

Total unity is the only survival mantra for the Cong in TS!

With a slender majority of only six seats in the Telangana State Assembly, the Congress government being led by Revanth Reddy may be in for many challenges, politically and financially. In a sense, it will be a tightrope walk for him as he will have to strategically balance internal and external challenges.

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi, as a strong opposition party, will utilise every opportunity to corner the government on many issues, particularly the much-publicised six guarantees. As the Congress leadership itself had underlined during the election campaign, the state of Telangana is debt-ridden. In this precarious financial situation, from where the Congress government will bring the funds

required to translate the six guarantees into reality is a question that has no immediate answer.

Revanth Reddy is the first Chief Minister from the Congress party without any administrative and ministerial experience. This may come in handy for the opposition BRS to taunt the new government unless the Congress leadership acts in unison by jettisoning internal bitterness among those who had missed the chief minister's post. It is a fact that the Congress could come to power due to the unflinching and dedicated efforts of Revanth Reddy and the party's high command acted sensibly by crowning Revanth Reddy. The Congress party's state leaders must keep in mind the facts and the compulsions involved and solidly stand by the new Chief

For the Congress, it is a much-deserved chance to govern the state as, after all, it was the party that had granted Telangana in the first place. The golden opportunity that the people of the state have given it should not be squandered due to internal squabbles. Other parties in the state are ready to embarrass the government by taking advantage of its slender margin.

Minister, come what may. The situation would have been different had the Congress won more than eighty seats, allowing it to enjoy unquestionable majority. But, with a margin of just six seats, keeping the majority intact is essential for the survival of the new government. For this to happen, the new Chief Minister must consult even the disgruntled leaders who had

aspired for the chief minister post in vain, not only to strengthen the party but also to not give any scope for the opposition BRS to fish in troubled waters.

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given it should not be squandered due to internal squabbles. Other parties in the state are ready to embarrass the government by taking advantage of its slender

margin. There will always be scope for it, given the political maneuvering ability of BRS supremo K Chandrasekhar Rao. He may be silent for now, but if the opportunity comes, he will never hesitate to make use of it. Over two terms, the KCR govt enjoyed a rock-solid majority and even now its number in the opposition is not such a weak one: including BJP's eight members and MIM's seven members, the total opposition strength is around 54. The difference between the ruling and opposition is only 10 members. Given the razor-thin majority, there will be a ruthless onslaught on the government by the combined opposition. In this kind of precarious situation, the Congress govt has to take each step carefully so that no room is left for the

opposition's combined attack. Apart from maintaining internal unity, the new Chief Minister has to be more careful about implementing the given promises, which involve hundreds of crores of rupees. With the debt burden looming large, it will be a herculean task for the Chief Minister to be able to fulfil them so as not to give any scope for criticism.

Total unity is the only mantra for the Congress government to sustain itself. It is incumbent upon the Congress leaders to shed any kind of dissatisfaction and work unitedly for the success of the government just as they had worked during the campaign to bring the party to power. Everyone has to stand by the new Chief Minister in fulfilling the agenda of the government and

take it to the doorstep of the people. Aspirations for posts and positions can wait. The first and foremost responsibility of the leaders is to keep the government on a strong pedestal by standing behind it and lending a strong helping hand to the new leader. It is a long-awaited dream coming true for the Congress, which the grand old party should not lose at any cost.

Lastly, experience can be gained with time if the leader is ambitious and a visionary like Rajiv Gandhi who had no political and administrative experience before taking over the reins of prime minister-ship after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. Later, he proved his potential and gave India a vision for development and showed the path for progress.

Complaint seeks removal of duplicate entries for votes

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The YSRCP ministers and leaders lodged a complaint with the State Chief Electoral Officer urging that those who have registered as voters in Telangana shall not register as voters in Andhra Pradesh.

Ministers Ch Venugopala Krishna and Jogi Ramesh, along with MP M Gurumurthy and MLC Lella Appi Reddy, complained about the enrolment of Telangana voters in Andhra Pradesh, violating Section 17 of the Representation of People Act, 1950. It says that no person shall be entitled to be registered in the electoral roll for more than one constituency.

The YSRC team lodged a complaint with AP Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Mukesh Kumar Meena with

evidence and proof. Telugu Desam Chief Nara Chandrababu Naidu is going to New Delhi on December 7 to complain against the YSRCP on entry of bogus votes.

Minister Venugopala Krishna said that it was the biggest violation of electoral practices that had been taken up by the Telugu Desam in Hyderabad as the voters who had already voted in Telangana recently were being illegally lured to get their names enrolled as new voters in Andhra Pradesh by TD leaders.

He alleged that Naidu was telling lies regarding bogus votes and going to spread the fake news in the national media in New Delhi and sought the Election Commission to remove the double and

triple entry voters and give voting rights to genuine voters.

Minister Jogi Ramesh said they had come to notice that there were 4,30,264 duplicate votes in both Hyderabad and AP and asked CEO MK Meena to remove double entries.

The policy of YSRC is that every eligible person should have a vote in one place in the country and they have already informed the Election Commission about this issue many times. He said that after examining the evidence provided by them, an investigation should be conducted and such votes deleted. Minister Jogi alleged that Chandrababu was trying to go back to the Central Election Commission for committing illegalities and complain about it.



CM attends wedding of MLC's daughter

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, along with his wife YS Bharathi Reddy, attended the wedding of YSRCP MLC Talasila Raghu Ram's daughter at A Convention Centre here on Wednesday. The Chief Minister and his wife blessed the couple, Pranava and Vishnu.

New Aarogyasri health cards soon: Min Aarogyasri scheme strengthened including 3,257 procedures

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Medical and Health Minister Viddala Rajini has said that the government is taking innovative steps regarding the Aarogyasri scheme. During a review meeting with the Medical and Health Department officials on Wednesday, minister Rajini said that the government, under the leadership of CM Jagan Mohan Reddy, had strengthened the Aarogyasri scheme by including 3,257 procedures with income of less than Rs 5 lakh. She explained that even treatments worth Rs 25 lakh can be provided free of cost under Aarogyasri.

The minister stated that the Aarogyasri card has also been fully modernized and the new cards will be given to every family very soon. The process of making the cards has already



started and Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has issued instructions to start distribution of new Aarogyasri cards from December 18.

She said that steps had been taken to distribute Aarogyasri cards to 1.43 crore families across the State through their secretariats. The officials were directed to take proper measures to avoid any problems in the issuance of cards. As per the instructions of the Chief Minister, steps are being taken to include ID numbers in the

newly designed Aarogyasri cards.

Minister Viddala Rajini said that Jagan had set a goal that the health details of everyone in our State should be stored safely. To that extent, the government has already undertaken many reforms. The details of all those receiving medical treatment in our State are being fully digitized through Jagananna Arogya Suraksha, Family Doctor, and Aarogyasri. Steps were ordered to ensure that the details of all

the patients are available at one place regardless of the way they are receiving treatment.

Rajini stated that the Chief Minister had already issued orders to take steps to implement the second phase of Jagananna Arogya Suraksha programme. Steps should also be taken to provide more speciality services in the second phase Jagananna Arogya Suraksha camps. She said that new medical tests should also be included and necessary procedures should be formulated for that.

Special Chief Secretary of Medical Health Department MT Krishna Babu, Secretary of Medical Health Department, Dr Manjula, Commissioner of Health and Family Welfare Department J Niwas, Director of Secondary Health and CEO of Arogya Dr Venkateshwar, DME Dr Narsimham and others were present.

All set for Revanth to take over...

Continued from Page 1

After taking oath, Revanth Reddy will go to the Secretariat at 3:00 PM.

The Telangana Congress has erected three daises for the swearing-in ceremony. Revanth will take oath as CM on the main stage.

A special stage has been set up for the 63 MLAs elect on the left of the main stage. On the right side, another stage has been arranged for 150 VVIPs.

The TPCC has arranged cultural programmes outside the LB Stadium for the benefit of people attending the swearing-in ceremony. About 500 artists, including those representing Gondu, Dappu, Oggu, Bonalu and Sheri Band, will welcome Revanth Reddy, his cabinet colleagues, VVIPs, and other guests attending the ceremony as per Telangana traditions and customs. Revanth Reddy will come to the venue from his residence heading a huge rally, it is learnt.

The organisers have set up a special gallery for martyrs' families with 300 seats.

Another gallery has been set up for intellectuals and Telangana protagonists with 250 seats. The seats have been so arranged that more than 30,000 people can simultaneously watch the programme from vantage points.

Besides, there is a chance for another 30,000 people to watch the proceedings from the galleries.

The TPCC has arranged huge LED screens for people outside the stadium to watch the proceedings.

Final results of SI recruitment released after HC nod

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

State Level Police Recruitment Board-Andhra Pradesh Chairman Atul Singh, here on Wednesday, released the results of the AP police sub-inspector recruitment after getting clearance from the AP High Court. A few aspirants had filed petitions in the High Court alleging faulty measurement of height hence the APHC conducted a measuring process on the court premises and found no fault in the process. The AP HC permitted the release of the test results, putting aside the earlier stay order, hence the APSLPB released the results on Wednesday.

Atul Singh, in the order, stated that 1,73,047 candidates had submitted online application forms for the post of SCT SI (Civil, Men & Women) and RSI (APSP, Men) after notification issuance. Preliminary written test was held on February 19, which

was attended by 1,51,288 candidates and the results were declared on February 28. As many as 57,923 candidates passed the written test and hall tickets were issued to them for participation in PMT/PET. He explained that 31,193 candidates qualified for PMT/PET and hall tickets were issued to them for the final written test which was held on October 14 and 15.

Atul Singh stated that the final test was held for four papers. The preliminary key for the Papers III and IV was given on October 15. Papers III and IV will be evaluated for only those candidates who pass Papers I and II. Atul Singh said that 25,839 candidates qualified in Papers I and II, out of which 18,637 candidates qualified Papers III and IV.

He added that the candidates may download their result sheets from the AP SLPRB website, www.slpb.ap.gov.in

Michaung...

Continued from Page 1

Regarding cyclone relief camps, a total of 236 relief camps were opened of which 124 were in Nellore, 37 in Konaseema, 36 in Tirupati, 27 in Bapatla and 12 were opened in West Godavari district. The officials evacuated 16794 people, and shifted them to relief camps of which 6077 were shifted to cyclone relief camps in Nellore district, 5113 in West Godavari, 3386 in Tirupati, 1308 in Bapatla and 910 in Konaseema district.

The cyclone damaged 1266.9 km length of surface roads, of which 495 km of roads are in the Nellore district followed by 311 km in Prakasam, 285 km in Bapatla, 95.4 km in Tirupati and 80.5 km in Konaseema district. As many as 14 sources of minor irrigation were damaged in Tirupati district, 3162 villages remained in darkness in which power was restored in 2,338 villages and works were under progress to provide power to the rest of the 824 villages.

Jagan following path...

Continued from Page 1

"The Opposition leader proposed to install Dr Ambedkar's statue in a corner of Amaravati while CM Jagan installed the statue in the heart of Vijayawada city, which will be a tourist attraction in the days to come," he added.

MP Gurumurthy also said that Jagan was the only CM who was implementing Ambedkar's ideologies in India.

Jagan has designed the education system to provide education to all children without any discrimination. Ambedkar framed the Constitution of India keeping in mind equality, he explained.

Lella Appireddy said that in India, where there were different religions and castes, everyone was able to live peacefully because of the Constitution written by Dr BR Ambedkar.

He said that it was equal to a holy book for India. In Andhra Pradesh, CM Jagan has been following the path shown by Ambedkar to eliminate poverty among SC, ST, BC and minority communities.

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PK, Naidu discuss...

Continued from Page 1

As they navigate the complex political landscape, the duo aims to forge a united front, capitalizing on lessons learned from Telangana and formulating a roadmap for success in Andhra Pradesh.

With Lokesh by Chandrababu's side and Pawan's unique insights, this meeting signals a proactive approach to political dynamics, setting the stage for a potentially impactful collaboration in the upcoming elections.

CM Jagan to lay stone for developmental works

Temple being developed with a comprehensive plan at an estimated cost of Rs 225 cr

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy will visit Vijayawada on Thursday. The CM will participate in the inauguration of various development works and the ground-breaking ceremony at Kanaka Durga temple. Later, he will have darshan of goddess Kanaka Durga. Minister for Endowments Kottu Satyanarayana, Temple EO and the Commissioner of Police reviewed the arrangements for CM's visit.

On the occasion, the minister said that the Durga temple was being developed with a comprehensive plan at an estimated cost of Rs 225 crore. "The repair works of the temple will be carried out without causing any inconvenience to the devotees. CM Jagan will lay the foundation stone for development programmes on Thursday morning. A four-storey automatic car park is being prepared for a permanent solution to traffic

woes. We are taking precautions to avoid landslides and a ramp will be built for the unused queues and put into use," said the minister.

The minister said that the State government has given funds of Rs 70 crore to transform it into a modern Indrakeeladri with the State government funds as well as devasthanam funds. "Development works will be done on par with Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam without any inconvenience to the devotees. The works are going on as per the master plan. After the development works, we will take a decision on the Ghat Road depending on the situation. After laying the foundation stone, the works will be completed within 18 months even during the elections," Kottu Satyanarayana said.



GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH
RURAL WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION DEPARTMENT
E-PROCUREMENT SHORT TENDER NOTICE

No.12/405-457/2023-24

Date: 30-11-2023

Online tenders are invited for 53 works with an estimated cost of Rs. 1005.02 Lakhs for Providing drinking water works to various habitations in Prakasam District. Tenders schedule will be available in e-market from: 08.12.2023 to 11.12.2023, 4.30 PM. Details visit: place i.e. www.tender.apereprocurement.gov.in. Ph: 9100121610. Sd/- Executive Engineer, RWS & S Division, Ongole.

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Rain soaks paddy yield, farmers worried

Express concern that they may lose MSP for paddy grains

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Farmers in Krishna and NTR districts are facing concerns as their paddy fields, which were in the harvesting stage, have been submerged due to the rain caused by Cyclone Michaung. In many other areas, the paddy yield was kept in heaps and piles soaked in water. Additionally, farmers are worried over the paddy as the grains dried on the roads would sprout when they get wet.

Paddy was cultivated in an area of 2.50 lakh hectares in the combined Krishna district (which includes both Krishna and NTR districts). Unfortunately, the cyclone caused significant damage to the crops, affecting 67,300 hectares in the Krishna district and 5,500 hectares in the NTR district. This has resulted in huge losses for the farmers, who had just started harvesting their crops.

Before the arrival of the cyclone, farmers started paddy harvesting and they are drying their grains on the roads to reduce the moisture. At this stage, the Michaung cyclone has shown its effect on the



submerged and to prevent sprouting, DAO Padmavathi suggested that farmers spray salt on the water. She personally supervised the spraying of salt on the paddy fields. She assured the farmers that they would procure the paddy as early as possible and would pay MSP. Also, farmers need not worry about their paddy sprouts and those grains would be also procured as per the MSP, she added.

rooms for both office spaces and lodging purposes. Discussions have taken place between officials and the VIMS administration regarding the allocation of rooms for office spaces. Once the rooms are allocated, the necessary infrastructure will be provided to meet the requirements of the visiting state-level officials. Concerned officials are expected to return to VIMS shortly to finalize the accommodation arrangements for each department.

VIMS currently comprises three blocks, with one housing the Outpatient (OP) and Inpatient (IP) departments, another dedicated to administrative functions, and a third block hosting laboratories and operation theaters for specific

paddy crop and grains. As per the norms, the Civil Supplies Corporation procured the paddy when it had 17 per cent moisture, however, the MSP will be slashed on the proportionate of the content of moisture.

Paddy grains have sprouted in Nunna, located in the Vijayawada Rural Mandal of the NTR district, and in Ramachandrapuram and Surampalli, located in the Gannavaram Mandal of the Krishna district. Due to heavy rainfall, the piles of paddy submerged in water have started sprouting. Farmers are now drying their paddy grains on the roads. The state govern-

ment has instructed officials to procure the paddy without any restrictions regarding moisture. However, as of now, paddy grain procurement has not started.

Farmers Bommareddy Subba Reddy, and Bhimavarapu Ajay Kumar Reddy have said that their paddy grains have sprouted due to the wet. One day before the cyclone, they harvested the paddy crop and dried up the grains on the bypass road, they said. Delay in the procurement, they lost the MSP, they felt. They urged the Civil Supplies Department authorities to procure the paddy grains immediately.

Krishna District Agriculture Officer (DAO) Padmavathi and her team inspected the paddy crops in Surampalli on Wednesday. The crops were



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Bogus votes: Complaint filed against TDP leader

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP Councillor Bhumi Reddy Vamsi has lodged a complaint against TDP in charge of Proddatur, Praveen Kumar Reddy, for maintaining bogus votes. Expressing concern over duplicate votes, the YSRCP leader filed a complaint with the Tahsildar against Praveen and his family for having votes in two places.

Vamsi provided Form-7 along with his complaint to the Tahsildar seeking deletion of bogus votes of the TDP leader in Proddatur and Kogotam village. He requested the Tahsildar Office to remove the stated bogus vote from the electoral list. The YSRCP leader criticised the Opposition leader and his family for including bogus votes in the electoral roll. He questioned the alleged ignorance of Praveen whose party is accusing the ruling party that it is indulging in including the duplicate to the voters' list.

Will procure every paddy grain, Collector assures farmers

Steps ordered to drain out rainwater from fields

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector Dr S Dilli Rao has assured the farmers that the State government will support the farmers who lost their crops due to Cyclone Michaung. Farmers need not worry about their wet grains as they would get the Minimum Support Price, he said, adding that they would procure every paddy grain from the farmers.

Collector Dilli Rao, District Agriculture Officer (DAO) S Naga Manemma and their team visited the paddy fields at Rayanapadu and Pydurapadu villages near Vijayawada on Wednesday. Farmers showed their crops submerged in the rainwater to the Collector.

After talking to the farmers, the Collector directed the officials to take the necessary steps to drain out the rainwater from the fields. The State government will provide support for every farmer in the



district. As much as 41,163 hectares of paddy was cultivated in the district and harvesting was completed in 10,000 hectares, he said.

Further, he stated that as per the preliminary report, 11,859 hectares of paddy crop were affected by the cyclone. Other crops on around 600 hectares were also affected. Also, he instructed the officials to arrange JCBs to drain out the rainwater from the fields.

Meanwhile, he said that based on the e-crop booking

data, crop damage assessment would be started soon after receiving guidelines from the government. Based on survey numbers, crop damage details would be collected. The Agriculture and Revenue departments should submit the detailed report as early as possible, he explained.

Agriculture Department Assistant Director B Venkateswara Rao, Vijayawada Rural AO B Ranganath Babu, Tahsildar K Lakshmi, and others accompanied the Collector.

Graduation ceremony held at Government Dental College

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The graduation ceremony for the 2018 batch of Vijayawada Government Dental College took place with grandeur on the college premises on Tuesday. Dr Indira Ramasubba Reddy, Chairman of Indlas Hospitals and an Eminent Psychiatrist, who is also an Executive Member of the

Dr YSR University of Health Sciences graced the occasion as the chief guest.

During his keynote address, he emphasized the urgent need for dentists in society and advised the graduating students to uphold social values and ethics in their professional lives. On the occasion, he launched the college website.

Dr Kolasani Srinivasa Rao, the college principal, expressed his gratitude to Dr Indira Ramasubba Reddy. The principal encouraged the graduating dentists to aspire to achieve greater heights in their careers.

The ceremony included the felicitation of students with the highest marks and those who received research funding from prestigious institutes like ICMR. Degree

holders shared their experiences with the college and its contributions. Cultural programmes organized by the students added entertainment to the event, and notable attendees included Dr Mahbub Sheikh, a Member of the Dental Council of India, Heads of the department staff, and students were present

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Govt shifts CM's base to VIMS for accelerated Uttarandhra development

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In an important move to speed up the development of North Andhra and make sure the decentralization works well, the government has said that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy will stay in Visakhapatnam for a longer time. During this stay, the CM will have detailed discussions with State-level officials to check how things are going and solve any problems.

To accommodate the CM and the accompanying officials, the government has designated up to 20 separate rooms at Visakha Institute of Medical Sciences (VIMS). A team of officials has already inspected VIMS to ensure the feasibility of utilizing these

rooms for both office spaces and lodging purposes.

Discussions have taken place between officials and the VIMS administration regarding the allocation of rooms for office spaces. Once the rooms are allocated, the necessary infrastructure will be provided to meet the requirements of the visiting state-level officials. Concerned officials are expected to return to VIMS shortly to finalize the accommodation arrangements for each department.

VIMS currently comprises three blocks, with one housing the Outpatient (OP) and Inpatient (IP) departments, another dedicated to administrative functions, and a third block hosting laboratories and operation theaters for specific

medical tests. However, these facilities are currently limited to the ground floor, first, and second floors. Plans are underway to maximize the utilization of the remaining floors for the upcoming state-level reviews and administrative activities.

The allocation of VIMS for the CM's review meetings underscores the government's commitment to streamlining administrative processes and ensuring efficient communication between state officials. The developments at VIMS are expected to facilitate a conducive environment for discussions and strategic planning focused on the progress of Uttarandhra and the successful implementation of the Partition Act.

Power restoration complete in most cyclone-hit areas

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Power Utilities successfully restored power supply to normalcy in most of the cyclone-affected areas in the districts of Nellore, Guntur, Prakasam, Krishna, Chittoor, Kurnool, West and East Godavari, Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram and other parts of the State on Wednesday.

Energy Special Chief Secretary K Vijayanand monitored the power restoration works continuously and instructed the officers to complete the works in a time-bound manner and get the power supply to normalcy as early as possible to avoid any inconvenience to the people living in the cyclone-affected areas.

Explaining the damage, CMD APSPDCL K Santosha Rao said that in the Circles of Nellore, Tirupati and Kadapa, three EHT Substations, 269 33/11 KV Substations, 145 33-KV feeders, 770 33-KV poles, 2,341 11-KV poles, and 247 DTRs were restored to normalcy. As many as 1,132 villages, 46 mandals and seven towns were also restored. As

many as 231 special teams were arranged and the losses were assessed to be Rs 1,235.45 lakh. Thirty-six 33/11kv substations were completely dead in Nellore Circle due to the cyclone, CMD APSPDCL said.

CMD APEPDCL I Prudhvi Tej said that in the Circles of Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, Rajahmundry, and Eluru, 150 33KV Substations, 134 33 KV feeders, 16 33KV poles, 514 11 KV poles, and 173 DTRs were restored to normalcy. Around 1,110 villages and 77 mandals were also restored. As many as 395 special teams were arranged and the cost of damages was assessed to be Rs. 545.98 lakh.

APCPDCL CMD J Padma Janardhana Reddy said that in the Circles of Vijayawada, Guntur, CRDA, Ongole, 204 33/11-KV Substations, 147 33 -KV feeders, 115 33KV poles, 1,247 11 KV poles, and 504 DTRs were restored to normalcy. As many as 1,707 villages, 109 mandals and 11 towns were also restored. Eighty-one special teams were arranged and the losses were estimated at Rs.1,995.57 lakh.

Services restored in KK line after boulder falls on track



PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Cyclone Michaung led to a boulder fall in the Tyada-Sivalingapuram section of the Kottavalasa-Kirandul line on Tuesday, disrupting train services. The alert loco pilot of a goods train demonstrated quick thinking by halting the train to avert potential mishaps from falling boulders.

Divisional Railway Manager Saurabh Prasad, accompanied by ADRM (Infra) and senior officials, rushed to the site in the night itself to oversee the situation. Reflecting on the urgency, Prasad stated, "Our



immediate focus was on ensuring the safety of passengers and restoring train services as quickly as possible."

Despite challenging weather conditions, the rescue team efficiently cleared the boulders to restore train services. Prasad acknowledged the collective efforts, saying, "It was a challenging task, but the dedication of our teams from various departments ensured the timely restoration of goods train services by 9.30 am."

The passenger special train No. 08552 Kirandul-Visakhapatnam, present at Araku during the boulder fall, was short-terminated. Waltair Division promptly organized three buses from Araku Station to transport the 199 passengers to Visakhapatnam due to the

track blockage near Tiada-Sivalingapuram. In response to cancellations from Araku, refund arrangements were made for affected passengers. The Commercial department of Waltair Division stepped up, providing essential supplies such as water, tea, biscuits, etc., to passengers being transported in buses from Araku Station to Visakhapatnam.

Expressing gratitude, Saurabh Prasad stated, "I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the department officials whose dedication and prompt action led to the swift restoration of train services. The commitment of our team remains unwavering, prioritizing passenger safety and ensuring service continuity even in challenging weather conditions."

OFFICIALS TO SPECIAL OFFICER

Will submit report on crop damage in 48 hours

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Dr G Lakshminsha, the Special Officer for Krishna district and Director of Gram/Ward Sachivalayam, and Collector P Raja Babu have instructed the officials concerned to hand over the details of losses incurred due to Cyclone Michaung. The report should include losses related to paddy, roads, drinking water, animal husbandry, fisheries, and other assets, they said.

Special Officer Lakshminsha and Collector Raja Babu inspected the paddy fields which were submerged in rainwater, in many villages of Guduru Mandal in the district on Wednesday. Later, they conducted a video conference with officials concerned regarding the crop loss assessment.

Speaking on the occasion, they said that around 61,000 hectares of paddy crop was badly affected by the cyclone and many paddy fields are submerged in rainwater. In this



context, officials concerned should take necessary steps to pour out the rainwater from the fields. Further, they stated that the district administration is trying to submit the detailed crop loss report to the government within 48 hours. As of now, 30 per cent of paddy harvesting was completed and the remaining crops were in the rainwater, they said. Also, they said that the government would purchase the paddy even if it may get a colour change.

Later, they explained the

measures which were taken to restore the electricity supply and road services in the district. As many as 52 mobile teams worked during the cyclone time and restored the power supply in 68 villages which were affected by the cyclone, they added.

Krishna District Agriculture Advisory Board Chairman J Raghava Rao, DWAMA PD GV Suryanarayana, agriculture scientists Dr Girija Rani, AD Manidhar, Water Resources Department DE Kiran and others were present.

Cong govt will fall within one year in the process of clearing debts: Raja Singh

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

BJP MLA-elect from Goshamahal constituency T Raja Singh alleged that the Congress government will fall within one year in the process of clearing debts done by the previous BRS government. Raja Singh commented that it is possible for the BJP only to run Telangana and make it clear that BJP will come to power in Telangana.

Speaking to the media on Wednesday after paying tributes to Dr BR Ambedkar's portrait on the occasion of death anniversary on Wednesday at the party office, Raja Singh said that it is not possible for the Congress to implement the six guarantees. The previous government made the State so as it is not in a position to pay the interest to the loans it took. How will the coming government bring the money for its announced schemes? he asked.

Raja Singh stated that the people changed KCR, who stated that he will change the Constitution. He said that



Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the person who spread the greatness of Ambedkar to the world.

Raja Singh said that all sections of the people remember Ambedkar. The Ravan Raj ended in the State. KCR had deceived Dalits and erected Ambedkar's statue with the pressure from BJP, he said.

Recalling that CM-designate Revanth Reddy stated that he will implement all the schemes implemented by KCR, Raja Singh said that the BJP activists will not leave Revanth Reddy if he deceives Dalits. He alleged that the Congress party never honoured Ambedkar and slammed the Congress that it gave deceiving assurances in the name of six guarantees.

Michaung cyclone batters 6 districts, damages crops



PNS ■ GUNTURU

The Michaung has battered six districts and caused heavy damages to crops.

Heavy rain lashed Tirupati, combined Kadapa, Nellore, Prakasam, Krishna, West Godavari, East Godavari, Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram districts.

Leaders of Rythu unions said that 70% of paddy crop is yet to be harvested and almost

all the crop damaged in the cyclone. Most of the farmers were planning to take up harvesting in the middle of December but their crop has been soaking in the water now, they lamented.

Moreover, the paddy farmers have left the heaps of harvested paddy at the field itself and all the produce is soaking in the rain water. According to sources, paddy cultivation was taken up in about 4.50 lakh

acres in combined Krishna district and the officials expected over 10.50 lakh metric tonnes of paddy yield..

Sources said that in Guntur district paddy was cultivated in 1.05 lakh acres, 1.95 lakh acres in Bapatla district. The entire paddy crop in the two districts were marooned in the rain water and the farmers may not get their investment.

The farmer expected 35 bags of paddy in an acre and each 76

K G s bag is purchased at Rs 1650. The paddy farmers incurred Rs 57,750 loss per acre due to cyclone," Srinivas, general secretary of AP Rythu Sangam said. According to sources, In Guntur district blackgram crop was damaged in 3000 acres, groundnut crop in 10,000

acres, chillies in 30,000 acres.

In Bapatla, tobacco crop was damaged in 5000 acres, red gram crop was damaged in 8800 acres and plantain crop in 1400 acres.

At Palakollu, over 200 coconut trees uprooted and caved in due to heavy gales. In Palnadu district, maize crop and red gram crop were damaged in hundreds of acres. The AP Rythu Sangam leader demanded the government to purchase discoloured and sprouted paddy from the farmers.

‘Soaked sprouted paddy should be purchased from farmers’

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Telugu Desam party senior leader and former minister Nakka Ananda Babu demanded the government to purchase the soaked and sprouted paddy from the farmers in the cyclone affected area and deplored that the farmers bore the brunt of the Michaung cyclone.

Nakka Ananda Babu along with other leaders visited some of the affected fields at Kolluru mandal in Vemuru constituency and saw the damaged paddy crop. He entered the knee deep water at the field, saw the soaking crop and interacted with the farmers and listened to their difficulties.

Speaking on the occasion, Nakka Ananda Babu said that the Michaung cyclone battered the farmers in the state extensively. The worst affected were the paddy farmers, he said. The sufferings of tenant farmers were untold, he lamented.

“The government miserably failed in mitigating the cyclone affected and loss. Since the government did not provide water from the Pattiseema by intine, delay took place in completing sowing operation in the kharif season which caused the farmers incur huge loss,” the ex-minister flayed.

If the water from the Pattiseema had been released 10 days earlier, most of the



farmers could have saved their crop, Nakka Anandababu hoped.

He said that paddy cultivation was taken up in 96,000 acres in Vemuru constituency of which only 10% of crop had been harvested so far and the rest was damaged due to cyclone.

The paddy crop in about 86,000 acres is yet to be harvested when the farmers were preparing for the same, at the same time, the cyclone created devastation, he lamented. He said that there are six drains in Kolluru and Repally division and the creepers in the drains should be removed before the farming activities begin. But the YSRCP leaders did not do

so and claimed the bills, he alleted. Since the drainage system is in a bad position the rain water inundated the crops, he criticized.

“When the TDP was in power, Rs 20,000 compensation was paid per hectare. The present government should extend Rs 30,000 compensation per hectare to tenant farmers.

The government should take steps to purchase discoloured and shriveled paddy produce from the farmers,” Nakka Ananda Babu demanded. TDP State executive secretary Kanapari Srinivasa Rao and Jana Sena coordinator Oosa Rajesh and other leaders were present.

Crop loss is enormous; govt should help farmers; Manohar

PNS ■ GUNTURU

Jana Sena Political Affairs Committee chairman Nadendla Manohar said that the crop loss due to the Michaung cyclone is enormous and the government should help the farmers.

Nadendla Manohar along with the TDP leader Alapati Rajendra Prasad visited some of the rain affected fields at Kollipara, Aithanagaram, Chakrayapalem, Burripalem, Chadalavada and Chemudupadu villages in Tenali rural mandal on Wednesday.

They saw the damaged crops and spoke to the farmers. They listened to the problems of the farmers. They expressed anguish after seeing the waterlogged paddy crop. They saw the farmers draining out the water stagnated at the fields by using motors.

The JSP and TDP leaders demanded the government to disburse Rs 20,000 compen-



sation per acre to every affected farmer.

Nadendla Manohar said: “The farmers are in trouble. The Chief should save them by pushing buttons. Instead of pushing the hollow button, it is better for the Chief Minister to push the real button to save the farmers.”

He criticized the Chief Minister for releasing a meger Rs 2 crore to each district to meet the expenses of cyclone damage and relief measures.

“Crops worth Rs 1800 crore damaged in Bapatla

and Guntur districts as per the preliminary estimation. If the irrigation canals had been modernized the situation would not have arisen,” Manohar opined.

Alapati Rajendra Prasad said that the farmers across the state suffered heavy blow as their crops submerged in the rain water. The cyclone battered the farming community in the state, he lamented. He demanded the government to provide seeds on 100% subsidy to all affected farmers.

Home guards play vital role in serving society: SP

PNS ■ KAKINADA

Superintendent of Police S Sathish Kumar said that Home Guards play a vital role in extending all kinds of supportive services to the society as an affiliate of the police department. Addressing the Home Guards as the chief guest at the Home Guards orga-

nization 61st foundation day celebrations at the Bhanugudi police convention hall here, Kumar said that the Home Guards organization was started as a voluntary service organization on December 6, 1963 and later became an affiliate of the police department with the Home guards getting honorarium for their services.

Sweeping success of Govt. College at Academic Fest 2022-23

PNS ■ RAJAMAHENDRAVARAM

The Government Autonomous College in Raja mahendravaram during the academic year 2022-23 has grabbed Commissioners Rolling Shield out of 168 Government Degree Colleges across the State.

It highlights the various awards received in different categories at an academic fest 2022-23 conducted by the Commissionerate of Collegiate Education (CCE). Dr. Ramachandra R K, the principal, mentions that a total of 19 awards were won across three categories, student, faculty, and college.

Among these, notable awards were earned in fields like Community Service Project, Start-Up Ideas, Physical Sciences, Chemistry, YouTube Channel Management, Best Library and more. The

awards ceremony is set to take place on December 16th at the Government Autonomous Degree College in Anantapur.

The note further details individual achievements across departments in the college, including 9 awards in categories like NIRF, NAAC CGPA, research papers, internships, and outstanding library facilities. It also mentions the Principal, Dr. Ramachandra R K, and the Internship Mentor, Mr. Ramu, extending awards to students and faculty for their excellence.

The event witnessed the presence of various dignitaries, including Mr. Sreesaila Shastry (Vice Principal of the College), Mr. Sanjeev Kumar (Coordinator of NRC, East Godavari District), and Dr. D. Sanjeev Kumar (Coordinator of the College Academic Cell), alongside other faculty members.

‘No loss of life in Bapatla district as precautions were taken’

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Minister for Social Welfare Meruga Nagarjun said that loss of life was avoided in Bapatla district during the Michaung cyclone as all precautions were taken.

The Minister, along with Collector P Ranjit Basha, visited some of the cyclone affected fields at Ilavaram village in Bhattiprolu mandal. The Minister and the Collector visited a relief camp set up at Ailavaram village in Bhattiprolu mandal.

The Minister spoke to the affected people. He also inquired about the facilities being provided to them. The Minister along with the district Collector gave away the compensation money and essential commodities announced by the government to the 26 families who were taking shelter at the village secretariat in that area. Later, they inspected the submerged paddy crop at the village.

Talking to the media, the



minister said that the state government was alerted when the announcement came from the Meteorological Department that there would be a big storm near Bapatla. He said that since the Chief Minister of the State had given instructions to the District Collector for four days, the administration had taken strong measures that are why there was no loss of life in the district, he claimed.

The Minister said that the farmers had incurred huge losses due to the cyclone and it was the responsibility of the government to protect the farmers, the minister said. The government is ready to purchase the paddy produce from the farmers. Collector Ranjit Basha reiterated all steps taken to protect the interests of the farmers. He made it clear that a survey had already begun to assess the loss of crops.

Krithika Shukla assures all help to farmers

PNS ■ KAKINADA

District Collector Krithika Shukla assured of extending all needed help to the Michaung cyclone affected farmers and asked them not to worry.

The Collector held a video conference with the officials and reviewed the cyclone situation. Speaking on the occasion, she said that there is no need for the farmers to worry as required help would be extended to them.

“The government will purchase the paddy produce from the farmers irrespective of the condition of paddy through RBKs. The farmers should not sell their paddy less than the MSP through the mediators. The water stagnated at the agriculture fields will be drained out using the workers of MGNREGS,” the Collector said, and asked the agriculture, irrigation



and DWAM officials and staff to work in coordination to help the farmers.

Collector Krithika Shukla made it clear that the government is ready to provide seeds for horticulture crops on 80% subsidy to the farmers. The agriculture department officials should visit the fields and give advice to the farmers to save their waterlogged crops, she told the officials.

Youth killed as bike plunges into drain

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

A youth was killed and two others were injured when the bike which he was riding plunged into a drain at Mission school road in Narasapuram on Wednesday.

Police said that the deceased Pala Hemanth (20) along with two other youths were riding



a bike. He lost control of the

bike resulting in it plunged into a drain killing Hemanth instantaneously.

Two pillion riders were injured in the accident and they were shifted to the GGH where their condition was said to be serious. The police registered a case and shifted the body of Hemanth to the GGH for postmortem.

JC launches collection of funds for servicemen

PNS ■ PARVATHIPURAM

Joint Collector R Govinda Rao here on Wednesday launched the collection of funds for the welfare of servicemen on the occasion of the Armed Forces Flag Day.

Every year, Armed Forces Flag Day is celebrated on December 7 to collect funds for the betterment of the forces and pay respects to the ones who laid their lives while protecting the country.

Speaking on the occasion, the Joint Collector conveyed his wishes to the army personnel, ex-servicemen and their families.

He said that the whole nation is proud of the patriotism, bravery and sacrifices shown by the Indian Army forces, during the Pakistan-China war, the Kargil conflict,



and the Bombay Taj Hotel invasion and during natural disasters.

The Joint Collector said that many army brothers laid down their lives for the defense of the country and all Indians owe them a lot.

December 7 th is observed as the Armed Forces Flag Day throughout the country to honour the martyrs and the men in uniform who valiant-

ly fought & continue to fight on the borders to safeguard the country’.

District ex-servicemen welfare officer Majji Krishna Rao appealed to people to send their donations to the account number 52065221666, IFSC Code: SBIN0020931, MICR No.535002017 and send the cheques in the name of Director, Sinc welfare, Vijayawada to Sainik welfare office, Vizianagaram.

INDIA CORNER

Japan is in favour of strengthening ties with Nagaland

Japanese Ambassador to India, Hiroshi Suzuki, on Wednesday said his country is in favour of strengthening and expanding ties with Nagaland. Japan and Nagaland have long-standing historical ties that go back to World War II, Suzuki said. He was speaking as the chief guest of the sixth day of Cultural Connect, a cultural extravaganza of the tribes of Nagaland at the Hornbill Festival in Naga Heritage village Kisama here. Suzuki expressed gratitude for the generosity the Nagas extended to the Japanese people who came here to collect the remains of their families after the war. "We are grateful for the warmest support to the Japanese by the Naga people," he said. Suzuki said, "We want to strengthen and expand our cooperation and the friendship that we enjoy between Nagaland and Japan." Impressed by the beautiful dances and songs of the people of Nagaland, he said this is a testament of how to preserve one's tradition and culture that were handed down by the forefathers.



Law Minister accuses INDIA bloc of trying to divide country

Law Minister and BJP leader Arjun Ram Meghwal on Wednesday accused INDIA parties of trying to divide the country on north-south lines, and asserted that the opposition will fail in its attempts. Meghwal said DMK MP D N V Senthil Kumar on Tuesday "described the states BJP won as 'gau mutra' (cow urine) states." The BJP has won assembly polls in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, while Congress got Telangana. The minister said when an apology was sought from DMK floor leader T R Baalu in the Lok Sabha, he refused. He claimed leaders from the Congress, NCP and other INDIA parties stood up in his support in the House. "We want to ask whether they want to divide India. A senior Congress leader says he likes South India. Is it because you lost Amethi that you do not like North India," Meghwal said while addressing a press conference inside Parliament House complex.



Doctor kills wife, 2 kids before committing suicide

A doctor posted at a Railway hospital here allegedly killed his wife and two children before committing suicide, police said on Wednesday. Arun Kumar Singh (45), hailing from Mirzapur, was an eye specialist at the Modern Rail Coach Factory Hospital since 2017. He lived with his wife Archana (40), son Aarav (4), and daughter Ariba (12) in a house located inside the hospital complex. The incident came to light on Tuesday night when the doctor's colleagues informed police after no one from the family answered phone calls. The police personnel broke open the door and found the bodies. Police recovered syringes from near the bodies which were allegedly used by the doctor to administer some drugs to his wife and children to make them unconscious before killing them, Superintendent of Police Alok Priyadarshi said. The minors died of head injuries while Singh was found hanging, he said.



Over 100 websites blocked for facilitating illegal investments

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Wednesday said that more than 100 websites that were being operated from overseas and involved in organised illegal investments and part-time job frauds have been blocked. These websites were identified and recommended for blocking by the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), an initiative of the Home Ministry aimed at addressing cybercrimes in a coordinated and comprehensive manner through its National Cybercrime Threat Analytics Unit (NCTAU), an official spokesperson said. Building a "Cyber Safe India" is the topmost priority under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the guidance of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, the spokesperson said. These frauds typically involve targeted digital advertisements using keywords like "ghar baithe job" (Do jobs sitting at home) and "ghar baithe kamai kaise karen" (how to earn while sitting at home) in multiple languages.



The targets are often retired employees, women and unemployed youth seeking part-time jobs with whom the fraudsters engage through WhatsApp or Telegram, convincing them to perform tasks such as liking and subscribing to videos or rating maps. Victims are initially given a commission and then persuaded to invest more for higher returns. Once the victims deposit larger sums of money, their deposits are frozen, resulting in them being deceived, the spokesperson said.

To combat cybercrime and protect citizens from threat actors, the Home Ministry urges people to promptly report phone numbers and social media handles used by fraudsters to the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal (NCRP). Several complaints have already been received through the helpline and NCRP as these offences pose a significant threat to citizens and raise data security concerns. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) invoked its power

under the Information Technology Act, 2000 to block these websites, who facilitated organised illegal investments and part-time job frauds, and they were found to be using digital advertisements, chat messengers, and rented accounts. The proceeds from these economic frauds were being laundered out of India through methods such as card networks, crypto currency, overseas ATM withdrawals, and international Fintech companies. The authorities advised people to exercise caution and due diligence before investing in online schemes that promise very high commissions. "If an unknown person contacts you via WhatsApp or Telegram, refrain from engaging in financial transactions without verification. Verify the name of the receiver mentioned in the UPI App, as random recipients may indicate a fraudulent scheme involving a mule account. Also, check the source of the initial commission received," the spokesperson said.

HP govt to back Rajiv Self-Employment Startup Scheme

PNS ■ SHIMLA

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Wednesday urged banks to provide loans at concessional interest rates to the beneficiaries of the government's Rajiv Gandhi Self-Employment Startup Scheme. The chief minister assured the banks that the government will give guarantee on the loan for purchase of e-taxis under the first phase of the scheme, a statement issued here said. Presiding over a meeting with representatives from public sector, co-operative and private banks here, he said the state government has initiated the first phase of the Rs 680-crore Rajiv Gandhi Self-Employment Startup Scheme and asked the banks to provide loans to the youth at concessional rates. Under the first phase, 50 per cent subsidy is being provided on the purchase of e-taxi with an aim to get these vehicles attached with government offices to provide self-employment to people. The chief minister also asked all the banks to send the interest rates to the state government within stipulated time.

Kashmir suffered for years due to Nehru's blunders: Shah

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday blamed India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru's "two major blunders" -- declaring a ceasefire without winning the entire Kashmir and taking the issue to the United Nations -- for the sufferings of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Replying to a debate in the Lok Sabha on the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, Shah said if Nehru had taken the right steps, a large chunk of territory would not have been ceded and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir would have been part of India. "I support the word that was used here -- Nehruvian blunder. Because of the blunder that was committed during the time of Nehru, Kashmir had to suffer. With responsibility, I want to say that the two big blunders that happened during the tenure of Jawaharlal Nehru, happened due to his decisions, because of which Kashmir had to suffer for years," Shah said. "Kashmir had to suffer due to Nehruvian blunders. One



was that when our Army was winning and as soon as Punjab area was reached, ceasefire was declared and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir was born. If the ceasefire would have been (declared) three days later, PoK would have been part of India," the home minister said. The ceasefire made without winning the entire Kashmir was one "blunder" and the other was taking the issue to the UN. There was an uproar by the opposition benches over the remarks on Nehru and they staged a walkout but returned later. After their walkout, BJD leader Bhartruhari Mahtab said the home minister should also talk about the "Himalayan blunder", a reference to Nehru's actions leading up to

the war with China in 1962. Shah quipped that his talking about two blunders had upset the opposition benches and if he had used the phrase "Himalayan blunder", they would have resigned. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said the remarks made were not an insult to anyone and were only made to put things in context. In his remarks, Shah also alleged that the Kashmir matter was taken to the UN in a hurry. "If at all it had to be taken to the UN, it should have been sent under Article 51 rather than Article 35 of the UN Charter," he said, asserting that he of course believes that the issue should not have been taken to the UN in the first place.

NCERT treats 'India' on par with 'Bharat': MoS

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) does not differentiate between India and Bharat, and duly acknowledges the spirit as enshrined in the Constitution that recognises both, according to the Union Education Ministry. This information was shared by Union Minister of State for Education Annapurna Devi in a written reply to a question asked by CPI(M) member Elamaram Kareem in the Rajya Sabha regarding an NCERT panel's recommendation to replace the country's name "India" with "Bharat" in school textbooks. "Article 1 of the Constitution of India states that 'India', that is Bharat, shall be a Union of States'. India's Constitution recognises both 'India' and 'Bharat' as the official names of the country which can be used interchangeably. NCERT duly acknowledges this spirit as enshrined in our Constitution and does not differentiate between the two," she said. The minister further said



the country is collectively moving away from the colonial mindset and encourages the usage of the words in 'Bharatiya Bhasha' (Indian languages). "NCERT, an autonomous body under the aegis of the Ministry of Education involved in preparation of school curriculum and textbooks, will also do its best in furthering the same," the minister said.

Lalduhoma to be sworn in as new Mizoram CM tomorrow

PNS ■ AIZAWL

ZPM leader legislature party leader Lalduhoma will be sworn in as the new chief minister of Mizoram on Friday, a Raj Bhavan official said. Besides Lalduhoma other members of his council of ministers will also be sworn in on Friday at 11 am in a function at the Raj Bhavan, the official said on Wednesday. Earlier in the day Lalduhoma met Governor Hari Babu Khambampati at the Raj Bhavan and staked claim to form the government. The governor invited him to form the government. ZPM won 27 of the 40 seats of the Mizoram



Assembly, election to which was held on November 7. The party emerged victorious on Monday trouncing Mizo National Front (MNF) headed by Zoramthanga. The ZPM advisory body will meet Lalduhoma on Thursday to discuss the structure of the new government, the general secretary of the ZPM media cell, Eddy Zosangliana Colney said.

Garba dance in UNESCO's cultural heritage list now

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

UNESCO has approved the inclusion of Gujarat's traditional Garba dance in its 'Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity', Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel announced here on Wednesday. India had nominated Garba, performed across Gujarat and in many other parts of the country during the Navratri festival, for inclusion in the list. "The age-old tradition of devotion to Goddess Mother in the form of Garba is alive and growing. Garba which has become the identity of Gujarat has been approved by



UNESCO under its intangible cultural heritage list," Patel said in a post on X. "This is a moment of pride for Gujaratis spread all over the world. This is a result of importance being given to the heritage of the country under prime minister Narendra

Modi's leadership and such heritage being taken to the world. Congratulations to the people of Gujarat," Patel further said. The inclusion was made under the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage

during the 18th meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage which began in Kasane, Botswana, on Tuesday. "Garba of Gujarat is the 15th ICH element from India to join this list. This inscription underscores Garba's pivotal role as a unifying force that fosters social and gender inclusivity. Garba as a dance form is entrenched deeply in ritualistic and devotional roots, involving people from all walks of life and it continues to thrive as a vibrant living tradition bringing communities together," an official release said.

Govt cut off from harsh realities Oppn on concerns over growing unemployment

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition members in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday accused the government of being cut off from the ground reality of the economic situation but treasury benchers hit back, asking them not to rely on selective facts and planted questions. During the discussion on the economic situation in the



country after MoS Finance Pankaj Chaudhary laid on the table a statement on the

Supplementary Demands for Grants 2023-24, Ram Gopal Yadav (SP) alleged the ruling

members were only indulging in propaganda and publicity. "When the ruling party members were speaking yesterday it appeared as if they were from another planet. They don't know what is happening on this side," he said in the afternoon session, alleging they were indulging only in propaganda and publicity using Prime Minister Narendra Modi's name.

Some crops tolerate ozone pollution better than others

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Certain crop plants are less prone to harm caused by ground-level ozone pollution, according to a study that opens the door to better models for predicting crop responses to the effects of climate change. The findings, published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, also pave the way for developing more resilient varieties that can sustain humanity's increasing demand for food, feed, fibre and fuel. A team of scientists at Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and University of Illinois

Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), US found that the so-called "C4" crops like corn and sorghum tolerate increased ozone levels better than "C3" crops, like rice or snap beans. A crop is designated as C3 or C4 depending on whether the CO2 it captures from the air is initially converted into a 3-carbon or 4-carbon compound, they said. The general ability of C4 crops to tolerate increases in ground-level (or "tropospheric") ozone better than C3 crops has long been suspected but not widely tested under actual field conditions, said Lisa Ainsworth, a research molec-



ular biologist at ARS. Together with ARS research plant physiologist Christopher Montes and a UIUC team led by Shuai Li Ainsworth conducted an extensive analysis of both published and unpub-

lished data. They culled the first dataset from 46 journal papers and the second set from 20 years' worth of open-air experiments conducted in the US, India and China.

Their analysis focused on the responses of five C3 crops (chickpea, rice, snap bean, soybean and wheat) and four C4 crops (sorghum, corn, giant miscanthus and switchgrass) to both ambient levels of ozone and increased concentrations of the gas, ranging from 40 to 100 parts per billion. Of particular interest were changes in the crops' photosynthetic capacity, chlorophyll content and fluorescence (a form of measurement for the pigment), antioxidant leaf activity, biomass material and seed yield. C3 and C4 crops differ in how their leaves capture carbon

dioxide from the air as a key component of photosynthesis. It is the process by which plants use sunlight to convert carbon dioxide into glucose, a sugar that helps power their growth, repair and development, and in turn, sustain other forms of life on the planet, including humankind. While both C3 and C4 crops use the enzyme called rubisco to convert carbon dioxide into sugars, C4 crops isolate rubisco in specialised cells where the concentration of carbon dioxide is very high. This enables higher rates of photosynthesis and greater efficiency of water use.

'Congress hatching conspiracy to insult Indian culture, identity'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Stepping up heat on the opposition over the north-south divide remarks, Union Minister Anurag Thakur on Wednesday accused the Congress of hatching a conspiracy to insult Indian culture and identity, instead of analysing the reasons for its defeat in the elections. Addressing a press conference here, he also questioned the silence of senior Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi on the issue and wondered whether the remarks on the north-south divide, reference to north India as "gaumutra states" and criticism of Sanatan Dharma had their sanction. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi is spreading the message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' but the opposition has started using foul language and blaming the EVMs and regionalism for their loss in the assembly elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh," the senior BJP leader said. "The Congress doesn't



believe in constitutional institutions. After facing defeat, they never analyse the reason for the defeat. They keep blaming EVMs and insult Sanatan Dharma, Hindus and Hindu culture," said Thakur, the Union Information and Broadcasting Minister. He said that during the election campaign, Congress raised the issues of casteism and religion, and when it did not work the opposition party was now resorting to a north-south divide. "Congress-led 'ghamandia' (arrogant) alliance is leaving no stone unturned to insult Hindu, Hindi and Sanatan Dharma," Thakur alleged.

FIRST COLUMN

DISCIPLINE YOUR SENSES

Our senses would always seek their objects but we must keep them on a leash



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

We have six senses, which are actively looking for gratification by contact with their objects. For example, our tongues look for tasty foods except when we are full. There is nothing wrong with it if these pleasures are within 'dharma'/'maryada' (within allowable limits). God has allowed it, as stated by Lord Krishna in verse # 7.11 of the Bhagavad-Geeta, in which He stated, "I am passion in beings, according to religious principles." He emphasised this point further in verse # 6.17, when He counselled, "One whose eating and recreation are appropriate; of one who strives appropriately in activities; of one who sleeps and stays awake, as required; his sufferings are less. Because sufferings there will be in this material world, described by the Lord as a place of miseries." (8.15) But despite such warnings, we are forever ready to transgress allowable limits hoping to escape punishment. What happens will be clear as we go through the activities of these six active senses. Beginning with our tongue, all of us are guilty of indiscretions sometimes or other. Picture yourself invited to a very rich buffet dinner. You survey what is on offer, which will be a lot unless you are on a restricted diet. What should I eat? People load their plates as if they are starving. This explains our control over our senses. Shouldn't we consider what is best for us to eat? Is it on offer? Then, why think so much? Just eat enough because more food will be available in a few hours for breakfast.



Let us go to our eyes next. It used to be okay till multiple channels came and now smartphones. There is so much to see, especially now one can watch with no one watching. Unfortunately, we are being watched all the time because 'karmaphalas' are being made by our acts. Wise people restrict themselves to what is useful and at worst, what is harmless like a sports programme. The pleasure of speaking occupies a very high place in modern man's desires. Everyone is an expert on everything with Google playing its role. Doctors get frustrated when patients begin telling them what they should know. One doesn't want to consider that if one was so wise why should he or she be in so much trouble? The fourth sense, which is also very active is our ears. What do we want to hear most? Our appreciation, which is how good we are compared to everyone around us. Again, like question begs an answer: why aren't we satisfied with our lives then? Our skin occupies an important position in how we think. We place comfort in all considerations. Air conditioners, heaters, etc are all fine, but how about a little sweating it out with walks, yoga exercises, etc? What does a modern person value the most? Muscles of course to show off. People spend hours in gyms to build what is not needed which gives them trouble as they age. I have saved the next sense for the last, which gives us the maximum trouble. Yes, you have guessed it right. The sex pleasure is considered the topmost pleasure of all by almost everyone. Our thinking is normally defined by it. Lord Krishna has warned us about it in verse # 18.39, when He cautioned about 'pramad'. The conclusion is obvious. We have senses and they would always seek contact with their objects. This is normal, but what is not normal is not restricting oneself to what is allowable. God would not have made such a system if it was not workable. It is very much so; only we have to be highly disciplined in thinking and acting, and we can live a satisfactory life.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher, views are personal)

Is India losing sheen for investors?



AS MITTAL

The slowdown in foreign direct investment in India is a cause for concern, as multinational corporations are finding other competitors more attractive

India's GDP grew by 7.6% in the second quarter (July-September) of the year, a positive sign of economic growth. However, the steepest declines in foreign direct investment (FDI) are a matter of concern, especially considering India's recent emergence as a promising investment destination and a viable alternative to China. This decline is particularly worrying as it is happening despite positive projections of India's growth by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and The World Bank. According to the latest report by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), FDI inflows have slowed down drastically. The decline in FDI inflows has been steep, and the situation has only worsened, with a further decline of -24% in April-September 2023. The current FDI inflows stand at \$20.48 billion, down from \$26.91 billion over the same period last year. Even the overall FDI inflows in 2022-23 witnessed a 16% decline, standing at \$71.3 billion from \$84.8 billion in 2021-22. The steepest declines in FDI have been in crucial sectors such as computer software and hardware, automobile, infrastructure construction activities, and metallurgical industries. For instance, inflows in computer software and hardware fell from \$14.4 billion in 2021-22 to \$9.3 billion in 2022-23, in the automobile industry from \$6.9 billion to \$1.9 billion, in infrastructure construction activities from \$3.2 billion to \$1.7 billion, and in metallurgical industries from \$2.2 billion to \$219 million.

The slowdown in foreign direct investment (FDI) in India is a cause for concern, as multinational corporations (MNCs) are finding Vietnam, Indonesia, and other competitors more attractive. This is a clear indication that the "China plus one" strategy of MNCs is not working for India. During January-September of this year, FDI in Vietnam increased by approximately 8% compared to the same period last year, reaching about \$18 billion. In the case of Indonesia, FDI flows stood at around \$10 billion during January-September of this year, similar to the levels seen last year. The factors that influence capital flows into countries include the global and domestic macroeconomic environment, the domestic policy and regulatory environment, and political stability. Since India is expected to benefit greatly from the "China plus one" strategy, policymakers must pay closer attention to these FDI trends. It is well known that FDI flows are more likely to gravitate towards countries with broader and deeper trade agreements. Lower tariffs and other benefits negotiated through free trade agreements (FTAs) incentivise foreign investment. Therefore, the decline in FDI flows to India may reflect this. A deeper assessment of the country's prospects is needed to address this issue. India is genuinely the alternative to China for companies looking to diversify if it is the "one" in China plus one strategy if the Government's PLI scheme is a powerful enough incentive to draw in investments, and if the solid foundations of India's growth forecasts are taken into account, then MNC investor should be long on India. Any concerns regarding an uncertain business environment, an uneven playing field, or the fear of arbitrary changes to the rules of the game must not deter investors from investing in India. More states should be in the ambit of FDI: The scope of FDI must be expanded to more Indian states. FDI has been concentrated in only a few states due to their location and favourable business environment. Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Gujarat have together attracted a staggering 69% of the FDI inflows into the country, with Maharashtra being the top recipient. However, it is disappointing to note that Punjab ranks a lowly 12th in attracting FDI, with a cumulative investment of a meagre Rs. 7693 crore in the past four years, which is a paltry 0.49% of the total inflows of Rs. 15.08 lakh crore from October 2019 to September 2023. In contrast, the neighbouring state of Haryana has been more successful, ranking sixth with FDI equity inflows of Rs. 67,502 crore, accounting for a substantial 4.17% of the total inflows during the same period. Punjab's successive governments have been striving to attract investments, particularly from foreign investors, but they have been facing major hurdles such as location disadvantage, poor connectivity, and frequent protests. The existing industry in Punjab has also been complaining about disruptions in their operations and movements due to the aforementioned issues. Haryana is way ahead in this regard with a significant



THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE CAPITAL FLOWS INTO COUNTRIES INCLUDE THE GLOBAL AND DOMESTIC MACROECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT, THE DOMESTIC POLICY AND POLITICAL STABILITY


advantage due to its proximity to Delhi NCR and superior connectivity. It is high time that Punjab takes firm steps to improve its position in attracting FDI, as its highest ranking was only ninth in 2020-21, when it attracted FDI equity investment of Rs. 4,719.45 crore, primarily in food processing, auto components, engineering goods, and textiles. The declining trend in FDI inflows to Punjab since then is a cause for concern. Therefore, the state must create a more conducive environment for businesses and investors, and promote its potential in various sectors, to attract more FDI and boost its economy. Disadvantage: Despite signing and negotiating bilateral free trade agreements, India has failed to secure a trade agreement with the European Union or become part of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) countries including China, Indonesia, Japan, and South Korea for free trade agreements. The trade agreement between the 10 member states of ASEAN and their free trade agreement partners - Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and Korea - has deepened economic integration between these countries, which are at the heart of manufacturing supply chains. As a result, India's exclusion from such agreements and the supply chains that run through these regions puts it at a significant disadvantage in this manufacturing ecosystem. The Way Forward: Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) have a far greater potential to facilitate the growth of the Indian economy than Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI). However, India needs to take swift and assertive action to speed up structural reforms, root out corruption, and reduce red tape in bureaucracy to strengthen its position as the most attractive investment destination for FDI. India has adopted a negative list approach in its FDI policy, which outlines only those sectors and activities where foreign investment is regulated. Sectors not mentioned in the document are open to obtaining 100% FDI under the automatic method. The liberal and attractive policy regime for investors, combined with a favourable business climate and reduced regulatory framework, have resulted in higher FDI inflows. But this alone is not enough. India needs to complement this with a sound trade policy that boosts exports, encourages inclusive development, and incentivises R&D to make our manufacturing ecosystem globally competitive, thereby fetching FDI at a large scale.

(The Author is Vice-Chairman of Sonalika Group, Vice-Chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, and Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council. Views expressed are strictly personal)

Artificial Intelligence is transforming the steel industry

A step-by-step approach is the best to implement artificial intelligence. Scores of AI models are available for use in the steel units which can be tried without much hassle

Technology is ever-evolving. While it becomes difficult to keep pace with rapid technological advancements in all expanses of life, it is equally difficult to discount them because these are highly value-accrative. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one such technology. The manufacturing sector, in general, and the steel sector, in particular, are integrating AI into their daily operations to improve productivity, health and safety, reduce operational costs and reap countless other operational and functional benefits. Survival will be at stake for those who will not. In a developing nation or the Global South, cheaper availability of steel is a prequel to ensure sustainable development. Since raw materials for



ALOK SAHAY

making steel are unlikely to be economical in the foreseeable future, adaptation of modern disruptive technologies and processes is the only way out. Estimates suggest that the proper adaptation of AI in the entire value chain of steelmaking can save between \$60 and \$100 per tonne. Apart from this, a key takeaway from the recently concluded ISA Steel InfraBuild Summit in Lucknow was that the use of AI in architecture will enable engineers and architects to design, plan, and build steel structures more efficiently, resulting in proper economics and savings in infrastructure and real estate. In the steel sector, AI can be adopted from R&D and innovation to procurement, manufacturing and back-office

process digitalisation to supply-chain inventory, marketing, and whatnot. All these can lead to a 60% growth in EBDI-TA in three years. Greenhouse gas emissions can also be reduced by 5-10%. Maintenance is, as always, a difficult task. Each manufacturing unit has its maintenance plan tailored to its particularities. Proper implementation and use of AI can help predict the exact timing of maintenance, thereby reducing shutdown time, cutting maintenance costs, and enhancing the lifespan of the machinery. The Indian steel industry has been the early adopter of AI. Adaptation of AI has the highest impact on steel manufacturing in the entire value chain. In the coke oven plant, sinter plant, blast furnaces,

continuous caster and rolling, among others, the implementation of AI has multiple benefits ranging from 1-2% yield improvement to a 50-80% reduction in quality losses. Energy consumption also improved by roughly 10%. Autonomous or semi-autonomous data or content examination also makes predictions and recommendations easier. Integration of sales and production data improves revenue management and customer satisfaction. With precise data, AI's ability to predict market data and price fluctuations helps manufacturers adjust production, manage inventories, and respond swiftly to changing market conditions. Enhancing safety is also another essential

aspect. No wonder steel manufacturers worldwide are embracing AI to ensure faster delivery of business requirements. This is the age of intelligent manufacturing. Far from having a steel-producing smart factory, intelligent manufacturing encompasses all of it - sourcing raw materials to production to marketing products through an integrated intelligent supply chain. Steel consumption mirrors the health of an economy. Aspiring to be in the league of a developed nation, India has miles to go to catch up with the global steel consumption average. The building, construction and infrastructure sector consumes nearly 70% of all steel in India. The growth of the steel sector will largely depend on the demand emanating

from the infrastructure sector. While AI adaptation will benefit the steel sector, implementing AI in the infrastructure sector will help assess the sector's specific needs - such as identifying cost-effective high-strength steel structure-based designs and offering tailor-made products. Adaptation, both in the steel and the infrastructure sector, is a challenging task. A mindset of experimentation and a determination to bring about positive changes are required. With AI, the ultimate goal is to implement an automated and unsupervised process linked with software and processes to improve performance over time. However, there is no substitute for human capital, and once integrated with AI, it will do wonders if used for the benefit of mankind and planet Earth. The apprehension that AI will displace jobs is unfounded. However, the dynamics of the job will change, requiring manpower with digital skills. It also warrants upskilling existing employees. A step-by-step approach is the best to implement AI. Building on the following line from the learnings of the first will yield the best results. Scores of AI models are in use in different steel manufacturing units in the country. The use of transformative technology will only go up in the days ahead. We need to be ready to adapt to the changes and implement it.

(The writer is the Secretary General of the Indian Steel Association (ISA), views are personal)

MONEY MATTERS

As many as 65 illegal telecom setups unearthed

As many as 65 illegal telecom setups, that allowed international calls with spoofed Indian numbers, were busted during FY2023-24, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed the International Long Distance Operators (ILDOS) to drop incoming calls with no Calling Line Identification (CLI), or improper CLI or having certain prefixes. Moreover, DoT is blocking the apps allowing the origination of spoofed calls. Such apps are also blocked at Google Play Store and iOS App Store, Minister of State for Communications, Devusinh Chauhan said in a written reply in Lok Sabha. DoT in coordination with Law Enforcement Agencies and Telecom Service Providers (TSPs) is unearthing illegal telecom setups that allow international calls with spoofed Indian numbers. Such illegal setups are used to bypass the ILDOs for anti-national activities, cyber-crimes and financial frauds, Chauhan said. "So far, 65 such illegal setups during FY 2023-24, 62 in FY 2022-23 and 35 in FY 2021-2022 have been unearthed."



ABFRL forms JV with shoe designer Christian Louboutin

Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail (ABFRL) on Wednesday announced a Rs 5 crore investment in an equal joint venture with French luxury shoe designer Christian Louboutin. Both the partners plan to invest a total of Rs 10 crore into the JV, which will be a subsidiary of ABFRL, according to a spokesperson. The 1991-founded Christian Louboutin has a presence in 30 countries, and has a portfolio consisting of men's footwear, leather accessories, beauty and kids, and is known for its red sole shoes. This joint venture envisages the transfer of the current Indian business into a newly incorporated subsidiary of ABFRL where the partners will hold an equal stake, the statement said. "We are excited to partner with ABFRL's team and look forward to working with them to manage and develop the business in India which is an extremely important market for us," Alexis Mourot, group chief executive officer of Christian Louboutin, said.



Airlines to retain US\$ 5.45 on average for every passenger

On average, airlines will retain just USD 5.45 for every passenger carried by them and the amount is just enough to buy a basic grand latte at a London Starbucks, IATA chief Willie Walsh said on Wednesday as he emphasised that the profit of airlines should be put in proper perspective. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has projected the airline industry to rake in profits of USD 25.7 billion in 2024 and USD 23.3 billion this year. Walsh, the Director General of IATA, said that considering the major losses of recent years, the USD 25.7 billion net profit expected in 2024 is a tribute to aviation's resilience and that the speed of the recovery has been extraordinary, but it also appears that the pandemic has cost aviation about four years of growth. "Industry profits must be put into proper perspective. While the recovery is impressive, a net profit margin of 2.7 per cent is far below what investors in almost any other industry would accept."



India's economy to grow at 6.8% in current fiscal: CII

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Industry chamber CII expects the country's economy to grow at 6.8 per cent in the current fiscal and accelerate to 7 per cent in 2024-25, driven by the government's continued focus on infrastructure development and promotion of ease of doing business.

In an interview with PTI, CII President R Dinesh, who is also the Executive Vice Chairman of TVS Supply Chain Solutions, said even on a conservative basis, the expected gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 6.8 per cent will be more than the 6.5-6.7 per cent estimated earlier by the industry body.

Sharing growth projections, the CII President said: "In the beginning, we had said 6.5-6.7 per cent. Now, actually, we are saying it is going to be 6.8 per cent for this year, and we are looking at 7 per cent for next year. Obviously, the first half has given the comfort for 6.8 per cent. In fact, I would say it



is a conservative number because if you look at what has happened in the first half, we are being conservative here".

On the recent state elections, he said the stock market and the industry favour continuity in policy.

During the recently held state elections, the BJP won in three major states -- Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, while the Congress won in Telangana.

"We welcome continuity in policy and making sure that

the consensus is for the growth of the country.... for us, continuity in policy is very important and that's something that whichever party be in power, we make sure that we communicate that... The stock market is cheering the fact that there is continuity from an approach".

According to him, India is in a "sweet spot", owing to various reasons, including the government's focus on infrastructure and the push for ease of doing business.

India's economy recorded a growth of 7.7 per cent in the first half of the current fiscal ended in September.

When asked about the possibility of an interest rate cut by the RBI in its upcoming bi-monthly monetary policy review, he said: "We are not asking for that (interest rate cut) at all because we don't believe that it's the right time to ask because inflation is above the benchmark (4 per cent), which they (RBI) have set for themselves".

"Today, we have 75 per cent to 95 per cent capacity utilisation cutting across many sectors, that has been there for the last 3 quarters. So, more or less, we can expect that very soon, we will have that percentage crossing, where people will continue to make capex investments. We did our membership survey and found that a majority of our members were actually looking at higher private sector investments taking place in H2 as compared with H1," Dinesh said.

Domestic electronics manufacturing up 4-fold to Rs 8.22L cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic electronics manufacturing increased over 4-fold to Rs 8.22 lakh crore in the last 10 years, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar informed the Lok Sabha that India has now reached a stage where 99.2 per cent of mobile handsets being used in the country are manufactured domestically, and from being an importer in the segment, the country has now become an exporter.

"In FY 2013-14 the electronics manufacturing was Rs 1,80,454 crore (US\$ 29.8 billion) and has grown significantly to Rs 8,22,350 cr (US\$ 102 billion) in FY 2022-23, which is further expected to grow up to Rs 23,95,195 cr (USD 300 billion) by 2026," the minister said. He said the country exported mobile phones worth US\$ 11.1 billion in financial year 2022-23. "We have become a mobile exporting country with US\$ 11.1 billion exports in FY 2022-23 as compared to a mobile importing country in 2014-15 when almost 74 per cent of all mobile phones sold in India were imported," Chandrasekhar said.

Markets scale fresh lifetime highs; Nifty nears 21k-level

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty rallied for the seventh straight session to hit fresh lifetime highs on Wednesday, driven by gains in index majors Reliance Industries, ITC and L&T amid persistent foreign fund inflows.

Besides, receding crude oil prices in international markets also boosted sentiment, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex surged 357.59 points, or 0.52 per cent, to settle at a new record of 69,653.73. The barometer rose to 69,744.62 during intra-day.

The broader index Nifty also climbed 82.60 points, or 0.40 per cent, to hit its fresh peak of 20,937.70.

"Post-state elections, market optimism thrives, confirming policy continuity and meeting investor expectations. A robust FII reversal is fuelled by receding inflation and dropping yields in US and Indian markets. The allure of Indian market gains post-China credit rating downgrade and decline in oil prices was followed by ease



in geopolitical tensions," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

As many as 20 shares of the 30-share index closed the session with gains, while 30 stocks of the Nifty's 50 firms ended in positive territory.

Among major Sensex movers, Wipro closed with the maximum gain of 3.85 per cent, followed by ITC -- 2.51 per cent higher. L&T and TCS gained 2.31 per cent and 2.13 per cent, respectively. Tata Motors, Nestle India, Infosys and Bajaj Finance were other gainers.

On the other hand, NTPC, Axis Bank, UltraTech Cement

and ICICI Bank ended the session with a loss of up to 1.58 per cent.

Analysts said the sustained equity buying by foreign institutional investors was attributed to declining US bond yields, while the domestic players were betting big on favourable macroeconomic data and expectations of longer political stability in the country.

Besides, investors are also expecting the Reserve Bank to maintain the status quo on the interest rate in its bi-monthly monetary policy decision to be announced on Friday, they added.

Adani group stocks end up to 20% higher

3 firms hit 52-week high

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Group shares extended their gains and ended up to 20 per cent higher on Wednesday after billionaire Gautam Adani-led conglomerate said it has plans to invest USD 75 billion on energy transition initiatives by 2030. Eight of the group firms ended in the green territory, and three in the red.

During the day, some of the group firms also hit their 52-week highs and locked in upper-circuit levels, with the total valuation of group companies reaching near the Rs 15 lakh crore-mark at close.

On the BSE, Adani Total Gas zoomed 19.98 per cent to close at Rs 1,053.65 apiece, Adani Green Energy rallied 16.11 per cent at Rs 1,565.10, Adani Energy Solutions bounced 7.36 per cent to Rs 1,162.30, and NDTV advanced 7.07 per cent to settle at Rs 285.40.

Sanghi Industries shares jumped 4.97 per cent to end at Rs 136.35, Adani Wilmar climbed 4.11 per cent to Rs 396.35, Adani Power gained 4.09 per cent to Rs 560.55, and Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) rose 0.67 per cent to Rs 1,018.65 apiece.

RBI unlikely to cut rates before June: Deutsche Bank

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank-led Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is unlikely to tweak repo rates till June next year, according to a foreign brokerage report. The bi-monthly MPC meeting started on Wednesday and the decision on rates will be announced on Friday.

According to the report by Deutsche Bank, the interest rate cycle appears to have peaked and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is unlikely to go for further hikes, unless absolutely necessary. The rate is likely to be cut in June, it said. The RBI hiked the repo rate last on February 23, when it was raised to 6.5 per cent.

With the RBI continuing to maintain tight liquidity, short-term rates are hovering around 6.85-6.9 per cent, which is 35-40 bps higher than the repo rate. "We see the central bank cutting the policy repo rate by 75 bps in 2024 and another 25 bps in early 2025. Earlier, we were expecting a 100 bps of repo rate cut in 2024 itself, starting from April 2024, but given that the Fed is likely to start cutting rates from June 2024, we have pushed back the start of the rate cut cycle to June 2024," the analysts said.

"We now expect 25 bps rate cuts in each of the quarters beginning from Q2 of 2024 totalling 100bps of easing in FY25, which will likely bring down the repo rate to 5.50 per



"We now expect 25 bps rate cuts in each of the quarters beginning from Q2 of 2024 totalling 100bps of easing in FY25, which will likely bring down the repo rate to 5.50 per cent by early 2025."

cent by early 2025," they said. However, the analysts said the RBI's final decision will depend on the Fed's move on rates. If Fed goes for a rate hike in early 2024, or does not go for a rate cut in the whole of next year, it could delay the RBI's rate cut cycle. The report said India's economy will double in size to US\$ 7 trillion by the end of the decade with per capita income also nearly doubling to US\$ 4,500 by 2030.

And even before the end of this decade, India is likely to become the third largest economy after the US and China, overtaking Japan and Germany, the analysts said.

Ashv Finance gets US\$ 10 mn investment from Encourage Capital

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Small businesses-focused lender Ashv Finance on Wednesday announced that Encourage Capital has invested US\$ 10 million (about Rs 83.33 cr) into the company.

The non-bank lender, which has over Rs 1,000 crore of assets under management at present, is planning to launch a rooftop solar finance facility for small and medium businesses with the capital, according to a statement.

The quantum of the acquired stake in the small businesses-focused lender was not revealed. At present, it operates at 180 locations across 15 states and the funding will also be deployed for expanding its reach, the statement said.

Surprise credits in thousands of UCO Bank accounts opened around transfer dates under CBI scanner

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI investigation into surprise credits totalling Rs 820 crore in the accounts of UCO Bank customers has brought under the agency's scanner thousands of recipient accounts which were opened around the dates the transfers took place, officials said Wednesday.

The CBI is probing a case where over 41,000 UCO Bank customers received surprise credits of varied amounts in their accounts during November 10-13 without any corresponding debits in the originating accounts, they said. Among various leads, the agency's needle of suspicion



has also gone on "thousands of accounts" which were opened around the time the transactions started and received the transfers, the officials said.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had earlier said in a statement that several account holders allegedly

exploited this situation, illicitly withdrawing funds from UCO Bank through various banking channels, thereby benefiting wrongfully from the transaction.

"No one who received the funds without criminal intent needs to worry about our investigation. We focus only on those

who conspired and orchestrated the massive scheme. It is an early stage of investigation, and all angles are being looked into," an official said. He added that people must beware of fraudsters who may want to exploit the situation by posing as investigators. The CBI does not make phone calls to get details in the case, hence, he said in cases of such calls, people may approach the agency directly.

The agency has noted that Rajasthan was the most affected state in the money transfer case, recording 7.50 lakh transactions in three days spread across 230 branches and 28,000 accounts in which Rs 760 crore were transferred.

ONGC to cut gas flaring, use green power at oil wells

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-controlled Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) plans to wheel green electricity to its installations in the Arabian Sea to replace natural gas it uses in operation of oil wells as part of its ambitious decarbonisation programme, its Chairman Arun Kumar Singh said.

India's top oil and gas producer has substantially cut gas flaring -- burning of methane gas is produced when oil is extracted from below surface -- and would look to bring it down to nil as part of its environmental commitments, he said while speaking at the 28th UN Climate

Change Conference in Dubai, called COP28.

Singh said ONGC uses a lot of gas to generate electricity as well as meet compression and other process needs of an oil and gas field. By 2028, this gas is intended to be replaced with green power wheeled to installations as far as 160 km from the west coast. The gas thus freed will be sold to industries like fertiliser and power plants.

Companies around the globe have pledged to slash down methane emissions by 30 per cent from 2020 levels by 2030. Methane, which is a more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide, tends to leak into the atmosphere.



This is sometimes deliberate when companies flare the gas that comes alongside crude oil, due to lack of consumption markets. It also can leak undetected from drill sites, gas

pipelines and other oil and gas equipment.

Controlling methane, which has been rising in atmospheric concentration for decades, is seen as one of the easiest and

cheapest ways to make an immediate impact on global greenhouse gas emissions.

"We have been working very consistently on reducing methane emissions," Singh said at the session on 'Accelerating the Elimination of Methane Emissions and the Decarbonisation of Oil & Gas'. "Because of the (Indian) geography and population, we hardly have any scope to flare," he said. However, a "very small" amount leaked unintentionally because of the "prohibitive" cost of capturing it, he said, adding that ONGC was working with technology providers to check that.

"We want to help the planet by making zero methane from

our operations," he said.

Flaring, which used to be done in the past because of lack of customers for gas, has been reduced by almost 80 per cent, he said. Crude oil pumped out of ground can easily be transported in trucks but to take gas from remote well locations to industries requires pipelines.

Sometimes, the amount of gas coming out with oil is so low that laying a pipeline becomes uneconomical.

"Earlier, we used to flare 14-15 million standard cubic meters per day, but now we are hardly flaring... now it is around 2 per cent," he said. "Still 2 per cent needs to go down."



Maruti Suzuki's electric SUV to be manufactured in Gujarat

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

Leading car manufacturer Maruti Suzuki on Wednesday announced that its upcoming electric SUV will be manufactured in Gujarat, and a new plant will be added to the company's existing manufacturing facility in Hansalpur, nearly 90 km from here.

Suzuki Motor Gujarat Private Ltd (SMG), which runs the car manufacturing plant at Hansalpur, is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Maruti Suzuki and commenced operation in February 2017.

"Our first EV, an SUV, will be launched in the next financial year of 2024-25. It will come out from SMG's Gujarat plant. At present, the entire SMG facility at Hansalpur has three plants - plant A, B and C. Now, to manufacture the EV, a new plant, also called a production line, will be added there," Maruti Suzuki Executive Director (Corporate Affairs) Rahul Bharti told reporters.

The upcoming EV SUV, to

"Our first EV, an SUV, will be launched in the next financial year of 2024-25. It will come out from SMG's Gujarat plant. At present, the entire SMG facility at Hansalpur has three plants - plant A, B and C. Now, to manufacture the EV, a new plant, also called a production line, will be added there."

be produced here at the SMG plant, will be exported too, he added.

In March 2022, SMG's parent firm Suzuki Motor Corporation signed an MoU with the Gujarat government to invest Rs 3,100 crore in the Hansalpur plant for EV manufacturing, Bharti said.

"Our EV concept car has already been unveiled. It will be a high-specification SUV having 550 km range (on a single charge) and a 60-kilowatt-hour battery," he said.

Kriti Sanon wraps a schedule for her production *Do Patti* in Manali

Bollywood actress Kriti Sanon is currently in Manali as she wraps a schedule for, *Do Patti*, produced by her production house Blue Butterfly Films. Earlier this year, Kriti made headlines by venturing into film production with the launch of her production house. The talented actress is now set to bring fresh narratives to audiences with her debut production, showcasing her versatility both in front of and behind the camera.

Taking to social media, she shares "Manali. You are beautiful! @ Its a Schedule wrap for #DoPatti!! Cold weather, Warm hearts! #Passionate souls trying to create some magic while making memories! Such a fulfilling schedule, all thanks to a great team! @beatnikbob5 @martrassepp you guys killed it! #DoPatti @bluebutterfly-filmsofficial"

The year 2023 has proven

to be a milestone for Kriti Sanon, as she not only delves into film production but also expands her entrepreneurial endeavors. Besides making waves in the film industry, Kriti has recently ventured into the world of beauty by unveiling her own skincare brand. Her foray into multiple domains underscores her dynamic and multifaceted approach to her career.

As the actress continues to make waves in the industry, her achievements reach new heights with a notable accolade – a national award and a Filmfare Best Actress award. Kriti Sanon's unstoppable journey paints a picture of a determined artist and entrepreneur, leaving fans and the industry eager to witness her upcoming film, *Do Patti*, where she takes on the dual roles of producer and leading actress, showcasing her prowess on and off the screen.



what's brewing?

Angelina Jolie says she wouldn't be an actress today, plans to leave Los Angeles

Oscar winner Angelina Jolie says she probably wouldn't pursue acting as a career if she was just starting in the industry today.

Born to actor parents Jon Voight and Marcheline Bertrand, the 48-year-old said she "really has a social life" living in Los Angeles since every time she leaves her house, she is subjected to unwanted attention by the paparazzi, which is also one of the reasons why she eventually wants to move from Hollywood.

"I wouldn't be an actress today. When I was starting out, it wasn't as much of an expectation to be as public, to share so much," Jolie told the Wall Street Journal Magazine.

"It's part of what happened after my divorce. I lost the ability to live and travel as

freely," she said referring to the high-profile and bitter separation from her *Mr & Mrs Smith* co-star and former husband Brad Pitt. In the interview, Jolie also noted that she hopes to spend more time at her home in Cambodia, from where her adoptive son Maddox (22) hails from.

"I will move when I can," she added. Jolie made her screen debut as a child alongside Voight in 1982's *Lookin' to Get Out* and went on to carve her niche as a leading actor with films such as her Oscar-winning turn in *Girl, Interrupted*, *Lara Croft: Tomb Raider*, *Salt*, *A Mighty Heart* and *Maleficent*.

The actor, also known for her humanitarian efforts, admitted that she "was never very impressed" with Hollywood.

"I never bought into it as sig-

nificant or important. I grew up in quite a shallow place. Of all the places in the world, Hollywood is not a healthy place. So you seek authenticity," she said, adding fame after her Oscar win led to depression and at times, suicidal thoughts.

Being in the public eye for almost all her life, Jolie said the stress post her separation from Pitt in 2016 got so bad that during shooting of the Disney sequel *Maleficent: Mistress of Evil*, her voice had changed registers from when she first played the titular fairy tale villain.

"My body reacts very strongly to stress. My blood sugar goes up and down. I suddenly had Bell's palsy six months before my divorce," she added.

Her last screen appearance was 2021's *Eternals*.



'Will always champion an Indian designer on international platforms'

Actress and style icon Sonam Kapoor revealed her reason to go local at international events which has led to India having major fashion moments globally. She said: "For me, I remember it was my first Cannes appearance. I was working with an international brand and they were taking me to Cannes. I know Masaba since we were kids, we were in kathak class together. But my sister Rhea and I discussed and we were like 'we should wear an Indian designer on a global platform' and we wanted to wear a designer who was young and someone who represented the modern and young India."

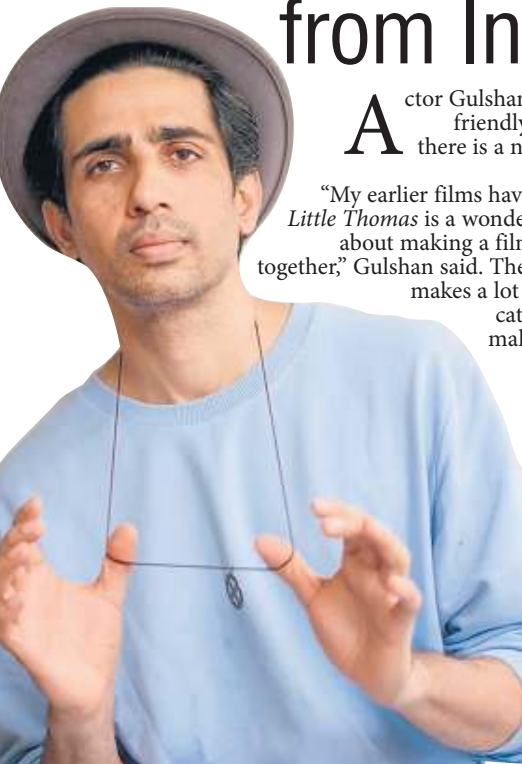
Recalling the time she wore a saree, Sonam added: "I remember, I wore her (Masaba) saree and at that time, I draped the saree myself. We had one make-up artist that was being shared by all young girls representing the global brand that I was endorsing."

"I remember going there and suddenly there was this one photographer who comes and takes a picture of me and the next thing I know is that I am on the cover of a leading fashion magazine in America!"

The actress said: "I cannot tell you how excited Masaba was! But what was very exciting for me was the fact that I was 23 years old, that an Indian designer featured on a global magazine, and I felt very proud of it as an Indian!"

On the work front, Sonam will be seen in *Battle for Bittora*.

'Our films need to make engaging stories for children from Indian cinema'



Actor Gulshan Devaiah is thrilled to embrace a children-friendly narrative with *Little Thomas* and said that there is a need to make more engaging stories for kids from Indian cinema.

"My earlier films have been catering to a more mature audience. *Little Thomas* is a wonderful shift for me, and I'm genuinely excited about making a film that children and their families can enjoy together," Gulshan said. The actor added: "The English speaking world makes a lot of films for children but in India we don't cater much to our children. Our films need to make diverse and engaging stories for children from Indian cinema."

The actor emphasises the importance of exploring varied genres for younger audiences and encourages fellow filmmakers to step up and experiment with storytelling that resonates with children. The film tells a heartwarming story centered around a Goan family. Directed by the National Award-winning filmmaker Kaushal Oza, *Little Thomas* also stars Rasika. The film marks a reunion for Rasika and Kaushal, who had previously collaborated on the short film *The Miniaturist of Junagadh*.

SUSAN SARANDON FIRED FROM MOVIE FOR SUPPORTING PALESTINE

Actress Susan Sarandon has been asked to leave the thriller film *Slipping Away* amid her anti-Semitism controversy.

Slipping Away is about a schizophrenic man who "struggles with his own psychosis and his wife's extramarital affair"

In the wake of the October 7 massacre by Hamas, Sarandon has been under fire for her latest outburst for saying Jews are "getting a taste of how it feels to be Muslim in America."

David Barroso, co-founder of the indie movie production company PTO Films, told Page Six: "As a company, PTO Films would like to make it clear that Susan Sarandon's views do not reflect the opinions of our organisation. We were considering her for a short film, but due to her recent statements, we have decided to pursue other options."

The actress had been set to play Dr Sylvia Mansfield in *Slipping Away*, with the film appearing in her "upcoming" projects list on IMDb under the "pre-production" list, reports aceshowbiz.com.

She has also been dropped from her talent UTA agency as "several staffers" are said to have been "extremely hurt" by her comments on the Israel-Hamas conflict.

Sarandon made her controversial comment about Jews "getting a taste of how it feels to be Muslim in America" after she attended a string of rallies in New York tackling the Israel-Hamas conflict - during which she also joined in the chant "From the river to the sea."



FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



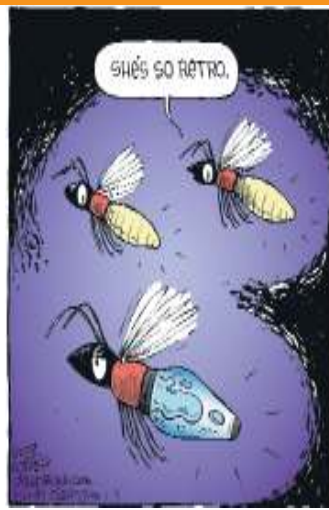
GINGER MEGGS



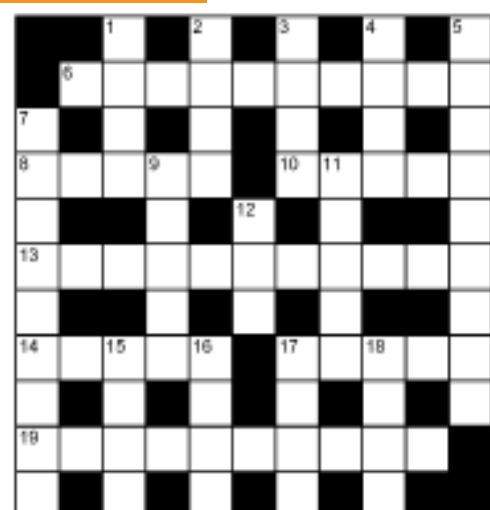
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 6 A railway engine
- 8 Wear these on fingers
- 10 An orchestra conductor's stick
- 13 Glass buildings for growing plants
- 14 Small cities
- 17 Nairobi is the capital of this country in Africa
- 19 In the middle of lots of people

DOWN

- 5 A day of the week
- 7 Opposite of duldest
- 9 The colour of grass
- 11 Make smile or laugh
- 12 Timid
- 15 This lives in soil
- 16 Cold winter flakes
- 17 He wears a crown
- 18 Require



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

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

BREAKING BARRIERS BY TRANSFORMING GENDER DYNAMICS

TEJAL SINHA

Gender equality is the most coveted state of affairs that our country has long craved. Gender equality is now a social and economic challenge as well as a moral obligation. Despite its many accomplishments, India is still underappreciated when it comes to gender equality. And then there is Seema Bhaskaran, the Lead for Gender at Transform Rural India, whose expertise in gender issues and community development makes her an invaluable resource.

Basically, her initial work with the Centre for Social Studies, where she documented the work of organisations working with women, helped her understand the importance of a multidimensional approach where the perspectives of many stakeholders can converge seamlessly. The lead begins, "My interactions with activists and academicians from the women's movement further sharpened my analytical and nuanced understanding of gender equality. Later, I worked on gender and decentralisation with Sakhi and KILA (the Kerala Institute of Local Administration). I developed modules and manuals and also trained elected representatives and Panchayat officials in areas like status studies of women, gender planning, budgeting, and auditing."

As the state project director of the Mahila Samakhyia programme under the erstwhile Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), her work focused on developing federations of women working towards gender equality and gender education of teachers. The work also entailed starting help desks in all schools in Kerala and working on the educational retention of children in difficult circumstances as well as the survivors of child sexual abuse.

"In MHRD, I worked on the implementation of the Right to Education by strengthening educational systems to retain children from marginalised communities in the education stream. As a technical expert on gender and social inclusion in the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, I worked on developing curriculum, modules, manuals, protocols, and advisories for gender and social inclusion and supported all states of India in developing gender operational strategies and implementation," shares Seema, adding that the focus was on the capacity building of staff, cadres, institutional mechanisms, and strengthening institutional mechanisms for action. "Interventions on gender equality and inter-



facing with the public system were also part of the process. This journey across the country has been instrumental in shaping my insights on gender equality. Through Transform Rural India (TRI), the endeavour has been to work through a gender transformation lens and a multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral approach towards quality-of-life enhancement.

The initial eye-opener for her was when she was looking at the lives of women from Safai Sathi communities and fisherfolk communities who faced extreme forms of deprivation. This helped her understand the concept of intersectionality very early in her childhood. And so, "I witnessed inequities and discrimination experienced by women from matrilineal communities and the domestic violence they were subjected to despite having land ownership, and this led me to question, introspect, and analyse the reasons behind these paradoxical situations. Instances of child sexual abuse in matrilineal homes also led to questions regarding the safety and security within a home and the institution of the family. My early association with the women's movement and participation led to a sharper and more nuanced understanding of gender rights. My education at TISS (Tata Institute of Social Sciences) promoted an even deeper academic understanding of gender issues."

Just like many, she too wishes there were a silver bullet to fix gender inequality, but sadly, there is not. That is why the only real solution she feels is a multidimensional approach—a multiplicity of strategies. It is also important to bring equal opportunities to rural India.

In rural India, the topic of domestic violence is much easier to talk about than that of sexual health. Public spaces for women to discuss gender issues are extremely limited. Gender issues ranging from menstruation, reproductive health, control over body and fertility, spacing pregnancies, use of contraception, abortions, domestic violence, and marital rape are taboo subjects. However, she shares, "Due to the growth of SHG-federations, women now have a platform to discuss aspects of financial inclusion. With attempts to integrate gender within the SHG network and develop institutional mechanisms, space has been developed for voicing issues of domestic violence too. Discussion on the Domestic Violence Act has been undertaken through campaigns by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, and women in rural areas have been informed about the One-Stop Centre where they can seek rehabilitative services. Discussions around the body and sexuality are still, however, curtailed by taboos. Efforts to introduce them into the school curriculum have failed. Patriarchy continues to decide on the age of marriage, number, and preferred gender of the child while family planning and spacing are done via the instrumentation of women's bodies."

Irrespective of Janani Janma Suraksha's aim to enhance reproductive health services, women's decision-making power regarding their bodies and fertility remained constrained within the patriarchal family structure. In such cases, "SHG networks and ASHA services have been instrumental in accessing entitlements under the National Food Security Act, the National Social Assistance

Programme, etc. ASHA's work has been critical in enabling access to reproductive health services, especially institutional delivery. Despite awareness, the fear of institutional delivery is high due to the lack of facilities in the labour room and a gender-insensitive environment. The behaviour of care providers also restricts women from accessing primary health centres in underserved areas. Social norms stemming from patriarchy have been difficult to change, and decision-making over fertility can be improved only through women's knowledge enhancement on reproductive health and sexuality. Adolescent education on sexual and reproductive health can be imparted through Anganwadis."

Children, adolescents, and youth are bombarded with distorted information, often leading to perverse notions and a debilitating escalation in sexual violence and rape. Women and children face the brunt of this and are scarred for life. And so, in such cases, "sex education would, on the other hand, provide adolescents and youth with scientific information. This would lead to enhanced control over the body and fertility and informed choices regarding marriage and contraception. It will also improve health-seeking behaviour and dispel false notions and misconceptions about masculinity and femininity. It will also enhance bodily agency and the understanding of reproductive rights. Very early on in my career, I realised that regressive ideas about women and their bodies are not just rooted in personal prejudices but stem from institutional beliefs that need to be addressed—the system needs changing if there is to be change at a macro scale. Young girls can be educated through the school curriculum. Adolescent clubs and the health and nutrition programmes in Anganwadis in rural areas can also be leveraged for sex education. The theme can also be introduced through a life-skill educational module."

CASE STUDY

The Mahila Samakhyia programme under the Ministry of Human Resources Development, which focused on the educational empowerment of women, was a good example of providing sex education. Sex education was provided through Mahila Shikshan Kendras and Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas managed by Mahila Samakhyia. Sex education was undertaken in schools among girl children in rural areas as well. It was packaged as part of life skills education and led to enhanced confidence among girls. Educational mobility was enhanced. As was the awareness among women to educate children and report violations of rights.

Empowering change and harnessing a transformative approach to become invaluable, *The Pioneer* brings to you our interaction with Seema Bhaskaran, the Lead for Gender at Transform Rural India, who is working towards embracing gender change.



COMMUNITY WISE

CHAMAK: Lurking beneath the Punjabi music industry's politics

TANISHA SAXENA

Chamak is an intriguing musical thriller that explores the dark underbelly of the music industry in Punjab. Although slow-paced, the screenplay keeps us interested throughout the series, shedding light on various aspects of Punjab's society, such as racism, politics, business feuds, LGBTQ issues, and possible honour killings.

The story opens with a mesmerising drone shot, offering a stunning view of Punjab's landscape in 1999, draped in the enchanting cloak of winter fog. The crowded ground, embellished with a meticulously arranged stage, eagerly anticipates the appearance of the legendary singer, Taara Singh. Yet, the narrative takes an unexpected turn when a gunshot pierces the air, abruptly concluding his performance. And the next moment, we are in Vancouver, Canada, in 2023. Kaala, a young chap who is accused of burglary, possession of illegal firearms, and other petty crimes, is presented to the officers for parole at the central prison. He says, "It is not what I did! It is the way I look. The colour my god painted clay with. I am not a criminal; I am an artist." He hints at the racism and bullying that he has been subjected to in the country. He is a rapper at heart who comes back to Punjab from Canada and unravels the death of Tara Singh.

This six-part series stands out for its genuine approach and layered storytelling. Aside from the inquiry, the series provides a glimpse into the lives of different members of society, exploring the struggles of people who want to make out in the music industry in Punjab. *Chamak* serves as a musical thriller that invites contemplation. While superficially depicting the quest of a young rapper investigating the demise of a renowned singer, the narrative unfolds layers, offering a nuanced and thought-provoking experience.

Chamak, as opposed to its literal meaning, transcends glamour; it delves into the shadows concealed behind the radiant glow of stage lights. It almost unfolds as a spiritual and cathartic journey, particularly for those intricately linked to the tapestry of the Punjab music industry. The drill to get the first break, nepotism, family dynamics, politics, and more. Each of these elements is wonderfully woven into the narrative, and



Created and directed by: Rohit Jugraj Chauhan

Produced by: Geetanjali Mehelwa Chauhan, Rohit Jugraj Chauhan, and Sumet Dubey.

Cast: Paramvir Singh Cheema, Manoj Pahwa, Gippy Grewal, Mohit Malik, Isha Talwar, Mukesh Chhabra, Prince Kanwaljit Singh, Suvinder (Vicky) Pal, and Akasa Singh.

Streaming: Sony LIV

nothing feels out of place.

Tara Singh and his wife, Navpreet, met a tragic end under the hail of AK47 gunfire. Curiously, despite both being victims, the case is singularly designated as the "Tara Singh murder case." A journalist, meticulously delving into the intricacies of the crime and subsequently aiding Kaala, raises a poignant inquiry. He astutely questions the conspicuous absence of the woman's name in the case, revealing a stark lack of reverence for women that persists even in the aftermath of death. The journalist poignantly observes the irony that, even in the solemnity of death, women seemingly contend for recognition, underscoring a disconcerting societal paradox. He questions, Even in death, women have no existence. Isn't it funny?

The cast delivers commendable performances; particularly noteworthy is Paramvir Singh Cheema's portrayal of Kaala, executed with remarkable authenticity. Kaala's character, navigating through both personal tribulations and professional struggles, emanates vulnerability juxtaposed with inherent strength. The on-screen dynamic between Cheema and Isha Talwar, essaying the role of Jasmine (Jazz), an aspiring musician, is a captivating narrative to witness. Jazz, despite defying the conventional Punjabi girl archetype, infuses each frame with her dis-

tinctive charisma. Their on-screen chemistry illuminates the nuances of the contemporary dating landscape, exploring insecurities and, most significantly, delving into the complex facets of commitment and loyalty within a relationship.

Manoj Pahwa and Mohit Malik, portraying the roles of Pratap Deol, owner of a music company, and Guru Deol, his son, form a captivating duo in the series. Their intricate father-son relationship unfolds gradually, with Guru navigating through a poignant chapter in his life. This dynamic adds a refreshing layer to the storyline, providing viewers with a compelling narrative to contemplate.

As the series progresses, the audience is treated to a wealth of relatable nuances. The musical thriller aspect shines with a stellar soundtrack featuring prominent names from the Punjabi music industry. Icons like Gippy Grewal, Mika Singh, Malkit Singh, MC Square, Afsana Khan, Asees Kaur, Sunidhi Chauhan, Kanwar Grewal, Shashwat Singh, and Harjot Kaur contribute to one of the standout albums of the year.

Melodies such as *Karigi Waya* and *Sunn Zindagi Ka Sangeet* exude a profound warmth that resonates deeply with the listener, offering a soul-stirring experience.

RATING: 3/5

A look at the changing phase of paediatric diabetes

The past generation has witnessed a surge in the number of children with diabetes. It is important to know two types of diabetes that are more common in children: type 1 diabetes (T1DM) and type 2 diabetes (T2DM). Although there are other variants, they are less common.

In T1DM, the complete deficiency of insulin is more common at an early age and carries a high genetic cause, whereas in T2DM, there is a relative insulin deficiency encountered in a child's later years due to a combination of genetic causes and obesity encountered due to poor lifestyle practices. In most cases, T2DM illness begins with excess weight gain, which can pose challenges to insulin and cholesterol metabolism. One can vary from having mild glucose elevations to severe glucose values, which are defined as impaired glucose tolerance, to true diabetes, where there are elevated levels of fasting or post-meal glucose elevations.

In T1DM, the illness is picked up very early since it is more symptomatic, like poor growth, significant weight loss, increased thirst, and passing urine more frequently since it is an autoimmune reaction where the body attacks its own cells. Concerns are with T2DM, especially in children, where alarming symptoms are not seen initially until the condition progresses to a more serious situation. Many times, it is picked up when a child presents to a doctor with some other problem and blood or urine tests show elevated glucose levels. So, it is very necessary to screen high-risk children early in life. In either case, young people who develop diabetes have a higher risk of health challenges throughout their lives.

If we focus on T2DM here, since it is a condition where reversible causes can be worked with, recent studies delineate risk factors for the development of T2DM in children and young adults. Incidence rates of T2DM increase with age, as puberty is associated with a challenge in insulin production. Emerging evidence suggests that lifestyle intervention and ideal medical intervention may reduce the rates of development of type 2 diabetes in subjects at the

highest risk, which mainly include obesity, a strong diabetes history in the family, diabetes affecting the mother during pregnancy, ethnicity, like we as Asians have increased risk, low birth weight, and most importantly, dietary factors like excess caloric intake, a low-fibre diet, high trans-fatty acids, and saturated fat, which increase risk, and reduced intake of fibre, polyunsaturated fat, and long-chain n-3 fatty acids, which may have a protective role.

The American Diabetes Association recommends risk-based screening for type 2 diabetes after the onset of puberty or age 10 years in children who are overweight or obese and have one or more additional risk factors as mentioned earlier. In high school, screening is recommended every 3 years, and if tests are normal,

motivating self-management skills and establishing individualised plans for self-monitoring of glucose. Lifestyle interventions aimed at achieving desired weight loss, which include improving diet standards with special importance given to nutrition and increasing physical activity, are often recommended. The role of medications in children with T2DM options is limited, which includes oral antidiabetic medication and insulin. Other injectable options aimed at weight and glucose control are being tried.

In T1DM, the answer is only insulin, since the body cannot produce it. Management is straightforward when administering insulin. Here, two types of insulin are commonly used by doctors: one type of insulin for meals, which is short-acting only for meals, and another type



recheck more frequently if BMI increases. The definitions of diabetes in children and adolescents are the same as in adults.

Screening for children with risk factors and who do not have symptoms of diabetes requires a single fasting blood test, which tests glucose levels (FBG) and average glucose over 3 months (what we call HbA1c), and if abnormal levels are found, doctors do a 2-hour glucose challenge test to confirm diabetes.

Management of diabetes varies between T1DM and T2DM. For T2DM prevention and treatment of diabetes, a structured management plan is recommended with the provision of extensive education on pro-

of insulin as a background cover, which should last round the clock, meaning a long-acting insulin. Room for oral medications usually doesn't exist unless the child is obese, which is less common with T1DM.

T2DM management can be challenging as there are limited oral medications used in children. If that fails, the only option remaining is to administer insulin. More importance is being placed on lifestyle measures like encouraging physical activity and having a well-balanced diet.

(The author, Dr. Srinath Aswathiah, is a senior consultant in diabetes and endocrinology at Gleneagles Hospital, Kengeri.)

ICC RANKINGS

Ravi becomes world number 1 T20I bowler



PTI ■ DUBAI

Young Indian leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi on Wednesday rose to the top spot in the ICC T20I bowling chart on the back of his recent player of the series-winning

performance against Australia. The 23-year-old was India's go-to bowler in the just-concluded series against Australia, taking nine wickets from five games. Bishnoi, who is on 699 rating points, has jumped five places to displace Afghanistan spinner

Rashid Khan (692) from the top slot. Sri Lankan spinner Wanindu Hasaranga and England's Adil Rashid, who both have 679 points, are in joint third. Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana (677) completes the top

five. Bishnoi is the only Indian bowler in the top 10 in the short-format even as Axar Patel climbed nine spots to be 18th. Meanwhile, the swashbuckling Suryakumar Yadav, who captained India during their 4-1 T20I series win against Australia,

held on to the top spot among batters, while opener Ruturaj Gaikwad dropped a place to be seventh. Hardik Pandya retained the third spot in the all-rounders' list, despite missing the series against Australia due to injury.



Mushfiqur becomes first Bangladesh batter to be out for obstructing field

PTI ■ MIRPUR (BANGLADESH)

Former captain Mushfiqur Rahman on Wednesday became the first Bangladesh batter to be given out for 'obstructing the field' in a bizarre dismissal on the opening day of the second Test against New Zealand here. The 36-year-old Rahim defended a rising delivery from New Zealand quick Kyle Jamieson in the fourth ball of the 41st over and then extended his right hand to apparently keep the ball away after it bounced up wide outside off stump. The Black Caps were quick to appeal and the on-field umpires referred the matter to the TV umpire Ahsan Raza who gave Rahim out. According to Law 37.1.2, "The striker is out obstructing the field if, except in the circumstances of 37.2, in the act of

receiving a ball delivered by the bowler, he/she wilfully strikes the ball with a hand not holding the bat. This will apply whether it is the first strike or a second or subsequent strike. The act of receiving the ball shall extend both to playing at the ball and to striking the ball more than once in defence of his/her wicket." Earlier such dismissals were classified as "handled the ball" but a change in the laws in 2017 brought them under "obstructing the field" category. Former England captain Michael Vaughan was the last batter to be given out 'handling the ball' against India in 2001. Rahim was Bangladesh's top-scorer with his 35 off 83 balls as the hosts were bundled out for 172 inside 67 overs. Bangladesh won the first Test in Sylhet by 150 runs.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jacques Kallis, one of the last multi-skilled legends, says quality all-rounders have become a scarcity in modern-day cricket, especially in Test cricket, because of "too much cricket across formats". While Sir Garfield Sobers (8032 runs and 235 wickets) is considered 'greatest of 'em all' across generations, Kallis (25,000-plus runs and nearly 600 wickets in three formats) is arguably one of the legendary all-rounders the modern era has seen. In the 1980s, there were four great all-rounders in Imran Khan, Richard Hadlee, Ian Botham and Kapil Dev while the new millennium saw emergence of Kallis and Andrew Flintoff. But with advent of T20 cricket and mushrooming leagues across the globe with new rules have actually discouraged development of multi-skilled cricketers. "It is a tough question to answer, all-rounders don't come around every day. There aren't many throughout the history. Lot of things, amount of cricket that is played certainly plays a role," Kallis told PTI during an exclusive interview. The former Proteas captain is in India to play the Legends League Cricket. While he didn't name Indian

Too much cricket is affecting development of all-rounders: Kallis



Premier League but the former KKR coach isn't a great fan of 'Impact Player' rule where a team can change one player during its batting or bowling innings as per need. "A few T20 competitions have substitutes (IPL) and I am not a big fan of that as it takes away the all-rounder out of your team. The teams that do not have good all-rounders are now playing with 12 men. I am not a huge fan of that. "There are lot of little things that add up on to why there aren't too many all-rounders at the moment, as it is surprising as they add so much value to the

game. But it's a whole lot of little things coming together," Kallis said. **CENTURION WILL BE TOUGH FOR INDIA:** The Indian team would be embarking on a tough away tour of South Africa, the only major Test playing nation where it hasn't won a single Test series in 31 years. The focus will be on the two Test matches, which is a part of World Test Championship (WTC) cycle even as ODIs and T20s are part of the full tour. The stars from both sides (Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, Jasprit Bumrah, Kagiso Rabada) will

only be playing the traditional format during the series. "This is a good Indian team but South Africa is tough to beat in South Africa. Centurion will probably suit South Africa and Newlands will probably suit India. It will be a good series and it will come down to one or two sessions that one team might play better than the other. It would be a closely-fought contest," said Kallis. **TRANSITIONS ARE TOUGH, GET YOUNGSTERS READY:** The Indian team's average age is in mid-30s. Skipper Rohit is 36 and main batter Virat Kohli is 35.

Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja are 37 and 35 respectively while Mohammed Shami 33. There would be a transition sooner or later in another couple of years and Kallis feels that if talented youngsters are groomed by keeping them with senior team, the handing of baton becomes easier. "Older players obviously have got the knowledge and you would combine that with younger players. That's the job of coaches and selectors to make sure so that even if younger players might not be playing, they are in that environment where they can learn from the older players," said Kallis, who scored 45 Test hundreds in his illustrious 18-year career in which he played 166 Tests. It is imperative that youngsters are travelling to unfamiliar territories and soaking in all knowledge available watching those who have been there and done that. "(They should) travel to these parts of the world that they are probably not used to and learn from sitting on the side, try to pick up as much knowledge as



PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Star Australia all-rounder Glenn Maxwell has vowed to play in the world's biggest cricket league, the IPL "until he can't walk anymore". The 35-year-old, who played a massive role in Australia's ODI World Cup-winning campaign in India recently, will once again don the colours of Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL next year. "The IPL will probably be the last tournament I ever play, as I will play the IPL until I can't walk anymore," Maxwell was quoted as saying by Australian Associated Press (AAP) at the Melbourne Airport on Wednesday. "I was talking about how good the IPL has been to me throughout my career, the people I've

met, the coaches I have played under, the international players that you get to rub shoulders with, how beneficial to my whole career that tournament has been. "You're rubbing shoulders with AB (de Villiers) and Virat (Kohli) for two months, talking to them while watching other games. It's just the greatest learn-

ing experience that any player could ask for," he said. Maxwell feels Australian cricketers should play in the IPL for experience ahead of the T20 World Cup in the United States and the West Indies in June. "Hopefully, a lot of our Australian players can get over to the IPL and get to work in slightly similar conditions to the

Bangladesh takes control of 2nd test



After New Zealand reduced to 55-5 on eventful 1st day

AP ■ MIRPUR (BANGLADESH)

Bangladesh took full control of the final test against New Zealand after 15 wickets fell on an eventful day one Wednesday as the hosts pursue a first ever test series win against the Kiwis. The home side was all out for 172 but hit back strongly to reduce New Zealand to 55-5 in 12.4 overs before bad light forced stumps. Both teams' batters struggled on a wicket where most of the balls kept low and the bounce was uneven. The New Zealand bowling attack maintained a tight line and length to create pressure by conceding just eight runs in the first seven overs after Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto opted to bat first. Left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner (3-31) and offspinner Glenn Phillips (3-65) shared six wickets to wreak havoc on the Bangladesh batting lineup. Ajaz Patel, another left-arm spinner, claimed 2-54 while skipper Tim Southee took one wicket without conceding a single run in 5.2 overs. Mushfiqur Rahman made a team-high 35 before becoming the first Bangladeshi batter to be dismissed for handling the ball. While defending a delivery from fast bowler Kyle Jamieson, the

team's most experienced batter used his right hand to push the ball away even though it wasn't close to the off-stump. After New Zealand appealed for the out, the third umpire checked and then gave him out for obstructing the field. Bangladesh's first boundary came in the eighth over when Zakir Hasan drove Patel through cover for four. The pressure eventually got the better of Zakir (8) when he played a rash shot against Santner and chipped it straight to mid-on. In the next over, Patel dismissed Mahmudul Hasan (14) after he was beaten by the drift to give a catch at short-leg. Mominul Haque (5) was the next to go when he was caught behind off Patel's bowling. But the biggest blow for Bangladesh followed in the next over when captain Najmul Hossain Shanto (9), who hit a century in the previous test, attempted a reverse sweep against Santner. The on-field Umpires turned down the appeal but New Zealand reviewed it successfully to leave Bangladesh 47-4. Mushfiqur and Shahadat Hossain, playing his only second test, shared a 57-run partnership which eventually kept Bangladesh ahead on a tricky wicket. The dismissal of Mushfiqur

triggered another collapse, which began with Shahadat (31) being caught down the leg-side off the bowling of Phillips. The onus was on Mehidy Hasan to lead a fightback with the lower order but Santer came back to dismiss him as New Zealand bowled Bangladesh out shortly after tea. However, Mehidy led Bangladesh's bowling attack with 3-17 and left-arm spinner Taijul Islam, who took 10 wickets in the first test, took 2-29. Tom Latham and Devon Conway started cautiously but Mehidy broke through with a delivery that Conway thought would turn. Instead it went straight to crash the stump as Conway was out for 11. Taijul then dealt a double blow by dismissing Latham and Henry Nicholls. New Zealand fell into deep trouble when Kane Williamson, the centurion of the previous test, ended up getting an inside edge towards short while defending a quicker delivery of Mehidy. Just a ball later, Mehidy fired another quicker one that kept extremely low to trap Tom Blundell leg-before for a duck. Daryl Mitchell (12) and Glenn Phillips (5) were batting when play came to an end because of bad light.



Du Plessis hints at return to international cricket

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Former South Africa skipper Faf du Plessis has hinted at a comeback to international cricket ahead of the upcoming T20 World Cup, saying that he has been in discussion with the Proteas' white-ball coach Rob Walter for the past couple of years. Du Plessis last featured in a T20I three years ago in 2020. While his last match for South Africa was a Test against Pakistan in February 2021. "I believe that I can return to international cricket," du Plessis told the broadcaster of Abu Dhabi T10 league. "We have been speaking about this for the last couple of years. It's just figuring out the balance of the T20 World Cup next year. It's certainly something we have spoken about with the new coach," he added. Despite not featuring for South Africa, du Plessis has been doing well in the domestic circuit as well as in T20 leagues across the world. With 730 runs from 14 games for the Royal Challengers

Bangalore, du Plessis was the second highest run getter in the IPL earlier this year. The 39-year-old led South Africa in the 2014 and 2016 T20 World Cups but wasn't considered for the last two editions of the tournament, despite never officially retiring from white-ball cricket. On Monday, South Africa white-ball coach Walter had said the likes of du Plessis, Quinton de Kock and Rilee Rossouw will be considered for the T20 World Cup, scheduled to be played in June next year in the West Indies and the USA. "Given that some of our frontline bowlers are missing out and there are guys - let me throw it out there just to create some media hype - like Faf (du Plessis) and Rilee (Rossouw) as well as Quinny (De Kock) that could well be considered for a T20 World Cup and then also the SA20 that happens next year - 80% of the side picks itself but there is definitely a space for other guys to get themselves into the conversation," Walter had said.

Hi Nanna has helped me push my musical boundaries

PNS| HYDERABAD

Hesham Abdul Wahab, a composer from the Malayalam film industry, debuted in Tollywood with *Kushi*. *Hi Nanna* by Nani is his next album to be released. In this interview, he discusses how he approached the sentimental, gentle movie with Nani and Mrunal Thakur in the key roles. On December 7, the movie, which also stars Baby Kiara, will be released in theatres.

Hesham made his debut with the Malayalam film *Salt Mango Tree* in 2015. And since then, there has been no looking back. For him, "Every single film is a test for me. It is too early for me to feel I have achieved a lot. There is so much to learn, explore and discover."

Well, it is through his upcoming film, *Hi Nanna* that he feels has helped him push his musical boundaries. "*Hi Nanna* differs from other films belonging to the genre in the way the story is narrated. All love songs induce the same sort of emotions and romantic feelings. The difference has to be brought out through the choice of singers, for example. That's one of the ways in which you do it. The song *Ammaadi* in *Hi Nanna* is a case in point. *Samayama* in *Hi Nanna* is not the same as *Darshana* in *Kushi*. Director

Shouryaav has made this film as a soft romance, which is why the songs are not loud. I used the instruments accordingly. The songs in *Hi Nanna* have a calming influence. The hang-over of working on *Hi Nanna* is yet to be finished for me. I worked on the movie till last week. The director has made use of my songs in surprising ways, especially in his non-linear approach to 'charanam' and 'pallavi'. The song 'Samayama' has a peculiar format."

For one of the songs, he has used Nadaswaram because it is associated with the Indian style of wedding. The use of the instrument underlines the marital association between the lead pair.

"*Odiyamma* took a lot of rumination involving me and the director. The song comes at a crucial point. We took some time to understand the underlying energy. *Hi Nanna* is the first Indian film to make use of Artificial Intelligence for scoring. What AI does is it makes 'sampling' easy. It presents mind-blowing possibilities. AI lets the composer do layered work. Changing the instruments also comes easy with AI. The film is way more than its music. It is going to be seen as an absolutely special film. Nani has expanded his boundaries as an actor. He deserves to be called the Natural Star."

On the other hand, he also has

Rashmika Mandanna's *The Girlfriend*, which went on the floors on Wednesday, which he feels is a new sort of genre for him. "The music I have done for *Kushi* and *Hi Nanna* is healing in nature. I don't get emotionally attached to my tunes. Once it is out there, I leave it for the listeners how they want to embrace it. I move on to the next project. I am currently doing a film starring Sharwanand in the lead (produced by People Media Factory and directed by Sriram Aditya). The musical soundscape will keep changing with time. Nothing is static. We have to keep on evolving. I myself have changed my style from *Hridayam* to *Kushi* and now *Hi Nanna*."

Recently, he has also worked with actor-producer Vikranth Reddy for Spark. "Although the film didn't work at the box office, it helped me assemble my music team, which helped me for *Hi Nanna*. Some films are like practicing in the nets."

Ending the chat on a brighter note, he signs off saying, "The music scene is growing in Hyderabad. The musicians here are so professional. Their knowledge is immense. Most of the composers are settled in Chennai and other cities. Hyderabad has had only a few musicians. As far as I am concerned, Hyderabad is my second home. If not in Kochi, I want to work in this city."



AHEAD OF *HI NANNA*'S THEATRICAL RELEASE TODAY, MUSIC COMPOSER HESHAM ABDUL WAHAB, SPEAKS TO THE HYDERABADI MEDIA, SHARING SOME INTERESTING INSIGHTS ABOUT THE FILM'S MUSIC.

tollywood

Jorugaa Husharugaa trailer out now, in theatres on Dec 15

Love, family, and career. That's what *Jorugaa Husharugaa*, starring Viraj Ashwin of *Baby* fame in the lead, is about. Starring Pujita Ponnada as the heroine, the youthful family entertainer is directed by Anu Prasad. Producer Nireesh Thiruveedula of Shikhar Arts LLP. Film to grace theatres worldwide on December 15. today got the film's trailer unveiled at the hands of *Uppena* sensation Buchi Babu Sana.

Releasing the trailer, Buchi Babu Sana appreciated its content. He also wished Viraj all the best. "Thanks to *Baby*, Viraj now enjoys a good image. I hope *Jorugaa Husharugaa* becomes a notable theatrical hit. I wish director Anu Prasad and producer Nireesh all the best. This film looks promising," Sana said.

The trailer shows Sai Kumar as the male lead's economically challenged and idealistic father. A weaver, he values relationships more than anything. In the city, Viraj's character falls in love with a beautiful colleague (Pujita). The rom-com scenes also



involve Madhunandan. Siri Hanumantu plays another urban girl who gets to play an important part. Brahmaji as a Church Father, Chammak Chandra and others have hilarious roles. The film, as the title suggests, is filled with fun. At the same time, expect some dramatic moments as well. The film is going to grace the theatres worldwide on December 15.



Rashmika Mandanna-starrer *The Girlfriend* kickstarts its shoot

Since its inception, Geetha Arts has been a production company, known for its distinctive storylines and quality production values. The production company owned by ace producer Allu Aravind has been making exceptional hits time and again. Now, recently the production announced a project in collaboration with the blockbuster production house of SKN's Mass Movie Makers in association with Dheeraj Mogilineni Entertainment banner.

With National crush and phenomenal performer Rashmika Mandanna in the lead role, talented filmmaker Rahul Ravindran helming the project. The title of the film is *The Girlfriend*. The film launched recently with a grand pooja ceremony. Now the film's regular shoot begins today. Rashmika got a grand welcome to the sets from director Rahul Ravindran, producers SKN, Dheeraj Mogilineni and Vidya Koppineedi.

Ace producer Allu Aravind garu gave his blessings to Rashmika and the whole team. The first schedule will last 20 days and will have key actors in addition to Rashmika. Already released sneak peek, promises to be a one-of-a-kind cinematic experience for audiences of all ages.

Krishnan Vasant wields the camera while musical sensation Hesham Abdul Wahab will score the music, both of which will surely be among the movie's highlights. Ace producer Allu Aravind presenting the film while Vidya Koppineedi, SKN and Dheeraj Mogilineni bankrolling the film.



'Prema Katha is different from the regular love movies'

The upcoming film *Prema Katha*, starring Kishore KSD and Diya Sithepalli, is jointly produced by Tonga Productions LLP and Cine Valley Movies. The film is bankrolled by Vijay Mattapalli, Sushil Vajpilly, and Shinganamala Kalyan. Upender Goud Erra is acting as co-producer. The film is directed by Shivashakti Reddy. The film *Prema Katha* is going release in theatres very soon.

Star hero Vijay Deverakonda released the trailer for the *Prema Katha* movie on Tuesday evening. In the press meet organized on this occasion, cinematographer Vasu Pendum thanking the producers and director said, "Our trailer is out now, and you will definitely like it. You have to decide the fate of any movie. This is a different love story. *Prema Katha* will entertain you for sure." Debutante Diya Sithepalli, who is making her debut with the film, gleefully says, "I'm glad to get the opportunity in this film. Our team worked very

hard for this film. This is my debut movie and I've learned a lot on the sets. Our movie is different from regular love movies. We are expecting your support."

In the film, actor Vinay Mahadev, who plays the character of a guy named Yadav reveals that all the action sequences in the film were done by the actors themselves. And in fact, this fight is going to be the highlight of the film. The film also stars actor Vikram, who plays a character named Srinivas.

Prema Katha movie was made with almost all newcomers," shares producer Vijay Matta, adding, "Lot of talented actors from theater played good roles in our film. Varthan Devarakonda, Mathura Sridhar Reddy and Singanamala Kalyan supported us well. Thank you to the hero Vijay Devarakonda who released the trailer. We are thankful to hero Anand Devarakonda, directors Harish Shankar, Hanu Raghavapudi and Maruthi for supporting our movie and releasing the first look and songs. We made our *Prem Katha* movie with a genuine love story."

'TRIPTI DIMRI IS NOT A PART OF RAVITEJA AND ANIL RAVIPUDI,' REVEAL SOURCES

Ever since the film *Animal* has hit cinemas, the one big thing that is being talked about is none other than the girl who has played the role Zoya. In almost all the public talk videos from Bollywood and Tollywood, people could be seen mentioning this beautiful lady, who is none other than Tripti Dimri.

Though the actress has showcased her potential in projects like *Qala* (Netflix), she actually got a huge name for a role that is neither author-backed nor has a good arc in *Animal*. Her beautiful looks, teasing glamour and innocent expressions have really impressed the audience big time and that made her famous many rumours right now in Tollywood. Some gossip popped out that she's part of Raviteja and Anil Ravipudi's movie, and other projects as well. How much of them are actually true? Reports are coming from close sources that there is no truth in these rumours and they are just a figment of imagination. Currently, Tripti Dimri is busy with her Bollywood assignments and she's not ready to take up any special roles or songs in Tollywood, but looking forward to doing as a leading lady only in big movies which would give her a huge break as it happened in the case of Mrunal Thakur. On the other hand, Anil

King Nagarjuna Akkineni is busy wrapping up his ongoing film *Naa Saami Ranga* which marks the directorial debut of popular choreographer Vijay Binni. Ashika Ranganath is playing the leading lady in the movie and her character was introduced as Varalakshmi. The glimpse that was released along with the first look poster presented the adorable chemistry of the lead pair.

The film's first single *Yettukelli Povalanipisthunde* will be unveiled soon. The makers announced to release of a promo of the song before launching the lyrical video. Nagarjuna looks elegant in the farmer get-up. Clad in Lungi, Nagarjuna is seen with a tractor on an agricultural

Ravipudi hasn't even wrapped the script, forget about casting. One cannot ignore the buzz and the sensation the flick *Animal* has created. This is further seen in the film's box office collections as the Saturday numbers were higher than Friday numbers. Fans have loved the chemistry of Ranbir Kapoor and Tripti Dimri in this movie. They felt that Tripti has captured the spotlight. Tripti has delivered a note worthy performance. Alia Bhatt has in particular penned a lengthy note appreciating Tripti Dimri.

Tripti made her debut in the year 2017, with the comedy film *Poster Boys* and gained recognition for her performances in Anvita Dutt's supernatural drama flick 'Bulbbul' and period film *Qala*.

Dimri will soon be seeing sharing the screen with Rajkumar Rao in Raaj Shaandilyaa's next venture *Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video*. This movie will take us back to the Mystical Age of 90's. It is an illustration of a retro recall and does promise to be an out and out family entertainer. The title *Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video* makes us ponder that what the video will be all about. Let's wait and watch to discover what will the video be all about once the movie goes on the floor.

land and he smokes a beedi. MM Keeravani who enchanted us with the BGM for the glimpse scored wonderful soundtracks. Chandra Bose penned the lyrics for all the songs in the album. Billed to be a mass action entertainer, passionate producer Srinivas Chitturi of Tollywood's leading production house Srinivas Silver Screen is making the movie on a grand scale with a massive budget. Pavan Kumar presents the movie. The shoot of the movie is presently taking place in Hyderabad. The production works neared the final stages.

The blockbuster writer Prasanna Kumar Bezawada provided the story and dialogues for the film. *Naa Saami Ranga* will have its theatrical release for Sankranti, in 2024.

Nagarjuna-MM Keeravani combo is back with another chartbuster, *Yettukelli Povalanipisthunde*



NEHA SSHETTY; NOW IN THE TOP LIST OF FILMMAKERS

Neha Sshetty, the stunning and talented actress impressing audience with her acting prowess and beauty. The actress celebrated her birthday on Wednesday. She shot to fame with *DJ Tillu* and ever since that blockbuster happened to her career, she's not looking back in Tollywood. Neha Sshetty continued the success of *DJ Tillu* with the films *Bedurulanka 2012* and *Rules Ranjann* this year. The song *Sammohanada* from *Rules Ranjann* ruled charts for weeks. The song shows Neha Sshetty's dancing talent. Neha Sshetty became the most happening heroine as three films became hits. Every director and Producer preference is Neha Shetty because of her glamor and performance. *Gangs of Godavari* movie starring Neha Sshetty with hero Vishwak Sen is getting ready for release soon. Produced by Sitara Entertainment, this movie is directed by Krishna Chaitanya. Neha Sshetty has an exciting lineup with the support she is getting from the audience and the faith of Tollywood in her.

