

ANALYSIS 7
'PARKINGSON'S LAW
OF MOBILITY, AND US

MONEY 8
REGULATIONS STRICTLY FOLLOWED
WHILE MAKING INVESTMENTS

SPORTS 12
WPL AUCTION: 409 PLAYERS
TO GO UNDER HAMMER

HYDERABAD, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer



'AUDIENCE WILL GET
TO SEE A MATURED
PERFORMANCE
FROM ME IN VBVK'

Page 11

www.dailypioneer.com

9-YEAR-OLD GIRL SUFFERS SEIZURES AFTER APPLICATION OF 'MEHNDI'

Doctors at a leading private hospital here on Tuesday said they have reported an "unusual" case of a nine-year-old girl who suffered epileptic seizures triggered by the smell of "mehndi" applied on her hand. The case study has been published in the January 2023 edition of the Clinical Neurophysiology, the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital said in a statement. The department of neurology at the hospital recently reported "an unusual case" of a nine-year-old girl who was suffering epileptic seizures after application of "mehndi", it said. When she had suffered her first convulsion after application of "mehndi", she had "abrupt loss of consciousness, leading to fall and convulsions for 20 seconds", doctors at the hospital said.

MUSHARRAF LAID TO REST; SERVING MILITARY OFFICERS ATTEND FUNERAL PRAYERS

Pakistan's former military ruler General Pervez Musharraf was on Tuesday laid to rest with military honours in an army graveyard here in the presence of his relatives and several retired and serving military officers. The former president's namaz-e-janaza (funeral prayers) were held at the Gulmohar Polo Ground in Malir Cantonment in the afternoon in a low key ceremony which was neither attended by President Arif Alvi, nor Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. However, Joint Chiefs of Staff General Sahir Shamshad Mirza and former army chiefs - Qamar Javed Bajwa, Ashtaq Parvez Kayani and Aslam Beg - attended the funeral. Former ISI chiefs - General (ret'd) Shuja Pasha and General (ret'd) Zafarullah Islam - and several serving and retired military officers also attended the funeral prayers.

MAN SHOT, CARS DAMAGED IN CLASH AFTER INTER-FAITH MARRIAGE

A man was shot at and vehicles were damaged in a clash between two groups allegedly after an inter-faith marriage in Haryana's Pataudi area, police said on Tuesday. On January 30, a Muslim man from Pataudi's Baba Shah locality lodged a police complaint alleging that his 22-year-old daughter had gone missing. It was later found that she had married one Rakesh, they said. After the wedding, Rakesh had started receiving threat calls. He informed his relatives in Rewari about the calls and they reached out to Bajrang Dal members for help. A group of men led by the outfit's leader reached the man's house where the clash erupted, they said.

15 MILLION PEOPLE LIVE UNDER THREAT OF GLACIAL FLOODS

As glaciers melt and pour massive amounts of water into nearby lakes, 15 million people across the globe live under the threat of a sudden and deadly outburst flood, a new study finds. More than half of those living in the shadow of the disaster called glacial lake outburst floods are in just four countries: India, Pakistan, Peru and China, according to a study in Tuesday's Nature Communications. A second study, awaiting publication in a peer-reviewed journal, catalogs more than 150 glacial flood outbursts in history and recent times. It's a threat Americans and Europeans rarely think about, but 1 million people live within just 6 miles (10 kilometers) of potentially unstable glacial-fed lakes, the study calculated.

JEE MAINS

22 Hyd students score above 99 per cent

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The National Testing Agency (NTA) conducted the Joint Entrance Examination main session-1 at around 574 centres in 287 cities including 17 cities outside India.

There are no girls among the top 20 who scored 100 percentile. The female topper is Meesala Pranthi Sreeja who scored 99.997259.

There were 46,465 applicants and the examination was conducted via a Computer Based Test (CBT) in 13 languages (Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu).

Hyderabad's Resonance Junior College which has an integrated course had 22 students scoring above 99 percentile in the exam.



20 candidates score perfect 100

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Twenty candidates have scored perfect 100 in engineering entrance exam JEE-Main's January edition, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Tuesday.

All the candidates with 100 NTA score in the Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Main are males.

HANDOVER OF POACHING CASE TO CBI

TS govt approaches SC against HC verdict

K. VENKATESHWARLU
■ HYDERABAD

Challenging the High Court's verdict of handing over the MLAs' poaching case to the CBI, the Telangana Government approached the Supreme Court on Tuesday.

Government Counsel Dushyanth Dave asked the SC Chief Justice's bench to consider the petition immediately. He expressed concern that if the CBI investigates the case all evidence will be destroyed.

The CJJ clarified that if these matters are brought to the notice of the bench on Wednesday, they will allow a hearing next week itself.

The State government had approached the High Court seeking a stay on the decision to

hand over the MLAs' purchase case to the CBI. The government asked the High Court to suspend its verdict for three weeks to challenge it in the Supreme Court. The government filed this petition in the High Court on Tuesday morning and approached the Supreme Court in the evening.

In fact, the Telangana High Court conducted a single bench hearing on the government's petition in the Moinabad farmhouse case. A petition was filed to extend the suspension of the earlier order for three weeks.

The government requested the HC to stay the verdict so that it can go to the Supreme Court. The High Court asked the government whether the CBI has registered a case. The Advocate General told the High Court that the CBI has not yet registered

a case and that the CBI is pressing to hand over the files.

The High Court asked how much time it would take to go to approach the Supreme Court. The AG replied that it would take a week to file the appeal.

Responding to AG's comment, the Court directed the AG to take permission from the Chief Justice's bench. The AG said that a mention will be made in the Chief Justice's court on Wednesday. The single bench adjourned further hearing till Wednesday. BRS MLAs Guvvala Balaram, Beeram Harshavardhan Reddy, Rega Kantha Rao and Pilot Rohit Reddy complained to the Moinabad police that they were offered money for quitting the BRS at the Moinabad farmhouse on October 26, 2022.



IPS, non-cadre officers transferred

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has issued orders transferring and posting seven IPS and Non-Cadre Officers. S. Ranga Reddy, IPS (2009), who was awaiting posting, has been posted as the Superintendent of Police (PCS&S). Yogesh Goutam, IPS (2018), the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Greyhounds, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner of Police (Admn), Cyberabad. R. Venkateswarlu, Superintendent of Police (NC), who is awaiting posting, had been posted as Superintendent of Police (CID), Hyderabad.

No share for States

Nirmala clarifies on cess and surcharge

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has clarified that the states will not have a share in the cess and surcharge on taxes collected by the Centre for specific purposes.

Answering a question asked by YSRC member V Vijayasai Reddy in the Rajya Sabha on Tuesday, the Finance Minister said that the amount collected in the name of cess, surcharge, and other duties will be fully utilised by the Central government.

The Union Finance Minister said that for the year 2014-15, Rs 82,914 crore was collected by the Centre in the form of cess. She said that for the financial year 2021-22, the amount

of cess collected was Rs 3,52,728 crore. The Minister was replying to another question about the details of the formula recommended by the 15th Finance Commission on the share of the taxes collected by the Centre to the states. The 15th Finance Commission recommended that 41 percent of the taxes collected by the Centre be distributed to the states. The 15th Finance Commission award, which will be in effect from 2020-21 to 2025-26, has prescribed certain criteria for the distribution of tax shares to states. The State has given weightage of 15 percent to the population, 15 percent to the geographical area, 10 percent to forest and environment, and 45 percent to revenue sources. The

Why only 50, contest in all 119 constituencies

BJP chief Bandi challenges AIMIM

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Responding to AIMIM Floor Leader Akbaruddin Owaisi's statement that they will contest in 50 constituencies and win 15 seats in the next Assembly elections, BJP state president Sanjay challenged the AIMIM to contest in all the 119 Assembly constituencies in the state.

"If they do that, we will ensure that AIMIM does not get deposits even in a single constituency," he said. He said that the BRS played a drama in collusion with the AIMIM in the Assembly to give the impression that it has no connection with the AIMIM.

'Poor people's
interests central
to our budgets'



P5

Will KTR take over before or after poll?

SNCN ACHARYULU
■ HYDERABAD

BRS supremo Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has triggered speculations about two things. But it is very difficult to read KCR's mind and his political strategies.

Now political circles as well as BRS cadres are speculating that KCR's son IT Minister KT Rama Rao may take over as Chief Minister and may go for early Assembly elections.



It is a well-known fact that KTR is the political successor of KCR. But now the hot topic is

whether KTR will be made the Chief Minister before the Assembly elections or after that.

According to speculations in BRS circles, KCR may make KTR the Chief Minister before the Assembly elections and he will concentrate on national politics.

According to another theory in BRS circles, KCR will make KTR the Chief Minister only after the Assembly elections.

Major investments via TS-iPASS in three dists

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The big-ticket investments that came via the TS-iPASS portal are concentrated in three districts. Rangareddy, Nalgonda and Bhadradi Kothagudem account for 52.37 per cent of the investments received.

As per the 2023 socio-economic outlook report on Telangana, about 32.15% of investments are in Rangareddy, 11.17% in Nalgonda and 9.05% in Bhadradi Kothagudem districts.

However, when it comes to approvals, the Medchal-Malkajgiri district gave maximum approvals followed by Sangareddy and

Rangareddy. Medchal-Malkajgiri (21.20%), Sangareddy (8.01%) and Rangareddy (7.54%) were the top three districts in approvals received for setting up business units. Of all the units approved after 2014-15, 96% are MSME units, while 4% are large or mega enterprises.

In terms of employment generation, Rangareddy, Warangal and Sangareddy generated the maximum number of jobs. Around 56.66% of the employment generated through TS-iPASS is in Rangareddy, 11.12% in Warangal and 8.04% in Sangareddy.



ON TRACK FOR EXCITEMENT



Final touches are being given for the Formula-E track at NTR Marg. Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar said shared the pics and said "get ready for Feb 11 excitement"

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Tritiya: Feb 08 04:28 AM to Feb 09 06:23 AM
Chaturthi: Feb 09 06:23 AM to Feb 10 07:58 AM

Nakshatram: Purva Phalguni: Feb 07 05:45 PM to Feb 08 08:14 PM
Uttara Phalguni: Feb 08 08:14 PM to Feb 09 10:27 PM
to Feb 07 05:45 PM

Rahukalam: 12:30 PM to 1:55 PM

Yamagandam: 8:14 AM to 9:40 AM

Variyam: 04:06 AM to 05:51 AM

Gulika: 11:05 AM to 12:30 PM

Amritakalam: 01:10 PM to 02:56 PM

HYDERABAD WEATHER

Forecast: Sunny

Temp: 33°C

Humidity: 43%

Sunrise: 6:46 AM

Sunset: 6:15 PM

Updated: FEBRUARY 7, 2023 5:00 PM



Will KCR be able to sustain any anti-Modi front?

Although Bharat Rashtira Samiti (BRS) president and Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao is making all-out efforts to bring anti-Narendra Modi forces together, there is a question mark over his ability to sustain such a front, whatever be its form ultimately. Given KCR's oratorical skills in English, Hindi and Urdu languages, expansion of BRS may not be a difficult task when it comes to garnering the support of like-minded parties. After nearly four decades, he is the first leader from south trying to make an impact in north India. Thespian NT Rama Rao, founder of Telugu Desam Party and four-time chief minister of combined Andhra Pradesh, was the first political leader who could



mesmerise even people in north India. Those days NTR addressed several election rallies in Haryana in support of Devi Lal during the Assembly elections of 1987. KCR addressed his first ever public meeting beyond TS in Nanded (Maharashtra) recently for promoting BRS. Former chief minister of Odisha and former Lok Sabha member from Koraput (ST) constituency Giridhar Gamang also joined BRS recently. Gamang had drawn the nation's attention by voting in favour of the no-trust motion against the Vajpayee government in 1999, necessitating fresh General Election. Historically speaking, Andhra Pradesh was formed on the basis of the linguistic

If KCR wants to sustain himself in any anti-Modi front, he must have a flexible approach towards the Congress. In Karnataka also, KCR's task of bringing anti-Modi forces together is not easy with both Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) playing politics. KCR has good relations with former CM of Karnataka H. D. Kumara Swamy, who once shared power with BJP as its coalition partner.

policy of the thirties that was given final shape in 1956. Andhra Pradesh, meant for Telugu-speaking people, comprising the Telangana region of the erstwhile Hyderabad State and the state of Andhra that had been carved out of the composite Madras state in 1953, came into existence on 1 November, 1956. The original Telangana movement started in less than a decade and peaked in 1969. The 1971

General Election reflected the mood of people seeking a separate state for Telangana region. Yet, then PM Indira Gandhi rejected outright the demand for a separate state of Telangana. Successive governments could rule the state for nearly six decades with the original T movement in limbo. KCR launched Telangana Rashtira Samiti solely for the purpose of achieving statehood for Telangana in 2001,



after differences with his political guru N. Chandrababu Naidu. During the regime of Dr. YS Rajasekhara Reddy, KCR faced rough weather politically with the latter's attempts to destabilize TRS by attracting its MLAs into

Congress' fold. After YSR's demise in 2009, KCR got an opportunity to rebuild TRS. He fanned Telangana sentiment so much so that even national parties, Congress and BJP, had to adopt a soft corner towards the demand for separate Telangana. With just two of his party's members in Parliament, including himself, KCR realized his dream of separate statehood for Telangana. Later, as CM of the new state, KCR adopted 'anti-Andhra' approach to get closer to people of his state and retained power in the 2018 elections in which TDP had truck with then principal opposition party Congress. Now, KCR is going to face third consecutive election amid anti-incumbency factor. BJP has since emerged stronger in Telangana State.

During the days of combined Andhra Pradesh, the influence of Muslims was confined to some pockets in the state. Muslims have since become a considerable political force. During his first term (2014-18), KCR was in the good books of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. BJP won only one Assembly seat in 2018, though it won four Lok Sabha seats exactly four months later. BRS' political friend MIM has since won its second Lok Sabha seat from Aurangabad (Maharashtra). MIM has to work directly against BJP in TS tomorrow for its own existence. KCR may have soft corner for the Congress party in the larger interests of his goal of defeating Modi. If KCR wants to sustain himself in any anti-Modi front,

he must have a flexible approach towards the Congress. In Karnataka also, KCR's task of bringing anti-Modi forces together is not easy with both Congress and Janata Dal (Secular) playing politics. KCR has good relations with former CM of Karnataka H. D. Kumara Swamy, who once shared power with BJP as its coalition partner. TDP supreme Chandrababu Naidu also is a very good friend of father-son duo H. D. Deve Gowda & H. D. Kumara Swamy. Since Naidu has a soft corner for BJP now, it is difficult to assess who will join hands with whom. It will be interesting to see the approach of various political players before and after polls. KCR's 'anti Modi front' hangs by this slender thread.

KTR, Akbaruddin review Old City development

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A couple of days after the verbal duel in the Assembly over the development of the old city, Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA & UD) Minister KT Rama Rao held a high-level review meeting along with Akbaruddin Owaisi. KTR said the development of Hyderabad is the ultimate objective of the Telangana government. At the meeting, he listed out the works underway and the progress achieved in providing drinking water, power supply, mobility infrastructure, maintaining sanitation, conservation of heritage structures and works on other fronts. Home Minister Mohammed Mahmood Ali, AIMIM Floor Leader Akbaruddin Owaisi, MP Dr G. Ranjith Reddy, Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari, Special Chief

Secretary of MA & UD Department Arvind Kumar, the MD of HMRL, NVS Reddy, and officials of GHMC, HMDA, HMWSSB, TSSPDCL and other departments attended the meeting held on Tuesday. KTR said that as part of the Strategic Road Development Programme (SRDP) undertaken by the GHMC, works on strengthening the road network in the Old City are going on briskly and several flyovers and the construction of roads have been completed. The Minister said that works costing several crores are underway. KTR said that the maintenance of major roads is going on effectively under the CRMP programme launched by the GHMC. Stating that the widening of roads in the densely populated Old City is a challenge, he asked officials to speed up works in localities where road

widening is essential. The MA&UD Minister said that the government is ready to allocate funds for land acquisition for development works underway in the Old City. He said that work on traffic junctions, construction of foot over bridges and bridges over Musi is going on fast. KTR said that drinking water supply has improved in the Old City in the last eight years and that around Rs 1,200 crore was spent on developing drinking water facilities. He said that over 2.5 lakh connections were given in the Old City under the free water supply scheme of the Telangana government and that the HMWSSB launched several initiatives to strengthen the sewage system. He said a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and other works were taken up in the Old City.

10 officers conferred with IAS

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

About 10 officers have been conferred with IAS rank from the state service. Five of them were selected through State civil services, while five in the Central Civil services quota. TSIC MD EV Narasimha Reddy, OSD to Minister K T Rama Rao, Katayani, OSD to Minister Harish Rao and Ashok Reddy Korem are among the 10 officers. Jalda Arunashree, A. Nirmala, Kanti Wesley, Kota Srivastava, Cheka Priyanka, Badugu Chandrasekhar and Naveen Nicholas were selected for IAS. UPSC conducted interviews for state officials in Delhi in the month of January. The interview has been sent to the state government on Tuesday. On the interview panel of five, apart from three members of UPSC, Chief Secretary Santhi Kumari and Special Chief Secretary Rama Krishna Rao were present from the state.

Congress, AIMIM alliance can hit BRS chances

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

Political equations are likely to change in Telangana by the time of the next Assembly elections. Friends may become foes and foes may become friends. The verbal duel between BRS Minister KT Rama Rao and AIMIM floor leader Akbaruddin Owaisi and the meeting between Congress Legislature party (CLP) leader Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and AIMIM leader Akbaruddin Owaisi indicates this. AIMIM leader Akbaruddin who was offended by the comments made by IT Minister KT Rama Rao in the Assembly said that his party will contest 50 seats in the next Assembly elections and will win at least 15. When the AIMIM leader demanded more time in the

Assembly for his party during the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the Governor, KTR said that AIMIM has only seven MLAs but was speaking for hours together in the House. He asked how much time the BRS should get as it has 105 MLAs. KTR said that time is allotted to parties on the basis of their strength in the Assembly. Reacting to this, Akbaruddin said that his party will contest 50 Assembly seats in the next elections and will try to win at least 15 seats so that his party gets a greater say in Assembly proceedings. A day after the verbal clash between Akbaruddin and KTR in the House, there was a meeting between Akbaruddin and CLP leader Bhatti Vikramarka and it became a sensation in political circles. The BRS and the AIMIM are friendly since a decade. But recently the equations between

them changed. The alliance of the BRS with the Left might have angered the AIMIM. It is a known fact that the AIMIM and the Left are enemies. The current situation may lead to the AIMIM ending its alliance with the BRS and becoming friendly with the Congress. If this happens the BRS may have trouble during elections. Muslim voters decide the fortune of political parties in at least 25 Assembly constituencies. Friendship with AIMIM may or may not help the Congress but it can help the BJP and damage the BRS. In the present circumstances, the Congress high command may not mind giving more seats to the AIMIM if they have an alliance. In the recent Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections the AIMIM contested in around 100 constituencies but it did not win even a single seat.

LTI Mind Tree to open delivery Centre in Warangal

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government's efforts to take IT companies to Tier-II towns have yielded results. LTI Mind Tree will launch its Delivery Centre in Warangal. The Executive VP of the company, Krishna Gollapudi, formally invited the Minister to inaugurate the facility. "Happy to announce that LTI Mind tree will be launching its centre in Warangal by the end of this month," KTR said. The government's ICT policy (2021-26) with a 5-year roadmap aims to increase direct employment to 10 lakh IT sector jobs by 2026 in areas around tier-2 and tier-3 cities. The policy aims to train 5,00,000 plus students every year, to meet at least 80% of IT sector workforce requirements from local talent.

Realtor hacked to death

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

A realtor and BRS leader was brutally murdered over a financial dispute at Bowenpally reportedly by his partner. Identified as Mosa Siddiqui, a resident of Bowenpally Dil Kush Nagar and is the owner of KMR Infra India, a real estate company. He is also a member of BRS party. The Bowenpally police said that the land transactions were going on between Faizuddin, a resident of Barkhas, who had given Rs 50 lakh to Siddiqui regarding 1200 yards of land in the suburbs of the city. Faizuddin reportedly went to Siddiqui's

residence in Dil Kush Nagar to talk about the land dealing. During the settlement, police said that Siddiqui was indiscriminately attacked with a knife that Fasiuddin had brought with him and hit on the head with a stone. Siddiqui suffered serious injuries and went into a coma. They immediately tried to take him to Narayana Hridayalaya Hospital but he died on the way. Bowenpally police said that the case was registered and have started an investigation. The body was shifted to Gandhi Hospital and two persons taken into custody by Bowenpally police.

22 Hyd students ..

Continued from page 1

They are K. Roshan, M. Nihal Raj, Y. Akshay, V. Sai Akhil, CH Sai Shashank, Aarav Jayawal, E. Karthik, Rohit Singh, Mohammed Mojahid, Anirudh Arrepu, MD Ayaan Khan, S. Sree Vardhan, B. Lahari, Ashish Kumar, Aditya Kumar, Harsh Kumar, and B. Roopesh.

Purnachandra Rao from Resonance said the Hyderabad resident students are interested in joining IIT Mumbai. They studied every subject for three hours.

Four students across India secured 100 per cent in Maths and Physics, 225 students secured 99 per cent and 2,300 students 90 per cent and above marks.

In the Telugu states, 22 students secured 99 per cent and above, 185 students 95 per cent and above, 435 students 90 per cent and above and 1,072 students qualified for JEE advanced as per 2022 cut-off, that is 65 per cent of the total students who wrote the exam qualified in the first attempt itself.

20 candidates score perfect 100

Continued from page 1

The 20 toppers include 14 from the general category, four from the OBC category and one each from gen-EWS and SC category. While Md Sahil Akhtar is the PwD topper with 99.9848042 NTA score, the SC topper is Deshank Pratap Singh with 100 NTA score and ST topper is Dheeravath Thanuj with 99.99041.

The candidates who scored 100 NTA scores are Abhineet Majety, Amogh Jalan, Apurva Samota, Ashik Stenny, Bikkina Abhinav Chowdary, Deshank Pratap Singh, Dhruv Sanjay Jain, Dnyanesh Hemendra Shinde, Duggineni Venkata Yuges, Gulshan Kumar, Guthikonda Abhiram, Kaushal Vijayvergiya, Krish Gupta, Mayank Son, N K Vishwaajith, Nipun Goel, Rishi Kalra, Soham Das, Suthar Harshul Sanjaybhai and Vavilala Chidvilas Reddy.

Major investments ..

Continued from page 1

These are the top three districts with the highest employment generation through investments received via TS-iPASS across the state.

A total of 22,110 proposals were approved between 2014-15 and 2022-23 (up to January 2023) with an investment of Rs 2,53,575 crore. These investments have provided employment to 17.26 lakh people.

Compared to 2015-16, the first full financial year when the TS-iPASS was in force, the number of approvals made through TS-iPASS increased considerably by 2022-23 (up to January 2023), with a CAGR of 7.4%.

Although the number of approvals given in 2022-23 (up to Jan 2023) is only 2,518, investments made so far are Rs 20,237 crore, higher than the investments of Rs 18,916 crore made in 2021-22. There has been a steady rise in the number of approvals given to food processing and agro-industries between 2015-16 and 2022-23, achieving a CAGR of 8.3% in this period. Cement and cement products have attracted an increasing share of the total investment, going from below 0.4% of the total investment in 2015-16 to 10.3% of all investments in 2022-23 (up to January 2023).

Will KTR take..

Continued from page 1

KCR may give full responsibility for leading the BRS during the Assembly elections to KTR and if the BRS wins it will be treated as public acceptance of KTR. After winning the Assembly elections KTR will be made the Chief Minister. If KTR is made the CM before the Assembly elections KCR can tour other states as a former CM. There is a lot of difference between the Chief Minister and a former CM while touring other states for expanding the BRS footprint. If the BRS wins the Assembly elections KCR's national image will get a boost and there will be no problems if he tours other states as a former CM. Meanwhile, BRS circles strongly think that KCR may not go for early elections.

TS govt approaches ..

Continued from page 1

As a result, the accused Ramachandra Bharati, Simhayaji and Nandakumar were arrested by the police. After that, the TSD government handed over the case to the SIT. But the accused approached the High Court saying that the SIT's investigation was not proper and that the case should be handed over to the CBI. After hearing arguments on this petition, the High Court issued an order on December 26, 2022, disbanding the SIT and handed over the case to the CBI.

India stands by..

Continued from page 1

A second IAF plane with similar consignments was sent to Turkey around noon. "First Indian C17 flight with more than 50 @NDRFHQ Search & Rescue

Why only 50, contest in all 119 constituencies

Continued from page 1

Sanjay said that Hindus are becoming a vote bank in Telangana and added that the Congress and the BRS are one. He said that even if all parties conspire to defeat the BJP the BJP will not back down. Addressing the BJP workshop in Manneguda on Tuesday, Sanjay made it clear that the BJP is holding 11,000 corner meetings only to establish Ram Rajya. He said that huge public meetings will be organised in 10 districts which Prime Minister Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah will attend. Sanjay said the BJP is going to create history with 11,000 corner meetings in 15 days. He said that BRS leaders who came to power exploiting sentiments have no right to talk about the BJP. He asked whether IT Minister KT Ramarao actually knew about the BJP. Sanjay said that KCR's relationship with Telangana has been broken after he changed the name of his party to BRS. He said that KCR must take responsibility for handing over Krishna River waters to AP.

personnel, specially trained dog squads, drilling machines, relief material, medicines and other necessary utilities & equipment reaches Adana, T rkiye," Jaishankar said on Twitter. Adana is one of the areas affected by the 7.8-magnitude earthquake. "Second @IAF_MCCC-17 with self-contained @NDRFHQ teams including dog squads, search & rescue equipment, extrication tools and vehicles leaves for T rkiye. India continues to support the people of T rkiye in their hour of need," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted.

Death toll over ..

Continued from page 1

Nurgul Atay told The Associated Press she could hear her mother's voice beneath the rubble of a collapsed building in the city of Antakya, the capital of Hatay province, but that her and others efforts to get into the ruins had been futile without any rescue crews and heavy equipment to help. "If only we could lift the concrete slab we'd be able to reach her," she said. "My mother is 70-years-old, she won't be able to withstand this for long."

			Municipal Corporation Aurangabad (M.H.) (Mechanical Section)		
Tel No : (0240)233536-40 Fax No : (0240)2331213			Add : Aurangabad Municipal Corporation Aurangabad. Executive Engineer (Mechanical) Head Office : Town Hall Aurangabad - 431001 E-Tender (Contact) Cell:- 9764999565 No./AMC/Mech/02/2023 Date : 03 /02/2023		
Sr. No.	Name of Work	Bid Submission End Date			
01.	Supply of Bio Mining Machine with Test & Trial -01 No. Capacity : 100 TPH (+/-10%) (Tender Amount: 1,75,00,000/-)	17.02.2023			
Note : Detail Information available at Website www.mahatenders.gov.in					
<div style="text-align: right;"> Sd/- Executive Engineer (Mech) Municipal Corporation Aurangabad. </div>					
म.प्र. / म.प्र. / म.प्र. / म.प्र. / म.प्र.					



Vemulawada will be developed on lines of Yadadri temple: KTR

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRICILLA

Sri Raja Rajeswari Swamy temple in Vemulawada will be developed on the lines of the Yadadri Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy temple, according to Minister for Industries K T Rama Rao on Tuesday. The Sri Raja Rajeswari Swamy temple in Vemulawada is prominently known as Dakshin Kasi

The Minister was holding a review meeting with the officials on the arrangements being made for Mahasivaratri celebrations at Sri Raja Rajeswari Swamy temple in Vemulawada. BRS MLA Chennamaneni Ramesh Babu was also present. The status of the ongoing developmental works in the town too was discussed.

KTR asked the officials to make all necessary arrangements to ensure that devotees who visit the temple from various parts of the State and the country face no inconvenience. Also, he asked them to focus on the management of sanitation in the town and arrange ambulance services, and take fire safety measures



Minister for Industries K T Rama Rao holding a review meeting in Vemulawada on Tuesday

as a precautionary measure. The Minister said that the annual cultural programmes, held during Mahasivaratri celebrations, have to be organised on a grand scale by coordinating with the State Culture Department.

Stating that Sircilla and Vemulawada would emerge as tourist destinations, the Minister asked the officials to chart plans for developmental works in that direction. He said that the tallest idol of Lord Shiva, construction of cottages, and adventure games

would be taken up at Ramappa Gutta in the suburbs of Sircilla. And, cable car services would be arranged at Nampalli Gutta in Vemulawada Suburbs.

KTR asked officials to lay footpaths alongside all main roads in the town leading to the temple, to spruce up the town with wall paintings at all places feasible to display the art and to lay a cycling track and walking track alongside Moola Vagu. He said that the mini-stadium being constructed with high standards

The Minister said that the annual cultural programmes, held during Mahasivaratri celebrations, have to be organised on a grand scale by coordinating with the State Culture Department

in Vemulawada would be completed soon. The Minister directed officials to send proposals to the State government for the laying of a four-lane main road from Kodurupaka to Vemulawada and a second ghat road to Nampalli Gutta. Along with District Collector Anurag Jayanthi, District Superintendent of Police Akhil Mahajan, Vemulawada temple officials and district officials from R&B and other departments participated in this meeting.

Three arrested for foreign varsity scam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Cyber Crime police of CCS arrested three persons involved in scamming Rs 2 crore from 32 Indian students studying in various universities in Canada and the USA, on the pretext of paying semester fees by collecting their details using fraudulent credit card transactions. The police froze Rs 2.7 crore in the accounts of the accused.

The accused are Devarashetty Pedda Venkateswarlu, Devarashetty Gautam, and Kohirkar Nilesh. The accused were booked under Section Cr.No 47/2023 registered in Cyber Crime police station, Hyderabad. The police seized five mobile phones, four cheque books, five credit cards, five debit cards and an amount of Rs 2,71,790 has been put on hold in the fraudulent bank A/c No. 024305011077 of ICICI Bank.

The police revealed that Devarashetty Gautham went to the USA to study, where he collected details of students studying in the USA and Canada through WhatsApp groups. He convinced the students that he would pay their fees through his credit card and give a 10% discount on that.

TSREDCO inspects solar-powered lights installed in Nagarkurnool

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana State Renewable Energy Development Corporation (TSREDCO) on Tuesday inspected solar-powered appliances in the tribal areas of Nagarkurnool.

The corporation has provided solar power facility to a total of 39 houses in two Chenchu habitations.

Addressing the people of Amrabad, TSREDCO Chairman Y Sathish Reddy said, "Telangana government is working with an aim of providing welfare benefits to the remote villages, tandas and Chenchu habitations. As part of this, solar-enabled lights and fans are being installed in the forest areas." The Chairman further explained, "A 300Watt Peak solar power system has been installed in each house in Chenchupenta. Three LED bulbs and one BLDC ceiling fan were installed free of cost to each household. The maintenance of lights and fans will be taken care of by TSREDCO. If the lights are damaged, they will be replaced with new lights." Amrabad Tiger Reserve in Nagarkurnool is home to a number of tiger



cubs. As it is a reserve forest, infrastructure cannot be provided there. Forest permits are not available for construction of roads or other works. The tribal community expressed unwillingness to leave the forest. A solar power system was exclusively installed and this brought light into their lives.

It reassured those who are living in fear of the wild animals in the forests. Reddy inspected the solar power system being installed in Chenchu hamlets.

Officials went from door-to-door in the Chenchu habitation to observe the solar-powered lights installed in the houses.

Interacting with the Chairman, locals said their lives have changed completely with the installation of solar system. "Till a year ago kerosene lamps were used for light, due to the lack of electricity, poisonous insects and wild animals used to attack us," they added.

The community urged Reddy to install solar panels for some of the newly established huts. He ordered TSREDCO District Manager Satyanarayana Murthy to ensure the installment of street lights along with lights for the new huts. They were assured that solar panels will be installed to operate agricultural electric motors.



Mahabubnagar Collector G Ravi Naik inspecting a township in Mahabubnagar on Tuesday

Officials told to focus on sanitation in townships

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

District Collector G Ravi Naik has directed the officials to focus on sanitation in Sarika Township and Potulamadugu townships

He inspected the townships under Bhutpur Municipal limits on Tuesday. He sought information from officials on the number of plots in the proposed townships and how many of them were auctioned and the plots which are yet to be auctioned.

He directed officials to take

steps to keep the townships spic and span. He asked the Bhutpur Municipal officials to take steps for the maintenance of the Sarika township. He directed the officials to take steps to plug the leakages in the Mission Bhagiradha pipelines. Revenue Additional Collector K Sitarama Rao, Bhutpur Municipal Commissioner Nurul Nazib, Housing Department Executive Engineer V Bhaskar, Bhutpur Tahsildar Chenna Kistappa and others accompanied the District Collector.

Endowments Dept staffer attempts suicide

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

A woman employee in the Endowments Department on Tuesday sparked commotion by allegedly attempting to commit suicide in the office following heated arguments with a politician.

The woman employee, R Samatha, alleged that she had resorted to the extreme step as Khammam rural mandal unit president Bellam Venu insulted her. She attempted to commit suicide by consuming tablets.

The staff at the office rushed her to a hospital. According to officials, Venu expressed anger at the employees for not communicating the information relating to the temple committee. Samatha is an Inspector in the department. She accused the politician of abusing her by using foul language.

TSCPCR compliments officials for making Operation Smile a success

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Telangana State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (TSCPCR) member Y Brundhadhar Rao has called upon the officials to identify the children engaged in bonded labour in brick kilns and other places and take steps to release them from bondage.

Addressing Labour, Revenue, CWC, ChildLine, DWO, Sakhi, Police, Scheduled Class and Backward Classes Welfare officials at the Collectorate conference hall here on Monday, he said that the Operation Smile implemented in the district was successful.

He complimented the officials on making the operation a success. He described mothers committing suicide, along with their children, as heart-rending. He asked the officials



TSCPCR member Y Brundhadhar Rao holding a review meeting in Karimnagar

to explain the activities of the Children's Commission and its services to people at the field level. The Telangana State Commission for Women and also Children would always stand by those in distress, he said.

2 gangs held in TOEFL and GRE cheating scam

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Two gangs consisting of seven members involved in cheating in GRE and TOEFL exams were arrested by Cyber crime police on Tuesday. Two of the accused are absconding.

The two gangs have been giving advertisements through social media to enable cheating to get good marks in GRE and TOEFL exam, required for higher education in the USA and charged Rs 20,000 each. Two of the accused are BTech students at NIT Raipur.

The arrested accused are Mandala Sharvan Kumar, Mandala Sai Santhosh, P Kishore, Arkatala Kiran Kumar. Accused GSJ Aditya and Guna Shekar, of the gangs are currently absconding. Both the gangs are booked under Section Cr.No. 159/2023 U/sec. 66 (C) (D) ITA act 419, 420 IPC. The police seized mobiles phones, four Airtel Sim cards, one HP laptop and two Asus laptops.

Hyderabad cyber crime police revealed that Shravan Kumar and Aditya, who are BTech final year students at NIT Raipur, used to help their friends by writing the GRE or TOEFL exam.

After that, they began to attract students who have applied for the GRE or TOEFL exam by giving advertisements on social media to get a good score, and charged them Rs 20,000 each.

Due to Covid protocols, GRE and TOEFL began to offer students an option to attend from home. Shravan and Aditya allegedly collect details of students through social media ads and write the exam at a friend's house in Hashinapuram.

WIDENING THE NH PASSING THROUGH SATTUPALLI

BRS leaders submit a memorandum to Gadkari

PNS ■ KHAMMAM

Sattupalli MLA Sandra Venkata Veeraiah on Tuesday submitted a memorandum to Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari in Delhi, along with other BRS leaders, and urged him to grant funds for widening the national highway which is passing Sattupalli and construction of drains on either side of the road.

Veeraiah along with BRS leader in Lok Sabha Nama Nageswara Rao, Rajya Sabha members Vaddiraju Ravichandra and Bandi Parthasarathy submitted the memorandum to the Union



BRS leaders with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari

Minister. They discussed the need for widening the National Highways proceeding through Khammam city and the need for changing their alignment near the newly built Collectorate complex and other things.

The Union Minister lent a

patient ear to the request from MPs and the MLA and responded positively to their demands. He issued directions to the officials in this regard. The MLA and MPs thanked the Union Minister and presented him with a shawl.

Three killed as car rams into stationary lorry

PNS ■ WARANGAL

Three persons, including a six-year-old girl, died in an accident near Pembarthi in jangaon district on Tuesday.

The deceases were identified as V Rajashekar (33) of Tirumalagiri, Abdul Rahimkhan (47) of Hyderabad and the girl.

The accident happened when the car rammed a stationary truck that was stopped on the highway to fix a flat tyre. As the driver Abdul Rahimkhan, along with the lorry cleaner, was busy replacing the flat tyre, the speeding car rammed into the stationary truck.

The lorry driver and cleaner were killed on the spot. The girl in the car was also killed in the incident.



The car overturned after it rammed into the truck. Two occupants in the cars suffered injuries and they were ferried to the Government Hospital.

According to police, the car was on its way to Hyderabad from Kazipet. It is suspected that the car driver could have fallen asleep at the wheel and failed to notice the parked lorry.

Police registered a case and the investigation is on.

KGBV students protest 'poor quality food'

PNS ■ MEDAK

Students Kasturba Gandhi Balikal Vidyalayam were on the warpath on Tuesday, alleging that the food being served to them was of inferior quality. The Vidyalayam is at Ramayampet in the district.

The students on Tuesday morning staged a walkout from the school and staged a protest. They alleged that the administration was providing poor-quality food to them. The school officials failed to provide even basic amenities to them.

When contacted, the school principal said that the contractor has been supplying low-quality commodities on time. That was why the students cannot be provided food in



KGBV students staging protest in front of school at Ramayampet in Medka district on Tuesday

time. It was taken to the notice of the higher officials, the principal said.

Ramayapet Municipal Chairman Jitender Goud visited the school and assured the students that he would take the issue to the notice of the officials. He promised to ensure that justice is done for students.

Budget is just old wine in new bottle: Sharmila

PNS ■ WARANGAL/HYDERABAD

YS Sharmila launched a frontal attack on the Telangana budget presented by Harish Rao on Monday in the Assembly.

Demanding that the BRS should come out clear on last year's allocations and actual spends, she listed out last year's budget allocations and actual spends and taunted the BRS for not being able to spend even a single penny on many things promised in the budget.

"In the last budget, the BRS allocated Rs 12,000 crore for double bedroom houses, and Rs 17,000 crore for the Dalit Bandhu scheme. There is absolutely no change as the

current allocation looks like a copy paste of the earlier one. But where is the expenditure and why has there been no execution?" she asked.

She added that the Chief Minister, who had failed to deliver on promises in the last eight years, couldn't be trusted when it came to these allocations.

The mismatch in allocations and actual spend, ultimately gives us the impression that KCR considers the budget as waste paper and is junking it.

"Every promise of KCR is a fake and every word is filled with dishonesty. It is eight years and none of the projects like Devadula, Kanthanapally, SLBC, Seetarama, and

Nakkalagandi have been completed. While his focus was on Kaleshwaram for obvious reasons, the other projects were denied funds. Kaleshwaram too has been a disaster and shamefully has been able to irrigate only 50,000 acres. This is a white elephant for the Telangana treasury and a cash cow for KCR and his contractors," Sharmila said.

KCR's loan waiver is another trick as although 36 lakh farmers are eligible for a waiver only Rs 763 crore was waived. The loan waiver needs Rs 19,000 crore but he has allocated only Rs 6,000 crore. This is an eyewash and plain cheating and the hopes of 25 lakh farmers have been dashed, she said.

Road metrics winner of the Mobility AI Grand Challenge

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana AI Mission (T-AIM) said that it has chosen Road Metrics as the winner of the Mobility AI Grand Challenge.

The challenge, which is in partnership with Capgemini, is to foster innovation for the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) using Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Launched in August this year by T-AIM, the challenge aimed to identify novel AI solutions to detect and classify potholes in the city. Open to all innovators in the country, the challenge received nearly 100 applications.

In all, 15 startups were given the opportunity to build a Proof of Concept, and three startups presented their solutions to a jury comprising experts from GHMC, industry and academia.

The winning startup, Road Metrics, will receive mentoring support and an award of up to Rs 20 lakh from Capgemini towards implementation of a pilot project with the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation.

Speaking at the award ceremony held at T-Hub, Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Government of Telangana, said, "I am extremely delighted to see industry, academia, startups, and government come together for this excellent initiative led by Telangana AI Mission."

As AI continues to advance and become more sophisticated, it has the potential to offer innovative solutions to the problems faced by local municipalities.

My congratulations to the winning startup for presenting a novel AI-based solution to the GHMC."

Emirates ID is enough in Dubai, declares ICP

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The stamping process will be cancelled in Dubai and residents of Dubai can fly directly within the GCC countries with their Emirates IDs.

The UAE visa is directly linked to the individual's Emirates ID and it describes the residence and its validity. Hence, passport is not required for visa sticker. The Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs and Port Security (ICP) had earlier

decided to merge residence and identity card applications. However, these changes first came into effect from May 16, 2022 in other Emirates except Dubai.

Now these will be allowed in Dubai as well. Airlines said they can verify a person's UAE residency using their Emirates ID and passport number. Prior to these changes, anyone applying for a new resident visa or going for visa renewal had to submit their passports to get the visa stamped.

A friend in need

India has been prompt in sending the relief teams to Turkey which has been devastated by three quakes

Turkey is pleasantly surprised by India's assistance at the time when it has been hit by a natural calamity. Three earthquakes in a span of 24 hours have left thousands dead and caused mass devastation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was prompt to offer condolences to the loss of life; more importantly, the expression of sympathy was more than verbal; relief to the quake-hit was immediately organised; by the time of writing of these lines, an Indian Air Force plane with a relief team from India had already reached Adana in Turkey. Evidently, Ankara did not expect such a friendly gesture from New Delhi, for the former has been quite critical of the Modi regime for some time. In September last year at the UN General Assembly session, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan raked up the Kashmir issue during his address to world leaders, much to the anger of India. "India and Pakistan, after having established their sovereignty and independence 75 years ago, they still haven't established peace and solidarity between one another. This is much unfortunate. We hope and pray that a fair and permanent peace and prosperity will be established in Kashmir," he said. Turkey has also tried to embarrass India at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In this, it has been aided by Pakistan, a close ally of Turkey's.

Erdogan, in particular, seems to nurture the ambitions of becoming some kind of Caliph; the nurturing has coincided with the oil-rich Arabs, especially Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), losing interest in spreading jihad worldwide. Erdogan has almost undone the secular legacy of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the father of modern Turkey. While Atatürk promoted Turkish nationalism, Erdogan has been a votary of Islamism. Three years ago, Erdogan had transformed Istanbul's iconic Hagia Sophia, a historic monument, into a mosque. He even led worshippers in the first prayers in it. Against this backdrop, it must have delighted the powers that be in Ankara that New Delhi did not let its antipathy towards them colour its reaction to the calamity. Turkish Ambassador to India Firat Sunel tweeted: "'Dost' is a common word in Turkish and Hindi... We have a Turkish proverb: 'Dost kara gunde belli olur' (a friend in need is a friend indeed). Thank you very much India." Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan visited Turkey's embassy. Rescue and medical teams have already left from India to Turkey. The Prime Minister's Office held a meeting, where it was decided to send two teams of the National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF). The teams will include 100 personnel with specially trained dog squads and the requisite equipment. It may be mentioned here that such endeavours are not an exception but the rule; in the past too India helped other countries, including the hostile ones, when they faced humongous crises. PM Modi himself spearheaded Vaccine Maitri. The MEA must capitalise on the equity created by India's generosity.

PICTALK



An airplane passes in front of a full moon as it descends for landing in Mexico City

AP/PTI

Aussies show the way

Australia moves out of the colonial past without much fuss

Australia is slowly but surely moving out of its colonial past. It is taking small yet effective steps that would snap its colonial ties. The recent announcement to do away with the picture of the British Monarch from its 5-dollar bill is a case in point. Though history cannot be wished away it can definitely be rectified. Australia is reevaluating its history and cultural identity in two ways: first by getting rid of the symbols that remind it of its colonial past and second taking firm steps to make its Constitution and policy more inclusive, giving proper space to the indigenous people of Australia. What is remarkable about Australia's approach is that it is doing so without creating any ill-will and hatred with the erstwhile colonial masters. The country is undergoing a cultural revolution of sorts as it acknowledges the injustices committed against Indigenous Australians, and the effects of colonization on their culture, language, and way of life.



This includes the forced removal of Indigenous children from their families, the loss of traditional lands and cultural practices. The recognition of the First Nations peoples in the Australian constitution and the creation of Indigenous-led initiatives and programs aimed at preserving Indigenous cultures and languages are some very substantial measures. Moreover, Australia has also been actively working to eliminate the symbols and monuments of its colonial past, with many cities and towns removing statues and monuments that commemorate controversial historical figures and events. This is part of a larger effort to decolonize public spaces and to recognize the contributions and experiences of Indigenous Australians and other marginalized communities. The education system is also being revamped, with a growing emphasis on teaching accurate and inclusive history in schools. This includes incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum and teaching students about the history of Indigenous culture. Though getting rid of the colonial past is a long and ongoing process, these changes would result in big dividends. As the country continues to acknowledge its history, it will be able to move forward and create a brighter future for all its citizens. Perhaps India could take a leaf from Australia and do better than just changing the nomenclatures of streets. A thoughtful approach would be more in line with the course the country must take as a confident and independent nation.

Invest in defence modernisation

The Government should shed the illusion of strength; we need modern warfare technology to face the menacing China threat

The only surprise in the defence budget was no surprise: static, in real terms, a negative budget for modernization- the litmus test of capability enhancement for maintaining deterrence in order to meet the two-and-a-half threat challenge plus government articulated missions of retaking PoK and Aksai Chin. Much of the capital is consumed by committed liabilities - payment for equipment already ordered and in the pipeline. Overconfidence in a strong government and leader, the chimera of G20 grandeur, and 'it is not an era of war' but 'Amrit Kaal has ruled out conflict with China and Pakistan. Northern Army Commander, Lt Gen Dwivedi earlier and former Army Chief, Gen Naravane, only last month, revived illusions of 'we are in a position of strength' in Ladakh. In the last nine years, the ruling government has invested more in lip servicing and symbolism than in closing the capability gap with China as defence budgets have hovered between 1.5 and 1.6 percent of GDP. Former Defence Minister Arun Jaitley would admit: "we have no money, we can't put cess on defence". So the government has renamed anonymous islands after PVC winners, built giant statues, installed tall flags, and embellished Jai Jawan Jai Kisan Jai Vigyan with Jai Anusandhan.

In the current fiscal defence has dropped to 1.4 percent of GDP and for the first time in decades, dipped below 2 percent of GDP if the pension bill is included. The capital acquisition increased from Rs 12,000 crore to Rs 1.6 lakh crore just an 8 percent increase well below inflation and the falling rupee. As there is no National Defence Strategy and a Policy, Plans, and Budgeting System to evaluate inter se capabilities, allocation is erratic and prioritized by CDS. IAF chief Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhuri has thrice publicly mentioned the dangers of combat squadron strength dwindling to 28/30 squadrons against the authorized 45 squadrons. PM Modi acquired 38 Rafales against 126 MRCA urgently sought by IAF.



Its requirement of 114 MRCA has been languishing for years: Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) is still not fructified i.e. forget it.

Similarly, the Navy, whose missions have multiplied - from the Gulf of Aden to the Indo-Pacific - is woefully deficient in submarines, and the indigenous aircraft carrier Vikrant is minus aircraft and other subsystems. At this pace of modernization, the third aircraft carrier is a mirage. Manpower-intensive Army needs a new tank, a light tank, and a new gun. The increased capital segment of the revenue budget is to make up for deficiencies in ammunition and equipment to fight a 30-day war not 10 days of intense conflict. Neither the hand-picked service chiefs bar Chaudhuri, nor the deeply-selected CDS Gen Anil Chouhan, has pointed to shortfalls in the modernization budget. They are unlikely to do so in the prevailing environment when discretion has become a better part of valour. Young officers have proven the backbone as an ADC of President Murmu gently ticked off Modi when he tried to step ahead of her during the Republic Day parade.

Two instances need recall. Former Army Chief, Gen Shankar Roy Choudhury warned the government that Army will not be responsible

for any operational mishap due to inadequate funding and

former CNS Adm Vijay Shekhawat declared at a press briefing that naval shipyards not receiving ship orders will have a negative effect on naval capabilities. The next day Defence Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav invited Shekhawat to breakfast. It is inconceivable that the highly nationalistic government that has excelled in capex - infrastructure hikes and doubled railway budget - has kept the sword arm insufficiently sharpened.

The government took huge operational risks by keeping the Army alone deficient of 300,000 soldiers: no recruitment was done for the last three years due to Covid. While the annual demobilization of 65,000 soldiers continued, no salaries had to be paid for the void in recruitment. Only now will 46,000 Agniveers be recruited on a low salary and no pension. It's OROP whose cost equaled modernization allocation but has reduced to Rs 1.3 lakh crore that is hurting. OROP arrears worth Rs 23000 crores are due by 31 March. Modi must rue his 2014 BJP election manifesto in signing up for OROP. This is indeed an era of war. As Russia's invasion of Ukraine enters its second year, India has to review its relations with Russia which has China, a no-limit strategic partner-

ship. India is still dependent on Russian military hardware, technology, and spares. Serge Chemezov, CEO of Russia military industrial Rostek was in India last month for payment of dues on account of Russian oil and S400 AD systems. The Americans are making determined efforts including the use of sanctions and diplomatic pressure to wean India away from Russian equipment. All European countries are increasing defence budgets to meet twin Russia-China challenges. The UK, France, and even Germany have reached 2 percent of GDP spending levels. Japan has erased the one percent GDP embargo and will spend USD332bn over the next five years. In Asia Pacific, South Korea, and the Philippines are increasing defence capabilities by 8 and 5 percent respectively. Despite active LAC and LoC and a sensitive internal environment, the Modi-Shah government is happy to let China march ahead with a defence budget thrice India's size. There is an urgent need for recapitalization of defence to deter China.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UNEXPLAINED WRATH OF NATURE

Sir — Man's science and thinking are a complete failure in front of nature and its upheavals. Millions of human beings consider themselves knowledgeable and scientific. But what is happening inside the earth, they have no idea. The latest proof of this came in South Turkey and North Syria on Monday morning with an earthquake. So far, only 4,000 people have been reported dead but this figure can easily touch 40,000 with the passage of time. Because such incidents of repeat earthquakes, measuring quite high on the Richter scale and that too at a depth of only 10-17 km below the earth's surface, don't happen very frequently.

The result is that almost all the houses and structures in 10 provinces of Turkey have suffered damage. It is said that 70,000 lives were lost in an earthquake in Turkey in 1939. We blame climate change for floods, droughts, landslides, storms, snowfall, expansion of sea coast, melting of glaciers, rise in temperature etc. But who is to blame for the earthquake? No science has given us the answer to this to date. It can neither be stopped nor predicted. We just have to bear its horror silently.

It must be said that India has done the right thing in providing the timely succor in the time to the two devastated countries and it bodes well for India's underlying philosophy of 'vasudhaiva kutumbakam'. India has behaved as a president of a G20 nation should. It deserves all the praise for its effort.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

BUDGET HAS NOTHING NEW

Sir — The absolute figures in the Union Budget speak louder than the Finance Minister's speech. The increase in the budgetary estimate of net tax revenue for 2023-24 over the revised estimate for 2022-23 is just ₹2.44 lakh crore. This is only 52 per cent of all receipts. Debt receipts made up 40 per cent. According to the IMF, India's debt-to-GDP ratio reached 84 per cent by 2022 end. A recent study has established a threshold of 77 per cent as the right debt-

A serious matter, this



Once, former PM Chandra Shekhar was on a long trip when a woman sought his help in solving the drinking water problem in her village. Chandra Shekhar said he had no power but he could raise this matter in Parliament, with the result that the problem was solved. Now, Rahul Gandhi has followed Chandra Shekhar's example by sharing his experiences during Bharat Jodo Yatra and explaining how the youth are facing problems getting jobs even after getting college degrees and diplo-

mas, how the farmers and poor families in rural India are facing problems as well as the lack of infrastructure. However, he devoted most of his speech time on Adani, which appeared to be an out of proportion outburst.

The image of Rahul has improved from being a 'Pappu' and his Parliament speech was a matured one. He mentioned that a Bangladeshi power contract was allotted to Adani due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pressure. It is a serious charge: If it is proved wrong, then Rahul should apologise, and if the allegation is found correct, a detailed investigation should follow. Rahul made two more allegations claiming that Modi was helping Adani secure the maximum share of contracts available. Since the tone of Rahul's speech was serious, its reply is also expected to be in the same manner as the image of the PM is involved.

Yash Pal Raihan | Jalandhar

to-GDP ratio. Debt above that affects the annual real growth. Interest payments and servicing debts surged from ₹8.05 lakh crore in 2021-22 (Actuals) to ₹9.41 lakh crore in 2022-23 (RE) and to ₹10.80 lakh crore in 2023-24 (BE).

The budgeted expenditure for fiscal year 2023-24 shows an increase of ₹3.16 lakh crore over the RE of 2022-23. The Finance Minister reduced the outlays for schemes/projects coming under certain Ministries and departments to keep the increase in expenditure at the targeted level. The Budget numbers betray the envisaged capital expenditure of over ₹10 lakh crore. The Budget offers little for ordinary people in the absence of new policy initiatives or mitigating measures.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

FORLORN UK AWAITS MESSIAH

Sir — The colonial British Empire that appropriated wealth from subjugated nations had been thriving on indentured immigrants for ages. Over time, reduced to a mere kingdom with the centres of economy shifting elsewhere, it found

some eminence together with the EU. Thus was the rise of Rishi Sunak to eminence, though his parents were immigrants. Now three months into office as the PM of UK, Sunak is already facing dissent. His choice for the office was not predicated on any illusions to ethnic equity but to have him wrestle with Britain's highly skewed economy in the aftermath of an ill-thought Brexit.

Expectedly, odds against him are only increasing with high inflation and strikes. The 1980s saw the UK in identical straits when it took a Margaret Thatcher to wield an iron hand to restore economic order. In the past three years, as many PMs have met their Waterloo and thus Sunak's political longevity was suspect *ab initio*. Now, neither the change of a Tory PM nor opting for a Labour Government can redeem the UK's economic trajectory till it comes together in bipartisan pragmatism and reinvents its multifaceted links with European nations.

R Narayanan | Navi Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

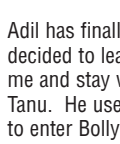
The propaganda was to target the government and make allegations using HAL's name. Such falsehood, no matter how big, frequent or high, is always defeated in the face of truth.



Prime Minister
— Narendra Modi



They have recovered some remnants off the surface of the sea...We have no intention to return spy' balloons Debris to China.
US Security Council spokesman
— John Kirby

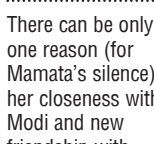


Adil has finally decided to leave me and stay with Tanu. He used me to enter Bollywood. I will go to court. He has taken my money. I have all the evidence.

Actor
— Rakhi Sawant



India can go to hell if they don't want to come to Pakistan to play cricket. It does not make any difference to us.
Former Pakistan Cricketer
— Javed Miandad




There can be only one reason (for Mamata's silence) - her closeness with Modi and new friendship with Adani. She might have instructions from Modi or the Adanis to not do anything that will go against the group's interests.
Senior Congress leader
— Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury

FIRST COLUMN

AFTER COVID, NURSING MOVES CENTRE-STAGE

Upskilling of nursing can prove to be transformative




DEEPAK SHARMA

Nursing has become an important part of the healthcare industry post-Covid. As technology takes center stage in nursing after the pandemic outbreak, the profession has gone through significant changes. The transformation in nursing care calls for upskilling of healthcare workers across the world.

Right from monitoring patients remotely to using tools to understand a patient's needs, hospitals need to train their nurses following huge technological intervention in the post-Covid era.

Nurses account for more than half of all the world's health workers, providing vital services throughout the health system, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO). Not only in the past, but today as well, nurses are at the forefront of fighting epidemics and pandemics that threaten health and human life across the globe. As they responded to an unprecedented crisis with bravery and courage, never has their value been more clearly demonstrated.



Nurses are the backbone of any health system, and they were on the frontline in battle against the pandemic. Today, there are just under 28 million nurses worldwide. Nursing numbers increased by 4.7 million worldwide between 2013 and 2018, but this still leaves a global shortfall of 5.9 million. The greatest gaps have been found in countries in Africa, Southeast Asia, and the WHO Eastern Mediterranean region as well as some parts of Latin America.

Well trained nurses with certifications in basic life support and advanced cardiovascular life support can make a huge difference in a hospital's ability to successfully deal with critical care and emergencies. While imparting such skills has been a time-taking and costly process for hospitals, including training and equipment, technology disruption has enabled digital learning solutions for healthcare professionals.

Today, there are complete online resuscitation and cardiac training modules for hospital staff that have made upskilling faster and better. Upskilling nurses can also solve the care home crisis due with an increase in elderly population. Also, upskilling is imminent in the era of telehealth, when nurses should be able to monitor and analyse the body parameters of a distant patient and raise an alarm by quickly informing doctors in case of emergency. The nurses will be able to handle a critical situation only if they are aware of new technologies such as wearable bands, computers, tablets, or smartphones.

While the upskilling or reskilling concept is relatively new to the US healthcare industry, other countries like India have been using upskilling with great success. During the pandemic, an online upskilling initiative had prepared over one lakh Indian nurses to fight Covid-19.

From recording audios to translating them using tools to understand a patient's needs, nurses are using as many tools as possible today. This rapid use of technology began after the pandemic outbreak. Hospitals can also invest in such tools to upskill their nurses, to take the patient care at a new level. For instance, if a patient is from another country or state, nurses can be trained in using specific tools or software that can translate what they are saying and then cater to their needs.

Similarly, virtual reality and Artificial Intelligence enabled tools can be used by nurses to transform the patient care. Recently, IIT Madras had joined hands with the state unit of the National Health Mission (NHM) to prevent maternal and neonatal deaths and improve the overall health of newborn babies and their mothers by upskilling healthcare workers.

According to a report, nursing makes up 50 per cent of the healthcare workforce and by 2022, it will be the most in demand profession in the US. Upskilling nurses by harnessing technology and developing new care models will help hospitals and for this they will need to invest in training and tools to empower their healthcare staff.

(The author is Co-founder & CEO of MedLern)

‘PARKINGson’s law of mobility, and us

Since the demand for parking is insatiable, new mobility services and mass transit must complement each other



SANJAY CHADHA PRIYANKA NAVLE



“

CARS OR TWO-WHEELERS ACCOUNT FOR 85 PER CENT OF PARKING SPACE USAGE BUT PROVIDE FOR ONLY 4-5 PER CENT OF TRAVEL DEMAND. IN CONTRAST, CABS ACCOUNT FOR 4-5 PER CENT OF PARKING AND ON AN AVERAGE CARRY 15-20 TIMES MORE PASSENGERS THAN A PRIVATE CAR

tiable demand for parking, using up large tracts of the scarce land, even as real estate development has gone vertical.

Lessons from global experience are instructive. Globally, the governing principles of parking policy are changing. Instead of promoting unlimited supply of parking, parking demand is sought to be reduced by discouraging personal vehicle usage in congested areas. Such a move towards shared mobility is being encouraged in cities like Paris, Madrid, Barcelona, Portland, etc., where fiscal disincentives have been put in place on use of personal vehicles, making public transport or a commercial hire a more lucrative financial choice. This frees up street spaces and parking lots, converting them into cycle lanes and recreational areas.

Since India faces similar challenges, it is only natural that India's response should also resonate with action taken across the globe. According to a study by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), a car in India on an average is parked for over 95 per cent of the time and is driven for less than five per cent of its life. The survey concluded that on an average, a car spends 8,360 hours parked and is only driven for 400 hours in a year.

Cars or two-wheelers account for 85 per cent of parking space usage but provide for only 4-5 per cent of travel demand. In contrast, cabs account for 4-5 per cent of parking and on an average carry 15-20 times more passengers than a private car.

The study also highlighted the vast land usage committed to this

ever-rising parking demand in urban areas. It estimated that the annual additional demand for parking spaces can be equivalent to as much as 471 football fields in Delhi, 100 in Chennai, 58 in Chandigarh, and 179 in Gurgaon.

The Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority (EPCA), has gone on record to state that provisions of parking for personal vehicles cannot be considered a matter of public good. Land is a limited resource, so there is a limit to the additional parking spaces that can be created in a city. Decades of experience in India and across the world bear testimony to the fact that the demand for parking is insatiable. New mobility services and established mass transit must complement each other to build systems that serve consumers regardless of where they live within the cities or their circumstance.

Already, for many of the millennials and Gen Z in India, the car has gone from being seen as a property asset to becoming a service that young people pay for only when they need it. It is expected that by the end of the decade, more apps, shared services, and electrification will significantly expand mobility's scope and modes. New mobility services have the potential to carve out a meaningful role in future mobility for themselves. These are cues for policymakers to get more actively involved in envisioning these new services in the urban transportation system. One of the most powerful outcomes of shared mobility is the impact on the environment. The ability of states to garner revenues to com-

bat the environment lies in innovative regulations. A commercial vehicle contributes substantially higher taxes, tolls and GST—a part of which needs to be channelised right to get this segment to grow. Despite the Green fund subsidies for manufacture of EVs through the FAME schemes, the current sales of electric vehicles (EV) is less than five per cent of the total vehicle sales against an ambitious target of a complete switch over for all new vehicles by 2030.

Due to a higher initial capital cost, a loan for purchasing an EV entails higher EMIs than its fossil fuelled equivalent, offsetting some of the advantage of the lower running cost. A targeted interest subvention scheme for purchase of EVs by the marginal earners of commercial vehicles would create excellent self-employment opportunities. Further, Priority Sector Lending (PSL) for green mobility can be expanded to the last mile to cover purchase loans, especially for women drivers which would enable more women to earn their livelihood with complete flexibility in working hours.

The tech platforms could also provide enhanced safety for women riders by mapping them to women drivers as a preference. The possibilities to convert this into an opportunity are endless.

However, state governments must be exhorted to bring out the attendant rules and regulations to enable the tech platforms to aggregate all vehicles without an exception—through a single licence. The road to success need not be lined with many tempting parking spaces.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

ALLOWING NOMINATED COUNCILLORS TO VOTE (IN THE MAYORAL ELECTION) IS ILLEGAL AND UNCONSTITUTIONAL. THIS IS OPEN HOOLIGANISM.



— DELHI DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER MANISH SISODIA

IF THE AAP DECIDES TO MOVE COURT, IT SHOULD FIRST GIVE A COMMITMENT TO ABIDE BY THE COURT'S DECISION.



— DELHI BJP SPOKESPERSON PRAVEEN SHANKAR KAPOOR

Mother tongue is a medium for higher studies

The disadvantaged sections will gain from the adoption of mother tongue in higher education institutes



SASHWATI BANERJEE

The Budget is a carefully crafted document aiming to cultivate voters of nine states going to polls this year with largess showered on agriculture and infrastructure projects. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is right in believing that the voter wants the glitz of infra in every field. It is a politically paying proposition.

Mother tongue is the ideal medium for expressing one's thoughts and feelings because language is such a potent tool. It is the language that a child picks up without his or her conscious effort while interacting with members of his or her own social group.

From the very first years of school, UNESCO has been setting the example and promoting multilingual education based on the mother tongue.

According to research, mother tongue education is essential for inclusivity and high-quality learning. It also enhances learning outcomes and academic achievement. Most importantly, mother tongue-based multilingual education gives all students the ability to participate fully in the society. Moreover, in India, the promotion of Indian languages in higher education is in sync with one of the focal points of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. About 95 per cent of students, who receive primary education in their mother tongue, face difficulty during their Higher education and should not be left out in their pursuit of higher studies.

NEP provides for higher education institutions and programmes in higher education to use the mother tongue or local language as a medium of instruction, besides offering programs bilingually. According to research, having a strong mother tongue foundation leads to a much better understanding of the curriculum as well as a more positive attitude toward school. It simultaneously fosters a whole host of other essential skills, such as critical thinking and literacy skills. Thus, it is critical that children keep their first language when they start school in a different language, as it also equips children with the skills they need to learn additional languages, allowing them to transfer their understanding of the structure of language to several new languages.

Moreover, research by Yared Seid showed that when children were taught in their primary schools with their mother tongue as the medium of instruction, it did improve their education outcome.

It also enhances the attributes of learning for students such as emotional development, besides having a very powerful impact on the formation of the individual. Mother language has such an important role in framing one's thinking, emotions, and spiritual world, because the most important stage of one's life, childhood, is spent in its imprints.

This is especially relevant for students who are first-generation learners (the first ones in their entire generation to go to school and receive an education) or the ones coming from rural areas, who may feel intimidated by unfamiliar concepts in an alien language.

In terms of education, the mother tongue, home language, or first language refers to the language that a child uses to communicate with others, interact with the outside world, and make sense of their surroundings.

There is an impending challenge to ensuring the availability of 'Quality Material in Regional Languages' such as textbooks and scholarly literature. Along with availability, ensuring quality control of the translations has become pivotal. Attracting and retaining quality teachers who are willing and able to teach in regional languages is a challenge. Language diversity is important for the balance of cultures, whereas focusing on one language can restrict exposure to different places and cultures due to language barriers. We may lose our advantage of being multilingual, for which ensuring a balance of languages is important. Moreover, a strict focus on regional languages can slow down the capacity of competing at global levels of education. Delivering technical courses in regional languages may prevent students from competing in global labor and education markets, where fluency in English yields a distinct edge. It is important to create a strong and successful bilingual/multilingual programme in the early years of schooling in a multilingual nation like India. The goal of teaching English in the early years should be to achieve basic conversational ability. However, when using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction, the accessibility barrier is removed because it accepts prospective students and their parents.

For multilingual children, there isn't a single model that fits all of their learning needs and contexts. Each school and community should determine what works best for them in terms of multilingual and mother tongue education. However, in general, the educational benefits that can be predicted are larger the longer a child can learn in and through his or her native languages.

MONEY MATTERS

IFFCO eyeing nano urea exports to 25 countries

Fertiliser major IFFCO Ltd is eyeing nano urea exports to 25 countries and expecting that output is likely to be 30 crore bottles by December 2024, a top company official said on Tuesday. The company is currently exporting the fertiliser to five countries, he said. "We have already produced six crore bottles of 500 ml each and have sold five crore units to farmers, which is equivalent to 22 lakh tonne of solid urea or conventional urea...We are already exporting to Sri Lanka, Nepal, Kenya, Suriname and Mexico," Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) Managing Director US Awasthi told PTI in an interview. After Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the world's first nano urea plant at Kalol in Gujarat last year, the company is exporting the fertiliser product, which has the potential to cut down the use of conventional urea, the most used Nitrogenous fertiliser, by 50 per cent or more, to the five nations, he said.



Sebi returns Go Digit General Insurance IPO papers

Markets regulator Sebi has returned the preliminary IPO papers of Go Digit General Insurance Ltd, a firm backed by Canada-based Fairfax Group, and now the company is looking to refile the documents with certain updates. The company had filed the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP) with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) in August 2022 to raise funds through an initial public offering (IPO). Go Digit's proposed IPO comprises fresh issuance of equity shares worth Rs 1,250 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of 10.94 crore equity shares by a promoter and existing shareholders. In the OFS, Go Digit offers to sell 10,94,34,783 equity shares. According to an update with Sebi on Tuesday, the markets regulator has returned the draft papers on January 30. In a statement, the insurance company said the DRHP (Draft Red Herring Prospectus) has been returned in terms of Sebi's IODR (Issuance of Capital and Disclosure Requirements) rules.



K Satyanarayana Raju appointed as new MD & CEO of Canara Bank

State-owned Canara Bank on Tuesday said the Union Government has appointed K Satyanarayana Raju as its Managing Director and CEO, with immediate effect. He will be replacing L V Prabhakar who demitted office on December 31, 2022. Raju, who is a Physics Graduate, Post Graduate in Business Administration (Banking and Finance) and CAIIB (Certified Associate of Indian Institute of Bankers), had earlier served Canara Bank as Executive Director since March 10, 2021. He has a very rich and vast experience in all segments of banking including Branch Banking, Corporate Credit, Retail Credit, Agri Financing, Credit Monitoring, Credit Recovery, Compliance etc. Also his rich experience and exposure led to digital transformation of banking products and services, the bank said in a release.



Regulations strictly followed while making investments

LIC tells govt amid concerns over exposure to Adani group

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid concerns in certain quarters over LIC's exposure to Adani group companies, the government on Tuesday said the insurer has informed that it strictly follows the statutory framework and regulations while making investments.

Last week, state-owned Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) said it has investments of Rs 35,917.31 crore in Adani group's debt and equity securities. The amount is 0.975 per cent of the insurer's total assets under management of more than Rs 41.66 lakh crore. The total purchase value of equity, purchased over the last many years, under all the Adani group companies is Rs 30,127 crore and the market value for the same as at close of market hours on January



LIC has informed that all investments of LIC are carried out strictly as per the statutory framework of the Insurance Act, 1938 and the IRDAI Investment Regulations, 2016 and are guided by a detailed governance mechanism

27, 2023, was Rs 56,142 crore, as per LIC. "LIC has informed that all investments of LIC are carried out strictly as per the statutory framework of the Insurance Act, 1938 and the IRDAI Investment Regulations, 2016 and are guided by a detailed governance mechanism," Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad told Rajya Sabha in a written reply on Tuesday. To a question by BJP mem-

ber Sushil Kumar Modi regarding the stakes held by LIC in various companies of the Adani group, Karad said, "LIC has also confirmed that most of the information with regard to its investments is already available in the public domain". Adani group has 10 listed companies.

Stocks of the Adani group companies have taken a beating, losing billions of dollars in market value, after US-based

activist short-seller Hindenburg Research in a report dated January 24 made a litany of allegations, including fraudulent transactions and share price manipulation at the Gautam Adani-led group.

The Adani group has dismissed the charges as lies, saying it complies with all laws and disclosure requirements. The opposition, however, has been calling it a big fraud.

India's non-fossil power generation capacity touches 174 GW

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's non-fossil fuel-based power generation capacity was at 174.53 gigawatt (GW) at the end of December 31, 2022, Parliament was informed on Tuesday.

The country's total power generation capacity, including 235.81 GW from the thermal base, was at 410 GW at the end of 2022, Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy R K Singh said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha.

"So far, a total of 174.53 GW power generation capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources has been installed in the country as on 31.12.2022," he said.

The capacity includes 63.30 GW solar power, 46.85 GW large hydro, 41.93 GW wind power, 10.73 GW bio power, 4.94 GW small hydro power and 6.78 GW nuclear power.

Puri: Energy transition has to ensure surviving present

PNS ■ BENGALURU

India, the world's third largest oil consumer, on Tuesday said it is committed to energy transition but surviving the present and cushioning the vulnerable from price volatilities is essential before moving to clean and green energy.

India has committed to net zero carbon emission by 2070 and has repeatedly emphasised that 'dirty' fuels like oil and coal, on which the economy is two-thirds dependent, will have to continue to be in use in the foreseeable future.

An immediate shift from low-priced coal and oil to expensive fuels of the future such as hydrogen will entail huge costs in a nation with low per capita income.

"Unless we survive the present, we will not be able to go into the world of clean and green energy," Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said at India Energy Week here.



Unless we survive the present, we will not be able to go into the world of clean and green energy

"While affordable traditional energy resources are essential for meeting the base load requirements, new sources of energy which are cleaner, sustainable, and innovative, are critical for combating the menace of climate change."

Geopolitical situations last year led to a spike in prices of crude oil - raw material for

petrol and diesel, and rates of natural gas - which is used to make CNG, electricity and fertilizer - shot up to record high. Countries in Europe switched back to coal-fired power plants as gas became unaffordable to many.

"We have to make sure our transition entails surviving the present and cushioning vulnerable from volatility," he said, adding the transition has to be affordable and sustainable particularly for vulnerable sections.

"We are actively conscious of the need to facilitate energy transition and in the interim insulate consumers."

India is 85 per cent dependent on imports to meet its oil needs and roughly half of its gas requirement too comes from overseas. And the spike in global energy prices meant it had to shell out more for imports. To insulate domestic consumers, it had to cut taxes as well as ask oil companies to hold prices.

'Budget to help in reducing capital cost for Indian companies'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Appreciating Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for continuing fiscal consolidation in the Budget for 2023-24, Niti Aayog member Arvind Virmani on Tuesday said it would help in reducing the cost of capital for Indian companies.

Virmani further said the large increase in capital expenditures by 33 per cent to Rs 10 lakh crore for infrastructure development will accelerate India's economic growth.

"On fiscal consolidation, the Finance Minister has reiterated that she will stay on it (the path of fiscal consolidation).



"... So, in a situation where there is a lot of global uncertainty, it is very important because it will have an effect on interest rates available to Indian companies," he told PTI.

Sitharaman in her fifth straight budget has raised the capital expenditure by 33 per cent to Rs 10 lakh crore for infrastructure development in 2023-24.

Electric passenger vehicles retail sales decline 10.51%

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Electric passenger vehicles retail sales declined by 10.51 per cent sequentially to 3,346 units in January 2023 over 3,739 vehicles sold in December last year, according to automobiles body FADA.

Tata Motors's electric PV sales were down 17 per cent at 2,426 vehicles in January as against 2,926 units delivered in December 2022.

MG Motor sales volume also dropped 12.55 per cent to 425 units against 486 units sold in the month earlier.

Sebi to auction properties of six firms

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To recover investors' money



auctioned include land parcels, storied buildings, flats and a commercial space, situated across West Bengal, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a notice. Inviting bids, Sebi said auc-

Sebi on Tuesday said it will auction 22 properties belonging to companies of MPS Group, Tower Infotech and four others on March 3 for a reserve price totalling Rs 91 crore in a bid to recover investors' money.

Apart from MPS Group and Tower Infotech, the regulator has put on block properties of Vibgyor Group, Prayag Group, Multipurpose BIOS India Group and Waris Finance International Group.

These companies had raised funds from investors without complying with regulatory norms.

The 22 properties to be

it in sale of the properties.

The regulator said the bidders should make their own independent enquiries regarding the encumbrances, title of properties put on auction and claims, among others, prior to submitting their bids.

"The properties are being sold with all the existing and future encumbrances whether known or unknown to Sebi. Sebi shall not be responsible in any way for any third party claims/rights/dues, etc," the notice said.

Sebi had earlier attached some of their properties after directives asking them to refund investors' money along with interest did not materialise.

Over 3,600 firms prosecuted for selling low quality pesticides

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than 3,600 firms have been prosecuted for manufacturing, sale and illegal import of sub-standard pesticides in the last five years and 137 companies were convicted by courts after they were found to be guilty, the government said on Tuesday.

"In last 5 years (2017-18 to 2021-22), Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine & Storage under the Ministry of Agriculture has analysed 3,40,479 pesticide samples, and 3,639 cases have been prosecuted against the firms who were found involved in the manufacture, sale and illegal import of sub-standard/low-quality pesticides, and in 137 cases the firms have been convicted by the Court after finding guilty," Minister of State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Bhagwanth Khuba said.

In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, the minister said the chemical sector is de-licensed and de-regulated.

The agriculture ministry has notified the Insecticide Act, 1968, wherein, there is no provision of spurious pesticides, however, under section 3k, the definition of 'misbranded' pesticide is clearly defined.

To ensure the availability of quality pesticides to farmers, the minister said provisions have been made that no insect-

'India can be superpower in defence sector'

PNS ■ PUNE

Lauding the private sector contribution in defence manufacturing, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Tuesday said India has the potential to emerge as a superpower in making military equipment and has displayed wherewithal to develop big and complex platforms.

Referring to the inauguration of Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd's new helicopter factory -- India's largest chopper manufacturing unit -- in Tumakuru district of Karnataka on Monday,

Sensex, Nifty decline for 2nd day on selling in FMCG, steel stocks

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower for a second straight day on Tuesday due to selling in FMCG, metal and auto shares ahead of the RBI monetary policy.

The 30-share BSE barometer declined further by 220.86 points or 0.37 per cent to close at 60,286.04, as 22 of its constituents ended in the red. The index opened flat amid mixed global trends. It moved in a range of 60,655.14 to 60,063.49 in the day.

Profit-taking in the FMCG and auto majors was weighing on the sentiment while buying in select heavyweights in banking and financials capped the fall

The broader Nifty of the National Stock Exchange fell by 43.10 points or 0.24 per cent to settle at 17,721.50, with 31 of its scrips ending in the red. The index touched a high of 17,811.15 and a low of

17,652.55 during the session. Profit-taking in the FMCG and auto majors was weighing on the sentiment while buying in select heavyweights in banking and financials capped the fall, analysts said. "Sentiments in the domestic market were hammered by bears that dominated the US market post the release of strong jobs data. Global markets are currently driven by central bank policies and the surge in bond yields in expectation of more rate actions," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

The Ramco Cements Q3 profit down 31.9% at Rs 51.2cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ramco Cements on Tuesday reported a 31.93 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 51.21 crore for the third quarter that ended on December 31, 2022, on account of a rise in fuel prices.

The company had reported a net profit of Rs 75.24 crore in the October-December period a year ago, The Ramco Cements said in a regulatory filing.

However, its total income was up 29.61 per cent to Rs 2,020.37 crore as against Rs 1,558.69 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year.

Bharti Airtel Q3 net profit zooms 91.5% to Rs 1,588 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Telecom operator Bharti Airtel on Tuesday reported a 91.5 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 1,588 crore for the October-December quarter of 2022-23.

Total revenue rose nearly 20 per cent year-on-year to Rs 35,804 crore in the December quarter (Q3FY23) "backed by strong and consistent performance delivery across the portfolio", the company said in a statement.

Its consolidated net income (after exceptional items) stood at Rs 1,588 crore for the just ended quarter, translating into an increase of 91.5 per cent

year-on-year. The consolidated net income (before exceptional items) at Rs 1,994 crore, was up by 147 per cent year-on-year, it added.

Bharti Airtel Managing Director Gopal Vittal said the company delivered another quarter of consistent and competitive growth across businesses. "Revenue grew sequentially by 3.7 per cent, while EBITDA margin expanded to 52 per cent.

ED attaches Rs 859 cr proceeds of crime in illegal loan app cases

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Directorate of Enforcement has attached proceeds of crime worth Rs 859.15 crore generated by accused persons/entities through illegal loan apps, Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad said on Tuesday. Further, assets amounting to Rs 289.28 crore have been seized under the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999. In a written reply to a query in Rajya Sabha, Karad said Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has furnished the list of Digital Lending Apps (DLAs) being used by regulated entities of RBI to the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY).

AERO INDIA

Boeing to showcase initiatives to boost 'Make in India'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

US aerospace major Boeing on Tuesday said it will showcase at the upcoming Aero India its focus on boosting local services, investments and partnerships in complimenting India's ambitious goal of achieving self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

The 14th edition of 'Aero India', known as Asia's largest aerospace exhibition, will be held in Bengaluru from February 13 to 17.

Boeing said a key strategic goal for it in India is to strengthen and leverage local

talent and its growing network of more than 300 supplier partners. "The Indian aerospace and defence industry is poised for growth and offers significant opportunities for Boeing with our proven portfolio of products and services," said Salil Gupte, president, Boeing India.

"Boeing is committed to supporting and enabling this progress with a vision to bring the best of Boeing to India and take the best of India to the world," he said. Boeing's displays at the Aero India will be built around the theme of "The Runway to a Billion



Opportunities" highlighting local partnerships and investments in India, according to the company.

The exhibits will also feature a range of advanced products including the F/A-18 Super Hornet, P-8I, CH-47 Chinook,

737, 787 Dreamliner and 777X.

The F/A-18 Super Hornet is in contention with Dassault Aviation's Rafale M for the Indian Navy's requirement for 26 deck-based jets for aircraft carrier INS Vikrant.

The Indian armed forces operate a sizeable number of Boeing-manufactured military platforms that included 11 C-17 heavy-lift transport aircraft, 22 AH-64 Apache helicopters (with six more on order), 15 CH-47 Chinook choppers, 12 P-8I long-range maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare aircraft.

India also has three Boeing VVIP aircraft, and two Head of State aircraft. In addition, more than 150 Boeing airplanes, including the next-generation 737, 737 MAX, 757, 777, and 787 Dreamliner, are operated by India's leading commercial airlines.

The joint venture between Boeing and Tata Advanced Systems Ltd -- Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited (TBAL) -- recently delivered the first fuselage for six AH-64 Apache attack helicopters ordered by the Indian Army from its state-of-the-art facility in Hyderabad.

Seema Pahwa: Theatre will definitely make you a better actor

TEJAL SINHA

Veteran actress Seema Pahwa has won hearts for all the obvious reasons. Before she could make her entry into the cinema world, she had worked extensively with theatre groups in Delhi at a tender age.

In fact, in a recent interview, the *Ferrari ki Sawari* actress recalled her theatre days, stating that there was a Punjabi theatre group that performed at Sapru House, which was dubbed "vulgar theatre" because all their dialogues had double meanings and she wasn't aware of that.

When we asked her about it, she recalled saying, "Yes, I was very young and slowly began to realise that what I was saying had a very different meaning because people would laugh at my lines. It was then that I began to grasp the language."

However, theatre is something that she has always loved to date. She had worked extensively in various Delhi theatre groups before making it big with *Hum Log*. Taking us through what made her get into theatres at a young age, she shared, "My mother was a veteran actress, and because of her, I came into this field very early. When I did theatre for the first time, I came face to face with the audience, and the live energy was absolutely invigorating. I may have done more work in cinema and on television, but I still love theater, which I think is the best medium for any actor because it reveals your weaknesses and strengths and gives you a better grasp of your craft. Cinema may or may not make you a better actor, but theatre definitely will, and that is why I am still associated with it."

It was later in 2019 when the *Bareilly ki Barfi* actress made her directorial debut with the critically acclaimed *Ramprasad Ki Tehrvi*. But did you know that directing was never in her plans? "I had never thought about directing and always wanted to be an actor first. In fact, I was looking for a director for *Ramprasad Ki Tehrvi*, but everyone refused and told me, "Seema, this is your world, and you know it best, so you are the one who is going to direct it." This made me gain more confidence, and I decided to give it a try. And now, of course, I am directing *Koi Baat Chale* by Zee Theatre."

Zee Theatre had recently presented *Koi Baat Chale*, another pathbreaking series of dramatic readings, as part of their promise under the proposition of 'Har



Din Naya Drama'. And, for the unaware, the series is being directed by the *Badhaai Do* actress.

Talking about the main focus behind directing the series, she shared, "With *Koi Baat Chale*, my intention is for Indian literature to reach this generation so that it can discover the treasure trove of great stories penned by iconic writers. Today's youth are not well aware of our own literature, and maybe through the dramatic readings by accomplished actors in *Koi Baat Chale*, they will get interested in these stories and explore more works by these writers. If, out of 10 people, even two develop a connection with literature through this teleplay, I will consider that we have succeeded in our mission to some extent. We have curated six classic stories that are very different from each other. We have two short stories penned by Munshi Premchand, three tales by Manto, and one by Harishankar Parsai. Through this mixed fare and variety, we hope to reach all kinds."

With such a format, we asked if an actor needs any additional skills to do justice to this medium. To this, the virtuoso enthused, "It's not easy to perform solo because you have no co-actor to support you on stage, and you have to be the narrator and also portray all the characters in the story. For instance, in 'Idgah', Vinay Pathak plays a child, a grandmother, a shopkeeper, and all the other characters that are

In an exclusive conversation with *The Pioneer*, veteran actress-director Seema Pahwa recalled her theatre days, her transition into direction, directing Zee Theater's *Koi Baat Chale*, and more.

ents would tell us about in the past. *Koi Baat Chale* brings those memories back to us in a different format. Sharing about choosing these six stories, she said, "This is a bit difficult to say as we have such great literature, and it was a tough task to pick and choose only a few stories. There are stories that are close to your heart, and so those were the ones that came to my mind instantly. Story-telling is a continuous process, so I hope that the project will live up to its name, *Koi Baat Chale*. There are many more stories we want to bring to the audience."

For sure, the act might have demanded actors with a different set of skills. As a director, one has their own set of lists for the actors while casting them. Wondered what she was looking for in the actors while casting them? She said, "I looked for actors who were capable of doing justice to all the characters in the story and also being strong narrators. In these times, it takes very little to just change the channel, so it is crucial to grab and hold the attention of the audience from start to finish. All our actors are renowned and established, and they have succeeded marvellously in

There were several stories that our grandpar-

keeping the audiences totally engrossed."

With OTT gaining huge prominence over time, she believes, "This is a great initiative. Initially, I myself was sceptical about bringing theatre to the small screen, but when I saw a few teleplays, I came to realise that this can be a great medium to bring wonderful plays to the audience in the comfort of their homes."

From Shyam Benegal to Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Seema has worked with some of the biggest names in the film industry. Ending the conversation on a lighter note, she signed off by saying, "Every director has their own way of working, be it Shyam Babu or Sanjay Ji. A director's work has various focus points. Shyam Babu's focus is on actors working on their characters with a certain liberty and ensuring that story-telling is at its best, while Sanjay Ji's focus is on making every shot beautiful and perfect in terms of the performance, the set, the props, etc. He not only focuses on these details but also on creating great music as well. So every director has his or her own charm, and I have been lucky to work with so many of them."

Taking the plunge into bee wrangling

HoneyVeda recently appeared on Season 2 of the business show *Shark Tank*. The 'sharks' were impressed with the honey idea. *The Pioneer* connected with the founder of HoneyVeda, who shared his experience.

SHIKHA DUGGAL

It is the responsibility of the beekeeper to clean hives, harvest honey and royal jelly, and maintain the health of the hive. Little did the founder of HoneyVeda, Hardik Ajaybhai Joshi, know that his passion for beekeeping would land him on *Shark Tank India* for the way he used his extensive knowledge to make cruelty-free products out of it.

Along with their scientific beekeeping process, they follow the beehive-to-bottle policy. It makes sure you receive the best possible natural honey. Every time! "To get into this business, it was important for me to learn beekeeping myself. The desire to work outdoors made me gain some information about animal science. Indeed, it's a nightmare to even go near a bee hive, but accidentally I did, and here I am today with a newfound love for a bee. They are natural pollinators, and hardly anyone is aware of them! When different flowers produce different types of honey, the light bulb went off. None of our honey products mention the flora information; how is the taste always similar? This led me to introduce HoneyVeda," said Hardik Ajaybhai Joshi.

The bee life cycle and hive social construct were so fascinating for him that they first carefully selected the site from which their little friends, the honeybees, would collect nectar. And that's also the secret to why their monoflora honey sells out so fast! Then, honeybee colonies are a set of wooden houses where bees deposit nectar. The right placement and careful planning help bees stay healthy and efficient. He waits and lets the bees take their time converting nectar into honey. Any accelerated or pasteurised processing can effectively eliminate all of honey's benefits! Furthermore, he said, "The honeybees are so smart that anyone will fall

in love with them. It's a hobby best entered into with preparation. We have to save bees just like we do for humans! Without these pollinators, not only would our natural world look bleak, but our food supplies would collapse. The farmers are also in the loop with us; we lease their farms for the beekeeping process. Sometimes, there is colony collapse disorder too, which is a bit more mysterious. Almost all the worker bees disappear and leave behind a viable queen, brood, and food stores. Climate change is the cause of it."

He pours his heart into bringing us the smooth goodness of raw honey—no heating, no processing. Before bottling and packing, HoneyVeda uses simple gravity filtering to remove unwanted particles. It's a simple process that doesn't change your honey at all! He explained, "It took me four years to establish myself as a "bee entrepreneur." I wondered—the kind of information and revelations I know about, commoners do not know about them, so why don't we turn this into a business? To do beekeeping, we even went to Spiti Valley. Yes, there is a chance to get stung all the time, but I always wear protection. The other aspect is the pain felt by farmers as our "main" pollinators become extinct as pesticide use increases. How will the ecosystem move forward? Furthermore, we have bees, and moving them is very disruptive to their work. As a commercial beekeeper that relies on honey harvest, I have to move them quite a few times a year, and that's quite unfortunate for the bees."

Beekeeping has to be about the bees and not humans! He continued, "The beekeeping process going by the market value is very manual. We had to migrate the bees at a certain height, hence, we chose Spiti Valley. But it was getting difficult for us to reach those heights along with the bee boxes. As a beekeeper, it was my responsibility to care for the welfare of my bees and do the best I could to make sure they thrive. I got stung a lot, but my main goal was to keep the bee alive. An unknown fact: if a bee stings a human, it will die there and then. I wasn't afraid of getting stung; I just didn't want my honeybees to die. I want to support pollination."



Creating equal opportunities for women in IT

The tech industry must create equal opportunities for women professionals to grow and lead from the front," says Alok Bansal. The MD of Visionet Systems India and the Global Head of BFSI Business reasons for more gender inclusivity in the IT industry.

Media reports in 2021 stated that Indian women make up nearly 43 per cent of the total graduates in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) but just constitute 14 per cent of scientists, engineers, and technologists in research development institutions and universities.

Alok Bansal, MD Visionet Systems India and Global Head of BFSI Business addresses this anomaly and says, "Women face gender-specific professional challenges all over the world. In fact, a 2022 study by LinkedIn states that 72 per cent of women in India are rejecting jobs due to lack of flexibility. This study should be a constant reminder to companies to reevaluate their employment policies and make

them more accommodating. The tech industry must create equal workspace opportunities for women to grow and lead from the front."

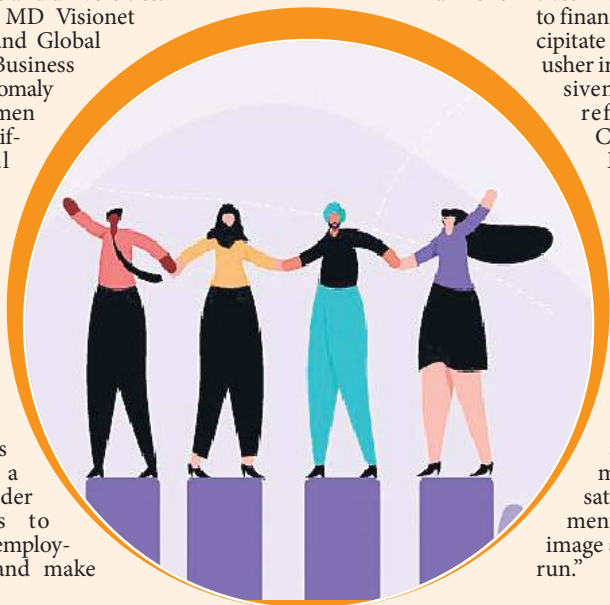
Women, he says, often suffer from the 'broken rung', a phenomenon where their promotions happen at a slower rate than their male counterparts. Lack of female role models, gender bias, unequal remuneration and stunted growth opportunities are some of the factors that hinder the progress of women in the tech field. Alok adds,

"Many women also

have to take a sabbatical to manage caregiving or child-rearing responsibilities. To ensure that when they return, their skill sets are second to none, companies should promote reskilling, upskilling, and mentorship programmes. Ensuring a proper work-life balance, flexible timings, timely increments and fair growth opportunities will go a long way in retaining women in the workforce."

He believes a larger percentage of female leaders and representatives in boardrooms not only leads to financial gains but can also precipitate a trickle-down effect to usher in more diversity and inclusiveness in workplaces. He refers to McKinsey & Company's Diversity Wins Report 2020 which states "companies whose boards are in the top quartile of gender diversity are 28 per cent more likely than their peers to outperform financially".

He concludes, "Women in powerful positions tend to safeguard the interests of female employees and also foster a culture of multi-perspective organisational feedback that augments the company's brand image and its growth in the long run."



The role of Edtech in 2023

The use of technology in education has been around for some time now. However, it has certainly gained a lot of attention and adoption in recent years, particularly due to the widespread shift to remote learning brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is likely to continue to grow and play an important role even after the pandemic subsides. In fact, experts predict that the global EdTech market will reach \$300 billion by 2029.

With this in mind, it's worth considering the increasing significance and potential of technology in education. It can improve the effectiveness and efficiency of education. It allows educators to make their content more engaging, interactive and personalised.

Additionally, technology has enabled the development of virtual and augmented reality tools that can help to create immersive learning environments and foster communication and collaboration among students and teachers.

In 2023, edtech will empower teachers with the tools and technology they need to educate their students effectively. Teachers today can make the learning experience more engaging, efficient, and effective for their students with the use of edtech.

In addition, edtech can play a significant role in maximising learning outcomes by incorporating quality in both offline and online learning through a blended learning approach.

Blended learning is an instructional method that combines traditional face-to-face classroom methods with online learning methods. By inte-

grating EdTech into a blended learning approach, students can get the flexibility they need to learn at their own pace and access online resources and activities in and out of the classroom. Simultaneously, teachers can use technology to personalise instruction, provide immediate feedback and monitor student progress.

It can help the government democratise access to technology and educational resources. By providing a means for delivering educational content and resources to a wider audience, including those in underserved or remote areas, edtech aids in the accessibility of education.

Moreover, online courses on Edtech platforms allow educators to create and deliver online courses on a wide range of subjects. These courses can be accessed by students from anywhere in the world, providing access to education to those who may not have access to traditional educational institutions.

Today as we stand in 2023, the government is taking a proactive and supportive approach to edtech and is working closely with them to create a brighter and more equitable future of education.

Another important aspect of edtech is its role in the development and adoption of analytics in education.

Analytics has become an increasingly important part of the learning process as it enables educators to measure a student's engagement and academic performance.

One way that edtech contributes to the use

of analytics in education is through the development of adaptive learning algorithms. These algorithms use data on student performance to create customised learning paths for each student.

Lastly, Edtech can help students develop a range of technology skills essential for many jobs in the modern economy. This includes skills like coding, data analysis, and the use of productivity tools and software.

It will also help them develop problem-solving skills and collaboration skills that they will need to succeed in a rapidly changing and increasingly technology-driven world. For instance, students can develop problem-solving skills through interactive learning activities and simulations.

Similarly, tools like virtual classrooms and collaboration platforms can help students develop aptitudes for teamwork, communication, and cooperation.

Edtech has the power to revolutionise the way we approach education, and it's not just a temporary solution brought on by the pandemic. It has the potential to transform education and prepare students for success in a constantly evolving future.

As we look to the future, it's clear that edtech will continue to play a significant role in how we approach education.

(The writer, Rishabh Khanna, is the founder and CEO of Suraasa)

what's brewing?



Surbhi



Lakshmi



Natasha



Pardhi



Ritvika



Gulshat



Akshay Gupta



Abhimanika



Kajri

Akshay Gupta, general manager, mobile business, Samsung India unveiled the Galaxy S23 Series and Galaxy Book3 series at hotel Novotel convention center in Hyderabad.

PARTY

Photos by SV Chary

LISTINGS

The Hyderabad Black Hawk team launched their new jersey for the 2023 season in the Rupay Prime Volleyball League. The Jersey, a sharp black and orange design, was launched by K T Rama Rao, minister for Municipal Administration & Urban Development, along with Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary of the Industries & Commerce (I&C) and Information Technology (IT) Departments of the Telangana president of Telangana Olympic body at an event in Hyderabad.



Hyderabad-based real estate developer Laxmi Nivasam Developers, announced the launch of Laxmi Logistics Parks across India starting with Chittoor, Sadasivpet and Lucknow.

Electrolux launched its two exclusive retail outlets in Hyderabad. Consumers can now explore elegant scandinavian designs coupled with sustainable innovative technology across Electrolux's range of care, taste, and well-being appliances.



A FESTIVAL WITH NATURE

Signature Packaged Drinking water, reveals its idea of living the good life, while doing good. Signature Green Vibes, a Festival with Nature is launching nationally with its debut in Hyderabad. The festival invites you to discover and celebrate nature across multiple destinations. Scintillating music performances by leading bands, locally inspired food, masterclasses with celebrity Green creators, green acts and more. Kicking off in Hyderabad as its first pitstop, the festival will be a one-day extravaganza held within the calm waves and the hustling of the Labyrinth Lakefront on February 11, 2023.

At the festival, Chef Kavitha Mantha, known for championing the cause of farm to table food will bring alive an experience, inspired from locally available ingredients. The audience will also be treated to a one-of-its-kind masterclass by Rakul Preet Singh, and Rahul Bose on their signature ways of leading a good life and giving back to nature. It will host popular Indie artists, with regional flair, such as, the rock band with a soundscape built upon elements of folk and classical sounds of Kerala - Thaikudam Bridge; the soulful - Taba Chake; and the reigning King of Tenglish, Hip Hop and Streetstyle Rap - Yung Raja, and many more. Be the first to get your hands on tickets for Green Vibes India 2023 as limited Early Bird tickets which start at Rs 999 onwards.

IKEA LOWERS PRICES TO ATTRACT MORE HOME FURNISHING LOVERS

IKEA India has lowered prices for many of its products without an end date as part of its long-term steps to make home furnishings more affordable and accessible for the Indian market. It is applicable for both its offline and online offers. The prices of these products have been reduced starting from 16% to as much up to 39%. This initiative is aligned with IKEA's omnichannel experience for the consumers as the low prices are also reflected in their food offerings and services.

THE PRESENCE OF LOVE IS PALPABLE!

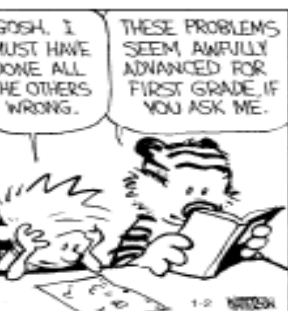
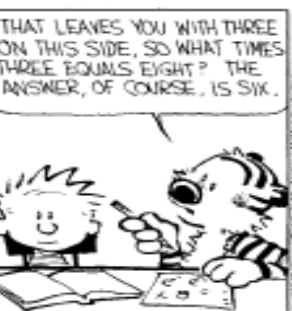
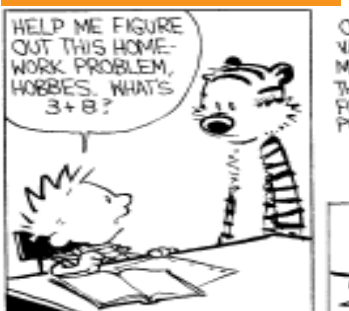
This Valentine's day make your loved ones feel special. Create special memories with a private rendezvous at the magnificent Novotel that includes all the components of love, Candle-lit tables, a stunning, chilly outdoor setting, a view of the pool, mouth-watering food, and sparkling cocktails, romantic music, and an unforgettable experience that will live in your memories for years to come. **Where:** Alfresco, Poolside Dining at Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre, Hyderabad, Telangana. **When:** February 14, Time- 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM **For Reservations, call:** +91 9642326162

FUN

ARCHIE



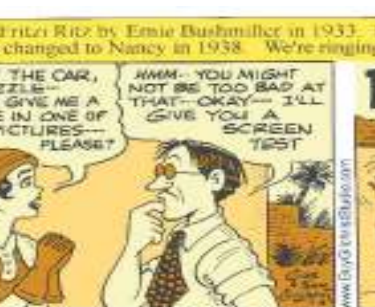
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



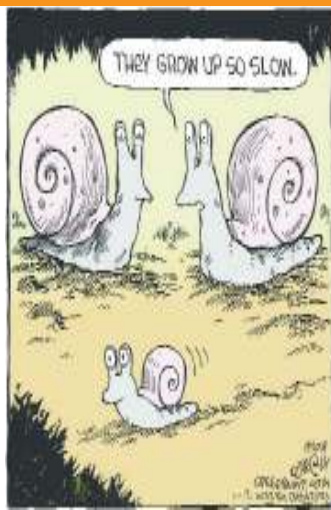
GINGER MEGGS



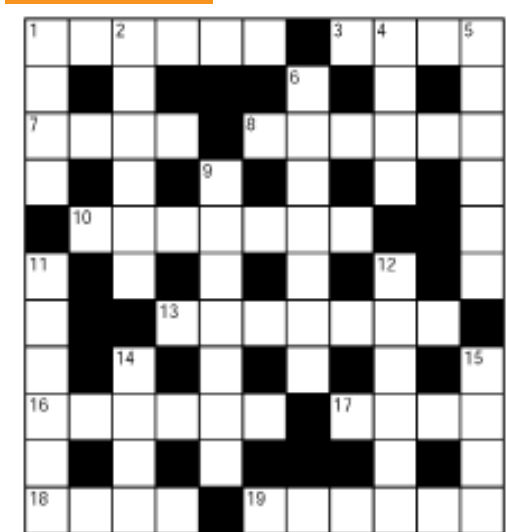
REALITY CHECK



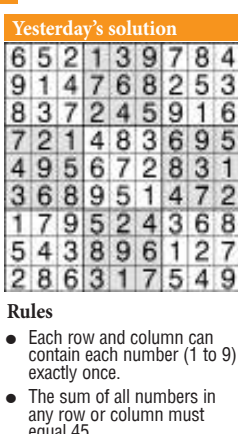
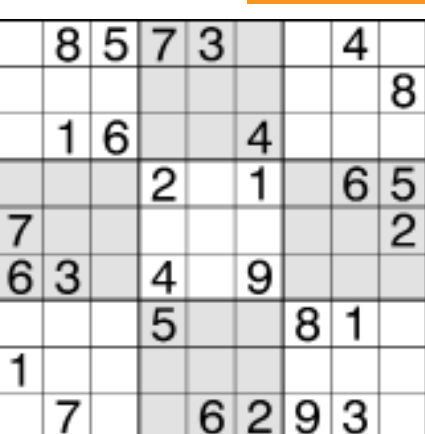
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



ACROSS

- 1 A season
- 2 Strike with an open hand
- 3 Jump over
- 4 Having a sharp sour taste
- 5 Applauded
- 6 Bumped
- 7 Sleepy
- 8 A biting, jumping insect
- 9 Require
- 10 Something built over a river

DOWN

- 1 Not sick
- 2 Just about
- 3 Overdue
- 4 A talking pet bird

- 6 A permit to drive
- 9 The language of Spain
- 11 Concealed from view
- 12 Shouted
- 14 Gown
- 15 A strong box for storing valuables



'Audience will get to see a matured performance from me in VBVK'

AMARTYA SMARAN

Kiran Abbavaram is perhaps one of the few actors in the Telugu Film Industry to have attained such massive fame in a short span. This success has raised many eye-brows and led to a lot of negativity on social media platforms. However, not giving in to the vicious trolling, Kiran Abbavaram is ready to prove his mettle as an actor with *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha* (VBVK), which is going to be released on February 17.

With *Sammathame* and *Nenu Meeku Baga Kavalsinavaadini* underperforming at the box office, the actor is hoping to score the much needed hit with *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha*. The film is produced by Geetha Arts and directed by Murali Kishor Abburu. VBVK marks Kiran Abbavaram's biggest film to date solely considering the production size. The teaser of the film received quite a good response. On Tuesday, the makers had launched the trailer of the film.

"This film is going to be very nice and you all will love it. We tapped in a new concept all together with this film. I feel blessed to have gotten the chance to work with such a big banner in the early stages of my career. Everything worked out so well and I really love the way in which the producers treated all of us. I'm super proud that *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha* is a Geetha Arts production," said Kiran.

The *Sammathame* actor was apparently so excited upon hearing the script, that he greenlit the project without any second thoughts. "When I first listened to the story, especially the climax, I was sure that everybody in the theater would clap. People might have liked different shades of my characters in different films, but in this film you'll see a complete package. The audience will get to see a matured performance from me; they will actually notice my growth as an actor in this movie," informed the star.

One of the first things that an actor looks for is the relatability of a character. If the character's over the top and nowhere close to reality, it takes a lot for the actor to perform on screen. "This character is quite relatable to me in real life as well. I didn't have to do any special preparation for the role. Let it be the way he treats people around him or the way he talks to someone, all that was not far away from me. So, it was easy for me to play this character on the screen," said the actor in an upbeat tone.

Every film brings with it a bunch of good memories. Talking about one such moment, he recalled, "We were shooting this fight sequence at the famous Govindaraja Swamy temple in Tirupati. Nobody has ever shot as extensively as we did in those premises. We'd start shooting for this massive fight sequence after 11 p.m. because the location would be filled with devotees until then. I felt this strong vibe while shooting in front of the temple which I can never forget. That's the most memorable moment from the VBVK shooting process."

Allu Aravind is one of the finest and the most trustworthy producers in the industry. So, we asked Kiran if there's anything that he learned from the successful producer. "I observed that Sir learns everyday. In all his interactions with youngsters, he really learns from all of them. He keeps himself updated and never stops learning," explained Kiran.

Likewise, the SR *Kalyanamandapam* actor had some great things to say about director Murali Kishor Abburu. "He's a wonderful person and a great writer. You can spend hours together with him discussing ideas and never get bored. He has a fantastic sense of humour and I love the way puts the dialogues across. The audience will certainly take notice of the dialogues in the film and talk about it."

In our conversation with the actor, we noticed that he isn't someone who takes things for granted. Looking back at his previous films which didn't do well at the box-office, he poignantly said, "I knew in the process (*Nenu Meeku Baga Kavalsinavaadini*) itself that something was missing. And while we all unitedly worked for the success of the film, things didn't work out in our way. I try not to repeat the same mistakes over and over again. I'm not someone who makes false promises to the audience. For all my films, I don't exaggerate about the content. I try my best to honestly promote the film. In the present day situation, we never know what's going to work. We can't really predict. We should be careful in promoting our films. I don't push the content of the film if it's bad."

There's a lot of negativity surrounding

the actor and he couldn't care less about the trolls circulating on social media. The actor was quick to deliver a dialogue from his latest film, "Negativity spreads easily but it will definitely stop somewhere. It might take time for positivity to spread but once it does, it catches on like wildfire," expressed Kiran, and continued, "I'm sure that if someone spreads negativity, it's not going to turn out to be the truth. I'm sure the negativity will stop. People who know me through my films and inter-

In an exclusive interaction with *The Pioneer*, actor Kiran Abbavaram, who is super excited for his upcoming film *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha*, shares some interesting insights about the film, memorable moment while shooting, negativity surrounding the actor, and more.

views know what I am and for the most part I get to meet a lot of positive people. There may be around five or six trolls who're trying to spread negativity. Now that I'm in the limelight, people will talk about it more."

All said, Kiran emanated nothing but confidence in our quick telephonic interaction. Before signing off, he reiterated, "I can proudly say that we

made a good film. The audience will definitely enjoy watching *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha* on 17th February. This Shivaratri, you all can watch it with your family and enjoy thoroughly and this is my promise. Please watch the film. I am happy because I know the film's result is going to be great. My only intention is that more people should know about this film and watch it in theaters."



Samantha's Shaakuntalam postponed, again

Sensational Samantha Ruth Prabhu starrer *Shaakuntalam*, based on a popular play Abhigyanam Shakuntalam by Kalidasa, has been postponed indefinitely.

The official handle of Sri Venkateswara Creations confirmed the news on social media, it said, "The theatrical release of *Shaakuntalam* stands postponed. The new release date will be announced soon @Gunasekhar1 @Samanthaprabhu2 @ActorDevMohan @neelima_guna #ManiSharma @GunaaTeamworks @SVC_official @tipsosocial @tipsmusicsooth"

The note read, "We regret to inform our beloved audience that we would not be able to release *Shaakuntalam* this 17th of February. We would be announcing the release date soon. Thank you for your continued support and love"

Written and directed by Gunasekhar. It is produced by Neelima Guna under Gunaa Teamworks and distributed by Sri Venkateswara Creations.

The film features Samantha in the titular role of Shakuntala and Dev Mohan as Dushyanta, the king of Puru dynasty along with Mohan Babu, Jisshu Sengupta, Madhoo, Gautami, Aditi Balan and Ananya Nagalla in supporting roles.

Tamannaah Bhatia becomes Myntra's brand ambassador

Myntra announced its association with the celebrated actor and fashionista, Tamannaah Bhatia, as its brand ambassador, further raising the celebrity quotient associated with one of India's leading fashion, beauty and lifestyle shopping destinations. Tamannaah will be seen in Myntra's latest brand campaign which is slated to go live shortly. Along with Vijay Deverakonda, who continues to be one of Myntra's brand ambassadors, the popular actors who are adored for their fashion sense as they are for their acting acumen, are all set to create a unique and impactful brand campaign for Myntra.

Speaking of the association, Tamannaah Bhatia, said, "It's so exciting to be associated with a brand that is a pioneer in the space of fashion! Glad to be a part of Myntra's brand campaigns, making fashion even more accessible to my fans across the country, and helping them elevate their everyday style with Myntra."



Kabzaa to hit screens on Puneeth Rajkumar's b'day

The much-awaited Kannada movie, *Kabzaa*, which is a pan-India release starring Upendra, Kichcha Sudeepa and Shriya Saran, will be released on the silver screen on March 17. The day also marks the birth anniversary of late Kannada superstar Puneeth Rajkumar.

Fans are celebrating the announcement from the film's

team. The movie's title song, which was released recently, has become an instant hit among the audience. The movie's posters and rushes have also garnered love and affection. *Kabzaa* is directed by the acclaimed director R. Chandru, who has delivered a number of superhits. The film has already earned its place on IMDb's list of most-awaited movies.

Chiranjeevi's Waitair Veerayya to arrive on Netflix on Feb 27

Veteran star Chiranjeevi's hit Telugu film *Waitair Veerayya* is set to premiere on Netflix on February 27, the streaming platform announced on Tuesday.

The streamer shared the digital premier date of the film on Netflix India South Twitter page.

"In front there is Mega Force festival! *Waitair Veerayya* is coming to Netflix on 27th Feb and we can't keep calm," the tweet read.

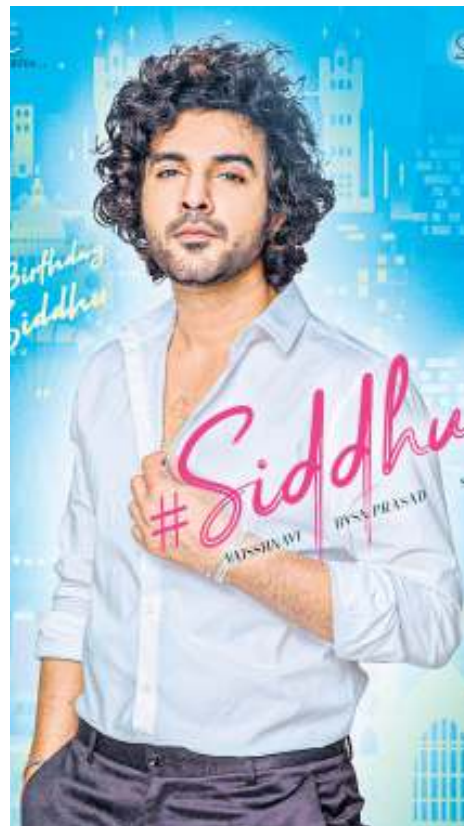
The Telugu action movie stars Chiranjeevi in the titular role along side Ravi Teja, Shruti Haasan, Prakash Raj and Catherine Tresa. Directed by Bobby Kolli, *Waitair Veerayya* released in theaters on January 13. It has been produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y Ravi Shankar.



Siddhu joins hands with SVCC & director Sukumar

The young and talented Siddhu Jonnalagadda, has been wearing multiple hats as an actor, screenwriter, co-editor and creative producer. He attained phenomenal success with the film *DJ Tillu*. This movie stood out among the massive influx of telugu films that have been released since the second wave of the epidemic. He is being choosy in selecting his films. And the actor locked his upcoming project.

On Tuesday, the actor celebrated his 31st birthday and announced his upcoming film. The new film which is the 8th film in his career is bankrolled by the popular producer BVSN Prasad under Sri Venkateswara Cine Chitra banner along with Sukumar Writings. The film which is tentatively titled *#Siddhu8* will be helmed by debutant Vaishnavi. The actor is currently working on much awaited sequel of *DJ Tillu* titled *Tillu Square*. He will soon start this exciting project and more details about the cast and crew will be announced soon. Now this exciting collaboration is unexpected and Siddhu is working back to back on top production house projects.



Aadi Sai Kumar-starrer CSI Sanatan on March 10

The makers of actor Aadi Saikumar's *CSI Sanatan*, under the Chaganti Production, recently unveiled the character of Aadi in the upcoming film. The actor will be seen playing the character of an investigative officer, who is trying to solve a murder case. Meanwhile, on Tuesday, the makers had announced the release date of the film. The film is going to hit the theaters on March 10, 2023. The film stars Misha Narang, and Vasanthi Krishnan in prominent roles.

