

ANALYSIS 7
SOME MODEST BUDGET
EXPECTATIONS FROM FM

MONEY 8
FINMIN TO STICK TO PRIVATISATION
OF CPSES NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR

SPORTS 11
INDIA WIN U-19 WOMEN'S
T20 WC TITLE

VIJAYAWADA, MONDAY, JANUARY 30, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

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PAWAN-SUJEETH'S
FILM TO BE
LAUNCHED
OFFICIALLY TODAY

Page 12

MADE-IN-INDIA WEAPON SYSTEMS HIGHLIGHT OF ARMY'S 'EXERCISE TOPCHI'

Indigenously manufactured weapon systems were the highlight of the Indian Army's 'Exercise Topchi', an annual firepower demonstration and training exercise conducted at the School of Artillery in Devlali here on Sunday. The mega event took place under the stewardship of Lt Gen S Harimohan Iyer, AVSM, Commandant School of Artillery and Col Commandant Regiment of Artillery. The event shows the capability of the Indian artillery. This year, we have stressed on 'Atmanirbharata' (self-reliance). All the gun systems and other equipment displayed today, showcase the capacity of the Indian industry," Lt Gen Iyer said. The guns and other systems be it the K-9 Vajra, Dhanush system or M777 gun system, all have been assembled in India, he said.

US TO START RECEIVING H1B VISA APPLICATIONS FROM MARCH 1

The highly anticipated H1B visa filing season for fiscal 2023-24 will officially begin on March 1 when the US immigration agency will start accepting applications for skilled foreign workers visas, the most sought-after by Indian IT professionals. The H1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China. The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) said for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023, it will accept applications between March 1 and March 17 petitions for H-1B visas that allow them to work and live in the US for up to six years.

PASSENGER HIDING FOREIGN CURRENCY WORTH RS 64L IN TROLLEY HANDLES HELD

A Bangkok-bound Indian passenger was apprehended by CISF personnel at the New Delhi airport on Sunday for allegedly carrying foreign currency worth about Rs 64 lakh by concealing them in his trolley bag handles, officials said. The man was intercepted by the security personnel at Terminal-III of the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport during security checks when the image of currency notes was spotted on the X-ray scanner, they said. The passenger was supposed to take a Thai Airlines flight to Bangkok, a senior officer said. The CISF personnel recovered Euro 68,400 and 5,000 New Zealand dollars, worth about Rs 64 lakh using screwdrivers to pull out the hidden currency notes, he said.

MIRAGE PLANE'S BLACK BOX, PART OF SUKHOI FLIGHT DATA RECORDER FOUND

The black box of Mirage 2000 and a part of the flight data recorder of Sukhoi-30MKI jet, which had crashed in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district, have been found in the wreckage, an official said on Sunday. Teams of the Indian Air Force (IAF) studied and inspected a forested area of Pahargarh where the debris of the two fighter jets fell on Saturday. The two frontline combat aircraft of the IAF crashed during a training mission in Morena, resulting in the death of a wing commander while two other pilots ejected safely. "The black box of the Mirage aircraft has been found from the wreckage in Pahargarh area of Morena.

BUDGET SURVEY

60% households expect dip in earning and seek relief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

More than half of households in a survey conducted online across 309 districts expect a decline in their income by up to 25 per cent and dip in savings, and are looking for relief in the coming budget, online platform LocalCircles said on Sunday.

The survey, conducted between November 25 and January 25, found that with job losses and hiring sentiment turning negative, 52 per cent respondents feel that the economic uncertainty will persist for the next 6-12 months.

LocalCircles claimed that 37,000 responses were received from household consumers across 309 districts of India, comprising 64 per cent men, 36 per cent women from tier 1, tier 2 and smaller towns as well.

"Our survey indicates that majority households in the country are facing the squeeze and in community discussions thousands of inputs were received by LocalCircles about lowering income tax rates or increasing deductions and exemptions," LocalCircles founder Sachin Taparia said. The number of responses on each question varied.

In response to questions on expected change in income, 7 per cent households projected a 25 per cent drop in annual income during the current fiscal, 22 per cent projected a 10-15 per cent drop, 10 per cent projected a drop of up to 10 per cent and 21 per cent felt their income will reduce but they were uncertain about the scale.

Fifty-six per cent household consumers surveyed believe their aver-



age household savings will reduce during the current fiscal while only 19 per cent households expect an increase, according to the survey.

In response to questions around economic uncertainty, 52 per cent out of over 13,000 respondents

expressed that they expect economic uncertainty to last 6-12 months while 23 per cent expected the uncertainty to last 3-6 months in 2023, 6 per cent felt uncertainty may last up to 3 months while 19 per cent were not sure about it.

All-party meet on Union Budget today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government has called an all-party meeting on Monday, a day ahead of the start of the Budget Session of Parliament.

The customary meeting, called by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi, is to be held at noon on January 30 in Parliament Annexe Building.

During the meeting, the government is expected to seek cooperation from all parties for the smooth running of Parliament.

Opposition parties are expected to raise matters of concern during the meeting and also highlight issues they plan to raise during the session. In the afternoon, a meeting of NDA floor leaders will also be held to strategise floor cooperation. The Budget Session will be held in two parts.

The session will begin with President Droupadi Murmu's address to the joint sitting of the two Houses of Parliament. Economic Survey will be tabled after the President's address.

Naidu gets Cong invite to attend Rahul's meet

SNCN ACHARYULU
■ HYDERABAD

TDP supremo N. Chandrababu Naidu was expecting something on the political alliance front and an offer came unexpectedly. While Chandrababu wants an alliance with the BJP the Congress has extended a helping hand to Chandrababu.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to the chiefs of 21 opposition parties including Chandrababu inviting them to Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra's concluding ceremony being held on Monday at Srinagar. It may be recalled that Chandrababu joined hands with the Congress during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections to unseat the BJP at the Centre. But unfortunately, the hopes of Chandrababu went in vain. In AP he lost power and at the Centre, the BJP retained power.

Later, Chandrababu realised that he committed a historical mistake by joining hands with the Congress. After that Chandrababu maintained a distance from the Congress. At the same time, Chandrababu is trying to revive his ties with the BJP.



But the BJP leadership has taken a strong decision not to have any alliance with the TDP. In these circumstances, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote to Chandrababu inviting him to attend the concluding meeting of Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra keeping in mind its old ties with the TDP. But Chandrababu has decided not to commit the same mistake again before the crucial Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections. Chandrababu has reportedly decided not to accept the Congress invitation. He still has some hope of striking a deal with the BJP. If Chandrababu attends the Congress meeting the BJP will close its doors permanently.



Jagan's 2-day visit to Delhi from today

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy will be on a two-day visit to New Delhi on January 30 to meet diplomats for the upcoming Global Summit. The CM will start from Tadepalli residence at 4 pm on Monday and reach New Delhi by 6.45 pm and will stay at 1 Janpath residence for the night.

The Chief Minister will attend the AP Global Investors Summit Round Table Meeting with diplomats and other foreign dignitaries at an event to be held at Leela Palace Hotel on Tuesday (31.01.2023) from 10.30 am - 5.30 pm. He will participate in the curtain-raiser programme.

After the programme, he will leave Delhi at 6.05 pm and reach his Tadepalli residence at 8.50 pm.

AP Budget session to begin in March 2nd week



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The budget session of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly will be held from the second week of March after the completion of the two-day Andhra Pradesh Global Investors Summit scheduled on March 3 and 4 in Visakhapatnam.

According to sources, the Budget session is likely to be held for at

least 25 working days this time. This year's budget for 2023-24 is likely to cross Rs 2.75 lakh crore and may touch Rs 3 lakh crore as this would be a crucial budget for the government as the next budget in 2024-25 will be uncertain as the parties will be busy with the general elections.

Actor Taraka Ratna continues to be critical

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The condition of Nandamuri Taraka Ratna continues to be critical for the second day after he suffered a cardiac arrest in Kuppam during Nara Lokesh's padayatra on Friday. Jr NTR along with his brother Nandamuri Kalyan Ram came to Bengaluru to see their cousin who was being treated at Narayana Hrudayalaya on Sunday. They reached Bangalore on a special flight and were received by the Karnataka Health Minister K Sudhakar.

Speaking to the media after coming out of the hospital, Jr NTR sounded hopeful and gave an update about Taraka Ratna's health condition.

Tirumala to be the world's best energy-efficient temple: TTD EO

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) has initiated several energy efficiency programmes in its establishments and water pumping stations in particular with an aim to make Tirumala the best energy-efficient pilgrim destination across the globe.

During a review meeting the Executive Officer of TTD on Sunday, AV Dharma Reddy said that the TTD has contemplated replacing 118 existing pump sets with energy-efficient pump sets in coordination with APSECM/ APSEEDCO and is likely to become the only pilgrim destination in the country which is planning to implement



energy-efficient water pumping programme at such a large scale.

TTD is a highly energy-conscious temple and strongly believes in pro-environmental activities for which full focus has been laid on star-

labelled appliances and the adoption of energy-efficient technologies. The TTD's initiatives to go with energy efficiency would promote eco-friendly solutions that will help society and nature as well. We would like to make TTD the top pilgrim destination in the energy efficiency front not only in the country but also across the world" EO TTD said. EO Dharma Reddy said that "TTD is determined to provide the best quality services to devotees with an objective to improve the existing facilities to devotees keeping the requirements of the future in mind and also provide the benefits of energy efficiency measures to all the devotees".

Ex-minister Vatti passes away

PNS ■ ELURU



Former minister Vatti Vasanth Kumar died on Sunday in Apollo hospital in Visakhapatnam. He had been suffering from kidney-related problems for the last few months. Vatti Vasanth Kumar was 70 and belonged to Pulla village.

Vasanth Kumar worked as a minister in the YS Rajasekhara Reddy, K Rosaliah, and N Kiran Kumar Reddy Cabinets and held rural development and tourism development portfolios.

He was elected to the Assembly from the Unguturu constituency in 2004 and 2009. He had been maintain-

ing distance from politics since 2014. His body was shifted to his native village Pulla.

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) paid tributes to Vatti Vasanth Kumar. City Congress president Naraharashetti Narasimha Rao, APCC legal cell chairman V Gurunatham and APCC RTI cell chairman PT Kiran paid tributes by garlanding the portrait of Vattasth Kumar in the Congress office on Sunday. Janasena Political Affairs Committee chairman Nadendla Manohar also condoled the death of Vasanth Kumar and recalled his association with him.

GVU, CM CONDOLE DEATH

Andhra Pradesh Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan has expressed profound grief over the demise of former Minister Vatti Vasanthakumar, on Sunday. Governor Harichandan said that Vasanthakumar was elected as an MLA in 2004 and 2009 and served as a Minister for Rural Development and Tourism in the united Andhra Pradesh. The Governor offered his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy expressed grief over the demise of former Minister Vatti Vasanth Kumar and conveyed his condolences to the bereaved family members.

Odisha min shot dead

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR



Odisha's Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das died of bullet injuries on Sunday, Apollo Hospital officials said.

Earlier in the day, Das, 60, was shot and grievously injured in Jharsuguda district when he got out of his car, allegedly by a police officer who was captured.

The minister was airlifted to Bhubaneswar in an air ambulance and admitted to Apollo Hospital,

Bhubaneswar.

A team of doctors operated on him, the hospital said.

"On operating was found that a single bullet had entered and exited the body, injuring the heart and left lung, and causing massive internal bleeding and injury."

"The injuries were repaired, and steps were taken to improve the pumping of the heart. He was given urgent ICU care. But, despite best efforts, he could not be revived and succumbed to his injuries," it said in a statement.



LIC continues to bet big on Adani

Remains in green
despite share price rout

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) is ploughing more money into Adani group's flagship firm as it continues to be a net gainer despite the plunge in stock prices following a short seller's fraud allegations, filings and stock market data showed.

LIC, India's largest life insurer, invested about Rs 300 crore in buying 9,15,748 more shares as an anchor investor in a Rs 20,000-crore new share sale by Adani Enterprises Ltd, according to a stock exchange filing of AEL.

The shares that LIC picked totalled 5 per cent of the stocks reserved for anchor investors.

In all 33 institutional investors put in Rs 5,985 crore as anchor investors in AEL. LIC already had 4.23 per cent stake in AEL, just like it has holding in other six listed companies of Adani Group.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Navami: Jan 29 09:05 AM to Jan 30 10:11 AM
Dashami: Jan 30 10:11 AM to Jan 31 11:54 AM

Nakshatram: Jan 29 08:21 PM to Jan 30 10:15 PM
Kritika: Jan 30 10:15 PM to Jan 31 12:39 AM
Rohini:

Rahukalam: 8:16 AM to 9:40 AM

Yamagandam: 11:05 AM to 12:29 PM

Varjyam: 03:51 PM to 05:37 PM

Gulika: 1:53 PM to 3:17 PM

Amritakalam: 07:40 PM to 09:23 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:06 PM to 12:51 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Partly cloudy

Temp: 34°C

Humidity: 62%

Sunrise: 6:39 AM

Sunset: 6:03 PM

Updated: JANUARY 29, 2023 5:00 PM



AP BJP core committee a divided house

MARTI SUBRAHMANYAM
■ VIJAYAWADA

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) core committee, which discusses the latest political developments and evolves new political strategies, is itself divided due to rift in the party leadership in AP.

The core committee, comprising senior leaders and party affairs in-charge and co-in-charge, takes important decisions after thoroughly discussing them in the meeting and the decision of the core committee should be implemented by all in the party. The issue of the formation of the core committee has also led to differences among leaders in the state unit of the BJP.

After Somu Veerajuu became the state

president, the core committee meetings are held only when he decides and only some leaders picked by Veerajuu are invited which has drawn flak from senior leaders and further fomented tussles.

Sanghatana Mantri, usually an RSS functionary, leads the core committee and he plays a significant role in the State

The issue of the formation of the core committee has led to differences among leaders in the state unit of the BJP.

BJP affairs. But AP Sanghatana Mantri Madhukar jee did not respond properly when six district presidents were sacked by State president Somu Veerajuu recently. Union Minister and State BJP affairs in-charge Muralidharan is not taking care of AP affairs either.

Some BJP leaders complained to the Central leadership that Madhukar jee,

Somu Veerajuu, co-in-charge Sunil Deodhar and general secretary Vishnuvardhan Reddy have formed a group in the state BJP and are taking decisions on their own without taking the opinion of other leaders into consideration, it is learnt.

A BJP leader said that it had been decided to hold core committee meetings on one-to-one basis as the outcome of the earlier core committee meeting, held virtually, was leaked to the media.

A BJP senior leader said that national co-general-secretary Shiva Prakash expressed surprise over the decision to hold the core committee on one-to-one basis and he underlined the need for holding the core committee meeting physically to take decisions. He direct-

ed the State leaders to finalise a date to hold the core committee meeting and send the details to him.

Interestingly, after the Visakhapatnam core committee meeting presided over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the core committee meeting has not been held so far. The Prime Minister asked the State leaders to release a charge sheet against the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government's corruption. But the core committee meeting has not been convened so far.

A senior leader said that the 'charge sheet' on the Jagan Reddy-led government's corruption has not been released as some BJP leaders fear that it would affect the benefits, which they were getting from the government.

Monday Mirchi

TS OFFICIALS HEAVE A SIGH OF RELIEF

MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS

Winds of change are blowing across babudom in Telangana. Officials heaved a sigh of relief after the change in leadership. Chief Secretary Santhi Kumar is flexible and approachable. She is not averse to giving appointments. Officials no longer feel micro-managed or as if they are walking on eggshells. A little bird told us that, compared to her predecessor iron-fisted Somesh Kumar, Santhi Kumar is refreshingly different. She has brought grace to the position by scrupulously following rules and has sent out a strong message to bureaucratic circles with her active presence at functions organized on the Republic Day. She was at the Raj Bhavan, Pragathi Bhavan, and in her office for the unfurling of the national flag. Later in the evening she even attended At Home.

DGP MEANS BUSINESS

Director-General of Police Anjani Kumar means business. With him at the helm of affairs, it looks like no official is going to sit idle without posting. In the recent reshuffle of IPS and non-cadre officers, as many as 48 officers who had been waiting for posting were given task. Nineteen IPS officers were given posting, including those from the 2017 batch. Bureaucratic circles are now discussing how the party of many these officials, who had been drawing salaries without any work for months, has come to an end. In the second round of rejig in the same week, Anjani Kumar asked 13 officers to report to the Chief Minister's Office. Anjani Kumar even conducted a session to boost the morale of the officers after rejig. Officials say his ways are different from those of his predecessor Mahender Reddy.

DONATIONS COME AT A COST

Days after promotion, the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy government moved senior IPS officer P V Sunil Kumar from the post of state Crime Investigation Department chief. The senior IPS officer of the 1993 batch has been asked to report to the General Administration Department. The sudden transfer has taken many by surprise, considering that Sunil had secured DG rank by climbing up the ladder quickly. Sunil was supposed to be in the good books of the Chief Minister. Apparently a complaint went to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs about PV Sunil and they were not very happy with the way AP government chose to deal with the complaint. There are whispers in the corridors of power that the action was triggered by a complaint about donations raised by an NGO started by PV Sunil. Some circles believe that Sunil Kumar might be given a better post, such as Intelligence chief. He is also tipped to be the next DGP of AP.

Sunil Kumar is known for his controversial decisions relating to filing of cases against TDP leaders, registering case in the alleged Amaravati land scam, an Inner Ring Road case, a sedition case against YSRC rebel MP K Raghurama Krishnam Raju and against a couple of media houses.

-Yours truly

The recent much-publicized intrusion of a deputy tahildar into CM Secretary Smita Sabarwal's house has taken bureaucratic circles by storm. Several questions came up among officials, instead of answers, when yours truly tried to figure out what exactly had happened. What was the security doing? Why didn't they check with Smita before letting them enter her house at that late hour? Why were the doors not locked? Why was it posted on Twitter two days after the incident? Her colleagues too responded with similar questions, for which there have been no answers till date. During the interrogation, even the second accused never explained why they were there late in the night. All they said was that they wanted to talk about promotions of tahildars because their Andhra counterparts got elevated. Nonetheless, the police have now decided to increase patrolling and strengthen vigil at bureaucrats' homes.

ONLY TASK IS TO PREPARE A REVENUE MODEL

Priorities change when the fiscal position of the government is weak with no light at the end of the tunnel. Government departments typically focus on their budgets, targets etc. With the countdown for budget nearing, the only task for every secretary of every department in Andhra Pradesh is to prepare a revenue model or loan raising scheme. None of the departments has been spared, including those which generally do not generate revenue. Some of the departments, such as animal husbandry, agriculture, cooperation and marketing, are puzzled as to how they could raise funds. Officials are breaking their heads over how each of them can contribute to enhancing GSDP, improving economy, and creating new jobs.

STREAMLINING ADMINISTRATION UNDER WATCH

It pays to have a pliant administration during polls. Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has been streamlining the administration, apparently to prepare for the upcoming Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. In one stroke, more than 90 officers have been transferred in the Police Department. In almost all the districts, new superintendents of Police have been appointed. Officers at top levels have also been changed. The general opinion is that, given the elections ahead, the government has appointed in key positions officers who would be useful. However, since the Election Commission and the courts are keenly observing everything, such officers have little scope to help ruling parties. If they do it out of the way, they have to face the music. KCR is expected to reshuffle IAS officers as well. He may want the entire administration to be in his grip by the time of elections. But that may not be possible because, apart from the Election Commission and Courts, the Union government led by BJP is closely watching the state administration.

AP Budget session to begin...

Continued from page 1

Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy and the Finance department officials are likely to allocate more funds for the welfare sectors as per the instructions of the CM, as the focus will be more on the Navaratnalu schemes of

the ruling party besides completing the housing scheme of 30 lakh houses for the poor across the state in Jagananna colonies with the funds allocated in the current budget.

Apart from the housing for the poor, the CM is very keen on constructing medical colleges, village clinics, and cold

storage attached to the Rythu Bharosa Kendras (RBK) with the funds allocated in the new budget. The finance department is working to give final shape to the budget and the CM is said to be going through allocations made to every sector and every department before giving a final nod.

Actor Taraka...

Continued from page 1

He said that Taraka Ratna, though in a critical condition, was responding to treatment. He is getting enhanced treatment and is currently fighting. I came here as a family member and doctors are trying their best, he said. All your blessings and prayers are needed, he requested and refused to comment about the medical aspects saying that he was not a doctor. His brother Kalyan Ram said that he was praying to God that his brother recovers quickly and comes before all of us along with the people's blessings.

CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG	
Dressed/With Skin	₹205
Without Skin	₹215
Broiler at Farm	₹190

EGG RATES ₹/100	
VIJAYAWADA	462
HYDERABAD	460
VISAKHAPATNAM	460
RETAIL PRICE	₹4.62

LIC continues...

Continued from page 1

According to stock exchange information, LIC made a total investment of Rs 28,400 crore in Adani shares over the last few years. The value of these shares was Rs 72,200 crore before the report of the US short seller triggered a stock price crash over the last two trading sessions. The value of shares that LIC holds in Adani group companies fell to Rs 55,700 crore but it still is a net gainer by Rs 27,300 crore over its original investment. LIC holds 9 per cent in Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone, 3.7

per cent in Adani Transmission, 1.3 per cent in Adani Green Energy and 6 per cent in Adani Total Gas Ltd.

Other investors who formed part of the anchor investors in AEL's follow-on public offer included Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and Al Mehwar Commercial Investment LLC.

AEL in the stock exchange filing said the FPO committee of its board of directors has finalised allocation of 1.82 crore shares to anchor investors at Rs 3,276 apiece, of which Rs 1,638 per share will be paid by now and the rest in subsequent calls.

Adani calls Hindenburg allegations attack on India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Richest Indian Gautam Adani's group on Sunday likened the damning allegations made by short seller Hindenburg Research to a "calculated attack" on India, its institutions and growth story, saying the allegations are "nothing but a lie". In a 413-page response, Adani Group said the

report was driven by "an ulterior motive" to "create a false market" to "allow the US firm to make financial gains." "This is not merely an unwarranted attack on any specific company but a calculated attack on India, the independence, integrity and quality of Indian institutions, and the growth story and ambition of India," it said.

JAGANANNA CHEDODU CM set to release Rs 330.15 crore for Rajakas, Nayi Brahmins & Darjis today

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In all, 3,30,145 eligible Rajakas, Nayi Brahmins and Darjis (tailors) across the State will get Rs 330.15 crore financial assistance under the 'Jagananna Chedodu' for the third consecutive year. The amount will be deposited in the accounts of the beneficiaries by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy at a function to be held at Vinukonda in Palnadu district on Monday.

Under the 'Jagananna Chedodu' scheme, shop owners from Rajaka, Nayi Brahmin, and Tailor communities will get Rs 10,000 each. With this, each beneficiary will receive Rs 30,000 in financial assistance from the Jagan government and the total



amount provided by the government will go up to Rs 927.39 crore under the 'Jagananna Chedodu' scheme in the last three years.

The Jagan government has selected the eligible beneficia-

ries in a transparent manner through village/ward secretariats by conducting social audits. The Jagan government is further providing an opportunity to the eligible beneficiaries in June and December who

A decade of serving river

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In front of a large gathering on the Krishna River's south bank under Vaaradhi, comprising hundreds of members, river walkers, runners, and swimmers who volunteered from 2012 to 2023, several speakers and prominent citizens lauded the impact of a decade of river cleanups by the Walkers and Runners.

Speaking after flagging off children's sand run and river swim, former mayor of Vijayawada city Dr. Jandhyala Shankar lauded the greening efforts by AWARA volunteers, who created three fruit tree parks along the river bank and cleansed off the piled-up trash. He recalled AWARA's efforts in publishing a systematic study of river trash over the years that determined how a ban on single-use plastic could cut down nearly 78 per cent trash hills dotting every ward and village of our nation.

In his chief guest address, philanthropist, industrialist,



and former MP Gokaraju Gangaraju said to make a habitually 'd' site into an ODF site was no mean task, but for the tenacity of AWARA cleaning efforts. That ritualised discipline could be behind the success of scores of youngsters who competitively secured competitive jobs in the paramilitary and the Army.

NDRF 10th battalion Deputy Commandant Akhilesh Kumar Choubey recalled the long and fruitful years of association with AWARA in common causes and training.

School student volunteers Loukya, Vaishnavi and Indira put up a public display of their resuscitation skills for first

responders. Retired Professor of Diabetology Dr. PV Rao organized a diabetic camp for adults and children, that was attended by several Vijayawada and Guntur physicians including Drs. Ramakumar, RamBabu, Ramana Murthy, and Satya Kishore.

Welcoming the gathering, a well-known environmentalist and AWARA founder Prof Ajay Katragadda remembered the thousands of citizen volunteers behind this 10-year saga and felicitated each one by name. Coach coordinator Sakuntaladevi, teacher Sharone, NDRF Inspector Sivakiran, and Head Constable Md Rafi Farooki supervised the arrangements.

BRS to boycott Murmu's Parl speech

K VENKATESHWARLU ■ HYDERABAD

BRS MPs are going to boycott the President's speech in Parliament. The BRS Parliamentary Party meeting held at the Pragathi Bhavan on Sunday took a decision in this regard. The BRS Parliamentary Party decided to boycott the President's budget speech to protest against the Centre damaging the interests of Telangana, discriminating against the state, imposing financial curbs and its biased attitude against the state on farmers' issues.

BRS President Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has already spoken to opposition Chief Ministers and opposition leaders on boycotting the President's budget speech.

It is learnt that KCR spoke to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejaswi Yadav regarding this.

KCR is going to speak to other opposition leaders on boycotting the President's budget speech as well as the issue of Governors as Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Delhi and other states have been facing trouble from Governors.

KCR gave direction to BRS MPs of both the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha regarding the strategies that have to be adopted by the party during the budget session of Parliament starting January 31.

KCR suggested that the budget speech should be dealt with according to conditions prevailing at that time. However, a decision will be taken on budget day on how to deal with the budget speech.

During the meeting, various issues were discussed including budget allocations, funds due from the Centre to the state,

To demand Centre to implement Rythu Bandhu and free power



and promises in the AP Division Act that the Centre has not fulfilled. The Centre will present the budget in Parliament on February 1.

KCR asked BRS MPs to use the Parliament session to expose the Centre's failures.

The CM directed BRS MPs to ask the Centre to implement the Rythu Bandhu Scheme and to supply free electricity to farmers throughout the country as it is being done by the Telangana government.

He also asked BRS MPs to pull up the government regarding LIC's investment in the Adani group. KCR directed his MPs to ask the Centre to implement categorization of SC reservations, ST reservations and for conducting a BC census

He asked BRS MPs to ask the Centre to sanction Kendriya Vidyalayas to TS and to link MNREGA with agriculture work.

The BRS Parliamentary Party meeting was held at the Pragathi Bhavan on Sunday under the chairmanship of Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao. The meeting lasted around four hours and it expressed concern about the "dangerous" policies followed by the Centre.

The BRS Parliamentary Party expressed concern at the

deteriorating situation in the country due to the policies of the Centre. KCR directed BRS MPs to oppose the anti-people policies of the Centre during the budget session.

The CM said the mistakes of the Centre should be brought to the attention of the nation during the Parliament session.

Tussle over Guv post to echo in Parl

The Parliament's budget session is going to witness the tussle going on between Pragathi Bhavan and Raj Bhavan in Telangana. The BRS decided this at its parliamentary party meeting held at the Pragathi Bhavan on Sunday under the leadership of BRS President Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao. Declaring that the BJP government is undermining the nation's federal spirit, BRS President K. Chandrasekhar Rao asked BRS MPs to make the Centre table the matter in Parliament. The Centre should be made to tell the nation the reason behind the progress of a state like Telangana which is advancing on the path of progress and why it is creating obstacles in its path. Not stopping there, the Centre is also misusing the post of Governors. It is undemocratic for the Centre

to keep Governors in its hands to weaken states. "As BRS MPs, you should strongly oppose in both Houses the evil policies of using the post of Governors who are supposed to be negotiators between the Centre and states while performing their constitutional duties for their own political interests. Governors are ignoring decisions taken by the highest bodies including the state cabinet, legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. You should expose the undemocratic policies of Governors and the attitude of the Centre who are trying to trouble State Governments and hinder development," KCR said. KCR directed BRS MPs to join hands with like-minded MPs of other parties to fight the BJP government in Parliament on public issues.

The prices of petrol, diesel, cooking gas and other essential items are increasing. It does not matter to the Centre that the common man's life is burdened by rising prices. The sufferings of commoners across the country should be brought to the attention of the country through both Houses of Parliament, KCR said. He said that unemployment is increasing by the day in the country. Without paying attention to the country's youth, without providing them job security, and by privatising government institutions it is causing immense damage, he said. KCR made it clear to his MPs that they should raise their voice on this issue. The CM made it clear that the Centre is acting like a fool on the promises made in the AP Division Act to Telangana and asked MPs to raise their voice regarding this. KCR made it clear that Telangana should raise its voice in Parliament to get its rights.

Tirumala to be...

Continued from page 1

During the meeting, senior officers of APSEEDCO conducted an investment-grade energy audit (IGEA) in pumping stations of TTD and proposed to replace around 118 existing pump sets with energy-efficient pump sets with an investment of around Rs 3.18 crore. It is expected to save 4.5 MU per annum worth of monetary savings of Rs 3.17 crore with a return on investment of around 12 months.

TTD Chief Engineer D Nageswara Rao, Superintending Engineer, Jagadeeswara Reddy, Executive Engineer, Ravishankar Reddy and other senior officials of APSECM & APSEEDCO participated in the meeting.

V/V SECRETARIAT RECORD

2.88 lakh grievances solved in a day, says MP Vijayasai

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Member of the Rajya Sabha and national general secretary of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) V Vijayasai Reddy has said that the Village and Ward Secretariat system in the State has created a new record by resolving 2.88 lakh grievances for the first time on January 25.

On Sunday, Vijayasai Reddy responded to many issues on social media platforms and said that after the establishment of village and ward secretariats, in three years, people have received a total of 6.43 crore services in their own villages. He said that people have got the most revenue-related services out of these. He said that the government-led by Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy will knock on the door of

every poor house.

The MP said that Rs 1.82 lakh crore have been directly transferred into people's accounts. He congratulated the department for standing first in the survey conducted by the central government and private agencies on the issues related to public trust, efficiency, and honesty in the police department of all the states across the country.

He said that the number of tigers in India is increasing and India was home to 70 per cent of the world's tigers population, but expressed concern as 133 species of animals, reptiles, and birds like one-horned rhinoceros, Asiatic lion, gharial, Ganges dolphin, wild owl are under threat. He said that there is a need to organise a wide campaign to save these creatures.

Jagan deceived women in the name of Disha Act

PNS ■ KUPPAM

On the third day of 'padayatra' on Sunday, TDP national general secretary Lokesh interacted with people on his way and all of them complained that they are not getting any of the welfare schemes. He said that "Bharathi Reddy, the wife of CM Jagan Mohan Reddy, promised to the people that the 'Amma Vadi' scheme will be given to all children. Is it being implemented?"

Lokesh questioned the State government whether the pension scheme for all those who have completed 45 years of age as promised is being extended to the beneficiaries. "When Jagan, before the elections, said that he will increase everything, people thought that the welfare schemes will be extended to more beneficiaries but the government is increasing all taxes," he said.

Lokesh said that Jagan had deceived even women in the name of Disha Act. "Except for two-wheelers which are seen in the name of Disha, the Act is not in force," he added. Observing that women are



being humiliated by none other than the Cabinet Ministers, Lokesh felt that the atrocities against women are on the rise because of the behaviour of the ruling party leaders.

Later, interacting with farmers at Gundisetipalli in the Kuppam Assembly segment, Nara Lokesh pointed out that during the TDP regime, 50 per

cent subsidy was provided to purchase animals while the Scheduled Castes (SCs) were given 70 percent subsidy.

"How can the Chittoor Dairy which is worth more than Rs 600 cr be handed over to the Amul company at a very cheap price and Jagan Mohan Reddy is resorting to large-scale corruption in the name of dairy farm-

ing," Nara Lokesh remarked. Even salaries are not being paid for Gopala Mitras, he added.

Lokesh also visited the Sunday market at Santhipuram and spoke to the shop-owners. The villagers of Babunagar also narrated their woes to Lokesh that they do not even have proper road facilities as the damaged roads were not repaired in the recent past.

Batchula Arjunudu hospitalised after heart attack

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP)'s disciplinary committee national chairman, MLC and Gannavaram Assembly constituency in-charge Batchula Arjunudu has been hospitalised after he suffered from a heart attack.

Arjunudu was rushed to Ramesh Hospital here from his residence at Kesarapalli of Gannavaram mandal in the wee hours of Sunday, after he complained of chest pain. He is undergoing treatment in the ICU and a team of specialist doctors are monitoring his condition.

Earlier, the MLC suffered a heart attack in June 2021 and the doctors placed a stent then. He was tested positive for Covid-19 twice and underwent treatment at AIG Hospital in Hyderabad. He has been ill for two years, family members said.

TDP national president Nara Chandrababu Naidu talked to the doctors and the family members of Arjunudu over phone. State general secretary Devineni Uma Maheswara Rao, TDP Machilipatnam Parliament president Konakalla Narayana Rao, former MLA Bode Prasad, party national official spokesperson Kommareddy Pattabhi and others visited Ramesh Hospital.



2 years of Vizag Steel Plant stir

Left parties ask State govt to convene all-party meet

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Left leaders have demanded that the State government conduct an all-party meeting as the agitation against the Central government move to privatise Visakha Steel Plant has completed two years. Ten Left party leaders wrote a letter to Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Sunday raising the demand.

The leaders said that they would conduct a public meeting at the steel plant with the cooperation of the Visakha Utku Pari Rakshana Porata Committee on Monday. CPI State secretary K

Ramakrishna, CPM secretary V Srinivasa Rao, CPI (ML) leader Jasti Kishore Babu, CPI (ML) New Democracy leader Y Sambasiva Rao, MCPI (U) leader K Nagabhushanam, CPI (ML) Liberation N Murthy, CPI (ML) New Democracy leader Ch Venkateswarlu, SUCI (C) leader BS Amarnath, Forward Bloc leader PV Sundara Ramaraju and RSP leader Janaki Ramulu have signed the letter.

They said that the Central government appointed a financial sub-committee for the sale or privatisation of the Visakha Steel Plant on January 27, 2021. The steel plant workers, officers,

contract labourers and the Visakha Utku Pari Rakshana Porata Committee have been staging an agitation for the past two years. Also, the State government passed a unanimous resolution in the State assembly.

They further said the people of Andhra Pradesh had raised objection to the Central move. Several organisations staged agitations in protest against the decision, they added.

Meanwhile, they said all political parties were opposing Visakha Steel Plant privatisation. So, to stop the Central government's move, the State government should conduct an all-party meeting, the leaders added.



Rajahmundry Rly Station inspected

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

G John Prasad, Principal Chief Commercial Manager, South Central Railway undertook extensive inspection of Rajahmundry Railway Station on Sunday. He was accompanied by Md Ali Khan, Assistant Commercial Manager, Vijayawada Division throughout the inspection.

G John Prasad commenced the inspection from the main entrance of Rajahmundry Station and reviewed the passenger amenities available. He inspected the booking office, circulating area, catering stalls, and parcel office. He also checked the fuel tanks of two-wheelers booked by Express trains at the parcel office. John Prasad instructed the officials to ensure the thorough emptying of fuel tanks

and strictly adhere to the safety guidelines while loading of such consignments. He also interacted with the staff, and enquired about the work environment and the problems encountered during daily work.

Later, PCCM inspected the working of ATVM machines and interacted with the ATVM facilitators engaged and asked about the volume of passengers they are dealing with daily. Subsequently, he also inspected all the catering stalls, counselled the vendors to maintain proper hygiene and wearing of safety gear while serving the passengers. PCCM and officials also inspected Foot Over Bridges, working of lifts, waiting halls, water vending machines and other essential passenger amenities available at the station.

Office-bearers elected

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Aqua Devils Association president Velagapudi Venkateswara Rao has said that infrastructure facilities would be provided on the banks of River Krishna to swim. His association will conduct medical camps apart from swimming coaching in River Krishna, he said.

The Aqua Devils Association general body meeting was held on the premises of Aqua Devils, chaired by the former MP Gokaraju Ganga Raju, on Sunday. The meeting elected a new committee unanimously. Speaking on the occasion, Aqua Devils Association's new president Venkateswara Rao said that his association would work for the development of the Aqua Devils. He thanked the members for electing him as president.

New committee: Velagapudi Venkateswara Rao (president), Mandapati Lakshmi Narasa Raju (general secretary), Lingipalli Ramakrishna (vice-president), Dr Obul Reddy (joint secretary), Veesam Venkata Subba Rao (treasurer), Gopalam Sambasiva Rao, CHL Narasimha Raom K Sambaiah, Suresh Kumar, V Ramu, P Prabhakar, KV Ramaiah, T Uma Maheswara Reddy

Band concert organised by ENC

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

A band concert by Eastern Naval Command Band was organised on 28 Jan 2023 at Naval Station, Bheeminipatnam, Visakhapatnam. Cmde CS Nayar, Station Commander, Naval Station Bheeminipatnam was the Chief Guest for the event. The event showcased a variety of musical scores ranging across several genres. The event was organised in two sessions, one each for school children and service personnel. It was witnessed by 400 spectators, including 180 schoolchildren from Kendra Vidyalaya, Naval Kinder Garden, and various



private schools. The show culminated with a soul-stirring rendition of a Tri-Service Marching Medley.

Minister releases APAEWA's diary

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Agriculture, Horticulture, Cooperation and Marketing Kakani Govardhan Reddy released the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural Employees' Welfare Association's (APAEWA) diary at his camp office at Tadepalli near Vijayawada on Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that agriculture officers were striving for better yield by giving awareness to the farmers on innovative farming methods. The officers work on the field from the start of the Kharif season to the next Kharif season, he said.

He appreciated them for they had been taking feedback from the farmers regularly and advising the government from time to time to sort out the farmers' problems. Also, they conducted e-KYC and e-crop programmes successfully with the support of the Village Agriculture Assistants, he said.



APAEWA president B Ranganath Babu, general secretary B Srinivas Reddy, treasurer B Sai Sree and others were present.



Trekking organised to Mulapadu forest

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The degree and yoga diploma students of Parvathaneni Brahmaiah Siddharth Arts and Science College, Mogalrajapuram, organised a trekking programme to Mulapadu near Vijayawada on Sunday.

Around 100 people took part in the trek. Apart from

students, there were people aged from six to 60 years.

They started from PB Siddhartha College at 5.30 am. The trekking continued until noon, enjoying fresh air and the beauty of nature. They climbed the hill with the support of a rope.

Even senior citizens participated in the trekking with enthusiasm.

After reaching the uphill, all trekkers performed yoga asanas. Yoga diploma students explained the importance of yoga to other trekkers. NSS coordinator Pedapudi Subhakar supervised the programme.

College Principal Dr M Ramesh, Director V Babu Rao, Dean Rajesh Jampala and others appreciated the trekkers.



Sadhu Sangham hails TTD's dharmic activities

PNS ■ TIRUMALA

The representatives of Akila Bharata Hindu Maha Sabha and Sadhu Sangham lauded the series of Dharmic and Spiritual programmes which are being observed by TTD for the propagation of Hindu Santana Dharma and univocally extended its support to TTD for its future programmes in taking forward Hindu Dharma.

TTD EO AV Dharma Reddy formally met the Swamijis at Annamaiah Bhavan in Tirumala on Sunday who participated in the Akhila Bharata Hindu Mahasabha that was organised in Tirupati on Saturday. He explained to them about the various dharmic and spiritual programmes being organised by TTD as a part of its mission of the propagation of Hindu Sanatana Dharma across the country.

The EO briefed them on Veda Parayanam, Homams, construction of temples in SC, ST, BC and fishermen colonies under the funds of SRIVANI (Sri Venkateswara Alaya Nirmanam) Trust, Jeernodharana of ancient temples, Srinivasa Kalyanams, Venkateswara Vaibhavsavams, Go Samrakshana programmes including GQ Adharita Naivedyam, Vyavasayam, Gudiko Gomata, Bhagavad Gita competitions, propagation of

Annamaacharya, Purandharadasa, Alwar works, taking forward all the spiritual programmes in a wide manner through SVBC Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Hindi channels across the country, free medical services including heart operations to children aged between a few days to 15 years, education and many more. "But some vested interests are trying to malign the image of TTD by spreading false and baseless reports on social media against us and throwing the pilgrim public in dilemma and confusion", he maintained.

The National Secretary of Akhila Bharata Hindu Mahasabha Kamalesh Acharya of Ayodhya and its Principal Secretary

Yogi Atidheshwarananda Parvata Swamiji of Yogi Peetham said that there are nearly six crore members in their Sangham from all the 29 states across the country. "We are all committed to sustaining the Hindu Sanatana Dharma in our country. We are impressed with the Dharmic programmes being carried out by TTD and are ready to extend our support to all the TTD activities in respective places and also give the correct information on the Social Media platforms with our wide range network of devotees who are present across the country", they added.



Three shooting ball players from Krishna in India squad

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Gogulamudi Vijay Kumar, Ponnada Haneeth Nag and Mallavarapu Siva Anjaneyulu from Krishna district have been selected to the Indian team for the first Asian Shooting Ball Championship that will be held at Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh from February 1 to 2.

These three players performed well in the 41st Shooting Ball Senior National Championship held at Jaipur in Rajasthan from December 22 to 27. They represented the Andhra Pradesh seniors. Based on their outstanding performance, the Shooting Ball Federation of India selected these three players to the Indian men's team.

India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, United Arab Emirates, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and Malaysia are the countries participating in the Asian Championship.

Gogulamudi Vijay Kumar is a senior physical education teacher and secretary of the Krishna District Shooting Ball Association. He is striving for the development of the game in every nook and corner of the district. Recently,



he organised the South Zone Shooting Ball Championship successfully in Vijayawada.

Krishna District Shooting Ball Association president A Rajasekhara, vice-president Venkata Rao, legal advisor K Stalin and others felicitated Vijay Kumar, Haneeth Nag and Siva Anjaneyulu at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium in Vijayawada on Sunday. NTR District Sports Authority Chief Coach SA Azeez also congratulated the players for getting selected to the Indian team.

3 Krishna fencing players selected

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Three fencing players from Krishna district have been selected for the School Games Federation of India (SGFI) Nationals to be conducted this year. Sri Ramya (Under - 17 Sabre), DN Priyusha (Under - 14 Sabre) and A Rehan (Under - 14 Eppy) were selected for nationals from the Krishna district.

Inter-District Fencing Championship for under 14 and U-17 category boys' and girls' was held in Kurnool from Jan 27 to 29.



In this tournament, Ramya won the silver medal in the Under-17 girls' sabre. Also, in the Under-14 girls' category, DN Priyusha got a silver medal in sabre, and A Rehan won a silver medal in the U-14 boy's Eppy. Also, the Krishna district boys' U-17 and U-14 teams won the bronze medals in the Foil. School Games Federation of India Krishna District Secretary

Thota Ajay Kumar congratulated all three players for getting national selections. Meanwhile, Gedela Krishna Srikrishna studying Class 8 in Sasi English Medium School from Visakhapatnam was also selected for the School Games Federation National tournament out of 31 players who participated in the Inter-District Fencing Championship. Krishna Srikrishna bagged a Gold medal in the under-14 Sabre event. Visakhapatnam Coach Venkat Reddy and Guntur coach Christofer congratulated him.

Systemic thyroid disorder affects eyes: Experts

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Ophthalmologists say that thyroid eye disease is an autoimmune eye condition that can occur in those suffering from a systemic thyroid disorder. However, even people with normal levels of thyroid can have this condition. The symptoms range from simple eyelid retraction to bulging of eyes with dryness and watering to serious problems such as severe pain, edema of the tissues

around the eye, unable to close the eyes, limitation of eye movements, double vision, and loss of vision.

Dr Kavya, Oculoplasty Consultant, LV Prasad Eye institute says that the complaints are more in the morning hours and often fluctuate in severity over the days and weeks. Thyroid eye disease has an active and inactive phase. The active phase needs medical treatment, followed by the inactive phase when sur-



gical treatment restores normal appearance. The condition can be quite frustrating for the patient and so it is important

that people are vigilant about this condition and that those having thyroid disorder get their eyes examined regularly to rule out eye-related complications.

The doctor said that it is a common myth that control of thyroid levels with steroids will reverse thyroid eye disease, but it rarely does. Treatment in the active phase mainly comprises lubricating eye drops and steroids to reduce swelling. Medical treatment in the

'active' phase merely pushes the 'fast-forward' button, so that you arrive at the inactive phase early, to get an early surgical correction.

Most patients end up losing their 'normal' look and seek cosmetic correction of the eyes to restore their natural look. This inactive phase is the right time to perform surgeries to correct the deformity. The commonest surgery that is needed is a 'key-hole decompression', says the doctor.

Felling trees for CM's visit

PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

The felling of a large number of trees in Vinukonda as part of security arrangements for the Chief Minister's visit has drawn flak from all quarters.

At a time, the growing of greenery and planting saplings are being promoted and emphasising the need of protecting the environment, the officials resorted to axing of large numbers of trees using hacksaw machines. The trees were located on the road divider and grew up to 22 to 15 feet.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Moha Reddy is coming to Vinukonda on January 30 to participate in a programme. In the name of security arrangements, the officials ordered the felling of trees as part of security arrangements.

The tree lovers expressed

anger over the officials for indiscriminate axing of trees citing frivolous reasons. The workers took up the felling of trees during the night. The tree raised on the APSRTC bus stand road divider. As many as 50 trees were felled on the premises of junior college also as part of security arrangements near the helipad of the Chief Minister's helicopter.

Vinukonda municipal Commissioner Srinivasulu and DEE Venkaiah said the three were felled on the advice of security officials. People of vinukonda were shocked and expressed displeasure to see the bus stand road without trees on Sunday.

Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy will participate in a programme in Vinukonda to transfer benefits to the beneficiaries under Chedodu scheme.



Complete developmental works in stipulated period, officials told

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Mayor Kavati Manohar Naidu directed the officials and contractors to expedite the on-going development works and complete them by stipulated period.

Mayor Manohar Naidu, along with MLC Lella Appireddy and MLA Maddali Giridhar, laid the foundation stone for the construction of CC drains and road from Ramanamakshetra to KVP Kalani cremation ground in Guntur West constituency here on Sunday. The road would be constructed at a cost of 80 lakh rupees.

Speaking on the occasion, the Mayor said that the road from Venkateswara temple at R Agram to Ramanamaktram was widened and a central



divider was constructed. At present under phase II, the road from Ramanamaktram to crematoriums is being constructed at a cost of Rs 80 lakh.

The construction and development of road expansion drain and roads would be very useful for the people of Guntur city in 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, and 25 divisions,

and the long-standing desire of the people of 18,19,20,21,23 and 25 divisions to build and widen road from the Venkateswara Swamy temple to the graveyard being fulfilled now.

The mayor said that so far development works worth Rs 150 crore had taken up and most of the works nearing com-

pletion. The Jagan Mohan Reddy headed government is giving importance to implement welfare schemes and the same importance is also being given for the development.

MLA Lella Appireddy said that many development works had taken up in Guntur city and steps were taken to complete them expeditely. MLA Giridhar alleged that Guntur city lagged behind in development during the TDP regime.

State Libraries Parishad Chairman Mandapati Seshagiri Rao, YSRCP State Joint Secretary Ghulam Rasool, corporators Kandrukunta Guravaiah, Nimmala Venkataramana and District Libraries Parishad Chairman Bathula Devanand were among those who were present.

Cut-out of Anam burnt

PNS ■ NELLORE

The giant cut-out of YSRCP MLA Anam Ramanarayana Reddy was reportedly set on fire in Venkatagiri town on the night of Saturday.

The giant cut-out was erected at the crossroad centre in Venkatagiri town by the followers and Anam Ramanarayana Reddy. Unidentified miscreants set on fire to the cut out in the wee hours and the cut out burnt partially.

Anam Ramanarayana Reddy follower and municipal councillor Janaki Ramaiah lodged a complaint to the police.

The setting fire to the cut-out of Anam Ramanarayana Reddy assumed significance in the wake of his recent comments denouncing the YSRCP government.

Ramanarayana Reddy has been making statements against the YSRCP leadership for the last few months. The YSRCP leadership has sacked him from the in-charge post and appointed Nedurumilli



Ram Kumar Reddy in the post. Setting fire to the cut-out of Anam Ramanarayana Reddy led to a hot discussion not only in the YSRCP but also other parties.

However, Ramanarayana Reddy has not responded to the burning of the cut-out so far.

District Collectors visit Naguluppalapadu village

PNS ■ BAPATLA

Prakasam District Collector AS Dinesh Kumar and his wife and Bapatla district Collector Vijaya Krishnan visited Naguluppalapadu village on Sunday.

The Collector couple interacted with some farmers and knew their problems and agricultural activities.

They saw the tobacco barrens and learned about the tobacco curing and grading process from the farmers.

The Collector couple also visited chilli, Bengal gram, red gram, and black gram crops in the village and the farmers explained to them the farming process.

Collector Dinesh Kumar advised the farmers to use less quality chemical fertilizers and pesticides. He also asked the farmers about the



issuing of cards to the tenant farmers, and extending loans by the banks.

The farmers told the Collector that if water was released from the

Gundlakamma reservoir that would help them a lot and make farming easy in the region. The Collector assured them of providing water for irrigation purpose.

HDK offers prayers at Mantralaya shrine

PNS ■ KURNOOL

Former Karnataka chief minister HD Kumar Swamy, along with his wife, offered prayers at the famous Sri Raghavendra Swamy Mutt temple at Mantralayam on Sunday.

The temple officials and priests accorded a warm welcome to former Chief Minister and JD (S) president Kumara Swamy and his wife at the temple. The couple visited the village deity Manchalamma and offered prayers.

Later, they worshipped

Raghavendra Swamy and fulfilled vows. Mutt seer Sri Subhendratheertha Swamy blessed Kumara Swamy couple and gave them 'prasadam'. The Karnataka and AP police made elaborate police bandobast in view of Kumara Swamy's visit to the temple.

Interestingly, Karnataka former Chief Minister BS Yeddyurappa, Eeshwarappa, a host of ministers and MLAs of both states have visited the temple and worshipped Raghavendra Swamy during the last few months.



National award for Gauravi Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabadi Kuchipudi dancer, Gauravi Reddy, was awarded the prestigious Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bala Puraskar, on Sunday. The award has been given under the Art and Culture category.

Indian President Draupadi Murmu granted the title on the occasion of Republic Day at Vigyan Bhavan in Delhi.

Roads and Buildings Minister Vemula Prashanth Reddy met Gauravi Reddy and her parents Chandra Shekhar Reddy and Taruna Reddy; and congratulated them on this occasion.

The Minister said that Kuchipudi dancer Gauravi Reddy's talent is a source of pride for all in Telangana. He wished her more success in future.

Eluru dist to get Rs 15.96 cr under 'Chedodu' scheme

PNS ■ ELURU

Eluru district will get Rs 15.96 crore under the 'Jagananna Chedodu' scheme. Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy will transfer the benefits under the scheme to the beneficiaries on Monday.

Collector V Prasanna

Venkatesh said that the beneficiaries including 15,968 'Rajaka' community people, 'Nayi Brahmins', and tailors across the district would be disbursed Rs 15.96 crore under the Chedodu scheme.

The Collector said that Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy would release financial

assistance of Rs. 330.14 crore to the beneficiaries of 'Chedodu' including 3,30,014 'Rajaka' community people, 'Nayi Brahmin's and tailors across the State on Monday.

The Chief Minister would release the benefits of the Jagananna Chedodu scheme by pressing a button at a pro-

gramme to be organised in Vinukonda of Palnadu district. District Collector Prasanna Venkatesh said as part of this, for the third year in a row under the 'Jagananna Chedodu' scheme, financial assistance is being provided to 15,968 beneficiaries in the Eluru district.



Green India Challenge flag hoisted in Antarctica

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The Green India Challenge, which has been launched with an objective to nurture the nature and environment better and provide clean air to mankind, is reaching new heights. The Green India Challenge flag is flying in the country and abroad also.

Recently, the flag was raised on a peak of highest mountain in Antarctica. Bhupathiraju Annmish Varma successfully completed the task of climbing seven peaks in seven continents. At the end of the globe, Annmish Varma climbed Mt. Vintion, the highest mountain in the icy continent of Antarctica, and hoisted the flag.

Annmish Varma said that there is an environmental threat to the world in the form of global warming. Rajya Sabha MP Joganipally Santosh Kumar



launched Green India Challenge with a strong determination to plant trees extensively and save the world from the environmental threat. To take this ambition further, Annmish revealed that he is climbing the highest mountains to display the Green India Challenge flag with the aim of creating environmental awareness among all.

He said that he successfully

completed the climbing of seven peaks in seven continents including Everest.

Annmish said he feels proud to present the Green India Challenge on the Globe's South Pole and thanked MP Santosh Kumar for providing this opportunity. Annmish appealed to all to make efforts to reduce pollution and work towards a clean environment.

Tollywood celebrities welcome Formula-E race

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Ahead of the FIA Formula-E 2023, Hyderabad EPrix that is set to make its debut in India, Tollywood actors and athletes cheered with excitement on their social media handles. Formula-E also announced the Grenko, energy transition and decarbonisation solutions company, as their official title partner.

Public figures like Prabhas, Chiranjeevi, Mahesh Babu, Nagarjuna Akkineni, Chaitanya Akkineni, Nani, Adivi Sesh, Venkatesh Daggubati to sports icons like PV Sindhu, Mohammed Azharuddin and many well-known names have taken to social media to express their support for the electrifying racing series.

Actor Konidela Chiranjeevi, said, "It is a matter of pride for India that the first-ever greenest race is being held in India and in the greenest city Hyderabad.



Let's make history on February 11, 2023, at the Greenko Hyderabad EPrix by accelerating towards a future of sustainability and decarbonisation."

Nagarjuna Akkineni shared a video message on his Instagram and said, "I extend my heartfelt congratulations to KT Rama Rao, the Government of Telangana and Anil Chalamalasetty for bringing the Formula-E World Championship to India and more importantly to my city. And I am super excited to see you all on February 11 at the Greenko Hyderabad E-Prix".

On the February 11, Hyderabad will make its mark on the global stage of motorsports. It's show-time for India

as it hosts its first-ever Formula-E race.

The all-electric Greenko Hyderabad Prix will drive India towards a sustainable future. Prabhas added. The electric car racing series will host its first ever race in the country on February 11, 2023, in the scenic track overlooking the Hussain Sagar lake.

A total of 11 teams and 22 drivers would be competing in the all-new GEN-3 race car which is a huge leap in technological development and innovation with engineers at the FIA and Formula-E pushing the boundaries of EV development.

The arrival of Formula-E in India is seen as a major boost for the country's growing automotive industry and is expected to encourage more investment in the electric vehicle (EV) sector. The ticket sales are actively happening in the city.

CRIME BEAT



2 dead in separate road accidents

PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

Two persons were killed in two separate road accidents in the district on Sunday.

Police said that a two-wheeler raider was killed when the bike he was riding rammed a stationary lorry from the rear end at Dachepalli on the Addanki-Narketpally highway on Sunday. The deceased was identified as Ranga Rao (45). The police registered a case

and shifted the body to the GGH Dachepalli for post-mortem. In another accident, a bike rider was killed when a container lorry knocked down his bike at Bhavya petrol filling station near Dachepalli on the Piduguralla-Dachepalli road Sunday. The 60-year-old deceased was yet to be identified. The lorry driver is absconding. The police registered a case and sent the body to the GGH for post-mortem examination.

Man brutally murdered

ELURU: A 28-year-old man was brutally murdered at Kotturu Thanda on Sunday. Police said that Banavatu Yesu (28) was stabbed to death after a worldly duel with the accused Podiyya. After stabbing to death Yesu, the accused fled from the village. The accused Podiyya was involved in some violent incidents earlier also. Nurvid CI and SI rushed to the place and sent the body for postmortem. A search was launched to arrest the accused.



Mentally retarded minor girl sexually exploited

ONGOLE: A mentally retarded minor girl was sexually exploited by a 45-year-old man at Pulla Reddy Palem village in Alakurapadu panchayat. Police said that the 12-year-old victim was mentally retarded and she was staying at home. When the parents of the girl were not at home, the accused used to go to her house and molest her. However, the mother of the girl noticed the accused coming from her house. When asked the victim, she told her mother that he had been sexually exploiting her for a few months. She lodged a complaint at Tangutur police station. The police sent the victim to the RIMS hospital for medical examination. DSP Pallapuraju spoke to the victim and collected details from her. The police registered a case under POCSO Act.



30 bus passengers have miraculous escape

KURNOOL: As many as 30 passengers travelling in a Telangana APSRTC bus had a miraculous escape as the bus dashed against the protection wall and came to halt on the edge of the ghat road. The Mahaboobnagar bound Telangana RTC bus while negotiating a risky curve, dashed against the protection wall of the ghat road and came

to halt. If the bus had gone a few feet ahead after dashing against the wall, it would have fallen into the deep gorge. The driver of the bus failed to control the bus while negotiating the curve, police said. The accident took place near the Srisailem dam. All bus passengers escaped unhurt.

Rowdy-sheeter waylaid, murdered

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Two persons waylaid a fast food stall owner and killed him when he was on his way home at Godavarikhani in Peddapalli district on Sunday evening.

The deceased was identified as Mantani Suman. He was one of the accused in a murder case, the police said. He was also a rowdy sheeter.

Two persons waylaid Suman and inflicted 15 knife injuries on him. He died on the way to the hospital.



Police arrived on the scene and shifted the body to the Government Hospital for post-mortem.

Engineering student ends life

TIRUPATI: An engineering girl student allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself to the ceiling fan in her hostel room in Puttur on Sunday. Police said that the deceased girl Aruna Jyothi (20) was studying engineering 3rd year at Siddhartha Engineering college. She belonged to Karupalli village in Sundupalli mandal in the Annamayya district. SI Paramesh Naik registered a case and shifted the body to the GGH for postmortem. The reasons for her taking the extreme step are yet to be ascertained, he said.

INDIA CORNER

Jaipur Foot maker begins limb fitment camp in Lebanon

The Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti -- makers of the famous Jaipur Foot -- has started an artificial limb fitment camp in Beirut, Lebanon. The camp is sponsored by the Union Ministry of External Affairs under the 'India for Humanity' programme. "The Jaipur Foot artificial limb fitment camp was inaugurated at the Rafik Hariri University Hospital, Beirut, on India's 74th Republic Day (Thursday)," the organisation said in a release on Sunday. Representatives from the Foreign Affairs and Public Health ministries and the Lebanese Armed Forces as well as Rafik Hariri University Hospital Chairman Dr Jihad Saadeh were present on the occasion. DR Mehta, founder and chief patron of Bhagwan Mahaveer Viklang Sahayata Samiti, said over 10,000 people with disabilities in over 40 countries in Asia, Africa and the Pacific Islands had been rehabilitated under the 'India for Humanity' programme, launched to commemorate the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in 2018.



JEE aspirant critically injured after falling from balcony

A 17-year-old boy JEE aspirant allegedly fell from the balcony of the first floor of his hostel building under Vigyan Nagar police station of the city on Sunday, police said. The teen, a resident of Chikhli city in the Buldana district of Maharashtra, is currently undergoing treatment at a private hospital. Circle Inspector at Vigyan Nagar police station Daves Bhardwaj said the minor student, a JEE Mains aspirant allegedly fell from the balcony of his hostel building early in the morning on Sunday. The boy sustained critical injuries and at 5.30 am, he was rushed to a hospital, he added. The injured boy had been living in Kota for the last two years and had been preparing for the entrance test while staying in a first-floor room on road number - 2, the circle inspector said. The boy was scheduled to take JEE Mains exam in the next few days, he added. The parents of the injured student were informed of the incident and they are on their way to Kota, he said, adding that the investigation into the matter is underway.



NIA attaches Hurriyat Conference office in Srinagar

The National Investigating Agency (NIA) on Sunday attached the separatist Hurriyat Conference's office in the Rajbagh area here on the orders of a Delhi court in a terror funding case, officials said. A team of the federal agency arrived at the Hurriyat office and pasted an attachment notice on the building's outer wall, they said. "This is to inform all members of the public that the building where the office of All Party Hurriyat Conference is located at Rajbagh and is owned jointly by Nayeem Ahmad Khan, who is presently facing trial ... has been attached by the court order dated 27th January 2023 by Special NIA Court Patiala House, New Delhi," the notice read. The Hurriyat Conference is an amalgam of 26 separatist outfits and was formed in 1993. The office has remained closed since August 2019 following a crackdown on separatist groups by the government.



India's dream of 'techade' will be fulfilled: PM Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday said domestic patent filings have outscored the country's foreign patent filings as he expressed confidence that India's dream of "techade" -- his call for Indian technologies to dominate the decade -- will be fulfilled on the strength of its innovators.

This underscores the country's increasing scientific capabilities, he said in the first episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' in the new year.

Modi has in the past used "techade" to describe the decade being dominated by home-grown technologies.

He said India's rank in patent filling is seventh globally while it is fifth in trademark registration. India's patent registration has risen by 50 per cent in the last five years, the prime minister said, noting its ranking in the global innovation index has surged to 40 from below 80 in



2015.

"I am confident that India's dream of techade will be fulfilled by its innovators and their patents," he said.

The premier Indian Institute of Science had 145 patents in 2022 which is a rare record, Modi said.

In the broadcast, he informed people that the total number of Ramsar sites, an international

recognition for wetlands, in the country has increased to 75 from 26 in 2014.

Lauding local communities, Modi said they deserve praise for preserving biodiversity.

"It is also a tribute to our age-old culture and tradition of living in harmony with nature. These wetlands of India are also an example of our natural potential. Chilika Lake of

Odisha is known to shelter more than 40 waterbird species. Kaibul-Lamjao, Loktak, is considered to be the only natural habitat of the Swamp Deer," he said.

Touching on the subject of e-waste, the prime minister said if it is not disposed of properly, it can also harm the environment but if dealt with carefully, it can become a great force in the circular economy of recycling and reusing.

Noting that a United Nations report said 50 million tonnes of e-waste is being generated every year, Modi said if the weight of all the commercial planes built so far is combined, it will not equal the amount of e-waste being released. It is like every second 800 laptops are being thrown away, he said.

Use of technologies and start-ups have made India a "global recycling hub", Modi said, adding there is no dearth of start-ups that are doing innovative work in this direction.

West Bengal my second home: Guv

PNS ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor C V Ananda Bose on Sunday offered prayers at the Dakshineswar Temple and the Missionaries of Charities' Mother House' here and called the state his "second home".

Bose, known for his fondness of the state and its people, had also recently performed 'Hate Khari' (a ritual to learn Bengali alphabet), on the occasion of Saraswati Puja this Thursday. "West Bengal is my second home... I wish to soak and imbibe the rich culture and language of this state, which is the soil of so many luminaries," he told reporters at the Dakshineswar Temple.

The governor later offered floral tributes at Mother Teresa's tomb, located within the premises of the Mother House. He also took part in the afternoon prayers and interacted with the nuns. "Saint Teresa had dedicated herself for the poor. She had shunned all comforts of life in her mission," Bose, who assumed charge as the Governor of West Bengal in November last year, said.

BJP will win all LS seats in Haryana in 2024: Shah

Bad weather forces HM to address Haryana rally over phone

PNS ■ GOHANA (HARYANA)

After his visit here to attend a public rally on Sunday was cancelled due to bad weather, Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressed the gathering briefly over phone and exuded confidence that "lotus will bloom" on all Lok Sabha seats in the state in 2024 elections.

He also said the Manohar Lal Khattar government has reined in corruption and undertaken development in all fields during the past eight years.

Addressing the 'Jan Uththan Rally', Shah appealed to the people of Haryana to vote for BJP to make Narendra Modi the Prime Minister again.

"I could not come, but in near future I will come to Gohana," he said, adding "on every Lok Sabha seat, Bharatiya Janata Party's lotus will bloom, I have full belief." BJP had in 2019 won all the



10 Lok Sabha seats from Haryana.

Haryana unit of the BJP had been preparing for the Gohana rally for the past few weeks and Shah was also to address a party meeting here.

Addressing the rally, Shah said the present state government has ended casteism, improved the law and order, and ensured there is no corruption in recruitment for government jobs in the state.

Shah said that the development which has been undertaken in the past eight years was not witnessed in the state in decades.

He also mentioned that now educated sarpanshes are taking Haryana forward.

Earlier, speaking at the rally, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar announced that Shah could not come as his helicopter was not given permission for takeoff due to bad weather.

The weather in Gohana was inclement and more rains are likely during the day.

Khattar said that Shah wanted to come by road but since it would have taken two hours, he suggested to the Union minister to address the gathering over phone.

Addressing the gathering over phone, Shah said, "I had great desire to meet you all in this rally, but due to bad weather, permission for helicopter takeoff was not given".



BBC DOCUMENTARY ROW

10 Rajasthan varsity students suspended

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Ten students of the Central University of Rajasthan (CURAJ) in Ajmer district were suspended for two weeks after they allegedly gathered on the campus to watch a controversial BBC documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots.

The university authorities, however, claimed that the suspension of the students was not linked to them watching the documentary, India: The Modi Question.

According to the university order, disciplinary action has been taken against the students for allegedly disobeying the instructions of authorities and carrying out a late-night demonstration at an undesignated site. The students have been suspended from the academics as well as the hostel on Friday for disobeying the instructions of teachers or the

authorities and demonstrating in late hours at places other than designated sites, the suspension order read.

The alleged incident took place on January 26.

CURAJ Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) president Vikash Pathak claimed that invitations for the screening of the controversial documentary on Gujarat riots near the campus canteen were circulated on social media.

He said that they had opposed the students who were gathering to watch the documentary.

Two policemen had reached the spot to avoid any untoward incident, Bander Sindri police Station House Officer (SHO) Kalu Lal said.

On January 26, around 25-30 students gathered with covered faces and they were dispersed from the spot, police said.

Pages from Ramcharitmanas burned in Vrindavan

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A group called Akhil Bharatiya OBC Mahasabha on Sunday in Vrindavan burned photocopies of pages allegedly carrying "objectionable comments on women and Dalits" in Ramcharitmanas, supporting SP leader Swami Prasad Maurya.

The protest was held in Vrindavan Yojana sector apparently in solidarity with Maurya, who had on January 22 in a statement said the Hindu epic contained passages discriminatory of women and shudras.

Gujarat junior clerk exam cancelled after question paper leak; 15 arrested

PNS ■ AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat government's competitive examination for the recruitment of junior clerks was cancelled hours before it was scheduled on Sunday after its question paper leaked, officials said.

The Gujarat Anti-Terrorist (ATS) has arrested 15 people in this connection from Vadodara, they said.

As many as 9.53 lakh candidates had applied for the exam for 1,181 posts which was to be held at 2,995 centres across the state.

Based on a tip-off, police detained a suspect and recovered a copy of the question paper of the exam early Sunday morning, after which the Gujarat Panchayat Service Selection Board (GPSSB)



decided to "postpone" the exam in the wider interest of the candidates, the board said in a statement.

State Panchayat Department's development commissioner Sandeep Kumar told reporters that the examination will be held in the next 100 days.

A Gujarat ATS officer said 15 people were arrested in this connection from Vadodara as the agency kept a close watch on the suspects in the last few

integrity of the nation and the channel should be banned in India immediately, Hindu Sena chief Vishnu Gupta said.

He recalled that the BBC was banned in India during the tenure of Indira Gandhi as prime minister. The ban was lifted after the organisation submitted an apology, Gupta claimed.

When asked, a senior police officer said, "Our patrolling team, which was present nearby, spotted the placards outside the BBC office and removed those."

"Some of them (Hindu Sena members) were still trying to display the placards elsewhere but they could not due to police presence and fled."

DOCUMENTARY ROW

Hindu Sena puts up anti-BBC placards

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Members of the Hindu Sena on Sunday allegedly put up anti-BBC placards outside the UK-headquartered broadcaster's office on Kasturba Gandhi Marg here over its documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots.

Placards reading "BBC is a threat to India's Unity and it should be Banned" and "BBC stop tarnishing India's image. BBC leave India" were put up outside the main gate of the BBC office amid a row over the controversial documentary.

The placards were removed by the police.

Hindu Sena members also accused the



media organisation of conspiring to tarnish and malign the image of both India and Prime Minister Modi.

The BBC is a threat to the unity and

Promise made to India fulfilled

■ Rahul after hoisting tricolour at Lal Chowk

PNS ■ SRINAGAR

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday unfurled the national flag at the historic clock tower of Lal Chowk in the heart of Srinagar as part of the Kanyakumari-Kashmir 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' and said a "promise" made to India has been fulfilled.

The security for the 10-minute event was at its peak as all roads in a one-kilometre radius leading to the chowk, which holds symbolic importance for the city, were sealed off from Saturday night and no vehicular movement was allowed.

Barricades were set up and concertina wires installed at all entry points with a heavy deployment of security personnel, while shops, business establishments and the weekly flea market were closed as part of the security exercise.

Gandhi, along with his sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, party leaders and workers, resumed the final lap of the yatra in Jammu and Kashmir from Srinagar's Pantha Chowk around 10:45 am.

Those part of the march walked for about eight kilometres to Sonwar raising slogans such as "Jodo Jodo Bharat Jodo", and along the way, were cheered and greeted by locals. Within a multi-layer secu-



ring, Gandhi, in a white T-shirt which he has sported for most of the over 4,000-kilometre yatra from India's southern tip, waved at people as yatris, including a large number of women, carrying the tricolour and Congress flags, moved towards Sonwar.

After reaching their destination, Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and other senior party leaders drove to the party's headquarters at M A Road here. Later, they headed to Lal Chowk, where the former Congress president unfurled the national flag.

"By hoisting the tricolour at Lal Chowk, the promise made to India was fulfilled today. Hate will lose, love will always win. There will be a new dawn of hopes in India," Gandhi tweeted in Hindi after the event.

Rains fail to dampen of as R-day fete

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Rains failed to dampen the spirit of Rains Retreat ceremony held at the historic Vijay Chowk here on Sunday as Indian classical tunes played by bands of the armed forces filled the air, marking the end of Republic Day celebrations.

Foot-tapping music marked the beginning of the ceremony with the arrival of President Droupadi Murmu. She was welcomed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

Prime Minister Modi got drenched as he moved around outside the sheltered



area, waving at the audience after the ceremony was over.

For the first time, a 3-D anamorphic projection was done on the facade of

North Block and South Block. As many as 29 Indian tunes were played by the music bands of the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, the State Police and the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

Never missing a step despite the wet ground, the bands began playing the 'Agniveer' tune followed by the enthralling tunes like "Almora", "Kedar Nath", "Sangam Dur", "Queen of Satpura", "Bhagirathi" and "Konkan Sundari".

The Air Force's band played "Aprajey Arjun", "Charkha", "Vayu Shakti", "Swadeshi", while fascinating "Ekla Cholo Re", "Hum Taiyyar Hai", and "Jai Bharati" were played by the band of the Navy.

Plea to put conversion matter before Supreme Court bench

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A fresh application has been moved before the Supreme Court urging that the matters related to alleged forcible religious conversions be taken up by a larger bench of five judges as they involve the interpretation of the Constitution.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud is scheduled to

hear the batch of pleas on Monday against anti-con-

version laws of several states regulating religious conversion due to interfaith marriages and on matters related to alleged forcible conversions.

The fresh application is filed by advocate Ashwini Upadhyay,

who is among the petitioners. He has asked the court to refer the petitions to a larger bench saying

there are several questions of laws involved which require the interpretation of the Constitution.

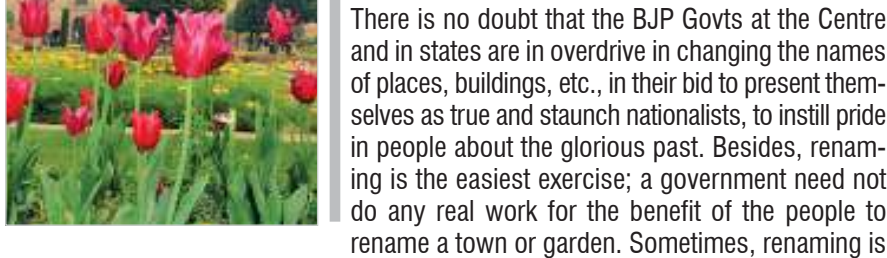
He raised questions like whether the previous judgments of this Court interpreting Article 25(1) of the Constitution are grossly erroneous in so far as they upheld the word "propagate" would include entitlement to convert.

"Whether the word 'propagate' needs to be construed in a manner which is not detrimental to fraternity, unity, dignity and national integration..." Upadhyay's fresh plea said.

Easy choice

Renaming of Mughal Gardens as Amrit Udyan is a convenient way of making a nationalist statement

Renaming of Mughal Gardens at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi as Amrit Udyan has resulted in reactions from various quarters on expected lines. The new name has been given by President Draupadi Murmu as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav festivities to mark 75 years of India's independence, Deputy Press Secretary to the President Navika Gupta told reporters on Saturday. Typically, the Bharatiya Janata Party has lauded the move, with spokesman Sambit Patra calling it a "historic decision" of the Narendra Modi government that was needed to "come out of 'slavery mentality'." Law minister Kiren Rijju saw the rise of New India in it. The Opposition, also expectedly, slammed the renaming of Mughal Gardens. Who knows, they might now want to rename the Eden Gardens and call it Modi Gardens, Trinamool Congress' Parliamentary party leader in the Rajya Sabha Derek O'Brien told a news agency. CPI general secretary D Raja saw "the RSS' agenda... to rewrite Indian history and redefine nationhood" in the decision.



There is no doubt that the BJP Govts at the Centre and in states are in overdrive in changing the names of places, buildings, etc., in their bid to present themselves as true and staunch nationalists, to instill pride in people about the glorious past. Besides, renaming is the easiest exercise; a government need not do any real work for the benefit of the people to rename a town or garden. Sometimes, renaming is also done to score political points and needle the Opposition. For instance, the names Gandhi and Nehru have been removed from several government schemes and places. It should, however, not be forgotten that the BJP, though the most active player of the game of symbolism, is not the only one. The Congress actually began the game. In 1995, the Congress government, at the behest of its MP Mani Shankar Aiyar, changed the name of the iconic Connaught Place (CP) to Rajiv Chowk and Connaught Circus to Indira Chowk. In 2004, in his capacity as petroleum minister, Aiyar got a plaque on RSS ideologue Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in the Cellular Jail premises in Andaman and Nicobar Islands removed. For Aiyar, and for the BJP, such decisions are ideological and political rather than rational. But then reason is increasingly playing a smaller role in politics; concomitantly, irrationality is growing by the day. When the BJP is in power, it removes the names of Gandhi and Nehru from schemes and places; when the Congress comes to office, it humbles Hindutva heroes. Such puerility cannot be allowed to continue. It is time political leaders across party lines considered the possibility of a comprehensive policy. The objective should be to make nomenclature apolitical and sensible. It is not good for the nation if a name changing exercise is criticised as being biased against Muslims, but this is exactly what has been happening. The Govt must ensure that it doesn't face such accusations in the future.

PICTALK



Spectators watch the "Van Gogh 360" digital immersive experience exhibition in Mumbai

Indian aviation is becoming chaotic

The civil aviation authorities should focus on providing better facilities at the airports, not on bragging about the scale of their operations



V V SUNDAR

The Indian aviation industry is now a farce. The recent disgraceful alleged incident involving an "unruly" passenger on Air India, an airline leaving behind a busload of passengers and flying off, the systematic chaos at Delhi International Airport (DIAL), and the frequent and unreported incidents at other airports all raise one question. What direction is the industry taking? What exactly does a passenger receive from these airports in exchange for paying the passenger terminal fee? How do airlines handle their obligations? What is being done to make travel safer and less stressful? Airports and airlines in India clearly do not provide the level of service that is expected of them. The stress of the journey begins and continues as a result of how airports handle ground situations.

Who needs the lofty titles and laurels of being the world's "busiest" or "best" airport? Passengers would prefer a more "efficient" airport! The "busiest" airport benefits only the operator and not the customer.

Consider our opulent airports, which appear to have heralded, albeit in reverse, a revolution. Despite the grandiose nature of many modern airports, inefficiency seems to be widespread. Aviation was created to change the way people travel by allowing them to travel long distances in a fraction of the time it would take by other means. Airports appear to put a dent in this theory.

They waste most of the passengers' valuable time and energy. Even for domestic travel, airlines and airports have set a reporting time of 2-3 hours. It is an unacceptable step back. Isn't it strange that in that amount of time, one can land on a foreign shore? The scales established by airlines and airport operators are only self-serving, without putting the customer at the center.

Ironically and equally fascinating are how technology has advanced to the point where it can detect if one's heart valves



need to be repaired, while airport x-ray machines still can't see through the bags and force us to go through the rather antiquated process of removing articles from cabin baggage as well as our jackets, belts, boots, and socks. Such mindless checks are an insult to any civilized process. It is a form of public humiliation that we have all come to accept as necessary.

Are we saying that the deployed man and machine are so skeptical of each other that they want to double-check that the passenger isn't a criminal on a mission? It calls into question both men's and machines' capabilities. Handlers at x-ray machines are unfamiliar with the objects or electronics that must be handled properly.

Many of us have seen the airport's general atmosphere deteriorate in recent years. The serpentine lines and cramped quarters give you a headache, but the lack of air circulation exacerbates the situation. In the dead of win-

ter in Delhi, one can easily sweat in one's jacket while navigating the lines. What advantages does this have for passengers?

Practical solutions, such as displaying the estimated time it will take to clear passengers or the crowd size inside the check-in and security areas, can be beneficial. Passengers' stress levels will be reduced if they are cleared in the order in which the airline or destination departs in real-time.

The passenger is entirely on his own until the end of the boarding. Rather, it should be the responsibility of the airline and airport operators to own the customer once he is inside the airport and make his journey safe, secure, and hassle-free in exchange for the cost of the ticket and taxes he has paid. That's the bare minimum any service provider is expected to do.

Why should a passenger be made to suffer because he or she is flying a specific airline and bunched like sar-

dines with other airlines that have peak capacity at that hour? Essentially, why should every airline passenger pass through the same rabbit hole? These are systems designed for a different era with the sole purpose of saving money. It is time to review the procedures that create friction and stress and eliminate them.

We don't want silent airports; we want upbeat airports, airports that are conscious of customer needs and that are practical. We want airports that deliver speed, efficiency, and care from the moment the passenger enters the terminal until they depart.

Alas, the airport operators and airlines are not catering to these issues. Negligence and air rage are direct and indirect results of the broken, negligent, and hands-off attitude of the airport, airlines, and stakeholders.

(The writer is a communications specialist based in New Delhi, a travel writer, and an aviation geek. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PENDING VACANCIES IN THE JUDICIARY

Sir — The noted former Supreme court Judge R F Nariman has made a very valid observation that the government could not keep pending the postings of new Judges as recommended by the Collegium for an indefinite period in view of crores of pending cases hanging indifferent courts at different levels.

The law minister should answer whether he is not concerned with the real problem of pendency of cases and if so whether he wants to cling to the same old reasoning that they are not responsible for this pendency as they have inherited them from earlier governments. As suggested by Mr. Nariman too, the government at least should tentatively form a committee of say 5 judges or so from different states who should be advised to give their opinions regarding new judges' postings say within around a month or so and the government should clear such names subject to having no 'objectionable comments' on the suggested names. Both the central government and the law minister seem to have no scant concern about delivering speedy justice to the innocents' litigations in the courts whatsoever which is the most atrocious attitude of the central government.

Katuru Durga Prasad Rao | Hyderabad

TROUBLE FOR ADANI

Sir — The shares of several companies owned by billionaire Gautam Adani collapsed due to heavy losses on Friday (January 27) after a report by a US investment firm accused the Adani Group of being involved in committing "brazen" corporate fraud. The report raised questions over the financial stability of Adani Group in the coming days and concerns are now raised over the savings of millions of Indians in big financial institutions like the State Bank of India (SBI) and Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).

The Congress party demanded that a thorough probe should be launched into Hindenburg Research's allegations adding that it may have exposed the financial system of the country to systemic risks "through the liberal investments in the

Iconic Telugu Actress Jamuna



The death of a Legendary actor of the yesterday years of the Telugu film industry's golden era - Jamuna - marks an end of an era of those great actors. She acted with other legendary actors of the era such as N T Rama Rao, Akkinnein Nageswara Rao, Savitry and S V Ranga Rao and others.

Her claim to fame came with the release of Missamma(1955) Telugu-language romantic comedy film directed by L. V. Prasad, arguably Missamma is one of the greatest movies of all times in the history of Tollywood, in which NT Rama Rao, with his indomitable nuances and

style, have his stamp of authentic life in, with this film Jamuna metamorphosed into an unabashedly artistic.

While she predominantly acted in Telugu films, she was a multilingual actress who had acted in about 200 films in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, and Hindi. She was the most glamorous actress of her era, playing a wide variety of roles such as Satyabhama, wife of Lord Krishna, in "Sri Krishna Tulabharam" and Kaikeyi, wife of King Dasaratha in "Sampoorna Ramayanam."

Jamuna also acted in a few Hindi films including Sunil Dutt-starrer box office hit film "Milan (1967)", her superb performance in this film won her the Film fare award. Jamunaa also had an inning in politics and was a Member of Parliament in the 9th Lok Sabha from Rajahmundry (AP). She has left behind an indelible mark in the heart of her fans with several memorable films Gundamma Kanth, Missamma, and many more. RIP Jamuna

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bangalore

Adani Group made by strategic state entities like LIC, SBI and other public sector banks".

"These institutions have liberally financed the Adani Group even as their private sector counterparts have chosen to avoid investing because of concerns over corporate governance and indebtedness. As much as 8 percent of LIC's equity assets under management, amounting to a gigantic sum of 74,000 crores, is in Adani companies and comprise its second-largest holding. If proven correct it will "destroy lives of crores of Indians who park lifelong savings in LIC & SBI." With this US investment firms have exposed the Adani groups.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

STOP THE FREE USE OF ARMS

Sir — The police are the body to ensure citizen safety and security, not doing brutality to the citizens by taking the law into their hands. It is a tragic reality for American police right now. The protest of #Blacklifematters seems to be the ever-

green protest in American history. Every single year, global outrage has been created to churn the seriousness of Black people's rights issues. Unfortunately, this year too, Tyre Nichols was beaten to death in Memphis city by American police officers. This reminded the story of George Floyd who had been murdered by Minneapolis Police by choking his neck. This is ridiculous for any developed country to do such barbaric and racist acts with the minorities they have.

The arms too are frequently misused by Americans also. In fact, their kids too had been shot in their classroom due to racist mentality towards those, they share their class. This kind of misuse of arms and police brutality only left citizens angry. America must change laws of stringent freedom, and there is an urgent need to change the free use of arms, by making the lives of citizens happier.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Thousands of people - men, women, children, elderly, and every section of society - stood on the roads and welcomed the Yatra and Gandhi heartily.

Congress general secretary — Jairam Ramesh



The Abrams tank is a very complicated piece of equipment. It's expensive, and it's hard to train on.

Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, USA — Colin Kahl

For all those who have high hopes, please note that Pathaan might be a film, but the country will still roar with Jai Shri Ram



Actor — Kangana Ranaut



Najam Sethi has the experience, and it's no concept that only cricketers should be PCB chairman. You need to be a good administrator, and you need to be a good repo with other boards. People can disagree for all I care. Former Pakistan cricketer — Wasim Akram

We are taking legal action against the husbands forcing minor girls to become a mother. I would suggest women become mothers before 30.



Assam chief minister — Himanta Biswa Sarma

MONEY MATTERS

Punjab & Sind Bank aims at Rs 500 cr recovery from NPAs

Punjab & Sind Bank managing director Swarup Kumar Saha has said the bank is expecting a Rs 500 crore recovery in the fourth quarter, as many of the resolution processes of NPA accounts are at the final stages. The state-owned bank's total recovery and upgradation stood at Rs 1,178 crore in the three quarters of the current financial year. Resolution of Meenakshi Energy is at the final stage at the National Asset Reconstruction Company of India (NARCL), while Sintex and Srei resolutions are also at an advanced stage under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, he told. Aided by a reduction in bad loans, recovery from them and healthy growth in interest spread, the bank aims to maintain its profit growth during the financial year ending March 2023. The bank has registered a net profit growth of 24 per cent at Rs 856 crore for the nine-month ended December 2022. It had earned a profit of Rs 1,039 crore in the previous fiscal FY22, the highest in the 114-year history of the lender.



Average stay of visitors declines in Shimla

The average stay of tourists in Shimla has come down from four-five days in the 1970s to one day at present, as per a report by Tourism Industry Stakeholders Association (TISHA). However, the tourists residing in unregistered/unauthorised accommodations are not accounted for, according to the report on major factors affecting the tourism and viability of the hotel industry in Shimla. The decline is attributed to traffic jams, parking woes and mushroomed growth of unregistered accommodations in and around the state capital Shimla, which has led to a 70-80 per cent decline in the number of average days of tourist stay in registered accommodations in the queen of hills over five decades, the association said. Water shortage in summer, landslides on the Shimla-Parwanoo National Highway, making commuting risky during monsoons, advisories by the district administration of heavy traffic and to avoid commuting on slippery roads.



Netherlands emerging as key export destination for India

The Netherlands has emerged as India's third largest exports destination after the US and UAE during April-December this fiscal on account of a surge in shipment of goods such as petroleum products, electronic items, chemicals, and aluminium goods. India's trade surplus with the Netherlands has also increased from USD 1.5 billion in 2017 to USD 12.3 billion in 2022. The Netherlands has taken over major destinations such as the UK, Hong Kong, Bangladesh and Germany, according to data of the commerce ministry. India's exports to the Netherlands rose by about 69 per cent to USD 13.67 billion during April-December 2022 as against USD 8.10 billion in the same period previous year, the data showed. In 2021-22 and 2020-21, the outbound shipments to the European country stood at USD 12.55 billion and USD 6.5 billion, respectively. The exports are registering healthy growth continuously since 2000-01.



Seven of top-10 firms shed Rs 2.16 lakh crore in mcap

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The combined market valuation of seven of the 10 most valued firms eroded by Rs 2,16,092.54 crore last week, with Reliance Industries Limited and State Bank of India taking the biggest hit.

Last week, the BSE barometer Sensex tumbled 1,290.87 points or 2.12 per cent.

While HDFC Bank, Infosys, ICICI Bank, HDFC and Bharti Airtel were the other laggards among the top-10 firms, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Hindustan Unilever Limited and ITC emerged as the winners.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) tumbled Rs 71,003.2 crore to Rs 15,81,601.11 crore, the most among the top-10 firms. State Bank of India's valuation tanked Rs 46,318.73 crore to reach Rs 4,82,107.53 crore.

The market valuation of ICICI Bank plunged Rs 36,836.03 crore to Rs 5,70,509.34 crore.

HDFC Bank's valuation declined by Rs 24,899.93 crore to Rs 9,01,287.61 crore and



that of Bharti Airtel fell by Rs 23,747.55 crore to Rs 4,31,583.22 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of HDFC went lower by Rs 10,257.28 crore to Rs 4,85,809.79 crore and that of Infosys dipped Rs 3,029.82 crore to Rs 6,38,891.87 crore.

However, TCS added Rs 17,837.88 crore, taking its valuation to Rs 12,47,882.88 crore.

Hindustan Unilever's mcap jumped Rs 14,931.65 crore to Rs 6,13,689.74 crore and that of ITC climbed Rs 13,591.48 crore to Rs 4,29,031.46 crore.

In the ranking of top-10 firms, Reliance Industries remained the most valued company, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ICICI Bank, HDFC, State Bank of India, Airtel and ITC.

FinMin to stick to privatisation of CPSEs next financial year

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry will move ahead with the already-announced and planned privatisation of state-owned companies in the next fiscal, and the chances of the new addition to that list of CPSEs in the Budget for 2023-24 is unlikely, sources said.

The disinvestment target outlined in the Budget for the next fiscal is likely to be a scaled-down and realistic one, as the budgeted PSU sell-off target is going to be missed for the fourth year in a row this fiscal. In the current fiscal, the government had budgeted to collect Rs 65,000 crore from disinvestment. However, so far, it has realised only Rs 31,106 crore by selling minority stakes in public sector companies.

After tasting success in privatising loss-making Air India in 2021, the progress of PSU sell-off has not been very impressive over the past year, and experts say that with the



general election around the corner in 2024, no major disinvestment announcement is expected in this Budget either.

"The plan is to move ahead with the strategic sale of the companies for which the Cabinet approval is already in place," an official told.

This means that the government will go ahead with the privatisation of companies like Shipping Corporation of India, NMDC Steel Ltd, BEML, HLL Lifecare, Container Corporation of India and RINL or Vizag Steel, as well as the big ticket IDBI Bank.

Considering that strategic

sale or privatisation takes at least a year, and in some cases even more, to conclude, a high budgeted disinvestment target may not be achievable.

Nangia Andersen LLP, Partner- Government and Public Sector Advisory, Suraj Nangia said: "The privatization process often takes time, depending on the type of privatization and the economic, social, and political context, emphasizing the importance of a medium-term plan, a solid regulatory framework, and competitive markets".

"A multi-year strategic plan for privatisation can be formu-

A multi-year strategic plan for privatisation can be formulated to ensure there is a concrete timeline and a well-designed sequencing and strategy for privatisation

lated to ensure there is a concrete timeline and a well-designed sequencing and strategy for privatisation," Nangia said.

EY India, Associate Partner, Tax and Economic Policy Group, Rajnish Gupta said the privatisation programme may see an uptick after the 2024 general elections.

"Maybe this year's Budget is going to be a little muted and we may see announcements around disinvestment and sale of minority stakes. After 2024, we may see an acceleration in the privatisation programme again," Gupta said.

Many delayed projects in road transport, highways sectors

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The road transport and highways sector has the maximum number of delayed projects at 428, followed by railways at 117 and the petroleum industry at 88, showed a government report.

In the road transport and highways sector, 428 out of 724 projects are delayed. In railways, out of 173 projects, 117 are delayed, while in the petroleum sector, 88 out of 158 projects are running behind schedule, as per the latest flash report on infrastructure projects for December 2022.

The Infrastructure and



Project Monitoring Division (IPMD) is mandated to monitor central sector infrastructure projects costing Rs 150 crore and above based on the information provided on the Online Computerised Monitoring System (OCMS) by the project implementing agencies.

The IPMD comes under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

The report showed that the Muneerabad-Mahaboobnagar rail project is the most delayed project. It is delayed by 276 months.

The second-most delayed project is the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail project, which is delayed by 247 months.

The third-most delayed project, Belapur-Seawood-Urban Electrified Double Line, is running 228 months behind schedule.

The flash report for December 2022 contains information on the status of the 1,438 central sector infrastructure projects costing Rs 150 crore and above.

Capital gains tax should be rationalised: Experts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Budget should bring in a simpler income tax return form for assesseees having only capital gains or dividend or interest income, along with simplification of the capital gains tax regime, experts said.

Under the income tax law, gains arising on the transfer of capital assets -- both movable and immovable -- are charged to tax under the head 'Capital Gains'. The tax rate is different for different asset classes.

Also, depending on the period of holding, the income is classified as short or long-term capital gains and taxed accordingly.



With capital markets in India growing at an exponential pace and companies taking the IPO route to raise funds, there is widespread demand that the capital gains tax structure be streamlined.

Deloitte India Partner Rohinton Sidhwa said the holding periods for different types of assets and the number of tax rates for different types of capital assets should be reduced to a maximum of 1-2 periods or rates (along with related surcharges).

Govt should hike assistance under PM-KISAN

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The government should in this year's Budget enhance cash assistance given to farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme from the current Rs 6,000 per year for purchase of crop inputs, provide tax incentives to agritech startups and cut import duties on agrochemicals, according to industry experts.

There is also need to announce some incentives to farmers as well as agritech startups for faster adoption of technologies, like artificial intelligence, precision farming and drones, in Indian agriculture sector, they added.

Edible oil industry body SEA



has demanded that a national mission should be launched to increase oilseeds production and reduce imports of cooking oils.

"There is urgent need to launch the National Mission on Edible Oils' with adequate financial support to boost the oilseeds production," Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA)

President Ajay Jhunjhunwala said. Currently, India is importing about 140 lakh tonnes of edible oils annually.

The mission needs to be implemented with an outlay of Rs 25,000 crore annually for the next five years to sizably reduce our dependence on imported edible oils to 30-40 per cent of consumption by 2026 from the current level of 65 per cent, he said.

Agrochemical firm Dhanuka Group Chairman R G Agarwal said farmers should be given more amount under the PM-KISAN programme so that they can buy adequate quantity of crop inputs like seeds, fertilisers and pesticides.

Lamborghini looking to cross century mark in sales in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Italian automaker Automobili Lamborghini is looking to cross the century mark in sales in the Indian market this year on the back of a record showing in 2022, according to the company's country head Sharad Agarwal.

The company, which sells a range of super luxury cars with prices starting from Rs 3.8 crore in India, is also bringing to the country this year its first hybrid car after it makes its global debut

in the first quarter of 2023.

Lamborghini posted record sales in India in 2022 at 92 units, growing at 33 per cent from the previous year. Its previous best-ever sales in the country was in 2021 with 69 units. Before that, its best sales was in 2019 when it had sold a total of 52 units.

"Yes, that's going to be our direction. This is the question which has been coming for some time. We look forward to how do we achieve the three digit mark and hit the century, maybe in 2023.

Go First to get Rs 210 cr under govt's credit line guarantee scheme: CEO

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Wadia group-owned Go First expects to receive Rs 210 crore under the government's credit line guarantee scheme next month as the budget airline seeks to boost its financial position and expand operations.

The airline, which received Rs 210 crore from the promoters last month, aims to have 53 operational aircraft in its fleet by the start of April this year,



its CEO Kaushik Khona said.I.

The airline currently has 37 aircraft in operation.

Apart from the coronavirus pandemic headwinds and intense competition, the no-frills airline is grappling with

the Pratt & Whitney engine issues that have forced it to ground many planes due to a shortage of spare engines.

Under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS), which has come as a relief for many pandemic-hit sectors, Go First has so far availed Rs 600 crore.

With promoters' infusing Rs 210 crore, the airline will be able to get an equal amount under the ECLGS next month, Khona said.

'Indian electronics manufacturing to cross Rs 1.28 lakh cr next fiscal'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Electronics manufacturing in the country is expected to cross Rs 1.28 lakh crore in the next financial year, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar has said.

The minister, in an interview with PTI, said the government is now going to broaden and widen the electronics manufacturing ecosystem with a new production-linked incentive scheme for hearable-wearable, IT hardware and component makers.



In a first, IOC begins export of aviation gas

PNS ■ MUMBAI

In a first, national oil marketer Indian Oil Corporation has started exports of aviation gasoline, the fuel that fires unmanned aerial vehicles and small planes -- turning a chapter in the nation's fuel history from being a net importer to an exporter.

The first consignment of 80 barrels of aviation gas (AV gas), each consisting of 16 kilolitres, was shipped from the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) to Papua

New Guinea over the weekend. This is the first-ever instance of India exporting this fuel, produced at IOC's Vadodara refinery, marking its entry into an estimated USD 2.7-billion global market, the company said in a statement.

Aviation gasoline powers unmanned aerial vehicles and

piston-engine aircraft used by flying schools. It is a higher-octane aviation fuel meeting the product specifications with superior performance, and quality standards and is cheaper compared to imported grades. The fuel that fires the engines of large commercial jets is called aviation turbine fuel (ATF).

"The indigenous production of the gas named AV gas 100 LL will not only help save foreign exchange but will also make training in domestic flying schools economical for budding pilots," IOC chairman SM Vaidya was quoted as saying in the company statement.

The development also has military implications as it can reduce the operating costs of UAVs that are increasingly being deployed by the defence forces as force multipliers.

M&A, corporate deals in 2022 surpass pre-Covid levels

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Despite global headwinds, mergers and acquisitions and other corporate deals in India surpassed pre-Covid levels to reach USD 159 billion with as many as 2,103 transactions in 2022, a 29 per cent increase from 2021 in terms of value, said a PwC India report.

India demonstrated signs of stable corporate deals defying the trend among most major economies of the world, said the PwC report titled 'Deals in India: Annual Review 2022'.

Mergers and acquisitions accounted for a major share of the deal value, boosted by more than 20 large transactions, and reached a record

high of USD 107 billion -- almost twice that of 2021.

"However, excluding the HDFC Ltd and HDFC Bank merger (worth USD 60 billion), M&A deal values were about 15 per cent lower than that of 2021. Private equity (PE) investments stood at USD 52 billion, 22 per cent lower than 2021 but 20 per cent higher than all other preceding three years in terms of value and quantum," it said.

It is to be noted that deal activity witnessed a steady decline quarter-on-quarter after a strong start in the initial months of 2022, the report said, and 70 per cent of deal activity in terms of value and volumes was witnessed in the first half of 2022, with only 30



per cent activity in the second half of 2022.

"The year 2022 has shown us that investor perspective on India is long-term, and the current market slowdown, while tough, will likely not result in major concerns for most. We believe M&A will be

an essential instrument for companies to move forward, integrate supply chains, beat disruption and boost their market share," said Dinesh Arora, Partner & Leader Deals, PwC India.

On M&A activity, the report said 72 per cent of disclosed

deal value was generated from domestic deals in 2022 (88 per cent, if the HDFC merger deal is considered). Companies sought to consolidate positions, curb competition and

The year 2022 has shown us that investor perspective on India is long-term, and the current market slowdown, while tough, will likely not result in major concerns for most. We believe M&A will be an essential instrument for companies to move forward, integrate supply chains, beat disruption and boost their market share

deal value was generated from domestic deals in 2022 (88 per cent, if the HDFC merger deal is considered). Companies sought to consolidate positions, curb competition and

enter new disruptive segments, leading to some of the largest-ever transactions in the banking, cement and aviation sectors.

Sectors such as financial services, technology, healthcare, energy and power, and industrials are expected to stay active on the domestic front in terms of value creation and market share gain.

On PE activity, it said early-stage deals saw an uptick in deal value by 13 per cent compared to 2021, reflecting investor confidence and the outlook for the Indian startup sector, while buyouts and late-stage deals witnessed a 55 per cent and 33 per cent dip in deal value, respectively, compared to 2021.

Rakhi Sawant confirms mother's death: I love you, Maa

Actor Rakhi Sawant on early Sunday morning confirmed that her mother Jaya Bheda died at a hospital here.

Bheda, 73, passed away around 9 pm on Saturday, according to Deepak Namjoshi, pulmonologist and director, CritiCare Asia Multispecialty Hospital and Research Center, Juhu.

In a statement shared on her Instagram Stories, Sawant said the funeral will be held on Sunday noon at Municipal Christian Cemetery here.

"With deep sorrow, I, Rakhi Sawant, inform you (about) the sudden death of my beloved mother. Many of you know that she was suffering from some medical conditions... I'm sad to say that she is gone... join us for the funeral service of my mother at 12:00 afternoon," the media personality said in the statement.

According to Namjoshi, Sawant's mother had stage four endometrial cancer which had spread to the brain, lungs and liver.

"She was admitted around a fortnight ago. She was earlier treated at another hospital and later referred here," he told PTI on Saturday night.

Sawant also shared a post on Instagram informing her fans and followers about her mother's death.

"Today, my mother left me. And I have nothing to lose. I love you, Maa. Now who will listen to me, who will embrace me? I miss you, Aai," the *Main Hoon Na* actor captioned a video of her mother from the hospital.

Sawant, also known for appearing on Salman Khan-hosted reality show *Bigg Boss*, often talked to the paparazzi about her mother's health.



Harrison Ford is happy for Indiana Jones co-star bagging Oscar nomination

Hollywood star Harrison Ford saluted his former *Indiana Jones* and the *Temple of Doom* co-star Ke Huy Quan for his Oscar nomination this week - the star's latest milestone following the success of his comeback film *Everything Everywhere All at Once*, reports People magazine.

"I'm so happy for him. He's a great guy," Ford, 80, told Entertainment Tonight at the premiere of his new Apple TV+ series *Shrinking*. "He's a wonderful actor. He was when he was a little kid, and he still is," he added. "I'm glad. I'm very happy for him."

Ford and Quan, 51, last acted together in the second film in the *Indiana Jones* franchise, where Ford played the titular role and Quan played the young Short Round. When asked if an on-screen reunion is possible between the stars, Ford told ET, "That'd be great."

As per People, the duo previously reunited in September 2022 when Quan shared a sweet photo of himself and Ford on Instagram. Ford attended an event to promote the upcoming *Indiana Jones* film, while Quan was invited for his role in season 2 of *Loki*.

Quan later detailed the encounter to The New York Times, telling the outlet that his heart was "pounding" as he approached Ford and thought, "Is he gonna recognise me? The last time he saw me, I was a little kid."

Ford, Quan said, ended up looking at him with his "classic, famous, grumpy Harrison Ford look" before recognising him.

"I go, 'Oh my gosh, he probably thinks I'm a fan and he's gonna tell me to not come near him.' But he looks and points at me and says, 'Are you Short Round?' Immediately, I was transported back to 1984, when I was a little kid, and I said, 'Yes, Indy.' And he said, 'Come here,' and gave me a big hug," Quan detailed.



Vicky Kaushal turns DJ in Anurag Kashyap's Almost Pyaar with DJ Mohabbat

Hindi film actor Vicky Kaushal will be seen playing the titular role of DJ Mohabbat in the Anurag Kashyap directorial *Almost Pyaar with DJ Mohabbat*. This marks the fourth collaboration between Anurag Kashyap and the actor.


Talking about Vicky Kaushal's special role in the film, Anurag Kashyap said: "The character of DJ Mohabbat is so integral to the story, that I wanted someone special to play it. DJ Mohabbat is the voice of love, and is the conduit between two stories and I wanted someone who is that. Someone everyone loves because they trust and believe him."

He further mentioned: "Vicky is that to me since I've known him. Always speaks his heart, never forgets, is grateful to his audience and people and the characters he plays. When I asked 'if not SRK then who?' My whole cast and my daughter and her friends in unison said Vicky Kaushal."

Almost Pyaar with DJ Mohabbat which stars Alaya F and Karan Mehta, is touted to be Anurag Kashyap's ode to modern love. Presented by Zee Studios under Good Bad Films Production is slated to release on February 3, 2023.

Vicky Kaushal said: "Anurag Sir has been a mentor, a friend and in many ways he's been my window into the world of cinema. When he spoke to me about this role I was immediately on board and this special appearance is for a special film, made by my special friend."





Hilary Duff, ex Joel Madden are neighbours and the families hang out often!

Hollywood actress Hilary Duff is keeping it friendly with at least one ex. The *How I Met Your Father* star, 35, revealed on 'Watch What Happens Live' that she and ex-boyfriend Joel Madden have long been good friends, after "the whole world's mind was blown for a hot second" at her and husband Matthew Koma's dinner with Madden and his wife Nicole Richie.

"By the way, I have a good relationship with their whole family. I think people were (blown away). I don't know. We're neighbours. And we actually hang out all the time," she explained.

"I was just in her driveway, honking for her to come drink wine with us the other day," Duff added of Richie, 41, whom Madden, 43, married in 2010. "She wouldn't, she was asleep by 8."

She said now that they're neighbours, "We get them to hike with all the time," adding: "And you know what? It's lovely."




As per People, Duff previously posed for a photo last February during "date night" with Koma, 35; as well as Madden and Richie, and Pete Wentz and partner Meagan Camper. They were also joined by Pulse Music Group founder Josh Abraham and wife Gina.

"My husband is a giant troll, it's one of my favourite things about him," Duff noted.



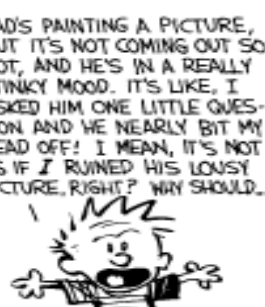

"Right when they moved in, for some reason Matt Photoshopped a picture of Joel and (brother Benji Madden) in a photo with me on Valentine's Day with like, 'Happy Valentine's Day, Honey.'"

"So, this was before we started hanging out, and I think Joel and Nicole were like, 'Oh my god, they don't like us and we just moved in here next to them.' But no, they just know that Matt is a big troll and likes to have lots of fun," she said.




ARCHIE




CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Beard

7 Movements of the sea caused by the moon's pull on the Earth

8 A sour oily fruit from a tree

9 One of the continents

10 An alcoholic drink

12 Look at something for a long time

14 Me

17 A type of small bird

18 A clothing size

19 A chart of months and days

DOWN

1 Broader

2 A six-legged creature

3 Round handle

4 Lift up

5 People not known to you

6 Extremely frightened

11 An eye's cover

13 A striped animal

15 Mistake

16 A joint in the leg

SOLUTION

SUDOKU

Yesterday's solution

Rules

Without a doubt, *Bigg Boss* is a massive franchise - but the content given by the contenders is sometimes so faulty that it creates a ruckus in their minds, once they are evicted. In the recent episode, when scandalous revelations were made against actor Shalin Bhanot, we saw him going through mental health issues inside the house, where at the moment he's being consulted by a psychiatrist offered by the makers. *The Pioneer's* Shikha Duggal connects with a few ex-contestants, who share their takes on the same.



Sacrifices, breakdown and betrayal!

Soundarya Sharma: Divisive viewers reactions

Inside the house, there will be an out spur of emotions — I was crying. Mujhe attachment hogayi. Salman Khan was constantly asking us "what is it?" and I didn't want to stretch it like a rubber band on national television. You say something inside the house, and fans start to get upset outside. And, when you come outside — that public backlash is too much to take for your brain's mental well-being.

A duplicate *Bigg Boss* will be running on social media these days and it's horrendous to read some tweets. Few contestants throw attitude inside, not ready to take this drama sometimes. You are not in a mood! I wasn't feeling lonely, it was by choice that I was on my own for the last few days because I can't fake it inside.

And then you have to go through internal politics that can sometimes cost you your exit! You severely feel unstable inside the house sometimes and it's good to have a well-ness team on standby for such shows.



The actor recently went on air and shrieks: "I am feeling worried and lonely. I am unable to take the insulting behaviour from Tina Datta. One can't talk about my ex-wife inside this house, they don't have the license to. Tina's voice is haunting me! Neither do I want my mental situation to become content for viewers. I think, am sinking into depression. Getting unbearable anxiety. A person like me is going



Vishal Kotian's emotional stress as a contender

If you are not ready for the mental game, as an ex-contestant would suggest one to not enter and waste an opportunity of a lifetime. The makers never force us! I cried too, and felt lonely too. If you are feeling too self-involved, aggressive, arrogant or frustrated: Salman Khan comes and tightens our screws (he laughed).

"Joh dikhta hai, woh bikta hai" — for the sake of TRPs few contestants in my season were given preferences which made me feel deceived.

I was trying my best to attract as many eyeballs as I can! Controversies, gossips, or be it episodes of catfights: that sometimes make us forget to be kind because we get too involved in the show. Apart from genuine mental breakdowns, I have seen contenders "acting to be emotional" which is so bizarre for me. You are setting off anxiety issues in the wrong direction by "acting"! If a scandalous revelation is revealed about you inside the house — image correction is the only way out. Low self-esteem and frustration won't take you anywhere as I can see in the current season. Few of them are lacking self-worth and howl when they experience an emotional burst out. It's traumatic for viewers to watch.

Nikki Tamboli: Having a backbone in the house

When I entered the show for the second time, I felt myself frailing. There was a time in the house when all the housemates were against me except for Sidharth Shukla who was fortunately present as a mentor there. I needed that guidance from him! These situations make you miss your family then. You get so infuriated inside, you'll get ready to walk on the path of betrayal too! And then there is the other facet, you will sacrifice too. That's the dynamic of that house. In my second innings, it was only Rubina Dilak who didn't let me get insulted ever. If my body was aching post a task, she used to take care of me like her younger sister. These things keep you mentally sane in that house. There was another way of keeping yourself in a sound mind: head inside the confession room and speak your heart out to *Bigg Boss*. That move allows the contestants to be able to think clearly ahead in the game without losing the plot.

All in all, we understood it's important to remember that mental health support is just as important to reality contestants too because they are facing their own challenges in a locked house without communication mediums outside.



through mental issues, so why can't the makers give us some offline space? I do not agree with the show's extension either, the house is eating me up inside out. I am extremely frustrated from the inside but can't show it on cameras: that's how distressed the situation is. I don't want my fans to see a depressed Shalin Bhanot! Can't even get candid inside the confession room because the cameras just don't



Dalljiet Kaur: Exposing your annoyance

The house's intensity is so much that you become vulnerable all of a sudden. You end up exposing your annoyance. You start taking wrong decisions on national television under the influence of exasperation because you have no idea what is going on outside. *Bigg Boss* house is full of judgements, you have signed a contract that will uncover your layers of personality as each day passes by. I have seen contestants not even acknowledging their irritation. They instead justify that and then behaviour evokes irritability in us also! Being locked up for more than a hundred days can cause feelings of indignation in anyone. Only real friendships will allow you to sustain yourself in that house without losing the mental track! When my son's name was being pronounced repetitively in the house and is also in this season by his father — it disturbs me to no end even being outside the house. I want Shalin to play with courage now. I don't want him to be susceptible to negative criticism.

Making mental health & mindfulness more accessible

Maintaining positive mental health and treating any mental health conditions is crucial to stabilizing constructive behaviors, emotions, and thoughts. *The Pioneer* connects with the founder of The Mindfulness Foundation, who has helped many people overcome their day-to-day mental health struggles.

K. RAMYA SREE

Not until we are lost do we begin to understand ourselves. Often, we tend to ignore the state of our mental health and end up doing things that drain our brains. Self-care is how you take your power back, and in order to gain this, mindfulness is the key.

In India, The Mindfulness Foundation (TMF), a mental health platform is the only Indian partner of the Oxford Mindful Foundation by Oxford University. The foundation aims to make mindfulness techniques and MBCT programmes accessible to varied groups based on their data-based research around - workplaces, schools, and lower-income groups - in India. It will focus on integrating mindfulness through modern psychology, and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) to help individuals manage lifestyle stress, anxiety, and the onset of depression.

Today, we have with us the founder of the TMF, Geetika Arora Bhojak, who has helped a lot of people overcome their day-to-day mental health struggles. She has also been working with corporates in India and globally to help them deal with the challenges of the new reality post-pandemic.

Asked what made her start her journey into the mental health space and become a mindful coach, Geetika said, "Just like a lot of people, I had my own mental health journey as well. Since we do not place as much importance on mental health the way we do on physical health, I was struggling to understand what was going on with me, trying to alleviate some of the symptoms I was experiencing, due to the lack of resources available. Seeing people in my family go through similar struggles made me realise that the lack of awareness makes these challenges go unnoticed and untreated, causing so many underlying problems. These situations propelled me to learn more about the field. During the pandemic, I had earned certification as a mindfulness-based cognitive therapy coach, allowing me to not only help myself but also others in my workplace and community."

"It is imperative for family and friends to create an environment free of judgement. Normalizing mental health problems and talking about them without any fear of judgement can be a way to reduce the stigma among people who may be wary of the term. Showing compassion for people with mental health issues is important because it allows them to feel safe enough to talk about their struggles. We must normalise seeking help for mental illnesses the same way we



do for any physical symptoms—that there is a problem and seeking help or treatment for it is important. Relaxing exercises and prayer can improve your mindset and vision of life. Research shows that meditation can help you feel calm and enhance its effects. Making yoga and meditation a part of your daily routine is another way we can lead a more mindful life."

Geetika feels social stigmas are the main obstacles to inclusive and open mental health education in the country. "Even today, people with mental disorders are seen as 'crazy' and untreatable. Despite India being the country with the highest suicide rates, mental health is not a priority in schools and colleges. It is largely the urban population that is now becoming more aware of such issues due to books, movies, and the internet. The government must collaborate with schools and mental health practitioners to introduce these topics into the education system and encourage dialogue on the subject. Even those who are educated on the subject may not seek help because they are afraid of being rejected by family and friends, as well as the high cost of treatment. Subsidising mental health and making it a part of insurance can go a long way toward helping transform the way mental illnesses are viewed in the country," she added.

TMF is here to take care of all that. She asserted that The Mindful Foundation aims to abolish the stigma around mental illnesses, raise awareness about making mental health everyone's prerogative, and assist others in becoming more aware of their surroundings and being in the moment. Mindfulness training helps an individual become one with their bodies and emotions and imbibe a sense of intrinsic self-awareness. Breathing is known to calm the heart and also reduce adrenaline, which is often the cause of stress-induced decision-making.

These practices are critical to understanding the subconscious mind and recognising negative behavioural patterns. And the foundation includes all of these sessions.

Inorbit Durgam Cheruvu Run 2023 ends on a high note

The city of Hyderabad witnessed the successful completion of the third edition of Inorbit Durgam Cheruvu Run (IDCR) 2023 powered by Alt Life a brand from Shoppers Stop that had over 6000 registrations this year. This marked a 100% increase over last year's 3200 participants. The first three winners of the half marathon were James Kipleting Korir, Het Ram, and Ramavath Ramesh Chandra. As for the 10km run, the fastest runners were Hukam Hukam, Dipak Suhaug, and Lakshmeesha C.S.

The 21 Km run was flagged off from Inorbit Mall, Hyderabad on Sunday early morning in the presence of

Ronald Rose, IAS Secretary of Finance and Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Societies, Government of Telangana, Shrawan Gone, Chief Operating Officer, Telangana and AP, K Raheja Corporation.

10 K Run was flagged off by Jayesh Ranjan, IAS Principal Secretary of Industries, Commerce and Information Technology, Government of Telangana, Shankaraiah, Zonal Commissioner, Serilingampally, Hyderabad; Amarnath Reddy, Chief Relations Officer, IT Telangana, and Shrawan Kumar, ZM TSIC.

The 5K Family run had over 3000 participants and was

flagged off by M. Stephen Raveendra, IPS Commissioner of Police, Cyberabad, K. Narayan Naik, IPS, Joint Commissioner of Police Traffic, Cyberabad, Shilpawali DCP L&O, Cyberabad; Shri Krishna Yedula, Secretary SCSC, Cyberabad Police were also present at the event.

IDCR is a run with a cause and this year the event has so far managed to raise a whopping sum of Rs 54 Lakhs. IDCR has partnered with NGO Nirmaan as its CSR partner. The proceeds #RunForInclusion will go towards providing skill development and employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the service sector.

This year, runners from 25+ corporates including put on their running shoes for the marathon with 850+ registrations from the IT Park Mindspace alone.



India win U-19 Women's T20 WC title

PTI ■ POTCHEFSTROOM

India on Sunday won their maiden ICC title in women's cricket as a bunch of sprightly and talented teenagers lifted the inaugural U-19 World Cup with an emphatic seven-wicket victory over England.

The Shafali Verma-led India U-19 squad managed to do what their seniors could not do by clearing the final hurdle in a global event.

India first bundled out England for 68 in 17.1 overs and then returned to knock off the paltry target in 14 overs to lift the coveted trophy.

"It is just a proud moment, its our first world cup," said Trisha with stumps in hand after the memorable win.

The win on Sunday also reaffirms India's dominance at the U-19 level with the boys winning the world title in the Caribbean last year.

India's bowling attack, led by pacer Titas Sadhu and supported by leg-spinner Parshavi Chopra, set up the comprehensive win on Sunday as they blew England away with a clinical display at Senwes Park.

While Sadhu showed that Indian women pace bowling is in safe hands following the retirement of Jhulan Goswami with impressive figures of 4-0-6-2, Chopra too continued her dream run as she snapped two for 13.



Archana Devi also scalped 2 for 17, while Mannat Kashyap (1/13), Shafali (1/16) and Sonam Yadav (1/3) accounted for one wicket each as England were all at sea

after being asked to take first strike.

Following a pep talk from India's Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra, India came out with a specif-

ic plan and executed it perfectly as England's innings never really took off after being reduced to 16 for three in four overs.

Chasing 69, Shafali started

with a boundary off Hannah Baker before launching Sophia Smale for a maximum. But Baker came back to get rid of the India skipper, who was caught by Alexa Stonehouse in

the 3rd over.

Her opening and team's best batter in the tournament, Shweta Sehrawat, also was back in the hut after giving a simple catch to Baker off Grace Scrivens in the fourth over.

Soumya Tiwari (24 not out) and Gongadi Trisha (24) then dug their heels in with a 46-run partnership.

With four runs needed, Trisha was cleaned up by Stonehouse, as Tiwari knocked off the winning runs.

Besides Shafali, Richa Ghosh was the other international cricketer in the U-19 squad.

Earlier, Sadhu bowled 20 dot balls in her quota of four overs. She struck in the fourth ball of the innings with a superb caught and bowled effort to get rid of Liberty Heap (0).

Spinner Archana then cleaned up Niamh Fiona Holland (10), while Gongadi Trisha pulled off a sensational catch to get rid of Grace Scrivens (4) to hand Archana her second wicket.

Sadhu could have added another wicket to her name but senior pro Richa dropped a regulation catch of Ryana Macdonald Gay, who had edged an away going ball.

The Bengal pacer, however, didn't have to wait longer as she went through the gates of Seren Smale (3) next.

Macdonald Gay played a

BCCI announces ₹5 crore reward for victorious squad

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

BCCI secretary Jay Shah on Sunday announced a whopping cash reward of Rs 5 crore for the entire India squad following its title winning performance at the inaugural Women's U-19 T20 World Cup.

India recorded a dominating seven-wicket win over England in the final in South Africa.

The Shafali Verma-led India U-19 squad managed to do what their seniors could not do by clearing the final hurdle in a global event.

"Women's Cricket in India is on the upswing and

the World Cup triumph has taken the stature of women's cricket several notches higher. I am delighted to announce INR 5 crore for the entire team and support staff as prize money. This is surely a path-breaking year," Shah tweeted after India's triumph.

The secretary also invited the entire unit to Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

"I invite @TheShafaliVerma and her victorious team to join us at the Narendra Modi Stadium, Ahmedabad and witness the third T20I on 1st February. This humongous achievement surely calls for a celebration," he added.

couple of hits to the fence to ease the pressure but in-form leg-spinner Parshavi Chopra then got into the act, trapping Charis Pavely (2) in front of wicket as England lost half their side for 39 in 10 overs.

Left-arm spinner Kashyap also kept things tight at the other end as Chopra removed Macdonald Gay with Archana taking a superb one-handed catch with a full dive at extra cover. India's fielding was exemplary in the big game.

With England at 46 for 6 in

12 overs, skipper Shafali brought herself in but Alexa Stonehouse hit her for a rare boundary.

Soumya was then in action as her direct hit found Josephine Groves short by a big margin, leaving England at 53 for 7.

Shafali and Richa then combined to pile further misery on England with the latter producing a stumping effort. Kashyap then removed Stonehouse with Sonam taking a dolly at cover.

Indian spinners limit NZ to 99/8

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

India's spinners impressed on a rank turner to limit a self-destructing New Zealand to 99 for eight, their lowest total against the hosts, in the second T20 here on Sunday.

With the pitch offering sharp turn, Hardik Pandya decided to employ spinners from both ends in the power-play after opening the bowling himself.

Wrist spinners Kuldeep Chahal (1/17) and Yuzvendra Chahal (1/4), playing in a T20 together after a while, extracted a lot out of the Lucknow surface while finger spinner Washington Sundar (1/17) produced another tidy spell.

Chahal was left licking his lips after the first ball of his opening spell. It was a ripper that pitched on leg stump before beating the outside edge of Finn Allen's bat. The opener perished two balls later trying to reverse sweep with the ball thudding into his back leg before crashing the stumps.

The in-form Devon Conway too fell to the reverse sweep as the ball kissed his gloves on way to wicketkeeper Ishan Kishan.

New Zealand were soon reduced to 35 for three in seventh over when the dangerous Glenn Phillips missed a straight ball from Deepak Hooda in his attempt to reverse sweep the part time off-spinner.

Daryl Mitchell got a beauty from Kuldeep that came



back in sharply to shatter the stumps.

New Zealand bat deep but none of the batters were able to apply themselves on a testing pitch.

Pacer Arshdeep Singh, who has been guilty of bowling too many no balls lately and Shivam Mavi, were only used in the death overs.

Arshdeep did well to take wickets in his two tough overs and conceded only eight runs. Skipper Hardik ended with figures of one for 25 in four overs.

WRIST SPINNERS KULDEEP CHAHAL (1/17) AND YUZVENDRA CHAHAL (1/4), PLAYING IN A T20 TOGETHER AFTER A WHILE, EXTRACTED A LOT OUT OF THE LUCKNOW SURFACE

'GIVE THEM SPACE'

Senior India off-spinner R Ashwin has urged fans to be patient with star batters Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli as far as winning an ICC trophy is concerned, saying it took even "the great" Sachin Tendulkar six attempts to win a World Cup.

India, who last won a World Cup in 2011, has not tasted success in ICC tournaments since their triumph in the 2013 Champions Trophy.

Backing his former and

current India skipper, Ashwin said on his YouTube channel, "It's easy to say you haven't won this and so on."

"After the 1983 World Cup, the great Sachin Tendulkar played the 1992, 1996, 1999, 2003, and 2007 World Cups. He finally won the World Cup in 2011. He had to wait for six World Cups to finally win one."

"Just because another stalwart MS Dhoni came and won a World Cup as soon as he took charge, doesn't mean it'll happen to everyone, right?"

The team's failure to win an ICC tournament for nearly a decade has attracted criticism and the most recent reverse was the crushing defeat to England in the semifinal of the T20 World Cup in Australia last November.

Ashwin asked the fans to give some space to Rohit and Kohli. "These players (Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli), didn't play in 2007. Rohit Sharma missed out on the 2011 World Cup. Only Kohli played in 2011, 2015, 2019 and now he will play his fourth World Cup in 2023. 'He hasn't won an ICC tournament' they say. He has won it in 2011, he has won the 2013 Champions Trophy."

"Rohit Sharma has also won the 2013 Champions Trophy. So, we can give them space guys. They are playing bilaterals, IPL, and so many other matches. When it comes to ICC tournaments, you need those crucial moments to go your way," he said.

PTI ■ POTCHEFSTROOM

India has been waiting for this moment for a long time, said chief coach Nooshin Al Khadeer on Sunday after the U-19 women's cricket team lifted its maiden ICC trophy, adding that the T20 world cup triumph underlines the country's enormous depth of talent.

The Indian women's team on Sunday lifted its first-ever ICC trophy with a seven-wicket win over England in the U-19 T20 World Cup final.

"It is a fabulous feeling. This is the feeling we have been waiting for very long. This is the first time we won the cup and it has come with the U-19 kids. Just shows the kind of depth we have and what is there for us in the future," she said after the match.

India had lost to Australia by seven wickets in the Super Six stage, their only defeat in the tournament.

"The most special thing is the belief. I knew they had a bad game against Australia, but the way they have gathered and played there after, we kept it very simple and we thought we would just play proper and simple cricket and we would achieve this."

"From the National anthem and till the time we won we had goosebumps. I personally realise and understand how special this is for us," she said. "To live it from the young

girls it's commendable. We have been waiting very long for a cup. We have a good future back in India. God has been kind and I'm keeping it simple."

India skipper Shafali Verma credited the support staff for all the support.

"The way all the girls are performing and backing each other, so happy. Incredible feeling. Thanks to the staff, the way they have been backing us everyday and telling us that we are here for the cup and because of them we are here," she said during the post-match presentation ceremony.

"The players have been backing me a lot. Thanks to BCCI for giving me this beautiful team and really happy for winning the cup."

While Shafali had a modest outing with the bat, fellow opener Shweta Sehrawat emerged as the highest run-getter with 297 runs at an average of 99.

"She (Shweta Sehrawat) has been excellent and has followed all the plans from the staff," Shafali said.

"Not just her, Archana, Soumya and I can't really take the names but they all have been incredible."

The other senior player in the team, Richa Ghosh said the triumph will give a boost to the senior team to go for the title in next month's T20 World Cup, also in South Africa.

"It is a superb feeling. I have

been waiting for this since U-19 days for so many years. All the players have a good positive energy, I really enjoyed with them and we will take the momentum in the senior world cup," she said.

"We are looking forward to that World Cup also, if we can win 2 World Cups, it will be superb."

Player of the Match Titas Sadhu, who returned with superb figures of 2 for 6 in her four overs, said "It's really surreal. Have been looking forward to this day for a long time."

"We had a plan in our mind, and thankfully we executed what we planned. The spinners backed up really well. We have played 2 matches and watched all the games that happened here, and had a pretty good idea where to bowl."

England skipper Grace Scrivens blamed the batting unit for the loss.

"We were gutted, our batting let us down. We were so good throughout the tournament going hard at the bowlers, we tried that today but didn't quite come off," said Scrivens, who won the Player of the Tournament for amassing 293 runs and taking nine wickets.

"All these girls are unbelievable and I absolutely loved captaining them. They (England senior team) made the trip here, awesome and really unbelievable."

BY PRAVIN THIPSAY

In the erstwhile Soviet Union, four prestigious Chess awards were conferred every year for excellence in different parts of Chess. The best attack award was named after the greatest attacking player of all time, Dr. Alexander Alekhine. The best defence award was called the 'Lasker award' in memory of Dr. Emanuel Lasker, who possessed extraordinary skills in defence. The best endgame award was named after 'Chess Playing Machine' Jose Raul Capablanca, who had little difficulty in converting 'theoretically drawn' endgames in wins. And the best strategy award went to none other than legendary Wilhelm Steinitz.

A Chess game played between two strong players, who have correctly grasped the important principles of Chess, usually takes a slower pace than a game between two amateurs. Since direct skirmishes are likely to fail early in the game, nowadays the strong players choose to slowly mobilize all their forces, thereby building up the position in a true warfare style, before launching an attack. This concept was first thought of in the 1870s by a player, who, after mastering the attacking and defensive skills of Paul

Steinitz: A strategist par excellence

Morphy, felt a need to look for something more concrete and complex than a direct violent attack from move one. He came out with a new revolutionary concept with his words "In the beginning of the game ignore the search for combinations, abstain from violent moves, aim for small advantages, accumulate them, and only after having attained these ends, search for the combination with all the power of intellect, because then (after strengthening the position by accumulating the small advantages) the combination must exist, however deeply hidden". Though a controversial thought then, the player was able to justify this strategy by defeating the best of the contemporary players. This type of play is called strategic play. The Soviet Union's 'best strategy award' is named after the player mentioned above, Wilhelm Steinitz of Austria, the first official World Chess Champion.

Wilhelm Steinitz (May 14, 1836 – August 12, 1900) was born at Prague (now the capital of the Czech Republic) in the Bohemia state of the Austrian Empire and later moved to

Vienna, the capital, to study mathematics. Around 1860, he became the strongest Chess player in the world and decided to move to England in 1862 to compete with the strong players there. Steinitz had a brilliant record of matches and tournaments for more than three decades; he became famous as 'The Austrian Morphy' in the 1860s for his brilliant attacking play. Though Steinitz solicited for slower attacking methods, he never disagreed with Morphy's way of King side attack. Steinitz's match against Zukertort in 1886, in which the Chess Clock was used for the first time in history, is considered to be the first official match for the World Chess Crown. Steinitz became an American (USA) citizen in 1888. In 1894, he lost his world Chess throne to Dr Emanuel Lasker of Germany. However, Steinitz continued to play brilliantly for a couple of years more after which his health deteriorated. Steinitz succumbed to various illnesses and passed away on 12th August 1900 at New York.

For our new series "Learn

from the Champions", I have chosen a game played by Steinitz while he was on his decline and yet had not lost any knowledge or skills he had accumulated in four decades. This game has been annotated by almost all world champions and Chess writers. Here is an example of how deeply had he grasped the essence of Chess. Let us see what Grandmaster Tartakover has to say about the game. "The feature of the following game is how White fastened on a small weakness in the enemy's camp and how, by skillful maneuvering, he prevented him from castling. Never relaxing his grip, he wound up the game with one of the most beautiful and aesthetically satisfying combinations ever devised on the chessboard".

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.c3 Nf6 5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Bb4+ 7.Nc3

"A move already advocated by Greco the Calabrese in 1619, by which White offers to give up a pawn for the attack." --- Tartakover.

Black must not hope to hold the gain of the pawn." Tartakover and Reti.

8.exd5 "White has come out of the preliminary skirmish with a pawn in the centre. Even though it is isolated, this pawn will prove a tower of strength". Tartakover.

8...Nxd5 9.0-0 Be6? "After this move which, to all appearances, is perfectly sound, Black loses his chance of castling. He should, at all costs, have played 9...Bxc3, and then completed his development. 10.bxc3 0-0 11.Re1, was necessary, though White stands much better." --- Reti.

10.Bg5! Be7 11.Bxd5 Bxd5 12.Nxd5 Qxd5 12...Bxg5 is even worse. For example, 13.Re1+! Be7 14.Nxe7 Nxe7 15.Qa4+ Qd7 16.Qb4 etc.

13.Bxe7 Nxe7 14.Re1 "After this orgy of exchanges, Black finds himself unable to castle. With his next moves he tries to get his king into safety by 'artificial castling', but it takes too much time". -- Tartakover.

"The point of all the

exchanges, as by this move White obtains command of the board, prevents Black from castling, and initiates a most powerful attack on the King." - - Dr. Tarrasch.

14...f6 15.Qe2 Qd7 16.Rac1! "16.Rad1! would have been more accurate" -- Anatoly Karpov. For example, if 16...c6? 17.d5! cxd5 18.Rxd5 Qc7 19.Nd4 when Black has no defensive possibility left. 16...c6?

"It would have been preferable to play 16...Kf7, as White can't embark on a combination with 17.Qxe7+ Qxe7 18.Rxe7+ Kxe7 19.Rxc7+ due to 19...Kd6! --- Dr Tarrasch. 17.d5!!

"A fine square vacating sacrifice. The d4 is made available for the knight, thus greatly intensifying the attack". --- Tartakover.

17...cxd5 18.Nd4 Kf7 "Black has almost castled, but not quite". --- Tartakover.

19.Ne6 Rhc8 Now White wins now with a forced combination, exactly in the style Steinitz had quoted. A very difficult combination to

spot though.

20.Qg4! g6 21.Ng5+! Ke8! Black seems to have held his own as a few exchanges seem to be inevitable now. But the Austrian Morphy had already foreseen the end of the battle! 22.Rxe7+!!

"An amazing situation! All White's pieces are 'en prise', and Black threatens ...fxc1#. Yet he cannot take the checking rook, 22...?xe7 23.?xc8+ ?xc8 24.?xc8+, and White remains a piece ahead." --- Tartakover. "The variations resulting from 22...?xe7 show the astounding degree of precision, which was required of White's calculations, before he could venture on the move in the text, e.g. 22...?xe7 23.?e1+ ?d6 24.?b4+! ...?c7 25. ?e6+ ?b8 26. ?f4+ and wins. In this beautiful combination the rook remains 'en prise' for several moves until Black, compelled to capture it, succumbs to a mating finish". --- Tartakover. 22...Kf8! 22...Kxe7 23.Re1+ (23.Qb4+ seems as strong.) 23...Kd6 24.Qb4+ Kc7 25.Ne6+ Kc8 26.Qf4+ 23.Rf7+! Kg8!

[23...Ke8?? 24.Qxd7# Or 23...Qxf7 24.Rxc8+ Rxc8 25.Qxc8+ etc. 24.Rg7+! Kh8! [24...Kxg7 25.Qxd7+ Or 24...Qxg7 25.Rxc8+ Or 24...Kf8 25.Nxh7+! Kxg7 26.Qxd7+ 25.Rxh7+!

At this stage, Black, who himself was a strong Chess master, left the tournament hall without making a move. The rules of the game did not have a possibility of 'resigning the game' in those days. Steinitz, therefore, had to demonstrate the following winning line to the organisers before being awarded the full point! (The tournament wasn't being played with Chess clocks).

"Mr. Steinitz (at the time) demonstrated the following brilliant and remarkable mate in ten moves" - Dr Tarrasch 25.Rxh7+! 25...Kg8 26.Rg7+! Kh8 27.Qh4+! Kxg7 28.Qh7+ Kf8 29.Qh8+ Ke7 30.Qg7+ Ke8 31.Qg8+! Ke7 32.Qf7+ Kd8 It is Mate in three now. 33.Qf8+! Qe8 34.Nf7+! Kd7 35.Qd6!

White doesn't give Black a single chance to execute mate in one with ...Rxc1. A truly amazing combination.

(Pravin Thipsay is an Arjuna Awardee and International Chess Grandmaster)

Regina shines as a leader after *Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke*

PNS| HYDERABAD

Srijit Mukherji's gaze toward women is empowering and empathetic at the same time. In his writing, he respects women regardless of their job or societal status. While this is how it is supposed to be and no other way, Srijit has been doing it for a long time even when it was a rare sight with films only casting female actors for just glamour.

Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke is yet another attempt at telling a story of Regina Cassandra winning the world.

Police officers conduct a sense of discipline in life, so what was the actress' learning from the series, she says, "The beauty of life is that discipline is some-

thing you must have. When it comes to maintaining discipline in life, I am quite the opposite of Kavya. I don't follow a schedule. Despite the fact that I put in strange hours, I believe the most essential discipline is to make sure you take time for yourself since burnout is a serious issue."

While she is playing an IPS officer and even met Kiran Bedi to which she shares her experience, "It is very crucial for female IPS officers to have assistance, according to Kiran ma'am. And I think I look up to all of them because some of them have strong family structures that push them to pursue all these things. I have the utmost respect for all of them, and I believe it is a very difficult decision for women to pick their jobs over their

families, especially in India. It constantly made us feel guilty, ashamed, and other unrelated emotions by society, and I think every one of these female IPS officers deserves my respect."

At the base level, *Jaanbaaz Hindustan Ke* is quite an intriguing story. A woman having scaled the heights of an ecosystem dominated by men. Meanwhile, also has a family that is right now going through a rough phase because she is fighting a divorce battle with her husband which also includes the custody of their son.

Regina, who plays the character of a mighty cop in her recent series and had recently visited the Connaught Palace police station, opens up about what she learns from the series.



Arvind Krishna starrer *S.I.T* first look unveiled

The first look of the Arvind Krishna and Rajat Raghav starrer *S.I.T*, under the SNR Entertainment and Vizag Film Factory Banner was unveiled on Sunday.

Directed by VBR, this film will be a new suspense thriller.

The film also stars Anil Rathod and Ruchita Sadinani, who will be seen playing prominent roles in this film is being made as a screenplay highlight.

The makers had already released the title poster of the film and has been increasing the curiosity about the movie among the movie lovers.

More details about the film will be released soon.



Pawan-Sujeeth's film to be launched officially today

Powerstar Pawan Kalyan who is busy with his political tours on his specially designed vehicle Varahi is now switching into the movies mode.

The actor-politician has been splitting his time between his films and political campaigns for the past few months. He is currently filming for *Hari Hara Veera Mallu* in Krish's direction. His latest film was announced in Sujeeth's direction produced by DVV Movies. Latest news is the film will go on floors with an auspicious Pooja ceremony today at Hyderabad.

The film will, however, take more than a year to be wrapped up. Pawan Kalyan is now busy with campaigning ahead of the assembly elections.

Anirudh Ravichander is composing the music. Details regarding the cast and crew of the film will be announced in the coming days. Pawan Kalyan also launched *Ustaad Bhagat Singh* with Harish Shankar in Mythri Movie Makers production.



Teaser of Nani's *Dasara* to be released in multiple languages

Natural Star Nani's debut Pan-India film *Dasara* is making noise with promotional content. The team will be releasing its teaser today. As the film is a Pan-India movie, the makers wanted to promote the film on a high scale. Massive stars from different industries will launch the teaser.

While Shahid Kapoor will launch the Hindi teaser, Dhanush, Dulquer Salmaan and Rakshit Shetty will unveil Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada languages.

Keerthy Suresh is the leading lady and Dheekshith Shetty will be seen in a vital

role.

The movie is being mounted on a large scale by Sudhakar Cherukuri under the banner of Sri Lakshmi Venkateswara Cinemas. Samuthirakani, Sai Kumar and Zarina Wahab will also play important parts in the film that will have music by Santhosh Narayanan with Sathyan Sooryan ISC handling cinematography.

Written and Directed by Srikanth Odela, *Dasara* will have a simultaneous release in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam and Hindi languages on March 30.



Darshana from *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha* is a break-up anthem!

Kiran Abbavaram is making an impression doing different genre entertainers. His upcoming film titled *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha* is releasing worldwide on February 17th, 2023. The makers recently started promotions and the film reached everyone's hearts.

On Sunday, the makers released the third single, a heart break anthem for all the break-up lovers titled *Darshana*. The song dives into the pain of a breakup and Anurag Kulkarni's soothing and energetic voice, combined with trendy lyrics by Bhaskarbatla is aimed at appealing to the youth.

Chaitan Bharadwaj has scored the music for the song that has catchy beats and soulful rhythm.



Sithara Entertainment teams up with Mass ka Das

Sithara Entertainment is known for different genre and thought provoking entertainers. Their upcoming film *Butta Bomma* is attracting all. The film's trailer got good response from the movie lovers. The film is releasing on 4 February to entertain all. Mass Ka Das Vishwak Sen released the trailer and wished the makers all the best.

In the midst of all this, Sithara Entertainment delighted all the fans saying that they will team with Mass Ka Das Vishwak Sen for their next project. Fans of Vishwak Sen are super delighted as Sithara Entertainment is a top banner and Vishwak Sen is popular for his intense and powerful performances.

Vishwak Sen is getting ready to entertain movie lovers with his upcoming film *Das Ka Damki*. The film directed by Vishwak Sen himself is set for a spectacular release on 17 February 2023. Vishwak Sen is romancing Nivetha Pethuraj in the film which stars Hyper Aadi, Rangasthalam Mahesh, Rohini, and Rao Ramesh in important roles.



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NTR Jr and Kalyan Ram's family visit Taraka Ratna

Adding to an array of heart attack related incidents pertaining to young men and women in India, on Jan. 27, actor Nandamuri Taraka Ratna collapsed from a severe heart attack. This unfortunate incident took place while the actor was busy canvassing for his cousin and Telugu Desam Party's national general secretary Nara Lokesh.

The 4,000 km Yuva Galam

Padayatra came to a halt and Taraka Ratna was shifted to Narayana Hrudayalaya Hospital in Bengaluru where he's kept under the supervision of doctors. Recently, his brother Chaitanya Krishna informed the media that Taraka Ratna's health is in critical condition and the doctors advised the family to stay patient until Monday.

Taraka Ratna's cousins Jr.

NTR and Nandamuri Kalyan Ram visited the hospital on Sunday along with Ratna's father Mohanakrishna to check on him. The distressed family members (Jr. NTR, Kalyan Ram and Mohanakrishna) were spotted with Karnataka's Health Minister K. Sudhakar.

Speaking to the media, the RRR star said, "Doctors at NH hospitals are providing the best treatment. He has the blessings

of my grandfather (Sr. NTR), family members, well wishers and fans. I wish him a speedy recovery and I pray to god that he should return to normalcy."

Jr. NTR's wife Lakshmi Pranati and Balakrishna's daughter Nara Brahmani (wife to Nara Lokesh) were also seen at the hospital. Sources close to the ailing actor say that he is doing fine compared to the report issued last night.



Ravi Teja's rugged-dynamic look woos fans

Raviteja's surprises in *Tiger Nageswara Rao* is set to entertain all. Raviteja after the shock of *Khiladi*, came back strongly scoring a resounding hit with the mass entertainer *Dhamaka*. He even entertained with his performance in Chiranjeevi's *Waltair Veerayya*.

Now all eyes are on his upcoming film *Tiger Nageswara Rao* which is in full swing under the direction of Vamsi Krishna. Reports are coming that Raviteja will be sporting three different looks for his role. He will be seen in a stylish, rugged, young and dynamic look and in another look, he will be sporting a long beard. The makers are however maintaining secrecy over the third look and it will be a surprise to all movie lovers.

The makers recently completed shooting a high-octane action sequence on Raviteja.

The film stars Nupur Sanon, and Gayathri Bharadwaj as the female leads while Renu Desai, and Anupam Kher in important roles. The film is the biopic on the dreaded thief of Stuartpuram, Tiger Nageswara Rao who wreaked fear in the state of Andhra Pradesh in the 1970s.

