

డబ్బా నుంచి ప్లాస్టాకి మారారు... మరి మీరు చూసే వార్తలూ మారాలి కదా...



నిఖార్సేన
వార్తల కోసం...

చూస్తున్నే ఉండండి... స్వతంత్ర న్యూస్ ఛానల్

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SUN  **DAY**
pioneer



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PERSON

MLC K KAVITA

Daughter of the Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao and MLC K. Kavitha has been a regular in the news for quite a few weeks now for her alleged involvement in the high profile Delhi Liquor Scam. The Enforcement Directorate quizzed her for 10 long hours on March 20 for the second time regarding her role in the Delhi Excise Policy Case. The high level political drama is underway and for the third time, the ED asked Kavitha to appear on March 21. As of now, no arrest was made in relation to the case. The high profile political drama is set to continue for the forthcoming weeks.



VIDEO

TESLA ELECTRIC CARS PERFORM A LIGHT SHOW TO NAATU NAATU

Days after the Telugu movie *RRR* won an Oscar award, the movie's official Twitter handle posted a video of hundreds of Tesla electric cars performing a light show synced to the beats of the now famous *Naatu Naatu* song. The video has since gone viral and shows the parked Tesla cars blinking their headlamps and taillamp in sync with the song that has now turned into an anthem since the Oscar win.

'NAATU NAATU' FEVER



SONG

DOTARA

A newly released song titled *Dotara* produced under the banner of T-Series has drawn strong criticism among Goalpariya folk artistes across Assam for wrongly portraying the state's culture and tradition. The song is sung by Bollywood singers Jubin Nautiyal and Payal Dev and produced by Bhushan Kumar. Speaking about the song, folk artists of Assam claimed that the producers of the song have hurt the Goalporiya folk elements and the evergreen composition of eminent folk singer Pratima Barua Pandey.



MOVIE

GASLIGHT

Sara Ali Khan is currently awaiting the release of her upcoming film *Gaslight*. Also starring Vikrant Massey and Chitrangada Singh, *Gaslight* is a mystery thriller directed by Pavan Kiplani. The film is slated to be released on the OTT platform Disney+Hotstar on March 31. Sara is currently busy with the promotions of the film in full swing.

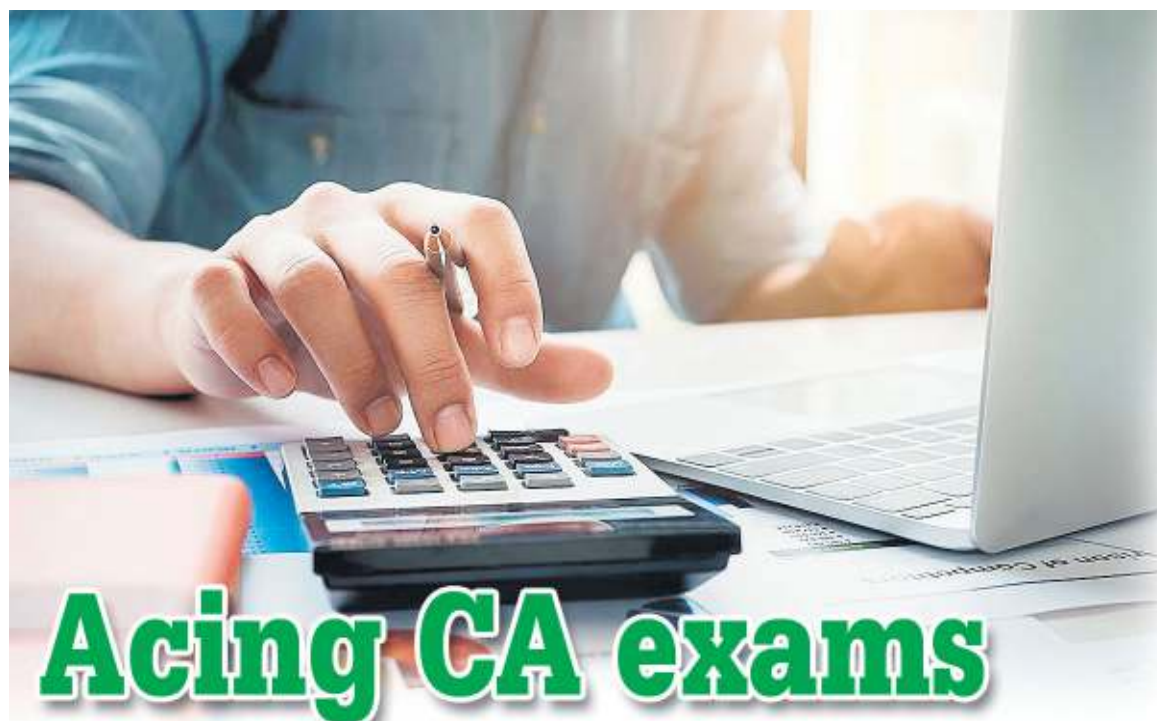


PICTURE

BOMMAN AND BELLIE WITH THE OSCAR

Kartiki Gonsalves' *The Elephant Whisperers* created history at the 95th Academy awards earlier this month. It won the Oscar in the Best Documentary Short Subject category beating the best in the world. The heartwarming documentary tells the tale of the couple, Bomman and Bellie, taking care of an orphaned elephant calf named Raghu at Mudumalai National Park in Tamil Nadu. The filmmaker recently met the couple and shared a picture of the duo holding the shiny looking Oscar.





Acing CA exams

Patient, paced triumph in self-study course

Finance professionals are central to a fast-growing economy like India. As of April 2022, India was home to more than three lakh Chartered Accountants (CAs), loosely known as 'financial doctors'. A CA at large scrutinises complex tax compliance sections and helps companies and individuals manage their finances in the best possible manner, often by liaising with government authorities. As professionals, CAs take up the gamut of functions relating to financial management on behalf of their clients: from crafting a company's or individual's tax strategies to auditing, financial planning, wealth management, tax planning, and filing income tax statements. Over a decade or so, the profession has seen exponential growth, thanks to India's growing number of businesses and young student population interested in becoming finance professionals. The demand for CAs has been on the rise. However, the general perception is that pursuing the Chartered Accountancy course is an uphill task. Well! Is it an exaggeration? Or, do you just need a great deal of patience to clear the course? *The Pioneer's* **AMARTYA SMARAN** gives you the low-down on what is considered to be among India's toughest professional courses.

Let us take a look at the group-wise(final) pass percentage of CA aspirants for May 2022 and November 2022. According to the statistical report presented by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI), in May 2022, 66,575 students appeared for Group-1(final) and 14,643 passed; a pass percentage of 21.99. And 63,253 students appeared for Group-2(final) and 13,877 passed(21.94%). In all, 29,348 aspirants appeared for both groups(final) and 3,695 students passed(12.59%).

As of November 2022, 65,291 students appeared for Group-1(final) and 13,969 passed(21.39%). In all, 64,775 students appeared for Group-2(final) and 12,053 passed(18.61%). As per both groups(final), 29,242 appeared and 3,243 passed(11.09%). We've taken into consideration only the final leg of the CA examination.

When we compare these figures to that of November 2017, one major difference we find is that only 39,328 students have appeared for Group-1(final)(15.91%); 39,753 appeared for Group-2(final)(15.11); 30,054 appeared for both groups(final)(7.50%). This, in comparison to the November 2022 figures, shows that the number of students who have attempted each of the groups doubled and as a result, the pass percentages have also risen accordingly. Albeit, the figures are bound to make us think that the pass percentage of the CA examination is pretty low.

What's wrong with the ones who are not able to clear the course? VS Hiranmai, FCA, ACMA, registered valuer, says Chartered Accountancy is a self-study course. "The moment a person joins the course, they are in search of a lot of institutions and think everything will be spoon-fed to them like in regular schools and colleges. Individuals who go into the vicious cycle of failing over and over again have the tendency of blaming the teachers or saying the portion's not complete. The students who are clearing the course own it up. They give 150 percent to the course the moment they sign up."

VS Hiranmai underscores the importance of getting a grip over the exam. "The basic mistake students are making is they prepare, revise, and go sit in the exam. The area where many students are lacking is that they don't take up any revision/practice tests. Before going to the final exams, when you are writing the test in the exam environment, you will come to know how you are able to manage. You'll learn how to handle pressure. Be it inter/final, if one wants to crack the question paper in a better manner and manage one's time well, you have to take a number of practice tests."

She says the notion that the institute maintains a certain pass percentage is not entirely true. The examiner or board(ICAI) expects a certain perspective from your end. It's not that the exam is getting tougher. The environment is changing, and the profession is such that you need to continuously update yourself. Keeping in view of whatever is hap-

pening, they are just tailoring the course. They are keeping it a little more practical. They are bringing in newer things to match international standards and want us to be more competitive. It's not a matter of making the course tougher, it's about polishing you and trying to bring out the best, according to Hiranmai.

Giving her advice on how students can prepare in order to clear the exams with ease, the experienced teacher opines: "I feel people who emerge victorious or clear in the third or fourth attempt have higher confidence levels. They trust themselves more. The other students who find themselves struggling are always worried about the outcome. It is basically how you train your mind. Your preparation should go in line with what the institute is expecting. Do a little bit of smart and take a lot of practice tests so that you'll get accustomed to the pattern. And don't write and leave it. See how they've evaluated and check where you're standing regarding your presentations. Seeing and correcting your mistakes will help you a lot."

Akhil Osuri is one of those students who discontinued the course and switched career paths. When he was in 11th standard, Akhil decided to become a CA. However, he told us that he didn't do enough research about the course. "One mistake that I've made is, I didn't do thorough research before joining the course. I got to know the pros and cons only after joining. In order to pursue CA, you have to be fully into it. Only then, you'll be to clear it," shared Akhil, who works as an analyst at one of the big MNCs.

The analyst says there's not much of a social life if you take up the course. "You'll miss college life and networking. You go to classes but just for a short period of time. For one particular class, you go to one place and for other classes, you go to another place. It's just that you'll only be concentrating on the subjects. And you won't be meeting many people."

Akhil wrote his finals twice and spent almost two years trying to clear the groups. Two years prior to appearing for the finals, he had already finished a course called CMA(Certified Management Accounting). He says, just to finish CA, he wasted two years. "During Covid, I decided to do something about it," said Akhil. "My ultimate thing was to work in an MNC. I didn't want to start any practice. I felt it wouldn't make much of a difference. Also, I was not sure when I'll be able to complete the course. I thought, instead of wasting time and making attempts, it's better to start working so that I'll have better work experience. I don't regret having taken this decision. I may not plan on writing CA final exams soon, but I'm thinking of doing CPA (Certified Public Accountant); the US version of CA. It's easier! There you can write the exam paper-wise, but here you have to write the entire group..."

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In case you fail one subject, it'll affect the entire group again."

It is a fact that clearing various levels of the CA course (foundation, intermediate, final) needs rigorous practice, saint-like patience, and an athlete's determination. Approximately 7,50,000 students enrolled in the CA course offered by the ICAI, as of 2022. Only a tiny fraction of these aspirants will end up with the CA tag at the end. Oh, wait! There's no age limit as such to get through the course.

Looking at the number of students who enroll and the percentage of them who make the cut, it sure does give the impression that it is one of the toughest courses to pursue. A lot of these students indeed struggle to get through the intermediate or final levels of the course and drop out. According to a recent report, the Chartered Accountancy course has a success rate of less than 16% and there are more than half a million dropout CAs in the market.

Sharing his insights on the topic, senior Chartered Accountant and past chairman of Hyderabad branch of SIRC(Southern Indian Regional Council) of ICAI(Institute of Chartered Accountants of India), Pankaj Trivedi comments: "The problem is, the course is designed in such a way together with the aptitude of the students is the reason for a lot of failures. Any professional exam is tough. In our profession, we continuously have to go to offices and work. When you're working it's a 10-6 job again and tiring as well. On those days, students will not find time to study. Even if they get time, they also join tuition. They feel that they are studying in tuition but unless you revise properly it will not be of much help. They want to finish the entire syllabus in about a month leading up to the exam and put in 10-12 hours. After you take the exam, because you studied so much, there's some optimism that you'll pass. In between the days of exams to results, here also there's no effort to study. Hence, results come, you fail narrowly, and follow the same pattern of studying. This cycle continues with the majority of them. This is my reason why people are failing."

Srikanth [name changed] initially planned to pursue Engineering but decided to go ahead with Chartered Accountancy. A decision he would take following a casual discussion at his cousin's place. Another cousin of Srikanth had already cleared her CPT (Common Proficiency Test) and she told him, "It's not as tough as you think. You just have to be consistent." And those encouraging words pushed the young Srikanth to enroll himself in the course. As of now, he has flunked the final exam thrice.

"Let it be CPT, Inter, or Final, it requires a dedication of about two to three months," says Srikanth in an assuring tone. "You have to sit in one place and study daily. If you're not able to do it, then it gets tougher. You can't be a master of every subject. You just have to know the tactics that will get you 60 in the exam. Once you prepare for 40, you end up getting 30. You have to be prepared in about 80% of the syllabus and that'll help you get 60. It also has the law of aggregates where you individually have to score a certain amount of marks (40% individual marks per subject) and cumulatively (50%) for the entire group as well to get through. Once you don't clear your exam, there's a roadblock. To be honest, if you want to clear it, you have to do it in one shot."

Srikanth is hopeful that this time around, he'll be able to finish his course and he's someone who loves challenging himself. "This course is so addictive that before you fail, you're of

the opinion that this is my last attempt or search for another alternative. What happens is there are certain cases where people worked at places and realized they're not being valued as to how they should be valued. A guy with a CA Inter knowledge is far better than a B. Com grad. The issue is both will be paid the same. The person will end up thinking, when I have more knowledge, why am I being paid less? That makes people want to get back to the course again. Every time you try to run away from the course, it somehow catches you and pulls you back. You may skip an attempt or so, but ultimately you'll come back to the course. It's like a dead trap," shares an excited Srikanth.

Speaking of the law of aggregates, which most aspiring CAs despise, CA Pankaj Trivedi explains: "You need to have equal knowledge of the subjects. What they are saying is that 40 marks is the minimum. If you're too good at a subject and get 60 and above, that means you're very well prepared and you don't have to write the exam for three attempts. But when a person gets 60 and then scores 50 and 20; it clearly shows that he/she has not concentrated on other papers. I think it's a better thing when they say minimum marks are expected in every paper and then a total aggregate. If I don't get it, you can't go ahead. It is 40% and

worried about failure. It was a tough exam, so we failed. See where you went wrong and try to come up with a better way."

Established by an Act of Parliament, ICAI is the second-largest professional body of Chartered Accountants in the world. ICAI is responsible for regulating the profession in the country in accordance with the provisions of the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 and the Chartered Accountants Act, 1988. As per the 73rd Annual Report and Accounts of the Institute for the year 2021-22, organizing Campus Placement programme is one of the prime endeavours of the CMI&B(Committee for Members in Industry and Business) in order to connect and bring together the newly qualified CAs (NQCAs) and the recruiters on a common platform.

Data suggests that through campus placements, jobs offered to Newly Qualified Chartered Accountants (NQCAs) nearly increased five times between 2015 to 2022. And the quantity of registered students has also doubled around those eight years. While 2017 has seen the highest job acceptance rate(95%) amongst NQCAs, the number fluctuated to 57% in 2021. In all, 55 editions of placement programmes were conducted by CMI&B till March 2022. The committee has witnessed 10,197 registrations in 2022, which happens



50%, right? They are not keeping 70% and 80%. I don't think it'd be proper if they say, you failed in two, so you write two. It's not once in a way study. You are putting into practice what you're studying immediately. Even after passing CA, we're supposed to continue studying. Thankfully, we are not asked to take any exams, but it is mandatory for us to do 100-odd hours of study in three years period. That's why I feel it's a good thing that they're asking us not to do it on a piecemeal basis."

The experienced CA opines: "Don't depend on that last two months' studies. Gradually increase it and keep it up to 7-8 hours per day which is more than enough if you do it for that full 6 or 8 months. And don't think that you'll get 80-90 in exam. You'll find new questions every time you see the paper. If you enter the room with 80, the moment you read the first question, your dream is shattered and mentally you'll not be in a position to read the other questions properly. Try to get in thinking that first I'll try for 40 then 50 and then more. If you go with that attitude, your mind can still take a couple of tough questions. It matters a lot with what attitude you're facing the questions. Pass or fail matters, the ranks and all don't matter in our profession. So, why do you want to unnecessarily strain yourself? No one is preventing you from getting good ranks but why do you want to strain yourself? Don't be

to be the highest in the last eight years.

In 2022, 7,360 jobs were offered by different companies that were participating in the placement programme and 5,538 jobs have been accepted. That sums up to a 75.2% acceptance rate. This represents a significant drop from 91.5 percent in 2015, when 1,254 jobs were accepted out of 1,371 offered by 90 participating companies. The number of jobs offered has gradually increased over the years and so did the number of participating companies, but the acceptance rates among candidates fluctuated. The highest annual salary(in Rs lakh) has risen from 21 in 2016 to 30.3 in 2022. Coming to the average salary, for 2021, it is around 9.2 lakhs per annum. All this shows the claims made by people that CA has no formal education system in place is a fallacy. As it has its own regulatory body that is doing its best to extend support to students and newly qualified CAs alike.

"There's already a structured education in place," shared Talluri Rajendra Prasad, Senior Chartered Accountant and Author. "This is not about formal education. It's a self-learning course. That's the original idea. This self-learning course is coupled with article training. So, the aspirants work for 6-7 in their office and then spend time on academics. Therefore, they have a good balance of theoretical knowledge coupled with practical experience. There is

always formal education in place. The structured material the institute provides to anyone who signs up for the course is very good. What he/she needs to do is understand the concepts thoroughly and apply them to a particular situation."

Talluri Rajendra Prasad says the term 'tough' is relative. CA Rajendra assures aspirants that the course has always maintained its standards. "Any person who is seriously interested in pursuing this course, only he/she can get through it. It is not like any ordinary degree where people walk in and spend some time. It can be cracked if one is seriously interested in the subject. Only hard work and discipline are required. It is as simple as that," says CA Rajendra.

"You are the backbone for the entire country in terms of the profession of accountancy," continues Rajendra Prasad. "The tax laws keep changing. Earlier, it used to be on a yearly basis and now it's on a daily basis. Even a small miscalculation will become a costly experiment in this course. You can't keep up with the pace when you enter the profession unless you work hard and struggle at the time of education. Those who're never serious can never clear the course. It's a unique course. No matter where you take up the course, the course quality is the same."

Ram is another aspiring CA who failed the final exam thrice. He thinks one has to figure out a few important areas and go with them to pass the exam. However, he also feels your soul won't be satisfied if one follows that particular way of studying for the exam. Ram feels the key lies in reading, understanding, and learning the material and then reproducing it on the day of the exam. Ram spends around 10-12 hours 30 days prior to the exam, a strict no if we look at what CA Pankaj Trivedi had suggested. The young aspiring CA was totally fed up with the cycle after he flunked for the second time. "I just took a break. Got a job at one of the companies and worked there for six months. I skipped an attempt because there's too much in life to explore," said Ram.

Now, with a renewed philosophy and great willpower, Ram is looking forward to clearing the exams this May and he's got a suggestion for the institute(ICAI) here. "I want them to finish the exams as soon as possible because what happens is after Inter, you have to take three years of articleship. In these three years, you'll be exposed to all the practical things in the world. At the end of the exam, you have to sit down and jot down theoretical, redundant and irrelevant concepts. I mean, it'd be great if they could get down with the exams first. Or else try to put an exam which factors the external factors as well; case study based or open book system. You don't have to jot things. You have to analyse and pick things from the internet."

It's not the failure that bothers these students but the idea that they're being looked down upon by their own. The first question that a relative or an acquaintance asks any young person is, "What are you doing in life?" If that is answered, then comes the inevitable, "How much do you earn?" or "Did you clear that CA exam?" All this brings a sense of unnecessary pressure, and the constant nagging gets to the student's mind.

Well, as life-long learners and just as registered students of a professional course, we must understand that failing at something helps us understand a part of ourselves, but it is also important that we shouldn't accept mediocrity and get comfortable with failure nor get too complacent the moment we suc-

'IT'S DISCOURAGING TO BE AN 'ARTISTE' IN LIFE'

Sankranti this year will remain very special in Shruti Haasan's career, as both the films she starred in — *Waltair Veerayya* and *Veerasimha Reddy* — released on Sankranti this year were chartbusters at the box office. With these two hits, the actress grabbed everyone's attention once again! While her fans are going crazy with the success of her films, we asked her how she manages to always strike the right chord, to which she replied modestly: "Working hard in all circumstances." This is her commitment to cinema. Rather than focusing strictly on the results of her accomplishments, she takes notice of the small steps.

Shruti explained what makes her tick, especially when she's working with Prashant Neel on her next magnum opus, *Salaar*, starring Prabhas in the lead role: "I was always drawn towards the world created by him, principally in *KGF* verse. No actor was considered not so intrinsic; each of his characters in the movie was easy to see. The scale of this film is so grand; on the contrary, observe the director, and you'll see how soft-spoken he is."

Her relationship with fame is very effortless. She was never in with the old, social media was never the bane of her existence, and she's in no mood to fit into the stereotypical standards centered around the cinematic world. The *Race Gurram* actress shared, "From day one of my appearance on

ness models change; promotional tours change, and social media now exists. I am jovial enough to do a voluminous film, but after giving so many blockbusters in my career, let's move on to content driven films too."

Apart from a true, deep-seated love of acting, the STARDUST AWARD FOR SUPERSTAR OF TOMORROW winner finds solace in the fact that, along with proactive efforts, you'll get what you want if you have a bow of teeth-gritting tenacity too. She explained, "I cannot emphasise some attributes enough. Even if you are a megastar, this business works only from Friday to Friday. In my personal opinion, it's discouraging to be an "artiste" in life. An artist is busy "creating," and his creations should be sensitive. Fall in love with the film you are doing, but there is a fear of rejection looming around too. I don't want to work in a race to be accepted; instead, I want to communicate my art to audiences. When stars take risks, they are heavily demoralised. Why? There is a lot of resistance in this industry to do it, and I chose it willingly. So no feeling sorry about it." Again, she chooses an independent film over a commercial one solely because of the artistic value. "You really get the schedule finished faster with more of the razor work done. For example, *Salaar* took extremely longer to be made due to

what's even more worrisome is how internet business is able to lure actors into it too. Mostly for the wrong reasons! Wherever you see a celeb now, he or she is looking so conscious. Where has the rawness disappeared? Questions are being formed by the journalists based on what they see of us on our feeds! I am not going to depend on my looks; it's a big no-no.

Being presentable and feeling ashamed of your own skin are two different things. To me personally, presence of mind locks the deal! I was too afraid to acknowledge who I was in the industry; I felt like a misfit but not anymore."

You know what? We have had innumerable interviews with the actress Shruti

Haasan and have observed she takes pride in being "sensitive," as she should be. No, she's not fragile!

She's celebrating who she is: she's processing information more deeply, and this powerful asset gave her the creativity to be a musician too. Perhaps! She translated this into innovation, just like her acclaimed father, Mr. Kamal Haasan, does. And full of humble emotions, just like her mother, Sarika Thakur, is. This mixture ended up making her see more possibilities in this industry, which is why she's still pushing through.

Actress Shruti Haasan, who likes to celebrate who she is, wishes to not be in the race of being accepted. Instead, she wants to communicate her art to the audiences. The actress speaks to *The Pioneer's* **SHIKHA DUGGAL** and opens up about her choice of films, not shying away from being sensitive, and much more.

celluloid, all I knew was to be an undemanding actress. Whatever happens around us as public figures is the by-product of being constantly in the gaze; however, this belvedere is not so steady. It's not just our film business; even if you're in an office, one must take a realistic approach. We cannot define stardom ever because even an athlete is a star."

Shedding light a little bit deeper into the success world, she shared, "There are formulas that always work. Moving ahead in this business, you experience a comedown. Some things are different, per se, for men and women. Women-centric movies will always be non-identical in terms of popularity in comparison with a male starrer, barring a few. Box office collections vary; busi-

ness models change; promotional tours change, and social media now exists. I am jovial enough to do a voluminous film, but after giving so many blockbusters in my career, let's move on to content driven films too."

There's another difference that she could spot, and that is, "I have been long enough in this industry to know the stark differences between pre- and post-the advent of social media. Society has become more judgmental, and



BLASTED NEW VIRUS: H3N2 NOW

Flu or influenza viruses are commonplace; however, they can lead to severe illness or death, especially in the case of people dealing with existential health issues such as pulmonary, chronic cardiac, renal, metabolic, liver, hematologic, and neurodevelopmental conditions! Lately, the rising cases of the H3N2 virus have been a matter of public concern. On March 6, Karnataka reported India's first death from the virus, and the situation is worrisome. One death was also reported in Haryana. This recent surge in cases has consequently led to a major chunk of the population being hospitalized and experiencing symptoms such as fever, cold, cough, and body aches. Nearly 150 percent more patients are visiting OPDs with such symptoms!

Doctor Bindumathi P L, Sr. Consultant, Internal Medicine, Aster CMI hospital has noticed a 70% rise in H3N2 which is an influenza virus among patients aged 25 and above. She explained, "Flu is a viral infection that affects the nose, throat, and lungs. When an infected person sneezes or coughs, the virus can be transmitted, just like in pandemic. Due to hazardous weather fluctuations over the last one to two months, there is an abnormal pattern in the growth in the number of cases. Also, the symptoms are persisting longer than normal. You might call this a pattern — we are now observing following covid. New infections that require study could be one of the causes." Several studies have pointed out that air pollutants are linked to an increased risk of this influenza. Low humidity in the atmosphere could be another reason. Elaborating on this, she continued, "Air pollution aggravates the respiratory symptoms of cough, wheeze, breathlessness. Another reason is that other viruses were ignored because of covid, and they are now re-emerging. It is a self-limiting condition that results in illnesses of various degrees of severity with high fever, cough with sputum, breathlessness, where some of which require hospitalisation too."

Similarly, at MediBuddy, the doctors have observed a 10% increase in the number of users taking cold and fever consultations in the last one week alone. The current increase in respiratory illnesses has been attributed to the H3N2 virus by the ICMR. Doctor Gowri Kulkarni shares, "This is a subtype of the influenza A virus that is known to cause seasonal flu. In some cases, sore throat, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, and wheezing are also seen. Those at the highest risk include children under 5, older adults over 65, pregnant women, and individuals with certain long-term health conditions."

Doctor Kulkarni further suggested some ways of prevention, such as practicing good hand hygiene, wearing masks in crowded and poorly ventilated spaces, and avoiding touching your face. Additionally, an annual flu vaccination is recommended, especially for those at high risk. If anyone gets sick, it is advisable to rest, hydrate, and consult a doctor, who may prescribe medications. Moreover, one shouldn't be taking antibiotics unless prescribed by a doctor!

"Yes, there has been an uptick in influenza-like illnesses. All of them are not the old seasonal flu or pandemic. The major con-

tributory virus is influenza A H3N2 this season. About half of all inpatients admitted for severe acute respiratory infections as well as outpatients being treated for influenza-like illness are found to have influenza A H3N2," asserted doctor Shuchin Bajaj, founder of the Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals.

Doctor Sunita Kapoor, consultant lathologist at City X-Ray & Scan Clinic, sheds light on other crucial aspects of the virus, including the type and the different ways of diagnosis. Beginning with the types of influenza viruses she describes,

"Influenza virus circulation usually peaks during the monsoon season, with secondary peaks during the winter. There are four types of influenza viruses: types A, B, C, and D. Influenza A viruses can infect humans and many different animals. The emergence of a new and very different influenza A virus with the ability to infect people and have sustained human-to-human transmission can cause an influenza pandemic and therefore is of most significance to public health. Also, these viruses are classified into subtypes according to the combinations of different virus surface proteins, hemagglutinin (HA) and neuraminidase (NA). Current subtypes of influenza A viruses that routinely circulate in people include A (H1N1) and A (H3N2). In years in which H3N2 is the predominant strain, there are more hospitalizations. Human infections are primarily acquired through direct contact with infected

animals or contaminated environments, these viruses have not acquired the ability of sustained transmission among humans."

Influenza virus detection techniques have been classified into four categories namely traditional methods (viral culture), serological methods (immunofluorescence assays, complement fixation, immunodiffusion test), advanced quick methods which include nucleic acid tests like RT PCR, multiplex PCR, nucleic acid sequence-based amplification, and conventional PCR and bio-sensing.

Prof. Dr. SK Chhabra, Head of Department from Pulmonary at Primus Hospital, advises, "Skin and hair issues in the festival of colors were not going to be the only concern this year as a new virus had been spreading, due to the rapid shift in weather from cold to warmer temperatures. The

increase in

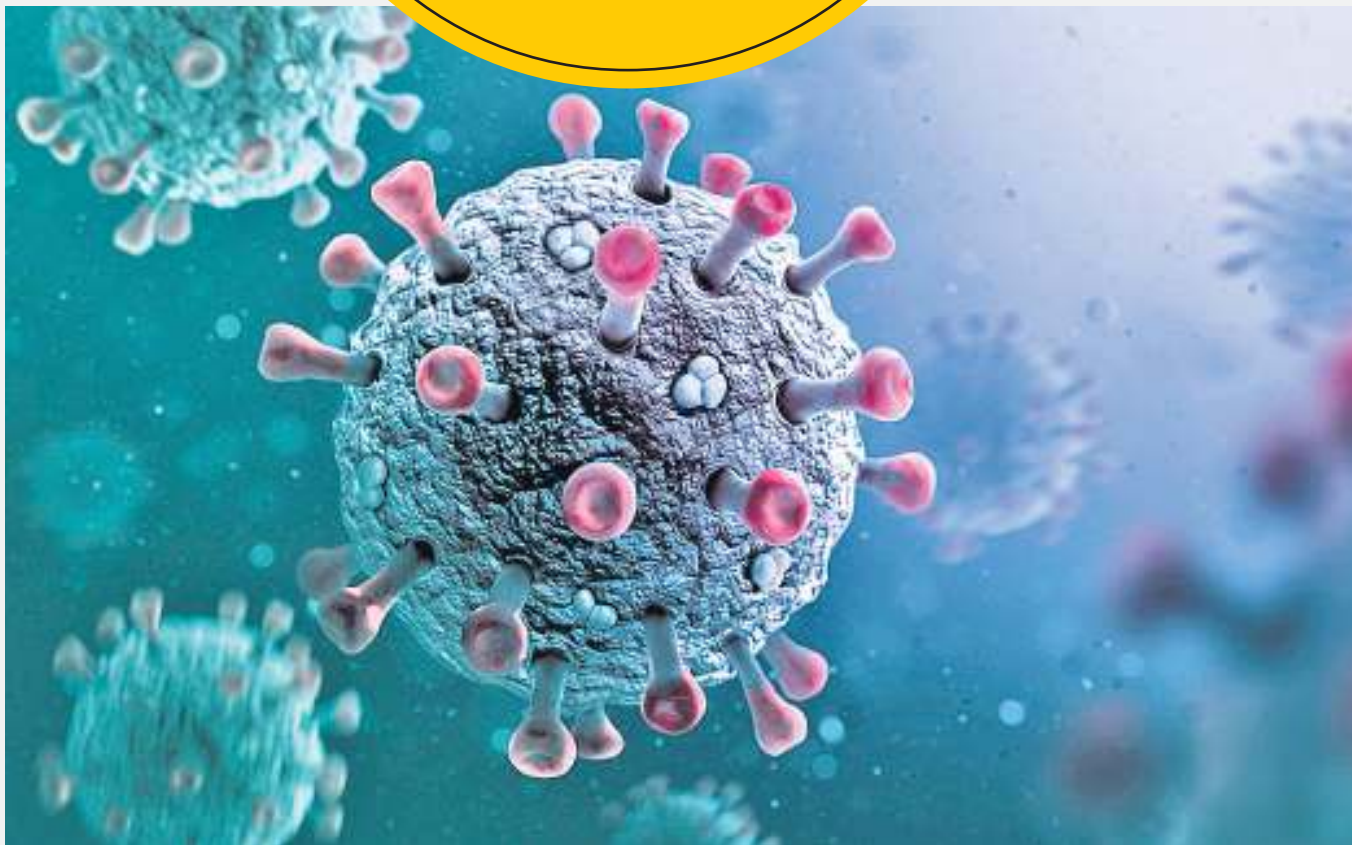
The rising cases of the H3N2 virus have been a matter of public concern. TANISHA SAXENA speaks to experts to give you a detailed report on the virus and the precautions to be taken from being infected.

the number of patients complaining of chest congestion demonstrates how seasonal change is having a negative influence on people's health. Apart from asthmatic patients, there are many additional individuals who have serious lung infections and are having difficulty breathing. They need to be extra careful now as they would have inhaled the colors, which caused serious harm to their health. No doubt, Holi is one of the most exciting festivals, but it is celebrated with chemical colors."

DR. SK CHHABRA shared some precautions to be followed:

These measures will help prevent the flu and limit its spread:

- Wash your hands frequently : Always and extensively clean your hands with soap and water, or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if neither is available.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes: Use a tissue or your elbow to sneeze or cough into if you must expose others to your germs. Do a quick handwashing.
- Don't touch your face unnecessarily: Don't touch your face too much; that includes your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Clean surfaces: Keep frequently touched surfaces clean to avoid picking up the virus from them and spreading it to your body.
- Avoid crowd: If at all possible, avoid congested areas. Keep your distance from those who are ill. You should avoid swine barns at seasonal fairs and elsewhere if you are at high risk of problems from the flu because of your age (younger than 5 or 65 or older), your health (pregnant or have a chronic illness like asthma).



Stealthing: Not a 'trend', but a 'SEXUAL ASSAULT'

Stealthing is the practice where either of the partners removes a condom during a sexual intercourse without the consent of his or her partner, who had consented to only protected sex. In this week's segment of FYI, *The Pioneer's*

TEJAL SINHA attempts to bring to you a detailed analysis of the act, its risks, and the laws surrounding the act.

Safe sex has been a forever debate. Sexual contact protects sexual partners from sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancy. When we talk about unsafe sex, it does not just mean genital sex but also includes other forms of sexual contact, including anal, oral, or any skin-to-skin contact.

One thing that needs to be known here is that not all STIs can have apparent symptoms, and so one might not be aware that they have an STI. That's also why practicing safe sex is important. And thus come condoms, also known as sheaths, into the picture. They act as a physical barrier to prevent the exchange of body fluids. Although there is no guarantee that they can provide complete protection against STIs, they do help to have safer sex when used correctly.

Films like Rakul Preet's *Chhatriwali* and Nushratt Bharuccha's *Janhit Main Jaari* have been a great source of education on a topic that is still taboo to discuss. While *Chhatriwali* focuses on male contraceptives and safe sex, *Janhit Main Jaari* speaks of a woman who takes on a difficult job selling condoms, explaining the importance of protection and dealing with the resistance from her family members and in-laws.

And now you might wonder why we are talking about safe sex. Today, for our weekly segment of FYI, we'll be talking about the sexual trend of "stealthing", which is doing the rounds.

Stealthing is the practice where either of the partners removes a condom during a sexual intercourse without the consent of his/her partner, who had consented to only protected sex. In fact, recently, in the first conviction for "stealthing" in the

Netherlands, a court handed a 28-year-old man a suspended jail sentence for secretly removing a condom during sex. However, it cleared him of rape.

The 28-year-old pleaded guilty to coercion at a Rotterdam court after taking off the condom without warning, despite the woman saying in advance that she did not want to have sex without it, according to a report published by *AFP*.

"This action is also called 'stealthing'. In this way, he exposed her to contracting sexually transmitted diseases and an unwanted pregnancy," the court said in a statement.

To our shock, according to a US study, 12 percent of women have experienced a partner stealthing during sexual activity.

Now that we understood what stealthing is, let's focus on the risk factor caused by it.

Dr. Ravikiran Barigala, consultant in infectious diseases at Apollo Hospital, said, "From an STD's point of view, stealthing increases the chance of infectious diseases. One might do it for pleasure; that's one of the reasons that people might remove condoms. However, since STDs have apparent symptoms, one might not be aware that they have one and can end up infecting their partner and unknowingly transmitting it. It is not only risky but also ethically and morally wrong. Legally, in the Indian context, it might not be considered wrong, although there could be repercussions for it and somebody might sue the person. The chance of infection is that at any point, even in the last few seconds of sexual intercourse, viruses or bacteria could be transmitted. One should consider this act as unprotected intercourse."

What can the receiving partner do now, in

terms of medicine? Dr. Ravikiran Barigala suggests that as soon as one gets to know about the act, one should consult the doctor as soon as possible to avoid infection. "It's recommended that they consult a doctor within 2-3 days of the act so that the medications can work effectively."

Now that it is a non-consent act, can the law help you out? We connect with Vedant Vashist, an advocate based in New Delhi, who explains to us what could be done in such cases.

"As of now, there is no specific section in the Indian Penal Code (IPC) for stealthing. However, depending on the circumstances, it may be prosecuted under Section 468 of the Penal Code. In such cases, you have to first go and report it to the police, and they'll lodge an FIR; after that, they'll do the investigation, and they'll put the case under the section that they feel is relevant to the incident. The charge sheet then goes to the magistrate, and they look into it and the sections, and later both parties are called for trials," shared the advocate.

Apart from Section 468, another section that can be considered for such an act is:

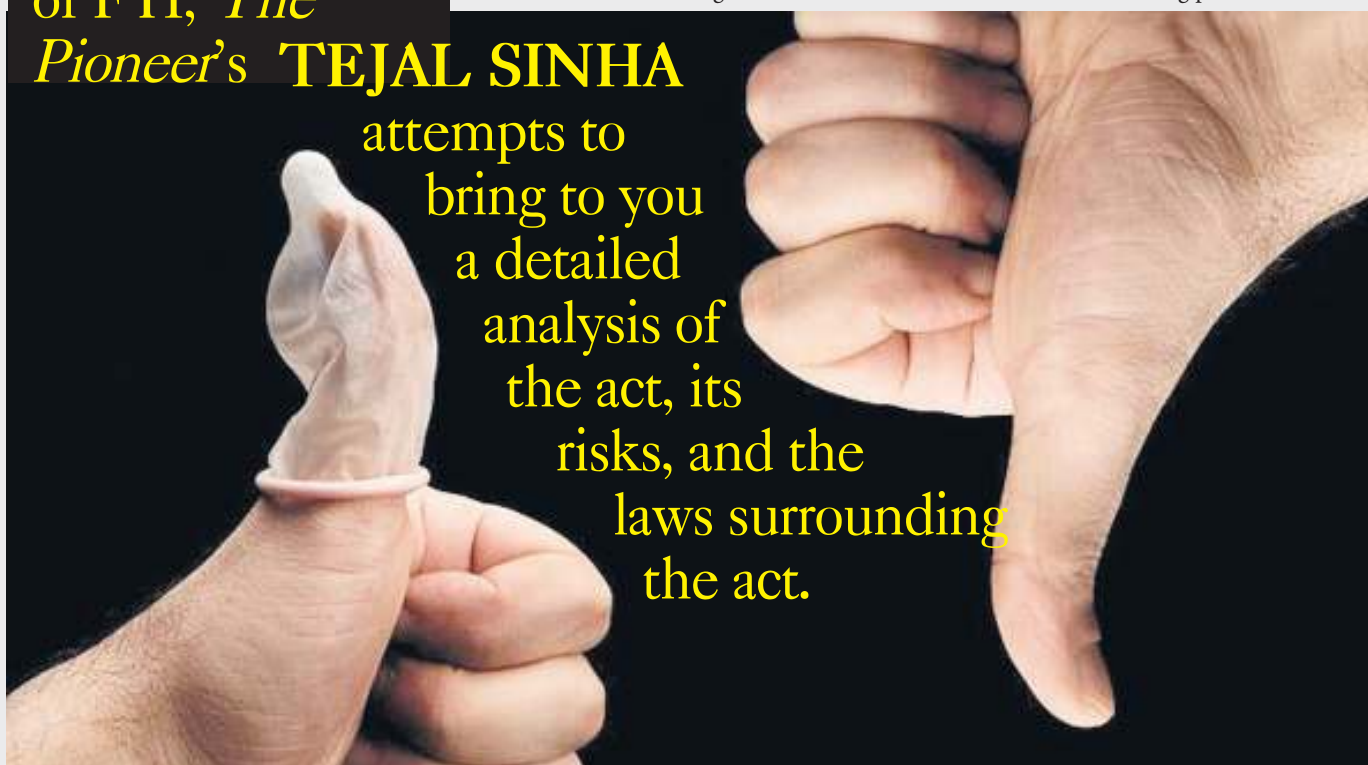
IPC Section 375 of Rape: According to this section, it's rape if it falls under the following categories:

- Against her will.
- Without her consent.
- With her consent, when her consent has been obtained by putting her or any person in whom she is interested in fear of death or of being hurt.
- With her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband and that her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married.
- With her consent, when, at the time of giving such a consent, by reason of unsoundness of mind or intoxication or the administration by him personally or through another of any stupefying or unwholesome substance, she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which she gives consent.
- With or without her consent, when she is under sixteen years of age. Explanation: Penetration is sufficient to constitute the sexual intercourse necessary for the offense of rape.

What is IPC Section 270?

Whoever malignantly does any act that is, and which he knows or has a reason to believe is, likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life, shall be punished.

It's high time that a strict law is amended for the act of stealthing, and people need to understand that this is just not okay! It's time we put a full stop to this!





DEMOLISHED OWN HOUSE AGAINST MOM’S WISH

I was born in KondareddyPalli of Mahbubnagar district. I studied in ZPHS Wanaparthy. I was quite studious; in my class, I was topper. I did Bachelor of Arts from A. V. College. I was part of students’ organisations and used to do very aggressive activities. If I am aggressive in politics now, you should understand. Of course, I was a naughty boy all along, though I wouldn’t get caught at home; so, hardly got beatings or scoldings. My mother wanted to stay in a 300-year-old house. It was made of mud and it was getting difficult to maintain it. She wasnot ready to come and stay with us in Hyderabad. Once I asked her to come to Hyderabad for a few days and then in her absence, got the house demolished. She felt very bad. But until then she used to stay alone there.

BROTHER’S DREAM

Winning and losing elections is part of the game. But when I am with my family, I feel very happy. We are seven brothers and my oldest brother is everything for our family. My eldest brother isnot there today to see my success. It was my brother’s wish to see that I become MLA or leader and that our family should have such representative. It was his biggest dream to see me politically succeed. He died at the age of 56 due to heart stroke. I keep thinking in many situations, if he were here, it would have been very nice. He was determined that someone from our familyshould have political influence. Parents’ demise is another sad moment, but it is part of life.

LOVE MARRIAGE

Mine was love marriage with Geetha. I used to visit her college and try my luck to woo her. Marriage is just a part of life, though people think marriage itself is life. To move forward in life, we need to work very hard. I am happy as I have achieved everything. I don’t have regrets in life. My life is going on in a comfortable, composed manner. I have got more than what I had wanted.



BEAUTIFUL BONDING WITH DAUGHTER

Bonding with my daughter Nymisha is very nice. I am not a strict father. My daughter never put herself in a situation where I have to beat or scold her. Normally I believe in counselling more. Not just her, I believe in talking and explaining in detail. Being away from family is part of the political game. Definitely anyone will have family attachment. But when we take responsibility, we must sacrifice something, especially family. Political families must prepare for sacrifices, especially when we are getting recognition and respect. Even those who had studied with me don’t have celebrity status like a leader or command respect. We have to make sacrifices; it is part of life.



20 YEARS IN OPPOSITION

I was first elected as a Member of the Legislative Council (MLC) as an independent candidate, and later I joined TDP. It is a fact that I am called a TDP person even to this day. TDP is like my mom’s place and Congress is my in-laws’ place. I came from TDP to Congress; so, how can I deny the truth and why should I? I switched for strong reasons. In my fight against KCR’s rule, I joined the Congress. There are multiple factors, but I joined Congress in the interests of the state: to stop an atrocious person like KCR. I didnot go to party in power, I went to opposition. All these 20years, I have been in opposition. I am happy being in opposition as I get a chance to fight for people everytime. I want the party I am in to come to power. I don’t want to bargain and goto a party that is already in power. It is not individual politics.

WOMEN ARE VERY RECEPTIVE

During Padayatra, unexpectedly the women section turnaround is good. Generally, we connect to political animals. I generally connect with youth; yet,senior citizens and women recognise and talk to me. I ask them if they know me, my name. They recognise me. For a leader, we need to connect to all sections. I used to think that I am not well-known among women and pensioners and my picture is not among them. But it is a realisation that it is not the case. Electronic media, social media, people know me; they identify me and my party. Even in rural and tribal backgrounds, they know me as a leader. I feel happy that there is reach.

OPPONENTS KEEPING ME IN POLITICS

Whenever I see the happenings under KCR, especially the political happenings after formation of the state, at least weekly once I think of leaving politics. Then in the fight with KCR, I am continuing to be in the field, sort of my opponent is keeping my ambition alive. It has become a danger bell for people who do mainstream politics after the formation of Telangana. KCR has destroyed Telangana and I can never forgive him. Doing politics to win is not wrong, but trying to wipe out political parties and taking over is horrible. In many instances, hardcore loyalists for whom the party has done everything and they have travelled along, leave the party. During such instances I wonder if I should be in politics. But then if people like me -- those who came from student organisations - leave politics, it would be a loss for the nation. Same thing inspires me again the next day to work more. There is no personal enmity with KCR, but his system and ways are spiteful. He tried to demolish the entire system. I have read a lot of books, seen a lot of criminals, even the worst kind of criminals have not done much to destroy like what KCR has done. For Telangana, this is horrible.



AnumulaRevanth Reddy, Member of Parliament from MedchalMalkajgiri and president of the Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee, is a die-hard optimist when it comes to his vision for the rump of the party he is now heading.

In a freewheeling interview with *The Pioneer’s Naveena Ghanate*, the 53-year-old politician speaks about his two-decade-long journey in the rough and tumble of politics. A tough nut to crack when he is revved in opposition to any policy of the ruling party; Revanth speaks about quality time, leaving TDP for the Congress, and taking on the KCR regime, apart from sharing eye-openers from his Hath Se Hath Jodo Padayatra.

Packing punch for opposition

‘CASH FOR VOTE’ MEANS NOTHING FOR ME

The ‘cash for vote’ scandal is something everyone speaks about but it has changed nothing for me. There are 130 FIRs and criminal charges cases against me, and this is just one of them. Before people questioned me on ‘cash for vote’ case, 37Congress MLAs, MLCs were taken away by KCR and KTR. Even in recent days also three out of four who went to BRS, faced issues on the same lines. So, when KCR, KTR want to speak about ‘cash for vote’,first their hands need to be clean. They should show their integrity and then lay charge against anyone. If this issue were to have impact on people, I wouldn’t have won the elections after that. After ‘cash for vote’ happened, I faced elections, I won and there is massive acceptance from people. For questions on ‘cash for vote’ raised by opponents, people are responding. I need not explain or elaborate anything to them, especially when people are voting for me. From 2014-2023, if we go through their party policies or decisions; on the one hand, they make the same allegations against me while on other hand they do the same thing. Here they have no scope to talk because they have nothing else against me.

BEING POWERFUL IN OPPOSITION

People in power claim that I am making them sleepless or blackmailing them. They should prove that. I am truthful that’s why I am being powerful despite being in opposition. I believe in truth; that’s why they are sleepless. If I compromise, there won’t be issues. If a decision is taken in government, I have to collect all my information - my confidential sources is one aspect, another is RTI - a common man’s weapon. Whenever and wherever I have collected all this information, I arrange it chronologically, keep it before

press persons, and distribute it in public. As a public representative, I am accountable. I will give information to public and media about government decisions and loopholes with evidence. Anybody can blackmail if the other person has done wrong. But here I am exposing openly in public.

I AM CELEBRITY

As a leader, I respect Chandrababu Naidu. In political scenario, I don’t cross party lines or keep relations with other parties. Allegations of relations with other parties keep coming against me because I am celebrity and the centre of attraction. There is focus on me, that’s why these issues of business with other parties come into discussion. If I wasn’t a celebrity, why will people care about businesses? It is easy to make charges but difficult to prove. In these 20years, I have been in opposition; never was I in the government. But I always fight with them, everyday -- on hourly basis. But they are unable to prove, especially those who want to frame charges against me. Why are they not able to prove despite being in power?

NOBODY HAS 100% ACCEPTANCE

Internal bickering in any political party is not out of the box. In any political party any person won’t have



100percent acceptance. 51% prevails in democracy. Even when you are forming the government, all you need is 51%. Some of them will initially accept or reject, but once the party takes a decision, everyone will fall in line. I am not worried. As part of hath se hath jodo, campaigns were designed for PCC, CLP and campaign committee chairman who play a key role in party. Average 40 Assembly constituencies we have to cover, as directed by AICC. Party approach is that on all sides of the state there should be activity. So that’s the party approach. And if someone else is doing padayatra, as a president I approved; it is party strategy.

KALESHWARAM AN EYEOPENER

In Padayatra physical fitness is not much of concern and I don’t see any difference as I play football. So, it is not out of my routine. Issues-wise people from different segments come and give representations. But when it comes to personal experience, it is something different. There is no housing scheme, MSP for farmers, podu lands or loan waiver;caste-based occupations & weavers have seen destruction after the formation of Telangana. ‘Kaleshwaram is completed and I am giving water’ is what the Chief Minister says. But it is an ornamental argument. The Kaleshwaram project during my Padayatra was an eye-opener. Even I was among those who believed that the project was completed, though ayacut didnot change. In Siricilla, 9th package, Nizamabad 20,21,22 package and like that many packages are only 79-80% complete. These have come to standstill. A project started at Rs 38,000 crore went up to Rs 1.4lakh crores, and still the works are pending. It is a serious fraud to claim: ‘The Kaleshwaram project is complete and I am giving water’. Seeing is believing, personal experience. The project and the packages need serious review

Quick bytes
Fav colour - black
Fav movie - Dalapathi
Fav actor / actress - once upon a time Krishna
Fav song - I listen to lot of songs, Kishore Kumar and Lata Mangeshkar
Food - non-veg - especially chicken - naatukodi
Holiday destination- I regularly goto America
Fav politician - Me
How religious are you - as per the requirement

Pursue iMBA for improved employability quotient

Gone are the days when freshers had the luxury of learning on the job. The world of work is becoming increasingly competitive, and organisations today seek candidates who are job-ready from day one. Therefore, it is important for students to choose programmes aligned to their aspirations that will prepare them for the real world of work. The integrated MBA (iMBA) programme is a great option for those who seek managerial roles and aspire to become business leaders.

iMBA is an innovative programme for students who have completed class twelve. Instead of spending three years in a graduate programme, students with managerial and leadership aspirations can join iMBA soon after school. The iMBA programme is structured to allow increased choice as it progresses and provides a techno-business route from which students may choose option modules to meet their individual needs and career goals. The programme offers business education, geared to professional practice, self-employment and is aligned to the demands of careers in emerging areas such as Analytics, Digital & Social Media Marketing and Banking, Finance & FinTech. The programme also provides the foundational grounding offered during bachelor-level studies.

The four-year iMBA programme



improves students' employability quotient by offering the following advantages:

Better job opportunities and higher income

An integrated MBA (iMBA) offers vast opportunities in the field of management. The course enhances the skills of students in specific areas they are interested in. By focusing on improving the relevant skill sets of students the programme boosts employability. This results in a higher income since they are already industry ready once they graduate.

Greater exposure to the industry

The degree aids in establishing strong connects with the industry through internship programmes and other networking

opportunities with professionals. Since the course is for 4 years, it gives students time to build better industry connections and this in turn helps them in their career path. Exposure to the best professionals in the industry at such an early stage also gives them an idea about how the industry works and keeps them updated with the latest developments.

Gives an edge to those seeking to go abroad for higher studies

Those who are looking to do a Masters in US, need to have a 4-year degree in their Graduation. A mere BBA (3 years) is not recognized by many Ivy-league US Universities. After completing 4-year iMBA students can apply to universities in US.

Entrepreneurial and managerial skills

An iMBA develops students' managerial skills and makes them industry ready. In today's rapidly transforming world, skills and experience are as valuable as academic knowledge. This degree prepares students for managerial and leadership roles by training them to acquire the necessary skill sets. The graduates of this programme stand out for their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. It becomes easier for them to fit into leadership roles and manage their own teams through the experience they gained during the course. They even gather a comprehensive understanding of the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and various trends in the industry. With the in-depth training received, many students go ahead and establish their own businesses at an early stage in their life.

By exposing students to the real world through industry internship programmes, iMBA helps students to understand the opportunities and challenges in the areas of their interest. The programme offers a unique opportunity for students to pursue their managerial career in the sector of their choice – finance, marketing, digital & social media or analytics etc., soon after school.

(The writer, Prof Deepak Khanna, is Professor Area: Management, NIT University)

Women have historically been the most important consumers of horticultural commodities, not only in India but also in other parts of the world. But many people are oblivious to the reality that the horticulture and agriculture industry in India is dominated by prominent women who hold positions such as business leaders and owners, growers, marketers, and researchers. A very recent announcement made by the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association (AAEA) revealed that economist Jayati Ghosh was chosen as the recipient of the 2023 Global Agricultural Economics Award (AAEA).

Families control the vast majority of businesses in the horticulture sector in India. The woman of the house typically occupies the matriarchal position in these businesses; this position may be hereditary or acquired through training, experience, and expertise. However, there are not nearly as many of them, and there is still a gender disparity between the men and women who hold positions of authority within the sector.

The horti-culture needs a cultural shock

As women farmers become more educated participants in a supply chain that is more effective, transparent, and enabled by technology, there is a rapidly expanding opportunity for innovative technologies and solutions that can assist farmers in increasing their crop yields and incomes.

As women become more proficient with

Women leadership in India's horticulture sector

digital technology and as aggregator services enter the farm, they (women) are empowering themselves by arming themselves with knowledge and training on the adoption of sustainable practises, expanding access to technology-enabled solutions, improvising farming and marketing plans, and gaining access to institutional support and financing, which is creating a multiplier effect on their income and position. It is getting easier for farm hands to claim managerial and decision-making status in the organisation as they gain more autonomy as a result of their work.

Startups are creating a women

A place where we can see substantive women participation is in the Agritech startups. Many of these are owned and led by women technocrats. They provide technology and services to the fruit farms to modernize, adopt sustainable practices and generate profitability along the value chain. Recognizing women's roles in agriculture and working to



expand their contributions should be a primary focus of the agricultural industry as a whole. It is imperative to rethink the approach that is taken towards female farmers in general in order to cater to their requirements. It is essential, in order to achieve sustainable livelihoods, to advance the cause of empowering women farmers through community institutions.

This would allow them to improve their quality of life, as well as increase their participation and productivity, which would all be improved as a result. Investing in the development of one's capabilities, skills, and knowledge is the means by which this can be accomplished.

The Ministry of Agriculture has acquired "Innovation and Agri-Entrepreneurship Development" under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY-RAFTAAR) to encourage innovation and Agri-entrepreneurship among women by offering monetary aid and promoting an incubation ecosphere. Via the National Agricultural Innovation Fund

(NAIF), the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) has also provided assistance to agribusinesses (NAIF). The Ministry has authorized certain RKVY-RAFTAAR Agribusiness Incubators (R-ABIs) and Knowledge Partners (KPs) as Centres of Excellence to carry out the program's implementation. Furthermore, Agri-Business Incubation Centers (ABICs) have been set up and are functional within the ICAR network as part of the NAIF plan. Many research opportunities are also cropping up in the field of horticulture and agriculture within the IITs. Areas like precision agriculture, climate.

Parting perception

The Horti industry in India should give serious thought to how to address the female predicaments, as increasing the number of women working in business, science, technology, engineering, and allied fields is essential to building a prosperous and sustainable global economy and stimulating economic growth. The leading horticulture hubs and brands in India like some of the leading fresh fruit importers have understood quite early the vast potential of women's power for our growth. Some of them have an all-women production line in their blueberry farms and the venture, as expected, is profitable. It has reinforced the belief that "women can do almost everything men do, and they can do it even better."

(The writer, Shubha Rawal, is the director, Sourcing and Marketing, IG International)

Ingredients

Fried chicken:

- 8 boneless, skin-on chicken thighs
- 2 cups buttermilk
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more if needed
- 1 tablespoon seasoned salt, such as Lawry's
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, plus more if needed
- 1/4 cup milk, plus more if needed
- Vegetable oil, for frying

Waffles:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 4 large egg whites plus 2 large egg yolks

Method of preparation

- Special equipment: a deep-fry thermometer
- For the fried chicken: Thoroughly rinse the chicken, then cover all the pieces with 1 3/4 cups of buttermilk. Soak in the fridge overnight or up to 24 hours.
- When you're ready to fry the chicken, remove the bowl from the fridge and let it sit on the counter for 30 minutes to take off the chill.
- In the meantime, preheat the oven to 360 degrees F and mix the breading. Put the flour, seasoned salt, paprika, pepper, thyme and cayenne (extra cayenne if you like heat) in a very large bowl and stir together well.
- In a small bowl, combine the milk and remaining 1/4 cup buttermilk. Pour into the flour mixture and, with a fork, gradually mix until there are little lumps throughout. This will adhere to the chicken and make for a crispier breading. If necessary, add a little more flour or milk to the bowl in order to make it slightly lumpy.

Place the breaded pieces on a plate.

- Add the chicken to the oil 3 or 4 pieces at a time. Make sure they aren't sticking together, then cover the skillet and fry for 5 to 7 minutes, checking occasionally to make sure the chicken isn't getting too brown. Turn the pieces over, cover again and cook 3 to 5 minutes more. All the while, monitor the temperature of the oil to make sure the chicken doesn't burn. Transfer the fried chicken pieces to a baking sheet (they will not be completely cooked through) and continue frying the rest of the chicken.
- Bake the thighs for 15 minutes to finish the cooking process. Sometimes I'll cut into the thicker part of one of the larger pieces,

vanilla and 2 egg yolks. Pour over the dry ingredients and very gently stir until halfway combined. Pour in the melted butter and chopped jalapenos and continue mixing very gently until combined.

- In a separate bowl (or using a mixer), beat the 4 egg whites with a whisk until stiff. Slowly fold them into the batter, stopping short of mixing them all the way through.
- Scoop the batter into your waffle iron in batches and cook according to the manufacturer's directions (lean toward being a little deep golden and crisp!). Keep warm.
- For the sauce: Pour the pancake syrup and bourbon in a small pot and bring to a boil. Turn down the

Chicken & waffle

Crispy waffles topped with spicy fried chicken drizzled with honey paprika sauce



heat and simmer for 3 to 4 minutes.

- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) salted butter, melted
- 1 to 2 jalapenos, chopped

Sauce:

- 1 cup pancake syrup
- 1/4 cup bourbon
- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) salted butter
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper

- Heat 1 1/2 to 2 inches of vegetable oil in a deep skillet over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 365 degrees F. Lower the heat slightly, if necessary, to keep the oil from getting hotter.
- Working in batches, thoroughly coat each chicken piece with the breading, pressing extra breading onto the chicken if necessary.

just to make sure the chicken is cooked through. (If any pink juice or meat is visible, the chicken needs to continue cooking in the oven.) Cover and keep warm.

- For the waffles: Preheat the waffle iron to the regular setting. Sift together the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in a bowl.
- In a separate bowl, whisk together the milk,

Turn off the heat and whisk in the butter 1 tablespoon at a time, then the cayenne.

- To serve: Place 2 chicken thighs on top of a waffle. Pour the warm sauce over everything and serve immediately.

Courtesy: Chef Nitin Bhardwaj, Culinary head, Taro Hyderabad.

Japanese kabocha pumpkin pie

Ingredients

- 1 1/4 cups kabocha squash puree
- 2 eggs
- 1 yolk
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons condensed milk
- 1/2 cup cream
- 1 g gelatin powder this is optional but it gives a hold to the pie and will cut out nicely
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 9- in store bought graham cracker crust



pumpkin spice and cinnamon to the mixture. Whisk until the mixture is smooth. Pass the mixture through a sieve to remove any clumps.

Method of preparation

- Cut the Kabocha squash and remove the seeds, scraping out as much of the string as possible. Cut into the flesh and place in a steamer. Steam until the flesh is soft enough to be scooped.
- Scoop out the flesh and place in a blender with enough water to get it going. Pass the puree through a sieve to remove any large clumps. (This is an optional step, but sure to impress.)
- In a mixing bowl, add the 2 eggs and 1 yolk, along with the brown sugar. Whisk until smooth.
- Bloom the gelatin in with a little water and stir to remove any clumps. Warm the cream on low heat and add the bloomed gelatin. Stir until the gelatin has dissolved.
- Slowly add the cream while whisking the egg mixture. Add the pumpkin, salt, vanilla,

- Pre-heat the oven to 325°F (162°C). Pour the mixture into the pie crust and bake for 45-50 minutes until the pie has set. Remove and let it cool before serving.

Recipe Notes: One kabocha pumpkin should have enough puree to make 2 pies. You can make the filling ahead of time and store it in the fridge for up to a week. Leftover pie filling can be made into pumpkin creme brulee by baking it in a ramekin, placing it in a water bath and bake at 250F for 45 mins or until it is set.

Courtesy: Chef Nitin Bhardwaj, Culinary head, Taro Hyderabad.

Bellam pulagam

Ingredients

- Rice
- Full-fat Milk
- Grated Jaggery
- Ghee - 1 tsp
- Split Cashews
- Paccha Karpooram, Edible Camphor (Optional) - A Tiny Pinch
- Cardamom Powder
- Till powder

How to Make Bellam pulagam making process

- Wash the rice thoroughly.
- To a large, heavy-bottomed vessel, add rice and milk.
- Over medium flame, steam the mix for 15 minutes in a pressure cooker till the rice is well-cooked.
- or
- Cook in a heavy-bottomed vessel till the rice is mashable and all the milk has been absorbed.
- Or
- Cook in a heavy-bottomed vessel till the rice is mashable and all the milk has been absorbed.

Next, mash the rice lightly with a heavy ladle.

- Let this cooked and mashed rice cool till it is just warm to touch or to room temperature. This step is important as the milk in the mix will curdle if it is hot when the Jaggery syrup is added.
- In a heavy bottomed vessel, heat the ghee.



- Split and add the cashew pieces to the ghee.
- Fry the cashews till light brown.
- Add 1/4 Cup water to the ghee and cashews. Use less water if you want your parammanam to be thick.
- Bring to a boil, add the grated Jaggery.
- Over medium heat, stir the Jaggery continuously till it thickens a bit.
- Turn off the heat and let the Jaggery syrup cool till its lukewarm or at room Temperature.
- Add till powder mix it well
- 16. Add the cardamom powder and edible camphor, and mix well.
- When both the syrup and the rice are lukewarm, mix them together.
- Mix well till the syrup is well incorporated.
- Offer the Bellam Parammanam as naive yam and enjoy as Prasadam.

Courtesy: Chef Satya Pandhari, Executive Sous Chef, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre.

Luxury wear starting at just Rs 5,000!



Ek Dhaaga, a fashion brand created by well-known designers Poonam Dubey and Sugandha Raina aspire to make practical clothing to the next level. The designers are planning to launch exclusive collections like airport look, occasion wear collection and formal wear, with a price range starting from Rs 5000 onwards!

Akihi, a luxurious, vegan, homegrown skincare brand — is offering a range of skincare products that are perfect for anyone looking for gentle and effective skincare solutions.



THE BODY SHOP'S NEW ACTIVIST MAKEUP RANGE IS HERE

The Body Shop, a Britain-born international personal care brand, has news that is sure to be music to makeup enthusiasts' ears. The brand has announced the launch of its new Activist Makeup range, with multiple products formulated based on its central values with premium, ethically-sourced ingredients, 95% of which are of natural origin.

The Activist Makeup range

includes a variety of products, all of which use premium ingredients of 95% natural origin and come in recyclable packaging. The new collection includes the Fresh Nude Foundation, Vitamin C Concealer, Tea Tree Face Base, Hemp Primer, Freestyle Pigments, Frame It - Brow, Swipe It Lip Balm, and Sheer Lip & Cheek Stain.



What women want

Eli Bitton, an Israel-origin fashion label that's setting up new standards of design in the Indian apparel industry founded by the designer maestro Eli Bitton in 1990. All the designs of Eli Bitton are curated, keeping in mind what women want. In Israel, the company is

known for its one-of-a-kind collections and designs, which are also available in plus sizes. They have an exquisite array of evening gowns, as well as a variety of chic mini dresses, overalls, jalabiya collections, trouser suits, casual collections, and leisure suits.

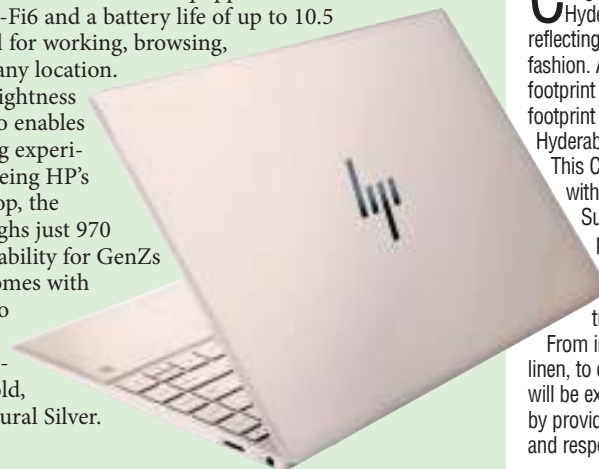


HP Pavilion Aero 13 launched

HP announced the launch of its latest Pavilion Aero 13 notebooks in India, powered by AMD Ryzen 7 Processor with Radeon Graphics for ultra-strong performance. The device is built for modern consumers – GenZs and Millennials, enabling them to work and learn productively anytime, anywhere.

The all-new HP Pavilion Aero 13 is equipped with fast and reliable connectivity with Wi-Fi6 and a battery life of up to 10.5 hours making it ideal for working, browsing, and streaming from any location.

The 400 nits of brightness and 16:10 aspect ratio enables an immersive viewing experience for the users. Being HP's lightest Pavilion laptop, the Pavilion Aero 13 weighs just 970 grams, enabling portability for GenZs and Millennials. It comes with three unique colors to compliment their style and lifestyle perfectly – Pale Rose Gold, Warm Gold, and Natural Silver.



Celio India launches its largest new concept store

Celio, the French Menswear brand launched its largest store in the country, in Sarath City, Hyderabad. This store will be one-of-its-kind reflecting a wide range of premium French fashion. A brand which already has a strong retail footprint in the country, is now expanding its footprint in all metros & is the 7th store in Hyderabad.

This Celio store will offer a 3000 sq. ft. space with a modern and fashionable Spring-Summer 2023 collection. The space promises to hold out the most authentic aura where you can step in at any time of the day and feel the most comfort by trying the collection.

From innovation denims, to sustainable 100% linen, to cool and trendy collaborations. This store will be exploring each and every core of fashion by providing customers with the most efficient and responsible services.

Electrolux announces the launch of its UltimateTaste range of refrigerators

Electrolux Group announced the launch of its UltimateTaste range of refrigerators in the Indian market, further expanding its product portfolio. Electrolux refrigerators are built to impress, from the slick external contours and thoughtful interiors to the way the door handle functions. The Scandinavian design of Electrolux raises the kitchen's aesthetic factor and is offered in a variety of gloss/matte finishes and in dark or natural stainless-steel finishes. The entire range comprises four different variations including bottom freezer refrigerators, French door refrigerators, a side by side refrigerator, and top freezer refrigerators. In line with its "Swedish thinking. Better living." principle, the Electrolux range of refrigerators aim to make your food last longer by preserving Taste, Texture and Nutritional value of your food and promoting sustainable eating habits.



Dolly J presents 'Scents of summer'

The textures of soft, dreamlike chantilly lace in the narrow lanes of Paris inspire a suspension of time which lies at the heart of the collection. The label's use of lacework creates an impossible lightness, an ethereal look for our summer brides and mirrors this delicacy in the fabrics of the ensembles. From apricot carnations and blush roses to metallic silvers and antique golds, the hues of this collection create an ethereal dream. The brand used this celestial embroidery with opaque beads and pearls that rise to prominence in elegant intricacy. This summer, lose yourself in feelings rather than thoughts, and ruminate on the magic of the stars and skies with the spring/summer'23 collection 'Scents of Summer'

Dear women, build your realty investing portfolio now

The goals of real estate investing are to increase wealth, independence, and confidence. Focus on building a solid real estate investing portfolio as you enter the market for the first time or expand your business. When it comes to working in the industry, women real estate investors face numerous challenges. The first issue is that there aren't enough women in the industry, which means there aren't enough female role models. The second challenge is that women are frequently discouraged from investing in real estate because they believe it is not for them and that they should focus their efforts elsewhere. Finally, the third challenge is that women don't know how or what to invest in, which leads to mistakes and financial losses.

Women must develop strong portfolio strategies to help them weather volatility while achieving critical goals. To assist women in overcoming these obstacles and making the process of real estate investing more accessible, here is how female investors can build their portfolios in the

real estate industry.

Educate yourself to take smart risks

It is crucial to educate yourself in a variety of niches related to real estate. This will be your stronghold in taking smart risks. The first step to building your portfolio is knowledge. You need to deepen your knowledge of the many different types of real estate investment strategies, assets, etc. A solid portfolio includes a variety of deals and terms. A solid portfolio includes a variety of deals. Plus, trying different types of investment strategies protects you during market shifts and adds a variety of income options.

Expand your networking in the industry

One way to gain confidence and

knowledge of how to build a solid base for your business is with the right training and network. Look for ways to build your network so that you position yourself to invest in different types of deals. This includes building a qualified buyers list. Connect with other women in the industry to both learn from and share your knowledge. Establishing mutual trust opens the door to more opportunities. Consider investing in different geographic locations. Virtual real estate investing makes this easier than ever. Most activities for real estate investing can happen with online tools or over the phone. Broaden your reach as an investor with virtual real estate strategies.

Review portfolio periodically

It's essential to review your portfolio periodically and

make the desired changes. Requirements change with time, and hence, it's crucial to analyse your portfolio to ensure it aligns with your needs. One of the other important tips for becoming a successful real estate investor is to diversify your portfolio. You should spread your investment money out over a few different properties. This will help you minimize your risks and maximize your potential for profits.

Buy more

The real estate investment flywheel happens when the property owner uses the money from refinancing other properties to buy more. And this is where the significant tax advantage comes into play. Effectively, you're capitalizing on the appreciation of your property value without triggering any capital gain taxes from selling properties.

(The writer, Gunjan Goel, is the director of Goel Ganga Developments)



EDUCATION & ASTROLOGY

What should your child study?

We all have many dreams about our children. Indian parents, especially, are very anxious about their children. Most want their children to be doctors or engineers. Parents work hard to give the best education to their children.

According to the principles of Vedic astrology, we can understand whether the child will do well or needs support in his studies by checking his horoscope. It can also suggest which subject is most suited for the child to study.

There were no such elaborate subjects in the earlier days; it was limited to Nyaya, Mimamsa, and Sidhanta. Students used to study in Gurukula, and they gained knowledge in weaponry as well, all according to their class and caste.

Nowadays, the abundance of subjects confuses parents and children regarding what to choose and what not to. In the earlier days, the focus was not on careers but on gaining knowledge about karma and justice. Nowadays, people are more about making money than having practical skills for overall well-being.

Regarding education, Mercury and Jupiter are given more importance than other planets. These two planets have a significant impact on the education, learning and intellectual development of the child.

In Vedic astrology, Jupiter is seen as the planet of education and knowledge. When Jupiter is situated in a trine or centre with the lord of the fifth house, the native gets excellent results in the field of education. Mercury is the factor of intelligence. If Jupiter is well placed with Mercury in the horoscope, then the person gets great educational achievements.

Significance of the second house

The second house plays an important role in successful education. It indicates the learning aspects of the child. If an auspicious planet is placed in the second house of the horoscope, then the child will get a good education at the primary level.

If the lord of this house is aspected by auspicious planets, it improves the person's learning abilities at an early age. The presence of Mercury or Sun in the second house means that the person's speech will be sweet and skilled in conversing with others.




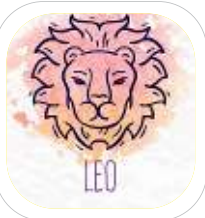










When Mercury, Venus and Sun combine in the second house, the person learns Vedas and other scriptures. But this kind of knowledge is not suitable for the benefit of material pleasures. It is better suited for mental and emotional welfare.

The presence of inauspicious planets like Mars, Rahu or Shani in the second house leads to bitterness in the speech and the child is not interested in studies at all. The fourth house is the house of sensitive and emotional possessions. Education seen from this house is related to emotional or sensitive areas. The presence of sattvik planets such as the Sun, Moon and Jupiter in the fourth house means that the child will receive education in social, spiritual or philosophical fields.

The presence of royal planets like Mercury and Venus in the fourth house indicates that the child will receive education in politics.

The ninth house indicates professional studies. The child will attain professional degrees if the ninth house has good planetary placement. If the ninth house has complex aspects, the child may need more parental motivation to succeed in education. The ninth house also indicates teachers. Looking at this house, we can see whether the child will have a good relationship with the teachers. This will motivate the child to have better results in studies.

The presence of the Sun and Mercury in the fourth house means that the person will reach heights of success in mathematics or astrology. Jupiter favours legal education. So, if this planet is

						
 <p>ARIES</p> <p>You will always be active with an intensely alive personality. Prepare yourself to face any situation calmly. You will need help to boost your energy.</p>	 <p>LEO</p> <p>You will be attracted towards someone to whom you will readily reveal your heart. There will be a rapid rise in career. Big financial pressure is likely.</p>	 <p>SAGITTARIUS</p> <p>You will find a stimulating partner. Disapprovals won't stop you from new ideas. You will be the life of the party. It is difficult to manage relationships.</p>	 <p>CAPRICORN</p> <p>You will be a target of attraction for others. Your loved ones are going through a tough time. Your commitment to the family will make them happy.</p>	 <p>VRGO</p> <p>A sense of joy and cheerfulness will fill you. The desire for vicarious experience will leave you sad. Your hidden sensitive nature will be revealed now.</p>		
<p>You possess the spontaneous enthusiasm of an innocent child. You will deal with problems easily. Negativity will prevent you from experiencing joy.</p>	 <p>TAURUS</p>	<h2>YOUR WEEK AHEAD</h2>		 <p>LIBRA</p> <p>You spend generously to gain anything beautiful. It is difficult to manage relationships. Being overly sensitive will hamper progress in life. Loosen up.</p>		
<p>Being warm towards siblings will render many joys in life. Remaining unreliable will cause problems in your career. You will need outside help to survive.</p>	 <p>AQUARIUS</p> <p>Nervousness may taint your ability to experiment. Self-improvement will be your motto. Friends will help you. Family members may turn against you.</p>	 <p>SCORPIO</p> <p>Your support will do a world of good for your near and dear ones. Balancing love and work will make you weary. This is a good time to revisit old plans.</p>	 <p>CANCER</p> <p>Problems between siblings will be resolved. Only you will remain calm and unbiased during critical situations. Your energy has to be well spent.</p>	 <p>GEMINI</p>	 <p>PISCES</p> <p>You will shy away from meeting new people. Life may seem to have lost all harmony. Relax and give it a thought and you will realize it is not that bad.</p>	

in an exalted position or in its own house, then the person gets high legal education.

The fifth house in the horoscope is considered the most auspicious. This house tells the education the person will get according to his intelligence. Based on the planets sitting in the fifth house, it can be decided in which field a person has to find his career.

How planets influence the education of your child

When the fifth house is strong, a person can make the right decision at the right time. When Sun and Rahu are in the fifth house, the person gets an education in technical, scientific and medical fields.

When the aspect of the planet present in the tenth house of the horoscope falls on the fourth house, it affects the person's emotional strength. The presence of the Sun, Mars and Rahu in the tenth house means that the person will acquire knowledge in the

fields related to political science and technology.

The Sun, Moon, and Saturn being in the tenth house mean that he will be interested in spiritual writings. On the other hand, Jupiter and Mercury indicate that the child will get an education in business and commerce. The presence of the Moon and Venus in the tenth house means that the child will make a career in aesthetics.

On the other hand, if the planets present in the eleventh house are directly aspecting the fifth house, then it strongly impacts the field of education. The presence of inauspicious planets in the 11th house creates obstacles in education. On the other hand, if benefic planets are present in the 11th house, then the person gets a good education in any field.

Selection of field of education according to astrology

A strong Sun in the birth chart indicates excellence in careers related to engineering, medicine, political science or law.

The strong position of Moon in

the 10th or 5th house indicates education related to chemistry, biology, hotel management, tourism, music, marine engineering or dance.

Mars in a strong position in a horoscope represents getting a good education in the military, physics, political science, computer hardware or electronics.

Mercury, in a strong position in the horoscope, represents studies related to commerce, chartered accountancy, company secretary or social sciences.

Jupiter is strongly inclined towards the field of languages like Hindi, Sanskrit, Social Science, Political Science, Philosophy, Journalism and other related fields.

Venus indicates software development, hotel management, tourism, dance, music, botany and communication

If Venus is with Saturn, the person is more interested in Sanskrit.

Saturn is related to studying computer hardware, foreign languages, law, philosophy etc.

Rahu indicates gaining expertise in studies related to computer hardware, medicine, electronics, mathematics or law.

Ketu indicates attainment of education in physics, political science, computer hardware, electronics or other related fields.

There are many careers in the medical field, like therapists, dietitians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and speech therapists – this is not easy to classify. However, the conditions for a medical career apply to these roles too.

Above all, the child has to get enough support from the family. The family environment should be peaceful and progressive to influence the child positively. If the child is not performing well, parents must make sure the child does not have any learning disabilities. Nowadays, there are so many ways to understand whether a child has any learning disability. There are practical remedies and medicines available for such disabilities.

GLOBE TROT

Ukrainian army uses cardboard drones for war biddings

The Ukrainian army has started using inexpensive Corvo drones made out of cardboard, its parts held together with glue and rubber bands, to do its war biddings. This drone has a flight range of 120 kilometers and has a capability of dropping small explosive devices. These drones have been repurposed to the needs of war since earlier they were used to ferry medicines, food etc.

The sturdy cardboard is coated with wax that helps prevent the fuselage from collapsing and failing during wet weather.

These drones fly themselves autonomously with no requirement of operator control. It will use GPS guidance where available but if GPS is jammed, the control software can work



out its position from speed and direction where it is moving.

These cheap Corvo Precision Payload Delivery System (PPDS) drones are being supplied by Australian company SYPAQ; about 100 of them are delivered every month to Ukraine.

NZ govt helps teens to recover from breakups

The New Zealand government is helping its teens to recover from breakups in an unusual new campaign. This campaign, Love Better is targeted specifically at generation Z to assist them to move on from breakups and broken relationships better. It provides them with a platform where they can talk to professionals about their bad breakups and more through videos, articles and even podcasts.

The Love Better campaign which appears on media and social media platforms is a community of the 'freshly broken-up helping freshly broken-up' teens helping out each other in minimising the pain of breakups and bad relationships. In



a video released by the New Zealand government, they affirm the universal truth that 'breakups suck' and encourage teens to discuss their experiences of being dumped by each other, as a healthy practice to process their feelings.

Turning plastic bags into tiles

An Egyptian startup is aiming to turn more than 5 billion plastic bags into tiles tougher than cement as it tackles the twin problems of tonnes of waste entering the Mediterranean Sea and high levels of building sector emissions. At the compa-

ny's factory, on the outskirts of Cairo, workers carry large barrels loaded with mixed plastic waste to be melted down and compressed. The resulting tiles are sold to real estate developers and contracting companies for use in outdoor paving.



'Sealed cover' can seal fate of judgements

The Supreme Court, by resolutely refusing to accept a 'confidential' submission from the Centre on the disbursal of arrears to retired defence personnel under the One Rank One Pension scheme, articulated on March 20 that enough is enough on matters pertaining to the questionable practice of 'sealed cover' jurisprudence. "We need to put an end to this sealed cover practice in the Supreme Court... This is fundamentally contrary to the basic process of fair justice," a bench led by Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud said.

In March 2022, two separate benches of the Supreme Court had flagged the practice. In a case involving the Bihar government, pertaining to the Patna High Court's orders granting bail to 56 persons who had been arrested in March 2020, a three-judge bench headed by then Chief Justice N V Ramana said it wanted arguments to be presented in open court. "Please don't give us a sealed cover, we don't want it here," Justice Ramana told the Patna High Court's counsel. Later in the day, during a hearing on an appeal against the Centre's ban

on Malayalam TV Channel MediaOne (the channel had gone off air on February 8 after the Kerala High Court upheld the ban by relying on documents submitted by the Centre in a sealed envelope), when the government repeated this practice before the apex court, it was pulled up by a three-judge Bench led by Justice Chandrachud that stayed the ban. In February 2020, interlocutors tasked by the Supreme Court to talk to anti-CAA protesters occupying a public road in Shaheen Bagh submitted a report in a 'sealed cover' to the Supreme Court. The report was neither taken on record by the Bench nor made available to any of the lawyers. Just last month, a bench of the SC led by the CJI had refused to accept names proposed by the Centre in a sealed cover for inclusion in the expert committee to examine the regulatory mechanism in the light of the Hindenburg report on the Adani Group.

The Supreme Court had bitten more than what it could chew when it began seeking information deemed to be of public interest in sealed envelopes. In the Rafale aircraft case, the Court accepted the government's argument that the matter pertained to the Official Secrets Act. While refusing to stay the arrest of activists held in the Bhima-Koregaon case, it relied on 'evidence' submitted by the Maharashtra police in a sealed envelope. In the NRC exercise in Assam - which resulted in about 19 lakh citizens being excluded from the list - the apex court sought details from the NRC coordinator in a sealed cover with neither the government nor the affected parties being allowed to look at them. In the case involving corruption allegations against former CBI director, Alok Varma, the court insisted that the Central Vigilance Commission submit its report in a sealed cover. The Court apparently erred in these cases because the principles of natural justice demand that all

parties in litigation get a fair chance to scrutinise evidence. Citizens need to know the reasons for court verdicts and no verdict is beyond scrutiny.

In fact, in December 2019, a bench of the SC in its order granting bail to P Chidambaram, had censured the Delhi High Court for relying on material submitted by the Enforcement Directorate in a sealed cover to deny bail to the former Union Minister. "It would be against the concept of fair trial if in every case the prosecution presents documents in sealed cover and the findings on the same are recorded as if the offence is committed and the same is treated as having a bearing for denial or grant of bail," the Bench said. While maintaining that the court can

seek information in sealed covers and pursue them "to satisfy its conscience that the investigation is proceeding in the right lines and for the purpose of consideration of grant of bail/anticipatory bail etc.," it cannot rely on such information to make its decision, the court said.

'Sealed cover jurisprudence' has been followed willy-nilly by the Supreme Court as well as lower courts. The practice of

seeking and accepting information from government agencies in sealed envelopes must go. For, sealed covers have the potential to seal fate of judgements. The sole justification for this is Rule 7 of Order XIII ("Copying") of the Supreme Court Rules, 2013 (notified in May 2014), which says: "Notwithstanding anything contained in this order, no party or person shall be entitled as of right to receive copies of or extracts from any minutes, letter or document of any confidential nature or any paper sent, filed or produced, which the Chief Justice or the Court directs to keep in sealed cover or considers to be of confidential nature or the publication of which is considered to be not in the interest of the public, except under and in accordance with an order specially made by the Chief Justice or by the Court."

That is, the court can ask for information in a sealed cover broadly under two circumstances: one, when information is connected to an ongoing investigation; and two, when it involves personal or confidential information. The logic behind this rule is that disclosure of information linked to an ongoing investigation could impede the investigation, and the disclosure of personal or confidential information could violate an individual's privacy or result in breach of trust. In any case, under the first circumstance, it prevents parties from having a full overview of the charges against them; and, in the second circumstance, it is not compatible with the idea of an open court and a transparent system of justice.

Courts are bound to set out reasons for their decisions. Non-disclosure of reasons leaves scope for arbitrariness in judicial decisions. It also takes away the opportunity to analyse judicial decisions. After all, the parties to a dispute and everyone interested in the case need to appreciate the rationale behind judicial decisions.



MURALI RAMASWAMY
Senior Journalist

**LIGHT
THEESKO**