not a year older than 79, and somebody asked him if he were "willing to get involved militarily to defend Taiwan if it comes to that?" Since the official US position on that question for many years has been 'constructive ambiguity', he was supposed to avoid both 'yes' and 'no'.

Biden has been playing the international game at the high-



GWYNNE DYER

(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'The Shortest History of War'. The views expressed are personal.)

est level for longer than most people have been alive, and he should know the drill. Say how much he loves Taiwan and how devoted he is to its democracy. He can even mention that he'd be really disappointed and quite cross if China invaded it. But he mustn't say what the United States would actually do.

Instead, with a loud clatter, the president of the United States jumped the tracks. "Yes", he said, "that's a commitment we made. The idea that (Taiwan) could be taken by force, just taken by force, is not...it would dislocate the entire region and be another action similar to what happened in Ukraine."

Compounding his crime, Biden went on to express the hope that China was paying attention to how the US and its allies have responded to the



Russian invasion of Ukraine.

"This is not just about Ukraine," he said. China is watching to see if the Western response to the invasion stays strong, or if it loses focus as the war drags on. It must stay strong, because otherwise "what signal does that send to China about the cost of...attempting to

take Taiwan by force?"

Quite a performance, and the headlines said things like 'US would defend Taiwan militarily if China attacked'. But being an old codger has its advantages, and one is that people panic less when you make some apparently radical remark or commitment. They're in doubt as to

whether you just misspoke, or whether you really meant it. Was Biden really sending a serious warning to China, but doing it in a way that did not compel China to respond directly? I suspect the answer is yes, because if you listen closely to what he said, he did NOT actually promise to commit American forces to defend Taiwan against a Chinese invasion.

He meant it to sound as if he had said that - warning that China would be "flirting with danger" if it invaded Taiwan - but there was no such definitive statement.

Maybe Joe Biden has just lost his marbles, but instilling a bit more doubt in the Chinese regime about his likely reaction in the event of a Chinese attack on Taiwan is not necessarily a blunder. 'Constructive ambiguity'

requires both the 'yes' and the 'no' to be plausible, and the 'yes' has been losing credibility recently.

In the much more fraught case of the US response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Biden has been notably cautious in his actions. Before the invasion had even begun, he made it publicly clear that American or NATO forces would not intervene directly to defend Ukraine.

As the strength of the Ukrainian forces and the sheer incompetence of the Russian army became clear, his willingness to give Ukraine more advanced weapons in larger quantities grew. But his seemingly accidental asides about how Putin cannot remain in power never become actual policy. Every option remains open.

This is a man who has been around the block a few times, and he knows how the game is played. So, if I were an adviser to Taiwan's president, I would tell her the most important thing in the event of a Chinese invasion attempt is to make a good show of resistance in the first few weeks.

There is no more difficult military operation than an opposed amphibious landing, and China has no real-world experience of carrying out that kind of attack across 200 km. of open ocean. So, if you can hold the invaders on the beaches for a week or two, American arms and supplies will start to flow in abundance.

But don't expect US troops to help you directly. Biden is not willing to fight a war against China either. Consider Ukraine.

Allcargo Logistics Q4 profit jumps to Rs 247 crore

Allcargo Logistics on Friday reported nearly five-fold rise in consolidated net profit at Rs 246.85 crore for quarter ended March 31, 2022. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 53.71 crore for the year-ago period, Allcargo Logistics said in a filing to BSE. Income went up to Rs 5,786.65 crore in the quarter from Rs 3,360.07 crore in the year-ago period, the filing said. This has been the best ever performance recorded by the company, setting stage for next phase of growth on the back of strategic acquisitions and transformational initiatives undertaken by Allcargo, it said in a statement. According to company's chairman Shashi Kiran Shetty, Allcargo Logistics' record performance is a result of sustained strategic initiatives over last few years. The company's sharp focus on technology has benefitted it in many ways, be it using data science and automation to drive optimisation, or digital platforms to serve customers better, he said.



India Cements Q4 net loss at Rs 10.58 cr, sales down 3.72 pc to Rs 1,417.62 cr

The India Cements Ltd on Friday reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 10.58 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 31, 2022. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 50.19 crore during the January-March quarter of 2020-21, India Cements Ltd (ICL) said in a regulatory filing. Its revenue from operations was down 3.72 per cent to Rs 1,417.62 crore during the quarter under review, as against Rs 1,472.45 crore in the corresponding period a year ago. ICL's total expenses were at Rs 1,459.28 crore, up 2.51 per cent in Q4/FY 2022, as against Rs 1,423.42 crore in the year-ago period. For the fiscal year ended March 2022, ICL's net profit was down 62.05 per cent at Rs 78.46 crore. It had reported a net profit of Rs 206.77 crore in the previous fiscal. Its revenue from operations was at Rs 4,858.35 crore in 2021-22, 7.71 per cent higher than Rs 4,510.55 crore in the year-ago period.



BEML Q4 consolidated net profit drops to Rs 133 crore

State-owned BEML on Friday posted 15.4 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 133.42 crore for the quarter ended March 31, 2022. The company had logged a profit of Rs 157.81 crore in the year-ago period, BEML said in a filing to BSE. Revenue from operations during the quarter under review dropped to Rs 1,683.58 crore from Rs 1,805.74 crore in the year-ago period, the filing said. BEML Ltd, formerly Bharat Earth Movers Ltd, was established in May 1964 as a public sector undertaking for manufacture of rail coaches and spare parts and mining equipment at its Bangalore Complex. The company has partially disinvested, and presently the Centre owns 54 per cent of total equity, rest 46 per cent is held by public, financial institutions, foreign institutional investors, banks and employees. BEML serves the country's core sectors like defence, rail, power, mining and infrastructure.



Global shares rise broadly cheered by US earnings, rally

PNS ■ TOKYO

Global shares gained Friday as investors cheered a strong set of earnings from retailers that has sent US shares higher.

European shares rose in early trading, while benchmarks in Asia finished higher, including Japan, China, Australia and South Korea.

France's CAC 40 added 0.8 per cent in early trading to 6,460.20. Germany's DAX rose 0.6 per cent to 14,319.07. Britain's FTSE 100 was little changed, but slightly higher, at 7,567.34. US shares were set to drift higher with Dow futures up nearly 0.1 per cent at 32,626.00. S&P 500 futures gained 0.2 per cent at 4,065.50. "Improved risk sentiments in Wall Street, along with earnings outperformance from Alibaba and Baidu, may aid to fuel some upside for the Asia region into today's session," said Yeap Jun Rong, market strategist at IG in Singapore.

Shares of Alibaba and Baidu surged after they reported better than expected results, easing some concerns about the negative impact from restrictions to curb COVID-19 infections. Both shares continued to rise.



Gauging Japan's economic path will be on investors' minds as data on manufacturing, housing and employment for April are set to be released next week. Some analysts expect the numbers to be dim because of a slowdown in exports to China during that period.

But some optimism is also in the air, with Tokyo's restrictions on tourists easing and the daily cap raising from 10,000

incoming people to 20,000 starting June 10. The Japanese government, led by Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, is also set to push ahead in parliamentary discussions with a supplementary budget, another possible plus for investors.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei 225 added 0.7 per cent to finish at 26,781.68. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 surged 1.1 per cent to 7,182.70. South Korea's Kospi jumped 1.0 per cent to 2,638.05. Hong Kong's Hang Seng surged 2.9 per cent to 20,697.36, while the Shanghai Composite edged up 0.2 per

cent to 3,130.24. Moody's Investors Service lowered the 2022 growth projections for G-20 economies to 3.1 per cent in 2022, down from 5.9 per cent growth in 2021. The latest forecast is half a percentage point lower than the 3.6 per cent growth estimated in March. Slowing economic activity in China from the nation's "zero COVID" policy is dampening growth, Moody's said.

The US retail sector is being closely watched by investors looking for more details on just how much pain inflation is inflicting on companies and consumers. Inflation is at a four-decade high and businesses have been raising prices on everything from food to clothing to offset higher costs.

The impact from Russia's invasion of Ukraine worsened inflation pressures by fueling higher energy and key food commodity costs. Supply chain problems worsened in the wake of China's lockdown for several major cities as it tried to contain COVID-19 cases.

Structural reforms essential for inclusive growth: RBI

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Making a strong case for structural reforms, the Reserve Bank on Friday said they are essential for sustained, balanced and inclusive growth, and also to deal with the after-effects of the pandemic.

In its annual report, the Reserve Bank of India also stressed that the future path of growth would be conditioned by addressing supply-side bottlenecks, calibrating monetary policy to bring down inflation and boosting capital spending.

"Undertaking structural reforms to improve India's medium-term growth potential holds the key to secure sustained, balanced and inclusive growth, especially by helping workers adapt to the after-effects of the pandemic by reskilling and enabling them to adopt new technologies for raising productivity," it said in the chapter on 'Assessment and Prospects'.

The escalation of geopolitical tensions into war from late February 2022 has delivered a brutal blow to the world economy, battered as it has been through 2021 by multiple waves of the pandemic.

TACKLING COVID States used Rs 1,460 cr from district mineral foundation fund

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State governments have spent a total of Rs 1,459.93 crore from District Mineral Foundation funds on various activities to curb COVID-19 during the past more than two years, according to the ministry of mines.

The ministry also said that several states, including Odisha, Telangana and Karnataka, are still using District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds to battle coronavirus. District Mineral Foundation (DMF) is a non-profit statutory trust, which has been set up for the welfare of the districts affected by mining-related activities. It is an initiative of the government to ensure that funds collected under DMF are utilised for the welfare of those affected by mining-related operations.

The total funds available under DMF as on March 28, 2020 was to the tune of Rs 14,694.47 crore, the ministry said.

"State governments are continuing to use District Mineral Foundation funds to combat



COVID-19, wherein Rs 1,459.93 crore has been spent till April 28, 2022," the ministry said, adding that the amount was spent between March 28, 2020 and April 28, 2022.

Of the total amount utilised during the pandemic, Odisha spent the maximum Rs 445.54 crore, followed by Telangana at Rs 334.08 crore. Karnataka spent Rs 199.58 crore, while Rs 139.79 crore has been utilised by Andhra Pradesh and Rs 91 crore by Chhattisgarh.

Other states which spent DMF funds to combat COVID-19 are Assam, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh,

Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

However, Bihar, Haryana and Kerala did not spend funds for activities related to COVID-19 since March 28, 2020 till last month.

As on March 28, 2020, Bihar had DMF fund of Rs 84.50 crore, followed by Haryana Rs 20.24 crore and Kerala Rs 2 crore. DMF has been created in each district under the provisions of Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2015.

Ruchi Soya Q4 profit declines 25 pc to Rs 234.33 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Edible oil major Ruchi Soya Industries Ltd on Friday reported a 25 per cent decline in its standalone net profit to Rs 234.33 crore for the March 2022 quarter, mainly due to higher tax expenses. Its net profit stood at Rs 314.33 crore in the year-ago period.

The company's total income rose to Rs 6,676.19 crore in the fourth quarter from Rs 4,859.5 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding fiscal. Net profit increased to Rs 806.3 crore in 2021-22 from Rs 680.77 crore a year ago.

Total income surged to Rs 24,284.38 crore during the last fiscal from Rs 16,382.97 crore in 2020-21. Its tax expenses stood at about Rs 61 crore in the quarter. The firm had received a tax credit of Rs 166 crore in the year-ago period.



■ Net profit increased to Rs 806.3 cr in 2021-22 from Rs 680.77 cr a year ago

■ The company also announced a dividend of Rs 5 per share for shareholders

The company also announced a dividend of Rs 5 per share for shareholders.

Ruchi Soya was acquired by Baba Ramdev led-Patanjali group in 2019 for Rs 4,350 crore through an insolvency process. Recently, Patanjali Ayurved announced the sale of its food retail business to group firm Ruchi Soya Industries Ltd for Rs 690 crore as part of its strategy to focus on non-food, traditional medicine and wellness business. Ruchi Soya Industries Ltd has recently raised Rs 4,300 crore through a follow-on public offer (FPO).



Godrej Industries Q4 profit at Rs 423 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Godrej Industries on Friday reported a consolidated net profit of Rs 422.82 crore for fourth quarter ended March 31, 2022.

The company had posted a loss of Rs 92.17 crore for the same quarter of previous fiscal year, Godrej Industries said in a regulatory filing.

Revenue from operations during the quarter under review stood at Rs 4,444.87 crore. It was Rs 2,610.69 crore in the year-ago period, it added. Total expenses in the quarter was higher at Rs 4,202.23 crore. It stood at Rs 2,813.8 crore in the corresponding period a year ago.

IMF wants 'adequate assurances' on Sri Lanka

PNS ■ COLOMBO

Since Sri Lanka's public debt is assessed as "unsustainable," the IMF has said that it requires "sufficient assurance" from the country that it will restore debt sustainability during the debt restructuring process, a media report on Friday quoted the global crisis lender as saying.

"The (IMF) team welcomes the appointment of financial and legal advisors to engage in a collaborative dialogue with their creditors. It is an important step towards restoring public debt sustainability," the EconomyNext website cited the International Monetary Fund as saying after the end of technical level negotiations between the crisis-hit country's officials and the IMF team.

"Since Sri Lanka's public debt is assessed as unsustainable, approval by the Executive Board of an IMF-supported programme for the country would require adequate assurances that debt sustainability will be restored," the



IMF said.

The global lender's comments come as Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, who is also the finance minister, on Thursday said he would quickly prepare an economic reform programme and seek approval from the IMF.

Wickremesinghe said: "I have placed my special attention on this because of the present global situation, the war in Ukraine and global inflation. From what we can see, a number of countries

may have to face economic problems like ours."

On Thursday, Wickremesinghe met the chairmen and top management of all state and private banks in the country and inquired from them issues such as the dollar deficit and credit expansion as well as the amount of savings, media reports said.

Sri Lanka has been going through the worst economic crisis since its independence from Britain in 1945, triggering a political crisis as well.

The nearly bankrupt country, with an acute foreign currency crisis that resulted in foreign debt default, announced last month that it is suspending nearly USD 7 billion foreign debt repayment due for this year out of about USD 25 billion due through 2026. Sri Lanka's total foreign debt stands at USD 51 billion.

The IMF on Thursday also said that the inflation had accelerated "driven by many factors, including the shortages of goods, fuel price increases, and currency depreciation".

"In this context, we are deeply concerned about the impact of the ongoing crisis on the people, particularly the poor and vulnerable groups," the statement from the global lender said.

"The IMF team held technical discussions on a comprehensive reform package to restore macro-economic stability and debt sustainability. The team made good progress in assessing the economic situation and in identifying policy priorities to be taken going forward," it added.

GAIL net jumps 40% on higher gas margins

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State gas utility GAIL India Ltd on Friday reported a 40 per cent jump in its March quarter net profit as margins on natural gas sales rose.

Net profit in January-March at Rs 2,683.11 crore was higher than Rs 1,907.67 crore in the same period a year back, according to the company's regulatory filing.

Revenue from operations rose to Rs 26,968.21 crore from Rs 15,549.07 crore in January-March 2021.

Ola scouts for land to set up cell, electric car factories

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Mobility giant Ola Electric is scouting for land to set up its cell and electric car factories and is in talks with multiple states, sources said.

Ola Electric needs 1,000 acres of land to set up its cell gigafactory and electric car factory which is expected to attract an investment of Rs 10,000 crore.

Some states are already vying, sources aware of the matter said.

Ola Electric's four-wheeler ambitions are taking a serious shape with some concept designs almost ready.

It is in talks with govern-



ments of Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Telangana for land acquisition, they said adding the company is likely to finalize it as

early as next month. The firm already has 500 acre in Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu where it has built its Futurefactory, the world's largest two-wheeler factory.

Ola Electric needs 1,000 acres of land to set up its cell gigafactory and electric car factory which is expected to attract an investment of Rs 10,000 crore.

A company spokesperson declined to comment on the developments.

Siemens board okays large drives applications biz sale

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Siemens on Friday said its board has approved the sale of its large drives applications business to a subsidiary of Siemens AG for Rs 440 crore.

"The Board of Directors of Siemens Limited has approved the sale and transfer of its Large

Drives Applications (LDA) business to Siemens Large Drives India Private Ltd (a subsidiary of Siemens Large Drives GmbH, which in turn is a subsidiary of Siemens AG) with effect from July 1, 2022, and is subject to receipt of requisite statutory and regulatory approvals, as applicable," a company statement said. The

LDA business within Siemens Ltd recorded revenue from operations of Rs 4,437 million for FY 2021 and an operating profit of Rs 251 million, it added. As of FY 2021, the LDA business contributed 3.4 per cent and two per cent, respectively, to the total revenue from operations and profit from operations of Siemens Ltd.

High WPI may put pressure on retail inflation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sounding a note of caution, the Reserve Bank said on Friday said there is a risk of high wholesale price inflation (WPI) putting pressure on the retail inflation, albeit with a lag.

In its annual report, the RBI said that the cost-push pressures from high industrial raw material prices, transportation costs and global logistics, and supply chain bottlenecks continue to impinge on core inflation.

"The substantial wedge between wholesale and retail price inflation amidst a sharp rise in manufactured products' inflation poses the risk of a possible passthrough of input cost pressures to retail inflation with a lag, although slack in the economy is muting the pass-through," the



central bank noted.

The conflict over Ukraine and the consequent spike in commodity prices has overcast the outlook for inflation in India as in the rest of the world, it added. To control spiralling prices, the government had recently cut excise duty on petrol and diesel and also waived import duty on some raw materials used in the steel and plastic industry.

Tata Motors files record 125 patents in FY22

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors on Friday said it filed record 125 patents related to powertrain technologies in the last fiscal.

The company said the number of patents filed in last financial year were the highest ever for the auto major so far.

The patents filed entail a diverse range of innovations and developments in traditional and new energy powertrain technologies, safety, connected vehicle technologies, body in white (BIW) and trims along with other vehicle systems, Tata Motors said in a statement.

Of the total filings, 56 patents were approved in 2021-22 fiscal.

"We have established a legacy of setting new benchmarks with cutting-edge technologies and features in the areas of new energy solutions, safety, product performance, cost of ownership and digitalisation," Tata Motors President and CTO Rajendra Petkar noted.

The growing voice of Hyderabad

SHIKHA DUGGAL

It's not difficult for Dr. Shantanu Gokhale to focus on the job at hand and be tempted to do another. The consultant endodontist by profession is all set to pay homage to his late guru. And he's fascinated by the city of Hyderabad.

He learned the nuances of Indian classical music at the tender age of three with the basic knowledge of ragas and continued to play the harmonium. He grew up witnessing the great masters of Indian classical music frequenting his house.

We got in touch with him to know how he is building a newfound penchant for our Nizami city. He says, "I have so many friends here. Guruji was really fond of this city." He had many uncountable stories to tell about Hyderabad city. "Santoor concerts have always been a part of this city for so many years, and that's how we musicians get together from across the country in the heart of this city. I heard about the Golkonda Fort, Charminar, and Ramoji Film City so much. My family and I watch a lot of Telugu films. Now everyone calls the blockbuster hits an integral part of Tollywood."

He noticed how the city's urban system is being pushed to its limits to the extent that there is so much development here.

He adds, "Surmandal is a group formed by music lovers in Hyderabad way back in 1934, and Shri Mohan Hemmadi was one of the founder members. It was Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan who mooted the idea of Sri Hemmadi forming this group. The name was also suggested

by him."

Further, into the conversation, we learned that he's going to be performing at Sparsh Hospice for terminally ill cancer patients and is most excited about it.

To know why, he said, "I am a doctor by profession and all my life, I have worked closely with cancer patients. I feel obliged. Moreover, we'll be celebrating Lt. Pandit Shivakumar's bond with the city with utmost happiness in the upcoming days. From all the classical gurus who have attracted me from a very young age, a prominent classical music festival brought guruji and me together in Pune. Choosing the instrument, santoor, was also a really different decision, because it could captivate the audience. Its sound is bound to hypnotise you. On the other hand, my bloodline led me to the profession in the medicinal field. I am juggling between both environments today. Frankly, it is easier to juggle between the two due to the advent of the internet. Dentistry and classical music have a symbiotic relationship for me, and I am thrilled to be performing here."

As more people are moving here, the beauty of the city is that there are still resources. The temperature isn't extreme, air quality is not suffering, green space is not shrinking, walking is not riskier, and housing is not that expensive. Transit is never overcrowded. Neither, as entire neighbourhoods are being wiped out in an instant by monster disasters. So, gear up. You'll serendipitously be coming across fascinating artists in our city, and after hearing this indie artist's story, we learned that Dr. Shantanu Gokhale will always have a room for love in Hyderabad.

In this week's edition of the **Hyderabond**, *The Pioneer* connects with a doctor by profession who will be paying homage to his late Guru.



Give a facelift to your home with some refreshing aromas



In the midst of soaring heat and a mercurial rise in humidity, we need to carefully choose our aroma. Using the right aroma would not just recharge our senses and stimulate us emotionally but can also reverse the general sluggishness that summer is usually known for. It can give a cool facelift to our homes and let us enjoy the summer vibes in the true sense.

Ridhima Kansal, director, Rosemoore, mentioned below some of the popular aromas for this summer season that refresh, reenergise and revitalise.

Lemongrass: It is an evergreen aroma, well known worldwide for its zingy, citrusy, and energizing appeal. Lemongrass is a timeless aroma that can fight fatigue and combat stress. It can instantly refresh the mind and revitalize the body. It is perfect for the hot summer giving an outdoorsy and energizing facelift to the décor.

However, it should be noted that lemongrass at times can be a little overwhelming, and hence adding hints of other complementary aromas can be beneficial. For instance, at Rosemoore we add some lime and mountain pepper. The former makes the aroma milder and sweeter while the latter adds a touch of spiciness.

Eucalyptus: It is a bright olfactory composition that enlivens the overall décor and helps in fighting fatigue and feeling rejuvenated. Eucalyptus has a minty and woody appeal making it a perfect fit for the bright and warm climate of Indian summers. It can also be paired well with other aromas to render increased depth. For instance, at Rosemoore, we often pair Eucalyptus with lime to make it more refreshing and zesty. Hints of magnolia are also added to add a layer of sweetness. Eucalyptus also has mood-improving qualities and it can be used in desks, office spaces, workstations, etc.

Egyptian Cotton: This one-in-a-kind fragrance is a new age aroma made with the help

overall well-being and peace. It is an intoxicating aroma with a hint of a floral accord, adding some amount of sweetness as well.

Floral and Fruity Tones: This summer one can also try out numerous fresh floral and fruity accords such as raspberry, pomegranates, figs, berries, etc. Such aromas are refreshing and have striking appeal. They can refresh the mind and can energize the body, giving a perfect respite from the scorching heat outside. Kids also generally love such aromas, which is a great reason you should give these a shot this summer.

Use the Right Product

While selecting the right aroma is important, it is also crucial to have the right product in place. Finding the right product often depends on a host of factors such as area, usability, exact purpose, etc.

A worthy choice is using an electronic or a reed diffuser, which can give a dash of spontaneous aroma. These reed diffusers are a preferred choice in many households as they do not need heat and electricity and are safe to operate. All you need is to

of mingling soft powdery musk with white wood and ozone. It gives a very cool and soothing appeal to the overall home ambiance with dewy and airy essence. The aroma can also promote

insert reed sticks inside the diffuser oil. A typical reed diffuser with 10 sticks can work for around 75 days. A traditional choice could be using a candle that can cast the whiff of your favourite aroma, rendering an olfactory makeover. While going for the candle, it is important to check the design and the aesthetics, as a beautifully designed candle is a perfect recipe to blend fashion with fragrance.

Candles are also versatile and can be used in a wide range of places. It can be used in the living room giving a perfect dash of energy. It can be put on a dining table, making the scene for a candle-lit dinner. Decorated candles can also be used on the porch, patios, gardens, deck areas, etc.

Classy and chic potpourris are increasingly becoming popular. Besides spreading your favourite aroma, these potpourris are visually appealing and can greatly enhance the overall décor and ambience. It can be placed at the entrance of homes, offices, retail spaces, etc.

Meanwhile, traditional products like sprays and sachets can't be missed. In a time of fancy, beautiful, and elegantly designed aroma products, sachets have not yet lost their charm. It is cost-effective and multipurpose. Sachets can be used in living spaces, workstations, and bedrooms. Likewise, they can be tucked inside drawers, shelves, laundry bags, purses, luggage bags, etc. to keep everything clean and fresh.

On International Women's Health Day today, *The Pioneer* gets in touch with a few gynaecologists and yoga instructors, who shared with us important facts on PCOS, tests to perform, and some tips to keep it in check.

K. RAMYA SREE

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is a condition involving an imbalance of hormones in women and is one of the leading causes of infertility.

Women with PCOS skip menstrual cycles, fail to produce eggs and find it difficult to conceive. PCOS is caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Unhealthy diets, high-stress levels, lack of physical activity and being overweight are some of the conditions that make women more prone to PCOS.

The incidence of this metabolic anomaly is increasing the world over with the growing prevalence of poor lifestyle habits, unhealthy eating practises as well as sedentary conditions. While there is no cure for PCOS, treatment involves restoring hormonal levels through the use of birth control pills or diabetes drugs. Women with PCOS are advised to do regular physical exercise and weight loss.

An Indian study from the National Institute of Research in Reproductive Health (NIRRH) reported PCOS to be present in 1 out of 5 young girls between 15 and 24 years in Mumbai.

With its deep-rooted knowledge of the intrinsic mind-body balance, Yoga offers a highly viable solution to tackle the con-

dition of PCOS. A combination of Naturopathy and Yoga allows the restoration of hormonal balance while offering a remedy for anxiety and depression that are common among women with PCOS.

Dr. Safala Shroff, gynaecologist and adolescent health educator, TooShyToAsk Project and Health App, talks about the early symptoms of PCOS, "The symptoms of PCOS start young when the girl attains puberty and usually improve as she reaches menopause, indicating that these symptoms coincide with the activity of her ovaries. She may visit doctors of different specialties for various issues, a gynaecologist for irregular periods or infertility, a dermatologist for cosmetic issues such as excess hair growth on her face and body, pigmentation and acne, and an endocrinologist for her obesity, not knowing that these issues are intertwined."

Symptoms include irregular, heavy menstrual cycles, excess hair growth on the face, stomach, and back, hair loss on the scalp, acne (pimples), overweight or obesity, infertility, depression and/or anxiety, and an impact on self-esteem, body image, and quality of life.

However, not all of these symptoms are experienced by all women.

Dr. Shimi Sundharan, M.D., head, research and development and academic cell, Metropolis Healthcare Ltd., lists out some of the tests to screen for disorders.

Blood tests are mainly advised to rule out conditions that mimic PCOS. Blood tests are also done to screen for disorders frequently associated with PCOS, like diabetes and high cholesterol.

Hormonal

tests

Anti-Mullerian hormone (AMH) levels are related to the total number of antral follicles in both ovaries. High AMH values are suggestive of PCOS.

Follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH), luteinizing hormone (LH): Most women with PCOS have FSH levels lower than their LH levels. FSH and LH levels support the diagnosis of PCOS.

Androgens: The primary

andro-

gens responsible for symptoms such as acne, hirsutism, baldness, and menstrual irregularities in females with PCOS are androstenedione, dehydroepiandrosterone (DHEA), testosterone, and dihy-

drotestosterone (DHT).

Thyroid function tests:

Thyroid tests like Thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH), Triiodothyronine (T3) and Thyroxine (T4) help exclude thyroid dysfunction as the cause of menstrual irregularities.

17-

Hydroxyprogesterone (17-OHP): This hormone is produced by the adrenal glands. This test is done to rule out late-onset congenital adrenal hyperplasia, a medical condition that can mimic the symptoms of PCOS.

Prolactin is a hormone secreted by the pituitary gland that helps promote lactation in women. Elevated values of this hormone (referred to as hyperprolactinemia) can cause irregular menstruation (oligomenorrhea) or a total lack of menstruation (amenorrhea).

On the other hand, we have a senior yoga teacher at Jindal Naturecure Institute, Deepika Dikshit, who shares a few yoga postures that can help in keeping PCOS under control and overcome infertility, anxiety and other symptoms associated with it:

Baddhakonasana (Bound angle pose)

This improves blood circulation to the pelvic region, promotes relaxation, reduces stress, and helps the reproductive organs. You are required to sit straight with your spine upright and legs spread in front. Bend and bring the feet close to the pelvis, with the soles touching each other. Interlock the fingers and hold the feet firmly. Draw in the heels towards the genitals and take deep breaths, pressing the thighs and knees down towards the floor by providing gentle pressure. Stay in this position as long as it is comfortable. Then inhale, lift the knees away from the floor and extend the legs to their original position.

Bharadvajasana (Bharadvaja's twist)

Regular practise of this posture alleviates stiffness and pain in the lower back, neck, and shoulder, makes the hamstrings supple, and tones the muscles of the uterus. For this, start by sitting on the yoga mat, legs stretched ahead and arms resting on both sides of the body. Fold your knees and bring them close to the left hip, putting the weight of the body on the right buttock. Position your left ankle on the arch of your right foot and twist your upper body as far to the right as you can while keeping your right hand on the floor and your left hand on the outer side of your right thigh. Try to twist your body further with each breath. Stay in this position for a minute before returning to the original position and repeating the procedure on the opposite side, shifting the weight to the left buttock.

Bhujangasana (Cobra pose)

The cobra pose exerts gentle pressure on the abdomen and pelvic region and helps address PCOS symptoms by stimulating the ovaries, improving digestion, and reducing stress. Start by lying face downwards, toes placed flat on the floor, legs together and palms beside the chest. Breathe in deeply as you lift your head and torso off the floor, keeping the navel fixed on the floor. Support your raised torso with both hands and arch your back as much as you can. Incline your head upward and keep your shoulders free and away from your ears. Keep breathing normally for 30 seconds and return to the starting position.

Child's pose (Balasana)

Balasana is a useful practice for PCOS as it induces relaxation by soothing the Central Nervous System. This automatically releases lower back tension, menstrual cramps, and PMS symptoms, while levelling blood flow throughout the body. For this position, kneel down on the yoga mat and sit on your heels, maintaining your knees hip-width apart. Bring your head down to touch the floor and arrange your torso down between your thighs. Keep your hands on the side of the torso and loosen up the shoulders towards the floor. Rest in this posture for 30 seconds to 1 minute and then go back to starting position.

Yoga and Naturopathy treatments are effective in treating PCOS with long-lasting benefits. It can be easily practiced by the ladies in the rural population as a safe, effective and economical way of treating PCOS.

what's brewing?



● Shweta



● Tony Berland



● Payal Rajput

PARTY

Photos by SV Charly



The Hungarian marque Keeway announced exciting introductory prices for its new product lineup: Sixties 300i and Vieste 300. The products which received a massive response from the customers come with an exciting introductory price tag; Sixties 300i at Rs. 2,99,000 (Ex-showroom, India), and Vieste 300 at Rs. 2,99,000 (Ex-showroom, India). The delivery for these will begin from June 2022 and a 2-year unlimited KMS warranty as standard will also be provided.



For the first time in Hyderabad, an extravagant overnight stargazing camp was organized by Oakridge International School, Bachupally, supported by Society for Space Education Research and Development (SSEED), as part of the Summer Learning Program 2022.



Actress Catherine and Indian choreographer Jani Master along with Kia representatives unveiled the Kia EV6 at Automotive Kia in Hi-tech city on Friday. The vehicle will now be displayed at the Automotive Kia, Hi-tech City showroom located at Kondapur, Hyderabad. Interested customers can visit the showroom to witness this game-changing product and they can also pre-book it by paying a token amount of Rs 3 lakh.

NEW STORE

Legrand India has announced the launch of its first retail outlet, Legrand Studio in Hyderabad. This retail outlet will host all the products of Legrand's India group company at their store. Actress Payal Rajput inaugurated the store in Plaza House, MG Road in Secunderabad, along with Tony Berland, CEO and MD Group Legrand India.



● Vidhi and Maitri



● Rahul and Harsha

FUN

ARCHIE



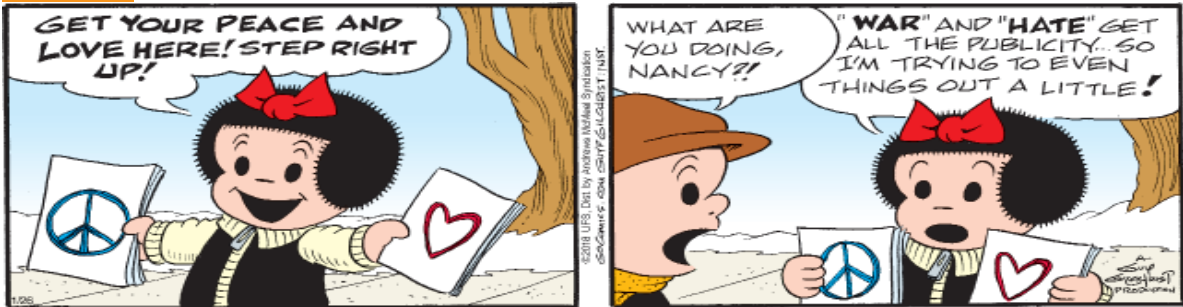
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



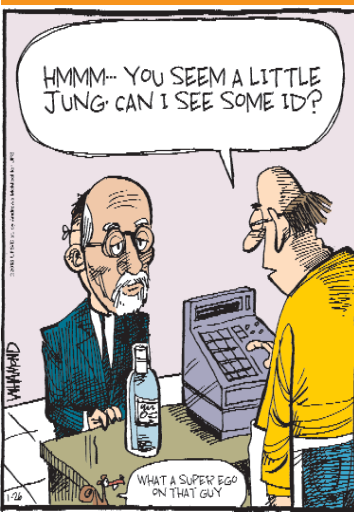
NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



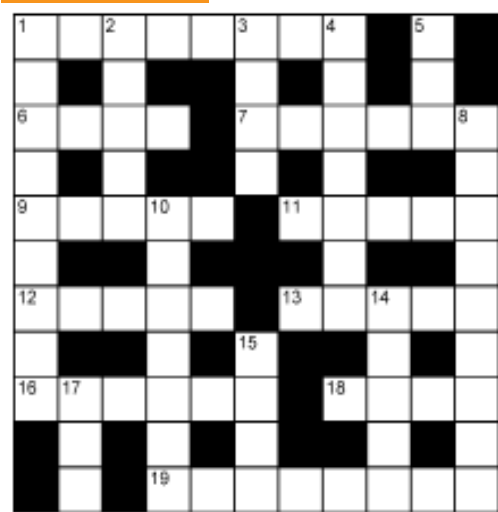
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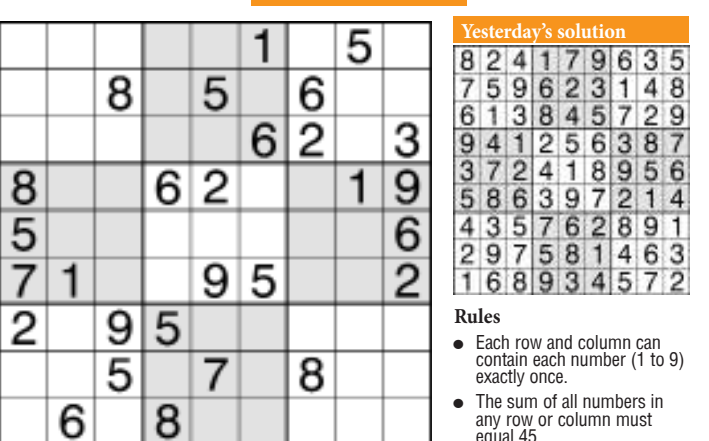
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



ACROSS

- The punishment announced to a criminal in court
- Strong affection
- To make or become larger
- Bend
- Salary
- From Ireland
- Go in
- A stinging plant
- A month
- Recall

DOWN

- Choice
- Not ever
- Requirement
- Say why

- Come first in a race
- A type of warship
- Someone who calls in to see you
- You have one on each hand
- Group of players in a game
- Pixie



‘My role taught me to improve my acting skills’

TEJAL SINHA

1 *120DB Dhvani* gained a positive response among other box office movies on May 20 and is growing among audiences due to its unique concept. The plot captivates the viewer with its special screenplay by unfolding multiple twists, keeping the audience engaged throughout the movie.

The story revolves around a mysterious and brutal attack that curses Arun, an ENT specialist with an extra-sensitive hearing problem, and his wife gets killed. He, along with his friends, unravels the secret behind the attack. Ravindra Reddy, a former bodybuilder, makes his debut in the film. He played the character of Kiran and carried off multiple emotions as a lover and a great friend with ease.

We got in touch with the debutant and asked about what made him get into acting. To this, he shares, “Acting in films was always my interest since my childhood. I was always a great fan of Megastar Chiranjeevi. Be it his dance, his dialogue delivery, his appearance, or his style, everything was mesmerizing. I have been attracted to the industry because of him. Likewise, the fanboy in me kept growing and the actor in me was devoted to him till now. Another reason is that I was always a hyperactive student. I loved sports and socialising and had leadership qualities from my childhood. I was always encouraged by my father. Everything that I am today is all because of my father’s encouragement. I really miss him today and wish to hug and thank him for the support. He would have been the first person to feel happy about my success. I hope he showers you with all of his blessings and support from above.”

The former bodybuilder believes that *120DB Dhvani* made him an actor instead of a character artist. For this, he thanks the director of the film. “I’m so thankful to my director, Durga Rao Sana, for believing in me and giving me the opportunity to prove my calibre. My co-actors, Trinadh and Vinay, also performed their best. Our story of the film has so much potential that everyone gets a chance to display their shades of hero and villain in the same film. This is the

main point which was applauded by the audience and gave us a huge success and appreciation. It’s not a routine film with four songs, three fights, and some stuff. Our story is completely new. It says everyone turns hero and everyone turns villain

Ravindra Reddy, who is seen playing the role of Kiran in *120DB Dhvani*, shares with *The Pioneer* some exclusive details about his experience as a debutant

ing to the time and situation, which gave us space to perform, and as in the title, *120DB dhvani* db stands for decibel, a unit to measure sound. Our movie is the first sound-based film.”

Coming from a different field itself was a big challenge for the 2017 Mr. Hyderabad (bronze) and 2018 Mr. Lean Muscle (gold) winners. He shares, “Getting a chance to act in films was not so easy as it took more than 13 years of struggle to get that one good chance. Getting those chances was very difficult as I don’t have any film background or big family behind me to support, but the hard work and struggle were fruitful. After a long wait, the role in the film taught me a lot about improving my acting skills. It would be easy to get a chance if you had some support from the industry. In fact, sometimes it’s a bit of luck and sometimes it’s a huge burden to be from a big family in the industry. Having a family in the film industry would help in getting chances and promoting ourselves is easy, but while acting it becomes a huge burden as they have to carry their families’ legacy on their shoulders and outperform them. Then only you can be identified as a good actor. If you fail to act well, no matter what or a big hero’s son, it doesn’t help you. I mean, entry into the industry is easy, but to sustain it is almost equal effort and hard work for both filmy and nonfilmy peers. The film industry is open to everyone who is passionate, but it

gives success to those who stay with consistency, hope, love, and passion.”

He believes that his destiny gave him a chance after seeing all his hard work and struggle.” It came through a friend, Samuel Sajeeth, who is also a director and was helping director Durga Rao Sana as executive producer for the film, so he called me to the director and narrated me the story in the first sitting. I was so impressed and he offered me a hero. It was a wow moment for me.”

“I got a good script and a hero with different shades, felt happy and immediately said yes to *120DB Dhvani*,” he adds.

Sharing about Tollywood films being appreciated by audiences in pan India, he shares, “Films like *Baahubali*, *RRR*, and *KGF* have erased the limits of films from Tollywood or Bollywood etc. It is now called Indian Cinema and not a different language industry. It’s a happy moment and a good sign for the film industry that it has grown to a world level. The audience has also changed their preferences regarding the type of content they would like to see.”

Ravindra also adds on stating that nowadays it’s hard to pull the audience to the theatre and impress them as it’s now the era of OTT films has started and price hikes on ticket rates are also affecting the audience’s ability to pull to theaters. But luckily the team was able to impress the audience with our story and performance. He wishes that theatres regained their allure and that audiences could experience true cinema in theaters.

“Tollywood always welcomes new talents and now with growing opportunities on OTT platforms other than theatre, new talents are being encouraged who are coming with new-age content. With wider opportunities out there, it is definitely a welcome for new talents,” he adds, sharing that bodybuilding is part of his day-to-day life and while doing workouts he only thinks of how to be

better than yesterday.

For him, fitness is not just a week or a month-long program; it’s a way of life.

He adds, “I never skip workouts, so I need not work hard overnight to get into good shape. That’s the reason I got good chances in modelling and then in films, and with diet, I eat everything in moderation. I eat to kill my hunger, not to fill my stomach. Diet varies from person to person. In general, people see a programme on the internet and follow the program, but they don’t see results. That’s because diet and workout vary from person to person. To see results, consult a doctor, a nutritionist, and then a trainer to see good results.”

Sharing about the types of movies and characters that he would like to work on in the future, he shares, “I want to be a versatile actor, not restricting myself to one particular genre, but from the depth of my heart, I love to play villains. I feel I can live in it with ease, so I feel more inclined towards villains, but as said in a director’s actor, I’m happy to play any role with my style of mannerism.”

It looks like, with *120DB Dhvani*, the debutant has got a huge list of projects that he will be working on. Giving us some exclusive hints about it, he shares, “I’m super excited to share my upcoming projects. I have acted in 3 pan-India films and 2 regional films.

Virataparvam, starring Rana Daggubati and Sai Pallavi, will be released on July 1. Then I have *Sita Ramam*, starring Dulquer Salman, Mrunal Thakur, and Rashmika, which will be released on August 5, *Kushi* starring Vijay Devarkonda, Samantha, which will be released on December 23rd, *Raju Yadav* starring Getup Sreenu, and Ankita Kharat, which will be released in August or September.”

“I also have an Indian super cop film with a very big budget and a pan-Indian film to be announced soon and I am playing the second lead in it, directed by Samuel Paul. Apart from these, a few other projects are under discussion with those to be fruitful and I am surely not going to look back,” he signs off.



Vishwak Sen’s AVAK to stream on OTT from June 3

With Vishwak Sen and Rukshar Dhillon as the lead pair, the movie *Ashoka Vanamlo Arjuna Kalyanam* (better known by its acronym AVAK) had a good theatrical run, with the hero grabbing the attention of critics.

The makers have now announced that this feel-good movie will start

streaming on the popular Telugu OTT platform, aha, from June 3.

Directed by Vidyasagar Chinta, *Ashoka Vanamlo Arjuna Kalyanam* is a family entertainer with a tinge of romance and dollops of highly enjoyable comedy.

Arjun Kumar Allam (Vishwak Sen), the 33-year-old boy next door, is the focus of the story. He and his family leave for a village named Ashokapuram,

where he is to marry Madhavi (Rukshar Dhillon). Due to the Covid-19 lockdown, however, Arjun and his family are stranded in Ashokapuram. Arjun and Madhavi’s families decide to have a low-key wedding as a result of the situation. Madhavi, though, has other plans. She elopes with the man she loves. The film follows Arjun as he navigates the next set of challenges.

Anil Ravipudi releases video, targets trolls

In the middle of the buzz surrounding

Anil Ravipudi’s Telugu family entertainer *F3*, the director has released a video in which he attempts to silence his trolls. Ravipudi and his film have been the targets of troll attacks on social media. Unfazed, Ravipudi has stated that he will continue to make films in his signature style and therefore does not take the negative feedback to heart.

The debutant

director compares trolls who try to bring down his films to non-vegetarians who shame vegetarians by comparing each individual’s food choices. “Non-vegetarians have no idea of what vegetarian food tastes

like and vegetarians will not stop eating the way they do just because they are being trolled,” Ravipudi said. There is an audience for all types of films as long as they are well-made.

With his over-the-top films that pack in a lot of fun, Ravipudi has carved a niche for himself. His latest, *F3*, is out in theatres and early reports suggest that the movie is an entertainer.



Vikram to release in 400 screens in Telugu states

Kamal Haasan’s *Vikram*, directed by Kollywood’s hitmaker Lokesh Kanagaraj, will be released on 400 screens in the two Telugu-speaking states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana on June 3. It will be the biggest Kamal Haasan movie release ever in the two states.

The Telugu version of the film, which also



features Vijay Setupati and Fahadh Faasil, is being bankrolled by Sreshth Movies. As reported earlier, Kamal Haasan and the core

team of *Vikram* will attend a pre-release event scheduled to take place soon in Hyderabad.

The action film, which stars Kamal Haasan as the enigmatic protagonist, has Vijay and Fahadh in spellbinding grey roles. Suriya Sivakumar will be seen filling a short, yet important role in the rather dark film. *Vikram* has received U/A certification from the Censor Board.

Is Adhikari the title of Ram Charan-Shankar’s film with Kiara Advani?

The upcoming big-budget film starring Ram Charan and directed by Shankar Shannmugham has been in the works for some time. There are rumours aplenty now that a tentative title has been circulated.

According to online sources, the tentative title for *RC15* is *Adhikari*. The title has been well received on social media, as it is



appropriate for all of the languages in which the film is being produced. Ram Charan plays an IAS officer and the plot revolves

around politics. Kiara Advani, who previously appeared alongside Ram Charan in *Vinaya Vidheya Rama*, will also be seen with the

Telugu star in this political drama. Ram Charan, who made national headlines with S.S. Rajamouli’s blockbuster *RRR*, has shifted his focus entirely to this film with Shankar following the failure of *Acharya*, where he appeared with his father Chiranjeevi.

RC15, which is being bankrolled by Dil Raju, has been written by Karthik Subbaraj of *Petta* fame.



Major ticket prices at the lowest rate

Adivi Sesh’s Pan-India film *Major*, directed by Sashi Kiran Tikka, is all set for grand release worldwide on June 3rd. The makers announced the film would have affordable ticket prices on single-screens and multiplexes. While the single-screen ticket price in Telangana is Rs 150, it will be Rs 147 in Andhra Pradesh, with multiplexes

charging Rs 195 and Rs 177, respectively. These are the lowest ticket prices for any film post-pandemic. The makers have reduced ticket prices for everyone to watch. This will surely bring a family audience to the theatres, and moreover, the movie will have repeats with the affordable ticket prices in Telugu states. The makers also took the brave decision of screening early premieres

across the country, much before the film’s theatrical release. The first screening was already held a few days ago in Pune, and it got unanimous positive talk. The audience indeed had a standing ovation after watching the show. The film is produced jointly by Sony Pictures Films India in association with Mahesh Babu’s GMB Entertainment and A+S Movies.

A perfect tribute to selfless, brave military personnel, *Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan*, who sacrificed his life for the nation in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks, the film also features Sobhita Dhulipala, Prakash Raj, Revathi, and Murli Sharma in prominent roles.

Vamsi Patchipulusu handled the cinematography of the movie, which is one of the most-awaited movies of 2022.



AP ■ PARIS

Jurgen Klopp's Liverpool are seeking to cap a remarkable season by avenging their 2018 defeat against Real Madrid when the sides meet again in the Champions League final in Paris on Saturday, but the Spanish giants have their sights on a 14th European Cup triumph.

It is Liverpool's third Champions League final in five seasons, after they followed their 3-1 loss to Real in Kyiv by beating Tottenham Hotspur in Madrid a year later, and they are widely seen as slight favourites at the Stade de France to become kings of Europe for a seventh time.

That would put them level with AC Milan, with only Saturday's opponents having won the trophy more often, and it would allow the Anfield club to finish the campaign with a treble after they lifted the English League Cup and FA Cup.

For a long time an unprecedented quadruple was on, but Klopp's side fell just short in the Premier League, finishing a point behind Manchester City. "Without the Champions League it would be a great season. With the Champions League it would be a fan-

AN EVENING IN PARIS

Liverpool eye revenge against Real Madrid in Champions League final rematch

tastic season," said Klopp.

It has already been a memorable few years for Klopp's side following their loss in Kyiv, when Mohamed Salah was forced off injured in the first half, Loris Karius endured a nightmare in goal, and Gareth Bale's brilliance won the trophy for Real.

"I think it is revenge time," Salah, scorer of 31 goals this season, admitted recently. Liverpool appear well placed given how much they have strengthened since 2018, chiefly in goal with the arrival of Alisson, while Thiago Alcantara has been a standout in midfield.

ANCELOTI TARGETS NUMBER FOUR

The problem is that you could be forgiven for thinking that Real's name is on the cup, as it has literally been so many times before.

While Liverpool saw off Inter Milan, Benfica and Villarreal in the knockout rounds, it is easy to forget now that Carlo Ancelotti's Real side lost at home to Sheriff Tiraspol in the group stage, such has been their extraordinary run since.

They were 2-0 down on aggregate to Paris Saint-Germain in the last 16 before a Karim Benzema hat-trick in 17 second-half minutes in the second leg took them through.

Against Chelsea in the quarter-finals they scored late at home in the return leg to force extra time before Benzema got their winner.

The best was saved for the semi-final against Manchester City when they went into the 90th minute of the second leg needing two goals just to force extra time. They duly got them, and Benzema then struck the winner.

The 34-year-old Frenchman now leads Madrid into the final in his home country after a campaign in which he has scored 44 goals, with 15 in Europe and 27 on their run to the Spanish title.

Benzema will surely be nailed on to win the Ballon d'Or if his club triumphs in Paris, where victory would also help Real supporters get over Kylian Mbappe's decision to snub them. Madrid are chasing their fifth Champions League in nine seasons, a run that began when they beat Atletico Madrid in Lisbon in 2014.

Benzema was in that team, as was Luka Modric, while Ancelotti was the coach in his first spell in charge.

The veteran Italian can now become the first coach to win the Champions League four times, having also triumphed with AC Milan in

2003 and 2007.

The latter victory came against Liverpool and was revenge for the Anfield club's win over Ancelotti's Milan in Istanbul in 2005.

"Playing a final with them is something special. They have won six Champions Leagues, and if they reach seven they would go level with Milan, so I have extra motivation to win this final," smiled Ancelotti, who had a spell as boss of Liverpool's

local rivals Everton before returning to Madrid. This will be the third final between the clubs, who also met in Paris in 1981 — then the English side were victorious thanks to Alan Kennedy's goal at the Parc des Princes.

Champions League Final
Live from 12:30am IST
SONY TEN 2 NETWORK

Ibrahimovic intends to continue playing: Maldini

AP ■ MILAN

Zlatan Ibrahimovic intends to continue playing despite the end of his contract with AC Milan and a lengthy layoff in store following knee surgery, club director Paolo Maldini said on Friday.

"From what I understand, his intention is to continue," Maldini told Gazzetta dello Sport, two days after the striker, who turns 41 in October, underwent surgery that is expected to sideline him for eight months.

"We have made an appointment in a fortnight. I don't see any problem in reaching an agreement. He is certainly not at ease playing so little. We will see what happens in the next two weeks," Maldini said.

Ibrahimovic, who returned to AC Milan in January 2020 eight years after leaving and has just helped the club win their first Serie A title since 2011, has had the anterior cruciate ligament in



his left knee reconstructed. The former Inter Milan, Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester United forward said this week he endured six months of sleepless nights due to the pain in his knee because he was determined to fulfil his promise to AC Milan of delivering their first Serie A crown in 11 years.

Thiago, Fabinho fit for final

AP ■ PARIS

Liverpool's preparations for the Champions League final were boosted by the news that midfielders Thiago Alcantara and Fabinho will be fit to face Real Madrid after injury scares.

Thiago was brought off at half-time of Liverpool's 3-1 win over Wolves last weekend nursing an Achilles problem.

Fabinho has not featured since sustaining a muscular injury in a 2-1 win at Aston Villa on May 10. However, the Brazilian took a

full part in an open training session in front of the media on Wednesday.

"Thiago Alcantara and Fabinho will be included in Liverpool's travelling squad for the Champions League final against Real Madrid," Liverpool said in a statement.

"The pair will be among the players journeying to Paris for Saturday's clash at Stade de France following injury concerns and are set to come into contention to return." Both players have been pivotal to Liverpool's stunning season that has already seen them lift two trophies in the League Cup and FA Cup.

Confident India eye revenge against Japan

PTI ■ JAKARTA

Having risen like a proverbial phoenix from the ashes, a rejuvenated Indian men's hockey team would like to put up a much-improved performance when it takes on Japan in its first 'Super 4' match of the Asia Cup here on Saturday.

Despite facing a below-par Indonesia in its final group league game, the young side coached by Sardar Singh must be lauded for being able to score a whopping 16 goals in just an hour.

It was one more than what India required to put a final nail in Pakistan's coffin as far as harbouring World Cup qualification hopes were concerned.

Both India and Pakistan finished on four points each in Pool A behind Japan but the defending champions qualified for the next round due to better goal difference (+1).

But it was not a smooth sailing for India in the first two matches.

Having already qualified for next year's World Cup by virtue of being the hosts, India fielded an inexperienced team with as many as 12 debutants for the tournament to gain much-needed experience.

The young boys did not have the best of starts drawing 1-1 with Pakistan before losing 2-5 to Japan, which pushed them on the brink of elimination.

But the Indians were in no



India vs Japan
Live from 5:00pm IST
STAR SPORTS SELECT 2

mood to bow out without a fight even as they stood at the point of no return. They staged a dramatic turnaround to keep alive their hopes of title defence.

They were also aided by Japan, who beat Pakistan 3-2 in their final match.

Their first goal achieved, the Indians would like to start afresh in the Super 4 stage, where Japan, South Korea and Malaysia are the other three teams. All the teams will play each other with the top two progressing to the final. Revenge

would be high on India's agenda having lost to the Japanese in the pool stages.

But it would be easier said than done as the nimble-footed Japanese rely mostly on counter attacks to surprise their opponents, a play they used to perfection against India in their last outing.

One of the perennial areas of concern for India is poor percentage of penalty corner conversions as this team doesn't have a designated drag-flicker like Rupinderpal Singh or Amit Rohidas. In fact, even against minnows Indonesia, India failed to convert even half of the 20 plus short corners that they earned.

Asian Games postponement give us more time to improve: Savita

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Indian women's hockey team captain Savita is confident of a good show at the Asian Games as the postponement of the continental event in Hangzhou provides the side with more training time and improve just like it did when Tokyo Olympics was deferred by a year. "We will once again deal with this postponement as an opportunity to train and be better prepared for the Asian Games," Savita said on the Hockey India podcast 'Hockey Te Charcha'.

"The one-year postponement for the Olympics gave us significant time to

improve and personally for me, I got to work closely with Janneke (Schopman), who has had a great impact on my improvement as a goalkeeper," she added.

One of the most successful goalkeepers in recent times, Savita will lead the Indian team in the FIH Pro League matches in Europe ahead of the FIH Women's World Cup which begins in July.

"Having finished fourth in Tokyo, everyone took notice of us. Earlier, there were expectations from the men's team only. But now, people expect the women also to finish in top three in any tournament we play and that is good for the sport,"

"No one expected we will go beyond the quarterfinals in the Olympic Games. Many of our supporters thought we would reach upto the quarterfinals at the outset, but I don't think anyone believed we could win the quarter finals.

"This zeal to win and not to give up till the last second of the match was inculcated by our coaching staff. We had to, and we knew we would change the script of Tokyo," added the experienced goalkeeper. Speaking about the team's preparations here in SAI, Bengaluru, for the Pro League and World Cup Savita said the side is hoping for a top four finish.

Fit-again Chhetri boosts India's chances in Jordan friendly



PTI ■ DOHA

Upbeat with the return of talismanic striker Sunil Chhetri in their ranks, India still have a tough task at hand when they face higher-ranked Jordan in an international football friendly match here on Saturday.

The 37-year-old Chhetri last played for India during their 3-0 win over Nepal in

the SAFF Championships final in October 2021, but since then was side-lined due to injuries.

The match is India's last preparatory outing ahead of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers which kicks off in Kolkata from June 8.

Jordan is placed at 91st as against 106th of India in the FIFA rankings.

"Another game against a stronger team will always

help," head coach Igor Stimac said about which team which reached here on Wednesday.

"It's our last friendly game prior to qualifiers, and we need to get final answers on certain questions. Some of our youngsters will have a great opportunity to gain more experience at international level," he added.

The squad has been in a preparatory camp for over a month, first in Bellary in Karnataka and then in Kolkata, and the coach said that the fitness levels of his players "are quite good".

"We have another 10 days (before the Asian Cup qualifiers), and it should be perfect. The boys have done a great job, and they need to be rewarded with some good results in the Qualifiers," Stimac said.

About Jordan as an opposition team, the coach said: "Jordan are ranked better than Belarus (FIFA Ranking 93) but are not as physical as Belarus. So for us, it should be a bit easier in regards to the build-up and ball possession."

The 'Blue Tigers' had played against Belarus in the FIFA international window in March, a match where they went down 0-3.

The Indian squad has been bolstered by the joining of the ATK Mohun Bagan players, who missed the preparatory camp owing to their club commitments in the AFC Cup.

Djokovic, Nadal roll into last 16 at French Open

AP ■ PARIS

Novak Djokovic and Rafael Nadal closed in Friday on a blockbuster clash at the French Open as both reached the last 16, while Carlos Alcaraz prepared to face the only man to beat him on clay this year.

Reigning champion Djokovic and 13-time winner Nadal are on course to meet in the quarter-finals, with the Spaniard seeded outside the top four at Roland Garros for just the second time.

World number one Djokovic strolled to a 6-3, 6-3, 6-2 win over Slovenia's Aljaz Bedene and Nadal eased past Dutch 26th seed Botic van de Zandschulp 6-3, 6-2, 6-4.

"I'm always very motivated when I get on the court, with the desire to produce my best level each time. It's not always possible to do it, but today it was very good," said Djokovic.

The 35-year-old Serb is aiming to become the oldest men's singles champion in Paris in the Open era as he chases a record-equalling 21st Grand Slam title.

Next up for Djokovic, who was also French Open champion in 2016, is a match-up with Argentina's Diego Schwartzman, the 15th seed.

Nadal, the 21-time major champion, improved his record at Roland Garros to 108-3 after seeing off 2021 US Open quarter-finalist Van de Zandschulp.

He has now reached at least the fourth round in 17 of 18 visits to Roland Garros, with the exception of 2016 when he withdrew in the third round with a wrist injury.

"I think I played a good match against a good player. I'm very happy to win," said Nadal.

The Spaniard had a break point for 5-0 in the third set, but Van de Zandschulp refused to roll over, winning four of the next five games before Nadal put away his second match point, having saved a break point in between the two.

"You always feel a little bit the nerves to finish the match, so I'm happy to be through in straight sets," said Nadal, who plays Canadian ninth seed Felix Auger-Aliassime



French Open (Day 7)
Live from 2:30pm IST
SONY TEN 2, 3, 4 & SIX

for a place in the last eight.

"I think it was my best match of the tournament so far for two-and-a-half sets, so I'm very happy with that."

Amanda Anisimova, the 27th seed and a 2019 semi-finalist, advanced to the last 16 as injury-plagued Karolina Muchova retired down 6-7 (7/9), 6-2, 3-0 after falling and twisting her ankle midway through the second set.

Last year's US Open runner-up Leylah Fernandez beat Olympic champion Belinda Bencic 7-5, 3-6, 7-5, while Aliaksandra Sasnovich defeated three-time Grand Slam winner Angelique Kerber 6-4, 7-6 (7/5). Coco Gauff, the youngest player left in the French Open, made the last 16 with a straight-sets win over Kaia Kanepi, the oldest woman in the tournament at 36.

After saving a match point in a thrilling five-setter against countryman Albert Ramos-Vinolas, Spanish teenage star Alcaraz goes up against Sebastian Korda, the US 27th seed who won their meeting in Monte

Carlo last month.

"I believe in myself, and of course I work hard every day," said the 19-year-old Alcaraz.

"You have to have a good goal, good dreams. Of course trying to follow your dream. Work hard every day. I think that's the secret."

"I'm still young, but I would say pretty experienced player now. I feel comfortable playing on the big stadium, big matches, playing in a Grand Slam. As I said, physically I'm strong. Mentally I'm strong, as well."

Alexander Zverev, the third seed and 2021 semi-finalist, was also starting at defeat in the second round against Sebastian Baez, saving a match point on serve at 4-5 in the final set after fighting back from two sets down.

The German Olympic champion meets Brandon Nakashima of the US who is enjoying his best Grand Slam run on his Roland Garros main-draw debut. It is the first time since Wimbledon in 2011 that all top 12 men's seeds have reached the third round at a major.