

Time to distil ‘Deeksha Divas’ for progress of Telangana

The ‘Deeksha Divas’ being celebrated widely on November 29 is a timely reminder that Bharat Rashtra Samithi chief and Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao should befittingly be re-elected to power. There is dire need to re-elect Bharat Rashtra Samithi to power to see KCR take over as the Chief Minister for the third time in a row, thus marking a historic moment when people are required to use effectively the most powerful weapon in their hands: vote.

KCR is the one and only leader who can mend the lives of people. It is imperative that he continues as the Chief Minister to complete developmental activities in various sectors and to lend meaning to the sacrifices made in the process of securing Telangana State. KCR’s leadership is panacea

for Telangana’s ills. Therefore, people should give their vote to the BRS and thereby take part in the development process, a BRS communique said on Tuesday.

Telangana people had been nursing an ambition to improve their lives and had to wait for over six decades to realize their dream state. Several generations of people of Telangana region had to sacrifice their lives to manifest their constitutional and democratic desires. The dream of Telangana State was realized 66 years after India became independent.

At the beginning of the 21st century, KCR became a ray of hope for the Telangana movement. At Jaladhrushyam, he launched the movement for Telangana statehood and has since rallied people of Telangana behind him for over

Unlike in 2014 and 2018 polls, the Congress is not fighting with its back to the wall this time. It is now going boldly with its plank that the state per se was granted by the grand old party. The Congress stands a chance to rule the state only if it gets 60 or more seats in the 119-member TS Legislative Assembly.

14 years.

The Congress had spoiled the Telangana region’s prospects in 1956 by merging it with Andhra Pradesh and played havoc with the lives of people in the region for over six decades. Promising to give Telangana State in 2004, the Congress joined hands with the TRS and came to power at the Centre as well as in Andhra Pradesh. But there were no signs of the Congress fulfilling the promise made by it. After all, it had played hide-and-seek

for over 60 years with the people of the region!

Vexed with the Congress’ ways, KCR, epitome of the Telangana movement, undertook an indefinite fast on November 29, 2009, solely to put pressure on the Congress. The fast sent shivers down the spine of the Congress as people of Telangana hit the streets and various cross-sections of people, including minorities, joined hands, and formed Joint Action Committees. The populace of Telangana tight-



RAMESH HAZARI
Senior Journalist

ened their fists in support of KCR. People of all regions, whether rural or urban, tightened their belts and jumped on the Telangana bandwagon. The whole Telangana was seething with anger, while seeking statehood for the region. It paralysed the then

AP government with people expressing their solidarity with KCR.

The powers that be in Delhi had no option but to yield to the severe onslaught on the Delhi administration by protagonists of Telangana and they made an announcement on December 9 that the Union government would have no objection to the formation of a separate Telangana State. In the wake of the announcement, the people of Telangana made KCR to withdraw his 11-day-old fast.

Gimmicks played by protagonists of united AP and the conspiracies hatched by them to create an artificial movement did not work before KCR’s steely resolve. KCR wrestled with death before achieving statehood for Telangana. Under the leadership of KCR, six-decade-old

dream was fulfilled on June 2, 2014.

Amid tremendous development in Telangana over the past 10 years, the state is now at a crucial juncture, facing elections for the third time. Everything is in the hands of voters now. The need of the hour is vision on the part of voters to improve their lives and secure the future of their wards. They should not succumb to inducements but remain unaffected by the designs of evil forces. They should not walk into the trap set by the Congress. They should identify the hand that is misguiding them to take a different path and brush it aside. They should put their best foot forward at this juncture. They should be cautious about tourists from other states, who visit the state once in five years and create bad

blood among people.

People should derive inspiration from Deeksha Divas and chase away saboteurs of Telangana. KCR was ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of Telangana. People today need to just use their vote for the progress of Telangana State.

Having achieved Telangana after a long struggle and having completed 10 years under the KCR government, let us not mind small problems that we had encountered during the period. People should share their strengths but not emotional weaknesses. They should march forward with maturity and vision.

Time is now ripe to recall and distil the spirit of Deeksha Divas, which had moved the people of the state. None but KCR would be able to properly organize Telangana and safeguard India’s newest state.

CM walking on the path of Phule: YSRCP leaders

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The ruling YSRCP leaders hailed Jyoti Rao Phule as a great man who fought against caste discrimination and provided equal opportunities to all. Ministers Karumuri Nageswara Rao and Meruga Nagarjuna, Chairperson of Telugu and Sanskrit Academy Lakshmi Parvathi, Government Whip in Legislative Council Lella Appi Reddy and others were present on the occasion of Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule’s death anniversary, the statue of Phule was garlanded at the YSRCP central office in Tadepalli on Tuesday.

Minister Meruga Nagarjuna said that Jyoti Rao Phule has

given courage to the downtrodden sections of the society. He said that in the past, poor and weak sections had to face a lot of difficulties even if they wanted to study and faced discrimination on the basis of caste. He recalled that the great BR Ambedkar also said that Phule was his teacher. He claimed that Jyoti Rao Phule’s ideas have been invented in AP state by CM Jagan and he said that the SC, ST, BC, and minority leaders are touring the state today in the name of Social Empowerment Yatra and they are getting huge responses. He criticized Naidu for undermining SC, ST, BC, and minorities during his administration. Minister Nagarjuna said that

seeing Jagan’s affection towards SC, ST, BC and minorities shows the desire to make Jagan the Chief Minister again.

Minister Nageswara Rao said that Jyoti Rao Phule was a warrior who fought for the rights of the poor and the weaker sections of the country and Phule’s struggles are inspiring for everyone. He suggested that everyone should follow him as an example. He said that the support of BC castes in Andhra Pradesh was possible only under the leadership of the Chief Minister of the state, YS Jagan Mohan Reddy who is credited with providing caste-wise corporations to the BCs. He deplored that but it is Chandrababu who insulted the leaders of the BC

unions by giving warnings of cutting their tails and skinning them if they go to solve their problems. He claimed that CM Jagan has achieved the social empowerment that Jyoti Rao Phule hoped for. Minister Nageswara Rao said that YS Jagan is the person who is walking in Phule’s path and making his dreams come true.

Telugu and Sanskrit Academy Chairperson Nandamuri Lakshmi Parvathi, Government Whip Lella Appi Reddy, APCO Chairman Ganji Chiranjeevi, SC Corporation Corporation Chairman Kommuri Kanaka Rao and many other party leaders paid tributes to the statue of Phule and addressed the gatherings.

NIA files counter in chicken knife case

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

National Investigation Agency (NIA) has filed a counter to the petition filed by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in the AP High Court on Tuesday. After four years, CM Jagan filed a petition in Vijayawada NIA court alleging that there was a conspiracy in the chicken knife case. The NIA court took up the inquiry on this petition and dismissed it.

Recently, Jagan Mohan Reddy filed another petition in the High Court. The High Court sought a counter on CM Jagan’s petition, following which the NIA filed a counter on Tuesday.

SAAP demerged from Youth Services dept

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a significant move, the State government has announced the demerger of the Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh, Commissionerate of Youth Services, and AP Society for Training and Employment Promotion at the district level. This decision marks the reversal of the earlier G.O.Ms.No.1 issued by the Youth Advancement and Culture (Sports and Youth Services) in 2018.

Additionally, the government has revamped the Chief Coaches’ posts at the district level, reintroducing the older District Sports Development Officers (DSDO) system. Effective December 1, DSDOs at the district level will assume a pivotal role in the develop-

ment of sports and games.

Principal Secretary PS Pradyumna of the Youth Advancement, Tourism, and Culture (Sports and Youth Services) issued a G.O.Ms.No.26 with immediate effect in this regard on Tuesday. The government has also rescinded the earlier G.O.Ms.No.1.

According to the government order, the initiative aims to establish a more efficient delivery system and effective administration of sports at the district level. Presently, Youth Services Chief Executive Officers (CEO) at the district level oversee sports activities. With the new initiative, STEP CEOs will focus solely on youth services, while DSDOs will assume responsibility for

sports and games at the district level.

The decision to demerge the Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh (SAAP) and AP Society for Training and Employment Promotion at the district level was endorsed during a SAAP board meeting following the directives of Minister for Tourism, Culture, and Youth Advancement RK Roja. Considering the reorganisation of districts from 13 to 26 and for administrative convenience, Vice Chairman and Managing Director HM Dhyanaachandra proposed to the state government to issue necessary orders for the demerger. The board also urged the government to revoke the previous orders issued in 2018.

YSRCP way ahead of others in public outreach

PNS ■ VIZIANAGARAM, ELURU

The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) has taken a decisive lead over its counterparts in the State, orchestrating multifaceted campaigns that involve party leaders and invigorate the cadre in anticipation of the upcoming elections. On one front, the party is assertively reaching out to every household in the State through its “Why AP Needs Jagan” campaign. Simultaneously, the party is making substantial progress with its extensive Samajika Sadhikara bus yatras across the entire state, marking today as the 23rd successful day of the yatra. YSRCP leaders representing Backward Classes (BC), Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Minority communities have conducted large-scale public meetings in the Nellimarla constituency of Vizianagaram district and the Kaikaluru constituency in the Eluru district, emphasizing Chief Minister Jagan’s dedication to uplifting marginalized communities.



transformations. Minister Amarnath stated, “The construction of the Bhogapuram airport is currently underway with an investment of Rs 4,700 crores. The development of Bhogapuram is expected to parallel the progress seen in Samshabad, home to an airport in Telangana. This initiative is poised to generate employment opportunities for up to 50,000 people. Additionally, the Chief Minister is scheduled to lay the foundation stone for the Saripalli Industrial Park, a significant step towards the region’s development.”

Addressing the enthusiastic supporters, Minister Dharmana Prasad Rao launched a strong critique against Naidu,

stating, “Despite the Central government committee recommending Visakhapatnam as the capital, Chandrababu hastily declared Amaravati as the capital overnight.” Minister Rao questioned the constitutionality of Naidu’s decision and demanded clarification on whether Naidu is attempting to emulate CM Jagan’s welfare schemes to regain power. He remarked, “While accusing CM Jagan of misusing funds in the name of welfare schemes, Naidu claims he will surpass the welfare initiatives if voted back into power.”

CENTRAL ZONE
Speaking in Kaikaluru, Health

Minister Vidadala Rajini condemned Chandrababu Naidu for negligent governance, highlighting that under Naidu’s administration, there were separate colonies for SCs and STs, leading to social disparity and untouchability. Minister Rajini emphasized that under CM Jagan’s administration, the government has pursued an unbiased approach, ensuring inclusive living for all residents in the Jagananna Colonies.

Housing Minister Jogi Ramesh added that BC, SC, ST, and minority communities should acknowledge CM Jagan’s unprecedented commitment to social welfare, surpassing any previous Chief Minister in independent India’s history. Minister Ramesh noted CM Jagan’s appointment of 17 cabinet posts specifically for BC, SC, ST, and minority communities to provide them with equitable political representation.

Following this, Kaikaluru MLA Dulam Nageswara Rao lauded CM Jagan, stating, “A record 15,000 house sites were allocated to homeless beneficiaries in the constituency, and a substantial sum of Rs 746 crore has been allocated and utilised for its development. This achievement was unimaginable before but has been made possible only under the able leadership of CM Jagan.”

SC adjourns...

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Seeking direction to set aside the High Court verdict, the State government said the accused (Naidu) is an ‘influential person’ and ‘has ensured that two of his key associates, including a government servant, have already fled the country’.

On November 20, the Andhra Pradesh High Court granted bail to Naidu while noting that the discretion to grant bail should be exercised judiciously in a humane and compassionate manner. The TDP chief recently underwent cardiac surgery at L V Prasad Hospital in Hyderabad. He was arrested on September 9 and released on interim medical bail on October 31, which is now made regular.

Naidu is accused of misappropriating funds from the Skill Development Corporation, which resulted in a purported loss of over Rs 300 crore to the state exchequer. On October 17, the top court denied interim bail to Naidu and said it would pronounce a verdict on his plea challenging the high court order refusing to quash the FIR against him in the skill development corporation scam case.

Drop stir and join duties: Govt to CHOs

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Special Chief Secretary of the Department of Medical Health, M T Krishna Babu, has urged Community Health Officers (CHOs/MLHPs) to drop their ‘unreasonable demands’ and promptly resume their duties.

In a press release on Tuesday, Special CS Krishna Babu said that a webinar would be hosted with all 10,032 CHOs statewide on Wednesday, at 11 am.

Stating that the Medical and Health Department will take stringent action against the CHOs, Krishna Babu insisted that they should assess the actual situation, alleviate their concerns, and return to their responsibilities. He cautioned that failure to comply could result in the cancellation of their contracts and termination from their positions, as indicated in a circular issued by the government on November 27.

Addressing the CHOs’ demand for 15 days of casual leave annually, Krishna Babu pointed out that they are neglecting their duties under



the guise of a phased agitation instead of abandoning the protest. He highlighted the government’s initiative to appoint Community Health Officers (Mid Level Health Providers) with B.Sc (Nursing graduates) qualifications, recruited to Dr YSR Village Health Clinics to deliver Comprehensive Primary Health Care services to rural communities.

Krishna Babu outlined the recruitment statistics, with 697 CHOs hired in 2019, 4519 during 2020-2022, and 4816 in the year 2022-23. Despite the Government of India’s norm of one sub-center for 5000 population, the Government of Andhra Pradesh sanctioned Dr YSR Village Health Clinic for each Village Secretariat, catering to approximately 2500 – 3000 population.

Jagan to unveil industrial projects...

Continued from Page 1

The projects encompass the inauguration of an Edible Oil Refinery plant in SPSR Nellore and a Sesame Processing Unit in Vizianagaram. The Chief Minister is scheduled to lay the foundation stone for the Starch Processing unit in Eluru district and the Manufacturing of RTE/RTC products with units being set up in Vizianagaram and Kurnool.

A plethora of groundbreaking projects is poised to reshape Andhra Pradesh’s industrial sector.

Among these projects, the Chief Minister is scheduled to inaugurate the Kakinada Printing Cluster, an establishment by the Sri Satyadev Printing Cluster Association.

Orchestrated through 250 beneficiary MSMEs, this initiative aims to generate 1000 direct employment opportunities and an additional 5000 indirect employment opportunities.

In a strategic move towards bolstering pharmaceutical infrastructure, Sigachi Industries Pvt. Ltd is slated to establish a greenfield Pharmaceuticals (API) plant with a production capacity of 72,000 MT per year. This venture, integral to the Orvakal Mega Industrial Hub in Kurnool, boasts an investment of Rs. 280 Crores and is expected to provide employment to 850 individuals, which is spread across 25 acres of land.

Meanwhile, RPS Industries Pvt. Ltd,

renowned for its expertise in Nutraceuticals, is embarking on a greenfield project to set up a grain-based bio-ethanol manufacturing unit. This initiative, situated within the Orvakal Mega Industrial Hub in Kurnool, comes with a total investment of Rs. 90 crore, promising job opportunities for 285 people over an expansive 11-acre landscape.

The ambitious development agenda extends further with a comprehensive slate of 17 Infrastructure Development projects spanning various districts. Cumulatively valued at Rs. 1,642 Crores, these projects are anticipated to generate employment for 16,731 individuals. Among these are 5 upgradation projects, out of which 3 in Guntur,

Hindupur, and Machilipatnam are set to be inaugurated by the Chief Minister and 12 other new industrial development projects commencing across diverse districts after a scheduled groundbreaking ceremony.

The Flatted Factory Complexes (FFCs) project is set to establish 4 units across Anakapalli, Kakinada, Visakhapatnam, and Srikakulam. With an expected investment of Rs. 143 crore, these FFCs are projected to create employment for 1,663 individuals, contributing significantly to the economic growth of the state. As the curtain rises on this array of projects, Andhra Pradesh stands at the threshold of a new industrial renaissance.

CM lays stone for solar...

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The Chief Minister also laid the foundation stone for enhancing the production capacity of EV scooter manufacturing utility of Avera AI Mobility Pvt Ltd’s plant at Nunna in Vijayawada from 25,000 to 1 lakh units. The enhanced production capacity will provide employment to another 200 persons. With the new sub-stations across the State, supply, and transmission capacity would be upgraded and most of the power problems would be solved, said the Chief Minister, adding that people in submergible Mandals like Kunavaram, Chintur, VR Puram, and Etipaka would also receive quality power.

He said that the Government had spent Rs 1700 crore in the initial days to enhance the feeder capacity to supply nine-hour free power to farmers during the day.

The Chief Minister said that the Government

has also signed an agreement with SECI (Solar Energy Corporation of India) for producing 17,000 million units of solar power in the State and supplying 13,000 million units of power to the agricultural sector at the rate of Rs. 2.49 per unit as against the usual average unit cost of Rs. 5.30 thereby reducing the burden of the State exchequer on free power supply to farmers.

He said the SECI would make available 3000MW, 3000MW, and 1000 MW of solar power by Sept 2024, Sept 2025, and Sept 2026 respectively. Energy, Mining and Environment Minister P Ramachandra Reddy, CS Dr KS Jawahar Reddy, Energy special CS K.Vijayanand, APGENCO MD KVN Chakradhar Babu, APTRANSCO Vigilance & Security JMD B. Malla Reddy, representatives of the HPCL, Ayana Power, Spring Agnitra, Solar Energy AP Sx Pvt Ltd and Avera AI Mobility Pvt Ltd were among those present.

Vigilance officials crack down on food safety violations

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Vigilance authorities in Visakhapatnam have cracked down on food safety violations, conducting surprise inspections at various popular eateries throughout the city. The impetus for these unannounced checks stemmed from a recent surge in complaints regarding the hygiene and quality of food served in multiple establishments.

During the inspections, officials uncovered a troubling pattern of non-compliance with food safety regulations, revealing instances of expired ingredients, improper storage practices, and unsanitary kitchen conditions. These violations pose a significant risk to public health, necessitating immediate action by the authorities.

In an especially alarming incident, officials at Helapuri Restaurant, situated at Jagadamba Junction, discovered



During the inspections, officials uncovered a troubling pattern of non-compliance with food safety regulations, revealing instances of expired ingredients, improper storage practices, and unsanitary kitchen conditions.

rotten meat being prepared for sale. This revelation raised serious concerns about the restaurant's commitment to food safety, resulting in its immediate closure. The restaurant's owner is now facing legal action for compromising public health. Furthermore,

authorities found evidence of pests in the kitchen of Zee Shan Restaurant in Madhurawada, underscoring the gravity of food safety lapses. The confirmed presence of pests prompted the issuance of a stern warning to the establishment.

Undeterred by these disconcerting findings, vigilance officials have pledged to persist with unannounced inspections, underscoring their steadfast commitment to upholding food safety standards and ensuring eateries are held accountable for any lapses.

180 AU students get part-time jobs

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

As many as 180 students were placed in part-time jobs across various disciplines by Andhra University's South Campus Placement Office. The director VR Reddy, said "This initiative is a testament to Andhra University's commitment to providing its students with a well-rounded education that goes beyond the classroom. We are confident that the part-time job opportunities and additional training programs will significantly enhance our students' employability and prepare them for success in their chosen careers."

"Andhra University is providing part-time opportunities in diverse sectors like digital marketing, research, analytics, consulting, and leadership roles, offering flexibility with up to 28 hours per week. Discussions are underway for monthly salaries ranging from Rs. 6,000 to 10,000, allowing students to cover expenses and gain work experience," informed VR Reddy.

Stating further Reddy stated, the university's placement cell isn't just about part-time jobs. It actively prepares students for government jobs with modules covering Arithmetic, Reasoning, and Analytics, enhancing their competitive exam readiness.

For students aspiring to pursue higher studies abroad, the placement cell provides essential training for entrance exams. To address challenges faced by students in dealing with consultancies, the university facilitates spot admissions under the guidance of college representatives. Over 150 students have already secured spot admissions in various universities across more than 20 countries.

Retired Prof K Ramachandra Rao, Andhra University alumnus said "The University's efforts to prepare students for government jobs and higher studies are commendable. I believe that these initiatives will provide our students with a strong foundation for success in their future endeavors."



Probe into morphing of women's photos

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a move against cybercrime, the City police have launched an investigation into a case involving the morphing of personal photos of young women through artificial intelligence on Telegram channels.

"We have registered a case and commenced the inquiry against an individual who targeted young women on social media platforms," stated DCP Srinivasa Rao. "The



accused, a graduate in Agricultural B.Sc., employed a methodical approach by sending friend requests to

unsuspecting individuals through various social media accounts."

The criminal's modus operandi involved accepting friend requests, particularly from anonymous Instagram accounts of unmarried girls. Subsequently, the perpetrator saved the personal photos of the victims in Telegram channels and employed artificial intelligence for morphing. The morphed images were then sent to the victims, accompanied by threats.

"The accused used advanced artificial intelligence techniques to morph the victims' photos into obscene images," revealed Crime Inspector R. Someswara Rao, who played a pivotal role in apprehending the criminal. "He then utilized these morphed images to blackmail and threaten the victims."

Following a thorough investigation, the police successfully apprehended the accused and recovered his electronic devices.

‘Phule promoted education among masses’

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

State Planning Board Vice Chairman and Central MLA Malladi Vishnu has said that Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phule is the one who encouraged education among the masses in the country. On the occasion of Phule's death anniversary, floral tributes were paid to the statue at Tummalapalli Kalakshetram. On this occasion, Phule's services to the country were remembered.

Later, Malladi Vishnu said that Jyoti Rao Phule has devoted his whole life to the uplift of the downtrodden communities. Having experienced caste discrimination, Phule worked his entire life to eradicate caste discrimination. His writings and lectures depict his direct experiences. Vishnu stated that Phule's activities for the



uplift of Dalit and Bahujan communities were commendable. He was hailed as a genius who educated his wife Savitribai and became a teacher to provide education to women. That is why Dr BR Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution of India, declared Phule as

his guru.

Malladi Vishnu said that the YSRCP government is moving forward with the inspiration of Mahatma Phule's thinking that education is the path to socio-economic development. He said that the welfare schemes implemented by CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy in the spirit of that great man are contributing a lot to the progress of SC, ST, BC, minority, and women communities. He clarified that the spirit of visionaries like Mahatma Phule is behind the state of Andhra Pradesh standing as a model for the country today.

YSRCP Corporator of 33rd division Sharvani Murthy, leaders Parasa Srinu, Krishnamohan, K Maruti, Vikram Nagu, RS Naidu, Lanka Babu, and others participated.

Rewrite history, Roja exhorts students

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Minister for Tourism, Culture and Youth Advancement RK Roja on Tuesday exhorted girl students to excel in every chosen field fighting against all odds and insults which they come across in their journey to achieve their goals and rewrite history.

Addressing the Annual Alumni Meet in the TTD run seven decades old Padmavati women's degree and PG college as its chief guest the AP minister who was a student over three decades ago from the college said studying in TTD educational institutions itself is a huge blessing to the students. She expressed immense happiness and became emotional about visiting the college after three decades terming it as the most memorable and unforgettable moment in her life.

She said when she was pursuing her education there were no avenues like what the girl students are having now. The Governments today are promoting women's education extensively and all students should utilize the opportunity to



achieve goals and bring glory to their institution, teachers and parents.

She thanked her lecturers on the occasion and advocated that studying at SPW helped her to build a successful career in her life be it film industry or politics.

Dr Krishna Prashanti who is a contemporary of Roja, Retired Telugu Head of the Department, and Octogenarian Dr DM Premavati, TTD DEO Dr Bhaskar Reddy also spoke on the occasion.

Cultural shows presented by students in the afternoon session

enthralled all.

College Principal Dr. Mahadevamma, Alumni president Vasudha, Warden Vidyullata, Telugu HoD Dr Krishnaveni, retired Principal Dr. Swarajya Lakshmi, old students, and students were also present.

State-level Children's Science Congress kicks off today

182 science projects to be showcased during the two-day fest

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Member Secretary of the Andhra Pradesh State Council of Science & Technology (APCOST), Dr Y Aparna, has stated that the 31st State-level National Children's Science Congress (NCSC) will be held at KL University in Vaddeswaram in Guntur district on November 29 and 30.

Dr Aparna told the media on Tuesday that KL University was all set to host the two-day Science Congress. As many as 500 children, guides, escort teachers, district coordinators and academic coordinators will attend the event. At the district-level, more than 4,000 science projects were showcased in all 26 districts. Of them, 182 projects have been selected for the State-level competition, she added.

From the State, as many as 17 science projects will be



selected to be presented at the National Children's Science Congress. The jury will select a project from each district, which would be sent to the KVR Scientific Society for Evaluation, she said.

She explained that NCSC was conducted every year on a specific focal theme. 'Local for Global' is this year's theme. For the benefit of the students, the main theme was divided into five sub-themes -- 'Know Your Environment', 'Improve Health, Nurture and Welfare',

'Society and Culture Systems for Healthy Environment', 'An Ecosystem-based Approach to Self-confidence' and 'Technological Innovation for Ecosystem and Health'.

Minister for Energy, Environment, Forests, and Science & Technology Peddireddy Ramachandra Reddy will inaugurate the two-day State-level National Children's Science Congress. Several ministers and officials will attend the function, she said.

Prepare plans for development of Railway Station Junction: Swapnil

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada Municipal Corporation Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar has directed the officials concerned to prepare a plan to develop the Vijayawada Railway Station Junction. Also, he instructed them to take up repairs to the footpaths at the Eluru Locks and Railway station.

The Commissioner visited the Eluru Locks Junction and Railway Station Junction near the Old Government Hospital in the city on Tuesday. He enquired about the footpaths which are damaged and directed the officials to make repairs immediately. Later, Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar instructed the Engineering Wing officers to prepare a plan for the development of the Railway Station Junction. The VMC chief also inspected the Vehicle Depot and issued several instructions to the staff.



GEF-UNIDO team studies VMC projects

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A high-level delegation, comprising representatives from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), convened for a thorough assessment at the Command Control Room of the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) on Tuesday. The mission aimed to evaluate the progress of the GEF-funded Vijayawada Municipal Corporation project, totalling approximately Rs 12 crore, as well as ongoing and proposed projects

under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode. As part of the assessment, the team also visited the Jindal Waste to Energy plant in Guntur.

Addressing the delegation, the Municipal Commissioner of Vijayawada provided insights into the GEF-funded project titled 'Rejuvenation of STPs and DP Stations and Installation of Biogas Energy Plants in VMC.' Emphasising the project's impact on reducing carbon emissions and lowering Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) levels in line with National Green Tribunal (NGT) norms, the commissioner outlined the

positive outcomes. The discussion further delved into other PPP projects in Vijayawada, such as E3 & Rajiv Gandhi Park, KL Rao Park, and others, capturing the team's attention. Subsequently, the team conducted a field visit to the Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.

The GEF-UNIDO Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach Programme (SCIAP) initiative is currently underway in 28 cities across 11 developing nations, including five pilot cities in India (Mysuru, Jaipur, Bhopal, Vijayawada, and Guntur). In collabora-

tion with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India, SCIAP aims to contribute to sustainable development by reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The four key components under UNIDO SCIAP India in Vijayawada include strategic sustainable city planning, investment and technology demonstration projects, capacity building for municipal officials and elected representatives in water and sanitation sectors, and assistance in improving the financial creditworthiness of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

4th UTT national ranking TT Championship begins today

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Table Tennis Association (APTTA), under the auspices of the Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI), is all set to organise the fourth Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) National Ranking Table Tennis Championship at the Chennupati Ramakotaiah Municipal Corporation Indoor Stadium in Vijayawada from November 29 to December 5. As many as 1,788 players in under-11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 categories will be taking



Andhra Pradesh Table Tennis Association president KVS Prakash Rao, general secretary P Viswanath, and Competition manager Ganeshan addressing the media in Vijayawada on Tuesday. Pic by **Ch Vijaya Bhaskar**

part in the tournament from across the country.

APTTA president KVS Prakash Rao, general secretary P Viswanath, and competition

manager N Ganeshan addressed the media at the CHRMC Indoor Stadium in Vijayawada on Tuesday. They said that TT stalwarts A Sharath Kamal and G Sathiyam, along with Manav Thakkar, will participate in this championship. NTR District Collector Dr S Dilli Rao will inaugurate the National Ranking TT Championship. Principal Commissioner of Income Tax (Central) Mithlesh Kumar Jha, TTFI General Secretary Kamlesh Mehta and others will attend the inaugural event.

Cong to face unequal battle if the verdict in TS is fractured

Should there be a fractured verdict in the upcoming Telangana Assembly elections; the scenario for staking claim to form the government would be different for the Congress, presently banded about as having an edge, and the Bharat Rashtira Samithi, which seems to have several aces up its sleeve to pull off a hat-trick.

Unlike in 2014 and 2018 polls, the Congress is not fighting with its back to the wall this time. It is now going boldly with its plank that the state per se was granted by the grand old party. The Congress stands a chance to rule the state only if it gets 60 or more seats in the 119-member TS Legislative Assembly. However, the BRS can reach the midway mark quite easily, perhaps with support from the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen and/or the Bharatiya Janata Party, both of which want to keep the Congress at bay.

The Congress had to bite the dust in 2014 as well as 2018 as people of India's youngest state reposed confidence in BRS president K. Chandrasekhar Rao, who had effectively played on Telangana sentiments. In TS' first elections, KCR was the choice of people, though his party had a tally of 63 seats -- just 3 seats more than the required majority in the Legislative Assembly. By 2018,

Unlike in 2014 and 2018 polls, the Congress is not fighting with its back to the wall this time. It is now going boldly with its plank that the state per se was granted by the grand old party. The Congress stands a chance to rule the state only if it gets 60 or more seats in the 119-member TS Legislative Assembly.

anti-incumbency became palpable, but the alliance between the Congress and the Telugu Desam Party came in handy for BRS to raise the bogey that the Congress would be "under the influence of TDP having Andhra roots". Today, the Congress has launched an all-out war against BRS, while anti-Andhra sentiment has outlived its utility. Besides,

BRS has positioned itself with trans-Telangana ambitions. Although BRS tried to influence settlers during the GHMC elections, the political turn of events following the arrest of former AP chief minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for his alleged involvement in the skill development scam has given room for settlers to rally behind Naidu.



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

The Congress has been on the ascendant in the state following its spectacular victory in the Karnataka Assembly elections. The Congress' appeal

for 'one chance' to rule the state the grand old party had granted a decade back seems to have struck a chord with voters. This explains why Telangana Chief Minister and BRS president had a meeting with poll strategist Prasant Kishor to know which way the wind blows. Ahead of the AP Assembly polls in 2019, then leader of the opposition YS Jaganmohan Reddy had engaged the services of the very same Prasant Kishor, after introducing him as the "man who will bring power to us (YSRCP)".

Coming back to the post-poll scenario in case of a fractured verdict, the priorities of BJP may change so much so that it could side with BRS just to scuttle the chances of

Congress becoming the ruling party in Telangana. For, the stakes are really high. Should the Congress win in Telangana too, (a la Karnataka), it could pave the way for a grand show by the grand old party in the 2024 General Election. In such circumstances, the BJP, with even a single-digit tally, may be helpful for the BRS. Likewise, the MIM, also with a single-digit tally, say 7, may add anti-Congress flavor to the combination.

At the end of the day, the Congress is under compulsion to get a majority on its own, without hoping for support from outside. What if the CPI is an alliance partner of Congress? And, what difference will it make if CPI gets say

one of the two seats it is contesting. If Jana Sena Party headed by film actor Pawan Kalyan manages to win two or three seats (out of the 8 seats it is contesting in alliance with BJP), there is no guarantee that JSP would offer support to BRS even on the advice of its alliance partner.

It would be interesting to watch whether BRS would uphold democratic norms should it not have the required numbers to form the government with or without the support of BJP and MIM. If BRS does achieve a hat-trick against odds, and not in disregard of democratic norms, KCR would indeed become a towering personality on the nation's southern political screen.

YSRCP ruling AP as per Phule's aspirations: MLA

PNS ■ PARVATIPURAM

YSRCP MLA A Joga Rao has claimed that the Jagan Mohan Reddy government is ruling the State as per the aspirations of Jyotirao Phule.

The MLA paid rich tributes to Jyotirao Phule on the occasion of the 133rd death anniversary here on Tuesday. The YSRCP leaders garlanded the portrait of Jyotirao Phule at the YSR Marg.

Speaking on the occasion, MLA Joga Rao said that Jyotirao Phule was a social activist who had striven for the underprivileged sections. He opposed the caste system and he was a social reformer and a writer, he said. Phule fought against the untouchability in society, he said, adding that he also strongly advocated education to the people of backward communities.

"Jyotirao Phule was not only a great social reformer but also a pioneer for women's education. Jyotirao Phule's wife Savitribai Phule opened a school for girls in 1848 at Bhidewada in Pune," Joga Rao recalled. All should remember Jyotirao Phule's efforts for the uplift of underprivileged sections and eradication of disparity, he added.

Jyotirao Phule founded the 'Society of Seekers of Truth' on September 24, 1873, to provide equal rights to the underprivileged sections, the MLA said.



TIDCO CHAIRMAN PAYS TRIBUTES TO PHULE



PARVATIPURAM: TIDCO Chairman Jamma Prasan Kumar paid rich tributes to social reformer and social activist Jyotirao Phule on his death anniversary on Tuesday. The TIDCO chairman, flanked by district YSRCP president SP Raju, garlanded the portrait of Jyotirao Phule and paid tributes. Speaking on the occasion, Jamma Prasan Kumar recalled the struggle carried out by Phule for the eradication of caste disparities in the society.

He said that Jyotirao Phule was born on April 11, 1827 in Maharashtra. He had striven for the eradication of the caste system and disparity in society. Jyotirao Phule also advocated women's education and founded the 'Society of Seekers of Truth' with his followers, he added. All Indians should remember Jyotirao Phule and draw inspiration from him, he stated. A large number of people's representatives and activists participated in the programme.

'Adudam Andhra' aims to promote sports

PNS ■ ELURU

District in-charge Collector B Lavanya Veni has said that the 'Adudam Andhra' sports event is being organized in order to encourage the youth to participate in sports.

Talking to the media here on Tuesday, the in-charge Collector said that the 'Adudam Andhra' sports event would begin on December 15 and continue for 51 days across the state.



She said that during the 51-day sports event, various sports would be organised at the village and ward level for 18 days, at the mandal level for 14 days, constituency level for six days, and district level for seven days. The sports events would also be held for six days at the state level from January 29 to February 2. The 'Adudam Andhra' sports event would conclude in Visakhapatnam on February 3, 2024, in-charge Collector Lavanya Veni said.

Panchayat secretary at the village level, MPDO at the mandal level, and district officers of various departments at the constituency level would act as nodal officers for the Adudam Andhra sport event, she informed. Enthusiasts participating in these sports and those coming to watch can also register their names, she said adding that the registration process is very easy and can be registered with just a mobile number and Aadhaar card.

Officials directed to complete construction of houses by Jan

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM

West Godavari District Collector P Prashanthi has directed the officials to take steps to complete the construction of 15,000 houses by January 24.

The Collector held a meeting with the officials and reviewed the mega campaign drive on the construction of houses in the colonies.

On the occasion, the Collector said that recently a large-scale housewarming ceremony was celebrated by the hands of Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy and preparations should be made to celebrate the second phase of Housewarming programmes across the state in February. As part of this, a target has been set to complete the construction of around 15,000 houses in the WG district, the Collector stated.



The Collector directed the officials concerned to complete the target by January 24, 2024. The authorities should work hard so that the WG district would be at the forefront of the construction of houses, she told the officials.

Collector Prashanthi said that the cement, steel, and sand needed by the beneficiaries are ready and bricks have to be provided, adding that the officials should prepare the best layout where 100 houses can be built in each mandal and complete the construction.

Along with this, internal

roads soak pits and welcome arches should be completed for the housewarming ceremony, the Collector told the officials, adding that at present the weather is very suitable for house construction. DRDA officials should take steps to provide necessary loan facilities to the beneficiaries.

AP State Housing Corporation Limited Chief Engineer GV Prasad said that the district had been placed in the forefront in the construction of houses in the last season and asked the officials to keep the district in the forefront in the second phase also with the same spirit. He asked the secretariat and housing construction department staff to coordinate to carry out the works in a speedy manner. DRO B Shivannarayana Reddy, Housing PD Dr.RC Anand Kumar, DE Venkataramana, and other officials were present.

FM inaugurates water tank, road

PNS ■ NANDYALA

Minister for Finance Buggana Rajendranath Reddy inaugurated the newly constructed water tank and a road at Betamcherla on Tuesday.

The Minister inaugurated the Rehmanpuram-Nagamallakunta road which was constructed at a cost of Rs 3.56 crore. He also inaugurated a water tank which was constructed at a cost of Rs 22 lakh at the village and released water from the tank. Later the minister inspected the progress of the construction works of Valmiki Bhavan which is being constructed at a cost of Rs 2 crore.

Later, the Finance Minister unveiled the pylons for two development works. The min-

ister conducted a padayatra on the newly constructed 5 km road after dedicating it to the people. The people of Rehmanpuram and Nagamallakunta villages accorded a warm welcome to Buggana Rajendranath Reddy. The entire area plunged in emotion as an elderly couple spread marigold flowers on the road while the Finance Minister was walking.

Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy directed the officials concerned to expedite the construction works of Valmiki Bhavan. Betamcherla MPP Buggana Nagabhusanam Reddy and municipal chairman CH Chalam Reddy were among those who accompanied the Minister.



No let-up in atrocities on SCs, STs: Bharat

PNS ■ RAJAHMUNDRY

Local MP Margni Bharat Ram has said that atrocities are continuing against the SCs and STs even now and called upon all to draw inspiration from Jyotirao Phule to fight against the caste disparity.

The MP, along with YSRCP leaders, paid rich tributes to Jyotirao Phule on his 133rd death anniversary here on Tuesday by garlanding the statue of Phule.

Speaking on the occasion, he called upon people to draw inspiration from Phule and strive to do justice to the underprivileged sections.

He regretted that social justice for the underprivileged sections is still far away even after seven and half decades of Independence in the country. The selfishness of successive



rulers is the main reason for social justice remains unfulfilled.

The MP emphasised the need for a caste census to do justice to the underprivileged sections. The political parties are consid-

ering the SC/ST/BC and minorities as vote banks disregarding their welfare, he lamented.

"Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy has taken a historical decision to conduct a caste cen-

sus in the state. All should thank the Chief Minister for the same. We can go one step forward with the caste census in providing social justice and the leaders of the communities can get power of positions as per the caste population proportion," the MP asserted.

Justice is being meted out to the backward communities in the YSRCP-led government, he claimed. MP Margani Bharat Ram also underlined the need for education for the underprivileged sections.

Later the MP inspected the progress of the construction works of the Ambedkar building. BC JAC chairman Margani Nageswara Rao, former MLA R Suryaprakash Rao, Margani Suresh, and Kadiyala Lakshmana Rao were among those who participated in the programme.

Bhaskar Award conferred on Prof Manoj

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

SRM University-AP Vice-Chancellor Prof. Manoj K Arora has been honoured with the Bhaskar Award, the highest recognition presented by the Indian Society of Remote Sensing. The award comprises a medal, citation and Rs 2,00,000. The award was conferred on Prof. Arora by Dr Shailesh Naik, former Secretary of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, and Dr Prakash Chauhan, Director-National Remote Sensing Centre and president of the Indian Society of Remote Sensing, during the ISG-ISRS Annual Convention and National Symposium on the theme 'GeoDiscover: Unravelling India's Spatial Frontier' held in Pune.



The award was given in recognition of his outstanding contributions and achievements in the fields of Remote Sensing, Digital Image

Processing, Land Cover Mapping, Earth Sciences, and Civil Engineering applications. Prof Manoj Arora said he was thrilled to receive the cov-

eted Bhaskar Award and to be in the league of fellow Bhaskar Awardees who have contributed immensely to the Indian Space Programme.

BJP Kishan Morcha activists stage dharna, arrested

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The BJP Kishan Morcha activists staged a dharna in front of the office of the Agriculture Commissioner here on Tuesday demanding the government to declare 403 mandals as drought-affected.

The BJP Kishan Morcha activists squatted in front of the office and raised slogans. When the police prevented them, a jostle took place between the BJP Kishan Morcha activists and the police leading to a tense situation for some time. The police arrested the BJP Kishan Morcha leaders and whisked them away to the police station.

BJP Kishan Morcha state

president Chigurupati Kumar Swamy condemned the police's excessive behaviour against the BJP Kishan Morcha activists. He said that the police arrested even women farmers for demanding to declare drought-affected mandals, he deplored.

He demanded the resignation of the Agriculture minister and the Irrigation minister for their failure to take steps to mitigate the drought situation. The government miserably failed to assess the drought situation and take steps to tackle it, he flayed.

The BJP leader said that they wanted to give a memorandum to the agriculture Commissioner but the police prevented them.

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka, the Congress candidate who is seeking election for a fourth straight term from this constituency, attributed the stoppage of the disbursement of Rythu Bandhu benefits by the Election Commission of India to Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao.

"It is KCR who intentionally planned the stoppage. He and BRS leaders should have had the sense not to criticise the Congress for their failures and mistakes," Bhatti said while addressing a gathering

at Jeelugupadu in Madhira mandal a few hours before concluding his campaign on Tuesday.

Bhatti said that KCR had more interest in liquor shop tenders rather than in disbursing Rythu Bandhu funds. He delayed the distribution knowing well about the announcement of the election schedule and the Moral Code of Conduct only for political mileage, and for blaming the Congress, the CLP leader said.

He said that his party after coming to power would credit Rythu Bandhu funds to

farmers' bank accounts.

Bhatti said that after November 30 the BRS will disappear from politics as the Congress would form a government with a record majority. "I am going to play a pivotal role in the Congress government as the Madhira representative," he added.

He said he would make all-out efforts to bring funds, industries, water, roads, libraries, educational institutions and placements for youth in his constituency. He asked people whether they wanted a working representative or a blabberer.



New lease of life for baby with acute leukemia

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A two-year-old baby was given a new lease of life by the doctors of American Oncology Institute (AOI) in Kanuru, Vijayawada. He had been diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).

The baby was presented with complaints of persistent fever and breathlessness. The initial evaluations revealed an alarmingly high white blood cell count (WBC), low platelet count, and anaemia, sparking immediate concern. Further diagnostic tests, including bone marrow studies, confirmed a high-risk diagnosis of Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, a form of blood cancer that primarily affects children.

Under the expert guidance of

Dr Sai Krishna Kolluru, Medical Oncologist, the baby was promptly admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) and a rigorous course of treatment was started. Over the span of three months, the baby was under intensive chemotherapy, administered by the highly specialised team at AOI Vijayawada, all the while under close monitoring to manage and mitigate the side-effects and complications associated with such a demanding treatment protocol.

In an astonishing turn of events, within just one month of dedicated treatment, the disease was under control, leading to complete remission. The child has now successfully completed the treatment.

INDIA CORNER

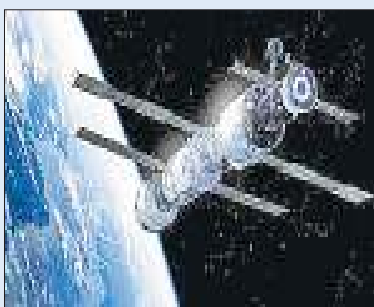
Police rescue 18 tourists struck in Odisha's nature camp

Police rescued at least 18 tourists who were stranded inside Similipal National Park in Odisha's Mayurbhanj district for around 16 hours, officials said. The tourists from Odisha and other states were unable to come out of Barehipani nature camp within the sanctuary due to a road blockade by local people. Personnel from Jashipur police station safely rescued the tourists through a different route on Monday night, SDPO Karanjia Subrat Kumar said. A local outfit named Similipal Bikash Parishad, which has launched an agitation demanding development of their areas, has blocked three gates to Similipal National Park for an indefinite period. People from three gram panchayats also joined the agitation and blocked roads at Joranda Chhak, Sana Uski, Chala, and Lanjighosara Chhak, officials added. Their demand include better roads from Kalikaprased Gates to Gadasimilipal, setting up of mobile towers inside Similipal, a concrete bridge in the sanctuary, road connectivity to all villages inside Similipal under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and creation of employment opportunities for jobless youths of peripheral areas of the sanctuary.



Ready to collaborate for building Indian space station: NASA

The United States is open to collaborating with India in building its own space station, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Administrator Bill Nelson said here on Tuesday. On a visit to India, Nelson said the US and India were working on plans to send an Indian astronaut to the International Space Station by the end of next year. "The selection of astronaut is determined by ISRO. NASA will not make the selection," Nelson told a group of reporters here. In response to a question, he said the US would be ready to collaborate with India in building the space station if it so desires. "We expect by that time to have a commercial space station. I think India wants to have a commercial space station by 2040. If India wants us to collaborate with them, of course, we will be available. But that's up to India," Nelson said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has asked ISRO to aim to build an Indian space station by 2035 and land astronauts on the moon by 2040.



Delhi court seeks ED's reply on Sanjay Singh's bail plea by Dec 6

A court here on Tuesday directed the Enforcement Directorate to file by December 6 its reply to an application by AAP MP Sanjay Singh seeking bail in a money laundering case related to the alleged Delhi excise scam. Special Judge M K Nagpal issued notice to the central probe agency on the application, which claimed that no purpose will be served by keeping Singh in further custody. The judge also directed the ED to provide a copy of the reply to the accused. The application, filed by the accused on November 24, has claimed that he is no longer required for custodial interrogation and that no purpose will be served by keeping him in custody. It claimed that the investigation against Singh was complete and there was no chance of tampering with evidence or influencing witnesses. Singh, who is currently in judicial custody, also claimed in the application that he was ready to abide by any condition imposed by the court.



HIGHER JUDICIARY

Prez: Cost of justice, language impede equal access to justice

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said the "cost" and the use of English language in the higher judiciary are among the hindrances in the way of equal access to justice, and emphasised on their removal. Addressing a conference here, she emphasised on the need to launch an awareness campaign among people, living in rural areas and those from socially disadvantaged groups, to help them make them conscious of their rights and get legal assistance.



"Our principal task is to remove those obstacles. The chief obstacle, of course, is often the cost of justice," Murmu said, addressing the valedictory session of the first regional conference on 'Ensuring Access to Quality Legal Aid for the Vulnerable: Challenges and Opportunities in the Global South' here.

Murmu said, equality is not only the foundation of justice, but a necessary condition of it too. "It has been long since the world proclaimed that all human beings are equal, but we need to ask ourselves if we all have equal access to justice," she said.

In practice, it means some people are often unable to seek redressal of their griev-

ances due to several factors, the president said.

"Our principal task is to remove those obstacles. The chief obstacle, of course, is often the cost of justice," Murmu said, addressing the valedictory session of the first regional conference on 'Ensuring Access to Quality Legal Aid for the Vulnerable: Challenges and Opportunities in the Global South' here.

She said that access to justice for all has been a theme close

to her heart and mentioned several steps taken to help economically disadvantaged sections of society to approach legal institutions for remedial action. Steps taken by the National Legal Services Authority, that is, NALSA, have also played a key role in expanding legal aid, the president said.

"The aim, on the whole, has been to advance 'ease of justice'. But I feel that there is a need to launch an awareness campaign

among people not only to make them conscious of their rights, but also to help them get legal assistance, if such a need arises," Murmu said.

Such an awareness campaign must focus on rural areas and socially disadvantaged groups to dispel the impression that justice is the advantage of the strong, the president said.

There are many more hindrances in the way of equal access to justice, she said.

CJs of foreign countries witness proceedings in CJI's court

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Sudan and Ghana, on Tuesday sat in the Chief Justice of India's court and witnessed the proceedings of the Supreme Court for around 30 minutes.

As soon as a bench comprising D Y Chandrachud and justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra assembled in the morning, Justice Chandrachud welcomed the chief justices of these countries.

"Members of the bar, I have very great pleasure in welcoming in the chief justices who have come from overseas for the international conference," the CJI said.

Chief justices of several countries, including from Ivory Coast, South

New NEP stresses on innovation through education: Anurag Thakur

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The new national education policy stresses on innovation through education, aligning with the government's commitment to fostering a dynamic learning environment for the youth, Union Minister Anurag Thakur has said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "impactful initiatives" such as the 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' showcase his dedication to alleviating exam-related stress, and ensuring that the country's youth is well-prepared for a prosperous future, the minister said.

He was addressing the convocation ceremony of the GD Goenka University on Sunday.

"Congratulations to GD Goenka University, students, teachers and parents on the splendid success of the 9th convocation ceremony," a statement issued by the private university quoted Thakur as saying in his address.

"Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the new national education policy



"We reaffirm the government's pledge to empower the youth, steering Bharat towards development, with a goal to achieve a Viksit Bharat (developed India) by 2047," Thakur added.

brought after almost four decades emphasises innovation through education, aligning with the government's commitment to fostering a dynamic learning environment for Bhartiya youth," the Union minister said.

As we celebrate this milestone, "we reaffirm the government's pledge to empower the youth, steering Bharat towards development, with a goal to achieve a Viksit Bharat (developed India) by 2047," Thakur added.

2020 DELHI RIOTS



Delhi Court acquits 9 accused of arson, vandalism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A court here has acquitted nine accused people of all charges, including rioting, vandalism, and arson, during the 2020 Delhi riots, saying they were entitled to the benefit of the doubt.

Additional Sessions Judge Pulastya Pramachala was hearing a case against the accused, who were accused of being a part of a riotous mob that torched a godown and some vehicles in Shiv Vihar here during the communal riots on February 25.

Noting the evidence before it, the court said the incident of vandalism and arson at the godown was established.

The court underlined that

the prosecution's case hinged on the testimonies of two police officials, an assistant sub-inspector (ASI), and a head constable (HC).

It said the ASI mentioned the names of the accused, on the plea that he had known them since before the alleged incident. But later the police official said that he only knew the names of three accused people.

"Forgetting a fact is much different from wrongly asserting a fact. Without having knowledge of a fact, one cannot assert it, and on the other hand, despite having knowledge of a fact, one can forget it and may come up with a wrong description of such a fact," the court said.

GYANVAPI MOSQUE COMPLEX

ASI AGAIN SEEKS MORE TIME TO SUBMIT SCIENTIFIC SURVEY REPORT

PNS ■ VARANASI (UP)

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on Tuesday sought three more weeks from the district court here for submitting the scientific survey report of the Gyanvapi mosque complex. The court will hear the plea on Wednesday.

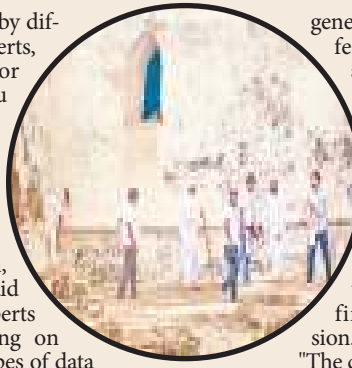
The district court of Varanasi had asked the ASI to submit the report on the Gyanvapi Masjid complex by November 28.

On Tuesday, the ASI sought an extension of three weeks, saying it needed more time for the assimilation of information

generated by different experts, counsel for the Hindu side Madan Mohan Yadav said.

In its application, the ASI said that its experts are working on various types of data collected by archaeologists, surveyors and other experts, etc.

"Assimilation of information



generated by different experts and different tools is a difficult and slow process and it will take some more time to complete the report for final submission.

"The court is therefore requested to give three more weeks to ASI to submit it," Yadav said quoting the application of the ASI.

The court has fixed November 29 for hearing the application for a time extension, he said.

The ASI has been conducting the survey in the barricaded area of the Gyanvapi mosque premises, excluding its sealed section, since August 4, following court orders.

A plea had sought a scientific survey of the Gyanvapi premises, located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi, to determine whether the 17th-century mosque was constructed over a pre-existing structure of a Hindu temple.

RAJASTHAN POLLS

Police seize record Rs 436-cr worth poll 'freebies'

PNS ■ JAIPUR

The Rajasthan Police made an all-time high seizure of electoral inducements like cash, liquor and narcotics worth Rs 436 crore during the recently concluded assembly polls in the state, officials said Tuesday.

This is over six times higher than that of 2018 elections when Rs 65 crore worth of such seizures were effected by the Rajasthan Police, they said.

Overall, as per Election Commission figures, illegal inducements worth Rs 690 crore were seized by various agencies deployed by it to ensure free and fair polls in the state where voting was held on November 25 for 199 out of the total 200 assembly seats.

As per official data for seizures made by the state police, out of the total Rs 436 crore, cash comprised Rs 47 crore, liquor valued at Rs 39 crore and narcotics of Rs 87 crore were intercepted since the model code of conduct was implemented by the EC on October 9.

RRTS project: Want complete compliance of order, SC to Delhi govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday made it clear that there can be no partial compliance of its order directing the Delhi government to release funds for the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) project and complete compliance of its directions must take place according to the schedule.

The RRTS project entails semi-high speed rail corridors connecting Delhi to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, Alwar in Rajasthan, and Panipat in Haryana.



The apex court observed the problem was that the Delhi government can make a budgetary provision of Rs 580 crore for advertisements but it cannot make a budgetary provision of Rs 400 crore which it

is supposed to pay for the project.

"You have to be arm-twisted for the money which you are liable to pay. That is the problem. Why are you doing this?"

"The issue is why you have not made budgetary provision. You can make budgetary provision for Rs 580 crore odd for advertisements. But you can't make budgetary provision of Rs 400 odd crore which you are supposed to pay," a bench of justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia said.

Current solar cycle intensity to peak in 2024

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The current ongoing solar cycle is likely to peak its intensity in 2024 and can potentially impact Earth's space weather, according to researchers at the Indian Institute of Space Education and Research (IISER), Kolkata.

It is known that roughly every 11 years, the intensity of solar activity reaches its peak, which manifests as violent disturbances in space weather such as solar magnetic storms or coronal mass ejections, impacting Earth's satellites and

May impact Earth's satellites, find researchers

telecommunications. "During intense solar storms, the Earth's upper atmosphere expands outwards, thereby introducing friction on the low-Earth satellites. The friction can lead to a decay in the satellites' orbits and reduce their lifetime. Thus, they are able to live in space for a much shorter time than they were originally supposed to," Dibendu Nandy, the study's corresponding author and



Professor of Physics and Head, Center of Excellence in Space Sciences India, IISER, Kolkata, told PTI.

The researchers also said that the most intense of these storms can cause serious dam-

age to orbiting satellites, electric power grids and telecommunications when directed at Earth.

In their study appearing in the journal Monthly Notices of the Royal Astronomical Society Letters, the researchers discovered a new relationship to help predict the occurrence of peaks in solar cycles, which are produced by an internal dynamo mechanism, harnessing energy from plasma flows inside the Sun.

Using decades-old data archives from ground-based solar observatories worldwide, they found that the ongoing solar cycle 25 is related to the Sun's magnetism activity, which they said manifests as sunspots cycle and recycling of the large-scale solar dipole magnetic field.

The sunspots, or dark spots on the Sun, are comparable to the size of the Earth and their magnetism intensity is about 10,000 times stronger than the Earth's magnetic field.



Give peace a chance!

The extended cease-fire in Gaza is a fine opportunity to reach stability in the region

The cease-fire has come as a godsend to the average Palestinian who finally got respite from flying mortar shells and some peace to get ration and medicines, which are luxuries in the conflict zone. The two-day extension of the cease-fire offers them a glimmer of hope and to international community the time to work backchannels for prolonged peace. However, as the Hamas and Israel have tentatively agreed to a break from hostilities, questions linger about the long-term prospects for stability. Will these additional two days lead to meaningful negotiations and a lasting peace, or is it merely a temporary pause before the bloody conflict resumes? The international community plays a crucial role in determining the trajectory of events and fostering an environment conducive to sustainable peace. The decision to extend the cease-fire by two days suggests a willingness on the part of both Hamas and Israel to explore avenues other than bombs, bullets and bloodshed. This respite provides an opportunity for de-escalation and opens a window for negotiations. However, the history of conflicts in the region raises scepticism about the durability of such agreements. The cease-fire extension allows for humanitarian efforts to take place, facilitating the delivery of essential supplies and medical assistance to those affected by the violence. Additionally, the pause in hostilities can pave the way for diplomatic initiatives, fostering an environment where both parties can address underlying issues through dialogue. One of the bigger, though not direct, consequences of the Gaza conflict is the involvement of super powers in the fray. Now that the US and the West are with



Israel, China and Russia are throwing their weight behind the Hamas. This could have ominous consequences for the world; it is, therefore, in the interest of the world and not just of the people of Israel and Palestine that this conflict is made to peter out, at least for the time being. Key stakeholders, including the United Nations, regional powers and other influential nations, should actively encourage both parties to engage in meaningful negotiations, addressing the core issues that fuel the conflict. The international community should work collaboratively to ensure the delivery of aid, medical assistance and reconstruction support to alleviate the suffering of those caught in the crossfire. To prevent a return to square one after the ceasefire extension, sustained diplomatic efforts are required. The extension of the Gaza ceasefire provides a fleeting moment of hope for peace, but the international community must remain vigilant in guiding the path forward. By actively supporting diplomatic initiatives, addressing humanitarian needs and encouraging sustained dialogue, the world community can play a crucial role in ushering in lasting stability in the region. The alternative — resuming hostilities — would only perpetuate the cycle of violence and deepen the suffering of those directly affected by the conflict.

PICTALK



Artists perform during the closing ceremony of the annual Camel Fair, in Pushkar

PTI

A new hope for Tuberculosis patients

TrueNat is a molecular test that replaces sputum microscopy for TB diagnosis. It is fast and accurate and will help in early detection and treatment

The latest country report on Tuberculosis (TB) indicates that in India, women account for 39.1% of the total cases notified. But missing from these figures are the hundreds of women who remain undetected and uncounted.

Why do women report fewer cases of TB than men? The lack of agency, poorer access to healthcare services, household responsibilities and the stigma associated with TB prevent women from coming forward to seek treatment. They are often reluctant to reveal they might have TB due to potential rejection from their families. Women also delay seeking care because they are hesitant to use family resources, often meagre. They wait until they are severely ill. By then, it is often fatal.

It is not just their lives that are on the line. There is a sixfold increase in perinatal deaths and a two-fold risk of premature birth and low birth weight babies of mothers with active TB. Women living with HIV and TB face a double whammy as their unborn child faces twice the risk of vertical transmission of HIV,



according to the World Health Organisation. All this can be prevented with proper treatment. Data shows that 85% of people recover from TB if treated. However, treatment can only begin when there is a proper diagnosis. An early and accurate diagnosis is key to reducing not just deaths but TB-related life-changing impairment. This is where TrueNat, a new molecular test that replaces the traditional sputum microscopy to diagnose TB, is making a difference. Not only does it enable rapid and accurate diagnosis, it can be taken to the doorstep thanks to its innovative portable technology. So, reaching out to a larger population, particularly vulnerable and marginalised women, is possible. Importantly, correct treatment can begin at the first

point of contact on the same day. Developed in India by the Goa-based Molbio Diagnostic, TrueNat also tests for resistance to the drug Rifampicin in approximately 90 minutes. Endorsed and included in the WHO Global TB Programme for its "high diagnostic accuracy", the Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (NAAT) using TrueNat can be conducted in facilities without an air-conditioned lab and in remote centres plagued by power outages as it runs on solar powered battery. Used in tandem with a portable digital X-ray machine, also battery operated, it can save more lives. That it is possible to fully transition from sputum microscopy to rapid molecular diagnosis, as has been recommended by WHO, has been shown by Goa. It is the first state in India to achieve this significant milestone. This shift has led to higher testing, early diagnosis, and boosted chances of recovery. TB being a contagious disease, one of the places where early and accurate diagnosis is direly needed is in prisons. A Lancet study has shown

that prisoners in India are five times more at risk of developing TB than the general population. Consider then the danger of TB infection faced by women prisoners housed in overcrowded jails. The number of women jailed by the end of 2021 was 22,918 but the capacity of the existing 32 women's jails is 6767, according to the latest National Crime Records Bureau report. In fact, only 18% of female prisoners get exclusive women's prison facilities, states the Justice Amitava Roy Committee report on prison reforms. Appointed by the Supreme Court, the committee, which presented its report earlier this year, said "Women in incarceration suffer the brunt of imprisonment far worse than their male counterparts, especially with regard to access to basic facilities, medical care and medical staff." This huge breakthrough means a decrease in price and increased accessibility.

(Swapna Majumdar is a journalist writing on development and gender. The views expressed are personal)



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

Nepal is recovering from its long annual hangover after celebrating Dussehra and Tihar. It energises Nepal to face the winter and the new year Vikram Sanvat 2080 but with one-third of Nepal in India and abroad with 1500 youth leaving Nepal every day. The rising standards of living and consumption are visible to me who has seen Nepal almost annually since 1959. Still, people are rich or very poor with the middle class small. People are happy except for the victims of the dengue and Jajarkot earthquake. Nepalese are happy with so little. When piped water, electricity, schools and hospitals reached the valleys or near the road network, people descended from the hills to avail man-made facilities, forfeiting nature's gifts to the hills. Hastily carved unmetalled roads have scarred the hills polluting the environment. Scooters, cars, motorbikes, trucks, tractors...anything with an engine moves along dusty tracks. Some people began returning to the hills. Last week Kathmandu news was dominated by one man: businessman-politician and expelled from CPN UML, Durga Prasain. He threatened to bring into Kathmandu 10 lakh protesters to rally against former PM and CPN UML chief, KP Oli. He is facing legal action for bad debt on loans taken from state banks. The debt, he says, will be repaid when he is solvent. Prasain has roped in King Gyanendra who is patiently waiting in the distant hope that monarchy will be restored. The mood in the country for the return of loyalty is growing given the pathetic track record of the secular, federal, democratic republic of Nepal. It was the Prachanda-led decade-long Maoist civil war that dismantled the monarchy in 2008 which was ratified by the 2015 constitution. Gyanendra attended a Prasain-organised function in East Nepal at which he said: "We never wanted Nepal to become a republic that sends 10 mn youth to the Gulf countries". Gyanendra is on a tight leash from the state although his daughter-in-law Himani is pop-

ularly active, doing social welfare. Gyanendra has met the Chief Minister of UP, Yogi Adityanath twice this year. There's a strong and historic bond between the Shah dynasty and Gorakhnath Peeth of Adityanath. The royalists RPP led by Rajendra Lindgen (both the old leaders Pashupati Rana and Kamal Thapa have been marginalised) has made big electoral gains. People ask me whether India is supporting the formation of Hindu Rashtra and the return of monarchy. I say the decision will be that of the people of Nepal. But Buddhisthim Gurung, a Nepali Congress businessman who lives in Lame Ahal, Pokhara where I too reside in Nepal, says emphatically: "Monarchy can never come back". But there is little doubt that support for the royals has grown exponentially. It is a clear reflection of the satisfaction that the current quality of governance provides. Prachanda the awesome leader of the Maoist Party with 32 seats in a house of 275 and whose party's fortunes are declining, has ensured his popularity is rising by attacking corruption frontally. He leads an alliance government that has former PM Sher Bahadur Deuba-led Nepali Congress as the largest party. But such is the electoral dynamic between NC and former Prime Minister KP



GEOGRAPHY IS INDIA'S BIGGEST ASSET IN BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH NEPAL WHICH SHOULD NO LONGER CHOOSE TO BE A YAM BETWEEN CHINA AND INDIA

Nepal in the throes of strategic choices

Nepal is exercising its strategic autonomy; distancing itself from the bullying Chinese dragon



ASHOK K MEHTA

Oli's CPN UML (the second largest party) that Prachanda is the kingmaker. He will complete one year in power next month and though there is a power-sharing arrangement with Deuba, he has been saying he will rule for all five years, apparently by doing an Oli on Deuba. In the previous Oli-led alliance, Prachanda had a power-sharing agreement with Oli which the latter did not honour. A rash of scams involving politicians and bureaucrats has made people very angry: Gold smuggling from China, human trafficking of Nepalese passed off as Bhutanese refugees for asylum in the US and the Baluwatar land sales scam. These involve former Prime Ministers, ministers, their spouses and sons. Former Water Resources Minister Dipak Gyawali said: "corruption will emasculate Nepal". The other contemporary issue is Transitional Reconciliation and Justice, dating back to the Maoist insurgency 17 years ago. On a visit to Nepal recently, UN Secretary-General António Guterres agreed to help Nepal in finding a resolution emphasising it has to be 'victim-centric'. The victims of the Jajarkot earthquake are still out in the cold as Prachanda goes to Dubai for a climate change summit tomorrow. The ban on TikTok proved

extremely unpopular. Shanti Gurung told me how she and her friends have circumvented it through VPN. TikTok has made celebrities and some people very rich in Nepal. Senior CPC leader of Tibet Affairs Management Executive Committee Wang Junzheng visited Nepal this month as part of regular visits by Chinese leaders. Prachanda on his visit to China in September did not sign in on BRI 2.0 but Nepal has subscribed to US MCC after years of political wrangling and covert threats by the US. Nepal is exercising its strategic autonomy, but China is a bullying neighbour. Kathmandu wants villages in the 21 Northern districts to patch up with China's Tibet power grid. Chinese-built airports with high-interest loans at Bhairawa and Pokhara are not in business, restricted to domestic flights. Flying over the IAF Jaguar base at Gorakhpur is the problem. But the issue can be resolved. Geography is India's biggest asset in bilateral relations with Nepal which should no longer choose to be a yam between China and India.

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. Views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GOVERNORS ABUSE NORMS

Sir — Raj Bhavans have become centres of inaction and retrogression in the states that are ruled by the opposition. Bills that were passed by the legislatures and sent for assent gathered dust in the governor's office. Raj Bhavans hardly bother to update the status of pending bills. In this context, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala approached the Supreme Court with identical prayers. The Court held that the surplusage expression in Article 200 "as soon as possible" conveys a constitutional imperative of expedition.

Any other reading of Article would leave the Governor in a position to virtually veto the functioning of the legislative domain by a duly elected legislature. It added, "Such a course of action would be contrary to the fundamental principles of a constitutional democracy based on a parliamentary pattern of governance." According to Dr. PK Sen (Bihar), "the question is whether, by interfering, the Governor would be upholding the democratic idea or subverting it. It would really be a surrender of democracy." An appointee who holds office only during the president's pleasure cannot act in a way that is detrimental to the elected governments and people.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

A SYMBOL HYPOCRISY

Sir — People are amused to see that the role of the Election Commission (EC), once independent under Election Commissioner Tirunellai Narayana Iyer Seshan, has become a symbol of "double standards," favouring Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah-led Bharatiya Janata Party. If not, then why did it hurriedly withdraw the permission previously granted to the Telangana government to provide financial aid to farmers under the Rythu Bandhu scheme at the start of rabi sowing? Whereas the poll panel has not acted on the Congress's complaints against the allegedly incendiary speeches made by PM Modi and Shah in Rajasthan. Not only Modi didn't stop here, even when the Congress objected, saying Modi's

Need speedy judicial system



While the Supreme Court (SC) plays a significant role in delivering justice, a cornerstone of the Indian Judiciary System since independence has had a slow working methodology. Litigants and accused have to wait years for the closure of cases and judgement delivery. In most cases, victims do not get instant judgments, and for this reason, sometimes even victims and their families suffer outages in society. "Justice delayed is justice denied," therefore courts should give due consideration to the claims filed.

The Indian Judiciary holds the highest pendency of cases and lacks a time frame for the disposal of litigation and appeals. At present, there are 79,813 cases pending before the 34 judges of the Supreme Court. That cleared depicts the need for constitutional reforms and revamping the structure of the top court to clear the pendency of cases. The supreme court hears between the centre and the states and between states, rules on domestic and family cases, civil and criminal cases, RTI (right to information) litigation, and provides legal and constitutional advice to the head of the state, i.e., the president. However, it creates burdens on the top court. Distributed or decentralised work mechanisms should be adopted by the judicial authorities for consistency and to ensure better judicial stability. To build the trust of society and its people, apparent and clear-cut constitutional idealism is mandatory.

Dimple Wadhawan | Kanpur

statement was a violation of the poll code, the PM slammed the party at a rally in Damoh, Madhya Pradesh, on November 8, saying, "Let them (the Congress) commit this sin (of objecting to his remarks), I will continue to do good work for the people... Eighty crore people will get free rations for the next five years." Moreover, shouldn't PM Modi and Amit Shah go on political campaigning with their government officials, and the EC remains blind to it? The way Amit Shah and other BJP leaders openly offer the Ram Temple tour promise, they want to know if the poll body has relaxed the Model Code of Conduct. However, these are proofs that the current EC has become a "symbol of hypocrisy" and "double standards."

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

RINKU'S TALENT LIES IN T20

Sir — Some very talented batsmen in India have fizzled out due to undue expectations and misplaced priorities. A lot is expected of Rinku Singh, the new Indian T20 bat-

ting star, who has captured the imagination of the cricketing world. Rinku did well in the first two T20 matches against Australia, and what impressed many were the views he expressed in an interview following the first fixture. His focus on remaining calm and modelling himself on that cool customer, MS Dhoni, revealed that Rinku has set himself unambiguous goals. By all accounts, he seems destined to play for the Indian T20 team for some time. At any rate, it may be difficult for him to break into the 50-over one-day side anytime soon, and that's how it should be. Selectors and team management should identify horses for the courses. India's batting ills lie in the fact that some players are nudged to play in all formats. A player like Rinku Singh must be given a long rope in T20 that is tailor-made for him.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

GOD HAS ALL THE POWER

If we want highest qualities, we must become devotees of God



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Does it sound unfair? Think about it. Imagine one of us even with a little power. We are inclined to abuse it, especially if there is no fear of punishment. These examples will substantiate. What do despots do? They bring unimaginable pain and suffering to the citizens. What do corrupt policemen do? They victimise the victim, if he is a rich man; they exploit him. What does a bully in a school do? There are innumerable such examples. We, human beings, are incapable of handling power. The creation works on the principle of 'karmaphala', which is, "What you sow you reap." Suppose God did not keep all the powers with Himself, what can someone do with an atom bomb? He can kill innumerable innocent citizens, who don't deserve to die according to their karmaphalas. Don't we have free will? So God had to balance between allowing free will and controlling all actions by everyone in order that the creation can go on. Parallel powers are unworkable. Yes, God empowers His devotees in many ways, as Arjuna was blessed, but these are His devotees, who are highly disciplined, and act as per God's plans. So let us get some idea of absolute nature of God's powers, which are briefly described by Lord Krishna in the verse # 10.41 of the Bhagavad-Geeta, "Whatever there is opulent, effulgent or even energetic, all that you should know as produced from a fragment of My splendour." These famous examples will shed some light about the extent of God's powers. Starting with the light of the sun, what does Lord Krishna state, "I am light of the sun." (7.8) What happened when Arjuna promised to kill Jayadratha before sunset? He was to enter fire if he couldn't. What did Lord Krishna do? He protected his 'nimitta' (instrument) by restoring the setting sun's light. As a result, there was daylight and Jayadratha came out from the protection of Kauravas; Arjuna killed him. Similarly, the Lord says that the heat of fire is from Him. (7.9) So, what happened when Seetaji entered fire in her fire test? She came out unscathed, because the heat of fire was withdrawn by Lord Rama. Another famous example is of Ashwathama using 'Brahmastra' on child Parikshit, who was at that time in the womb of his mother Uttara. What did Lord Krishna do? He simply made Brahmastra harmless by withdrawing its enormous power? He could because nothing is independently powerful, neither a person nor a weapon. If this was not so, there will be parallel power, which cannot be allowed, as this can cause disruption in the creation's functioning. Before I go any further in describing God's unlimited powers, a question must be answered, which is, "Why does God not stop miseries heaped by a strong person on the weak? Does God not have such a power? He does but allows it. Why? Because we suffer due to our karmaphal. Others are just acting as mediums. In those cases, God remains aloof. Continuing about the extent of Lord's powers, Lord Krishna says that He is manliness of men (7.8), which is a traditional quality of being brave and strong. In the verse # 7.11, the Lord repeats this by stating that he is the strength of strong. However, in this verse, the Lord qualifies it by stating that such persons should be devoid of lust and attachment. If they are not, God will withdraw it from them. What happened to the most powerful man because of his lusty behaviour? I am referring to the last US President. Same could be said about Swami Vivekananda, whose brightness impressed one and all, wherever he travelled in the world. Where did this devotee of the highest order get his brightness? From God of course! I can go on, but the message is loud and clear. If we want the highest qualities, we must become devotees of God, otherwise we will always be inferior; God is ready to bestow upon us whatever is cherished by us. Source for everything superior is God only; He has all the powers. (The writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

Succumbing to the challenges of growth

The removal of founders from the companies they birthed, is a complex and often painful process



UTTAM CHAKRABORTY



British writer and theologian Frederick William Robertson has rightly quoted, "There are three things in the world that deserve no mercy, hypocrisy, fraud, and tyranny." Power is a pervasive and fundamental force in human relations and plays a valuable role in social, political and economic interactions. Power differences in social groups are important in promoting group activities. Most people want power, and power has many benefits. However, power is a corrupting force in several instances. The recent and short departure of Sam Altman from OpenAI and again returning to the company in the same post is a matter of surprise. However, founders being ousted from their organisations have been the larger picture for deliberations. This phenomenon is unfortunate, but not new. History has been witnessed with examples of visionary leaders who found themselves at odds with their boards or stakeholders, resulting in their removal. From the likes of Steve Jobs at Apple to Travis Kalanick at Uber, the stories are as varied as the industries themselves.

The Myth of Invincibility
The myth of invincibility continues. One common thread that ties together the stories of ousted founders is the perception of invincibility that often surrounds them. When a company is in its infancy, the founder is not just a leader but a symbol of the organisation's identity and purpose. However, as the company grows, the demands and challenges evolve, and the skills needed to lead a startup may not necessarily align with those required to steer a large corporation. Founders, especially those with a strong vision and personality, may find it challenging to adapt to these changing dynamics. Sam Altman's exit for some days from OpenAI serves as a case in point. While he played a pivotal role in the organisation's early success, the need for a different leadership style to navigate the complexities of a rapidly expanding enterprise may have become apparent. Boards and stakeholders, driven by a duty to ensure the company's long-term viability, might make the tough decision to part ways with the very leader who brought the company into existence.

The Ashneer Grover Saga
The story of Ashneer Grover, co-founder of Indian fintech giant BharatPe can be thought of in this context. It is another chapter in the book of ousted founders. In his case, the clash was not just about strategic direction but also about clashes of egos and leadership styles. Grover's outspoken and sometimes controversial demeanour, which might have been tolerated or even celebrated in the start-up phase, became a liability as the company matured. This raises a crucial question: How much of a founder's identity is tied to the company they create, and when does that identity start to hinder rather than propel the organisation forward? The removal of founders like Grover suggests that companies may prioritise stability and a more harmonious internal environment over the charisma and idiosyncrasies of their visionary leaders.

The Travis Kalanick Case
The case of Travis Kalanick at Uber is perhaps one of the most infamous examples of a founder's ousting in history. The ride-sharing giant's rapid ascent was accompanied by numerous controversies, including allegations of workplace harassment and a toxic corporate culture. In this instance, the board's decision to remove Kalanick was driven not just by financial concerns but also by a pressing need to address the company's tarnished reputation. Kalanick's story underscores the importance of accountability in leadership. While founders are often given leeway in the early stages, the moment their actions jeopardise the company's integrity or public perception, boards are compelled to act. This raises questions about the delicate balance between a founder's autonomy and the responsibility they bear to the company and its stakeholders.

Adam Neumann's Fate
WeWork's Adam Neumann is another founder whose grand vision ultimately led to his downfall. Neumann's ambitious plans for WeWork, including its IPO, were marred by controversies surrounding the company's financial health and governance practices. His removal was a necessary corrective measure to salvage the company and protect the interests of investors. The cautionary tale of Adam Neumann serves as a reminder that while visionary leadership is crucial for a startup's success, unchecked ambition and a lack of grounding, in reality, can lead to a founder's undoing. Boards and stakeholders must carefully evaluate whether a founder's aspirations align with the company's long-term sustainability or if they are veering into the realm of fantasy.

Steve Jobs's Tale
In the pantheon of ousted founders, Steve Jobs stands out as a unique case. His departure from Apple in 1985 was a result of internal power struggles and disagreements with the board. Jobs's confrontational style and tendency to make unilateral decisions further fuelled the tensions within Apple. His unwillingness to compromise and his impatience with dissenting viewpoints alienated both colleagues and board members. In 1985, after a series of heated confrontations and a vote of no confidence from the board, Jobs was forced to resign as CEO. However, Jobs' eventual return to Apple in 1997 and the subsequent resurrection of the company's fortunes showcase the rare scenario where a founder is reinstated to lead their creation once again. Job's story is a testament to the enduring impact of a visionary leader and the potential for redemption. However, it is worth noting that Jobs returned to Apple with a tempered approach and a willingness to collaborate, a stark contrast to his earlier stint. This suggests that even in exceptional cases, founders must evolve and adapt to the changing needs of their organisations.


The Bottom Line
The recent and short departure of Altman from OpenAI is the tip of the iceberg. Power, privilege, corruption and hypocrisy continue to rule everywhere. The removal of founders from the companies they birthed is a complex and often painful process. It involves a delicate balance between preserving a company's identity and ensuring its long-term success. While each case is unique, common themes emerge – clashes of egos, leadership style mismatches, accountability issues, and the perils of visionary excess. The stories of Sam Altman, Ashneer Grover, Travis Kalanick, Adam Neumann, and Steve Jobs provide valuable insights into the challenges and pitfalls that founders may face as their companies evolve. The key lesson for both founders and boards is the importance of adaptability and a shared commitment to the organisation's well-being. In the ever-changing landscape of business, the question remains: Can founders successfully navigate the transition from startup visionaries to leaders of established enterprises? The answer may lie in their ability to embrace change, foster a culture of accountability, and, when necessary, make the difficult decision to step aside for the greater good of the organisation they helped create. (The writer is an Associate Professor at the School of Management, Presidency University Bengaluru; views are personal)

Ancient Indian democracy: Lessons for today

In the ancient democracy of southern India, there was zero tolerance for corruption and strict punishment was given to defaulters



KS RADHAKRISHNAN



Even during kings' reigns democracy was practised and flourished, but even after so many technological advancements in the 21st century, the elections are used for self-gain. Many times it questions whether they run a government or a business. There are no constructive rules for the candidate's section. It leads to less hope in democracy. The state of corruption and its deep Nexus create a worrying stage. At once, Tamil Nadu was teaching democracy and ethics to the rest of the world by inscriptions. Now all the developmental activities are marred by corruption. Most of the funds allotted for various programs and policies are siphoned in the name of Implementation, but the truth is that it goes into the pockets of politicians. The bureaucracy which is well-known for red tape, complicated procedures, and poor transparency in various policies and programs is also responsible for more corruption activities. From the Chola period, we can see a procedural usage of public money for various programs. Now on the contrary, when a new government assumes power, the plants and programs of earlier governments get cancelled out rightly, leading to a waste of public money. It is widely known that people who are prone to corrupt attitudes are escaping the clutches of law due to the unclear nature of laws and underhand dealings with higher officials. No laws are daring enough to reach the corrupt and put them behind bars. One should think that the country is not only run by technology but also the scope of human resources. In this era of Artificial Intelligence youths are taking everything for Granted and are not ready to make the right decision and questioning the state of the world a comfortable life is a primary requirement. Nobody is ready to take responsibility to make the system stand right. As we are from the land of Swami Vivekananda, his message for the youth of this country is "Let human". He also dwelt on the capabilities of the youth; he wanted the youth to train itself to serve humanity. What he wanted from the youth were 'muscles of iron' and 'nerves of steel'. Today, the youth are exceptionally responsive and they just need to be encouraged. Swami Vivekananda was only the medium; he is himself the message as well for the youth of India. His teachings will always stay relevant. He once said, "The education which does not help the common mass of people to equip themselves for the struggle for life, which does not bring out the strength of character, a spirit of philanthropy, and the courage of a lion – is it worth the name? Real education is that which enables one to stand on one's own." For him, education meant secular learning that built character and instilled human values in students. All these initiatives of the Government require active involvement and support of youth as they are the major stakeholders of the future of this country. As Swami Vivekananda once exhorted, "Arise! Awake! And stop not till the goal is reached", let us all unite and work for the country with Purity, patience, and perseverance as the Swami felt long ago that these three are essentials to success. The country, believe it or not, is in dire need of a revolution and the only hope we have is the youth. With their vision and farsightedness, the youth can bring to the plate not only changes but freshness which the country could use to give itself an image makeover. The Chola administration has become the foundation for modern democracy. We are in the age to revive our electoral pattern as our democratic legacy extends far beyond Athenian democracy and the Roman Republic. (The writer is an activist and a lawyer, the views expressed are personal) This is the second part of the series on ancient Indian democracy

Concluded

MONEY MATTERS

American chipmaker launches its largest global design centre

The US-based semiconductor company AMD on Tuesday inaugurated its largest global design centre in Bengaluru, as part of the USD 400 million India investment announced by the company in July. The 500,000-square-foot campus was inaugurated by Union Minister for Railways, Telecommunications, Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw, the company said in a statement. The campus plans to host approximately 3,000 AMD engineers in the coming years, focused on the design and development of semiconductor technology including 3D stacking, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and more. The campus will serve as a centre of excellence for the development of leadership products across high-performance CPUs for the data centre and PCs, and gaming graphics processing units (GPUs). "India's semiconductor program launched under the leadership of Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi lays strong emphasis on supporting the design and talent ecosystem for semiconductors."



Delhi HC imposes Rs 2 lakh costs on Ashneer Grover

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday imposed Rs 2 lakh as costs on BharatPe co-founder Ashneer Grover in the matter related to his alleged defamatory social media posts against the fintech company. Justice Rekha Palli took on record the apology and the undertaking given by Grover but proceeded to impose costs on him, saying the "court cannot be taken for granted". The judge, while dealing with a plea by Resilient Innovations Pvt Ltd - which owns BharatPe - against its former MD, said the court was "appalled" to note the "persistent" and "blatant" violation of the earlier orders and assurances given by Grover in this regard. "Taking into account that defendant no 2 is now filing an affidavit specifically undertaking not to post any such defamatory posts in future and is also apologising for his past behaviour, this court is inclined to close the matter at this stage by binding the defendant no 2 to his undertaking."



Tata Motors launches registered vehicle scrapping facility

Leading automobile manufacturer Tata Motors has launched a registered vehicle scrapping facility (RVSF) in Punjab, which will be the company's fourth such unit. Named 'Re.Vi.Re Recycle with Respect', the facility was unveiled in Morinda by Shailesh Chandra, Managing Director, Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles and Tata Passenger Electric Mobility, a company statement said here on Tuesday. The facility uses environmentally-friendly processes and has the capacity to disassemble 12,000 end-of-life vehicles safely and sustainably, each year. The RVSF is developed and operated by Tata Motors' partner Dada Trading Company and is equipped to scrap both passenger and commercial vehicles, regardless of their brand, aligning with the company's vision to promote eco-friendly initiatives. "This milestone follows the resounding success of Tata Motors' three previous RVSFs in Jaipur, Bhubaneswar and Surat, further reinforcing its dedication to eco-friendly initiatives," it said.



'China slows, India grows'

S&P pegs 7% GDP growth for India by 2026

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's GDP growth rate will rise to 7 per cent by 2026 compared to 4.6 per cent for China, S&P Global Ratings said on Tuesday.

In a report titled 'China Slows India Grows', S&P said it expects Asia-Pacific's growth engine to shift from China to South and Southeast Asia.

"We project China's GDP growth to slow to 4.6 per cent in 2024 (2023: 5.4 per cent), edge up to 4.8 per cent in 2025, and return to 4.6 per cent in 2026. We see India reaching 7.0 per cent in 2026; Vietnam, 6.8 per cent (4.9 per cent); Philippines, 6.4 per cent (5.4 per cent); and Indonesia remaining steady at 5 per cent," S&P said.

The US-based rating agency on Monday projected India's GDP to expand at 6.4 per cent in the current fiscal year and in the next. For 2025 it projected growth rate to rise to 6.9 per cent, followed by 7 per cent in 2026. S&P said with Asia-Pacific's central banks likely to keep interest rates high, the region's borrowers will see costlier debt servicing.

"Concurrently, a widening



"Concurrently, a widening conflict in the Middle East could drag global supply chains and raise energy costs, fanning inflation. High input costs dilute corporate margins, while high prices weaken demand."

conflict in the Middle East could drag global supply chains and raise energy costs, fanning inflation. High input costs dilute corporate margins, while high prices weaken demand," S&P said.

Energy and demand shock risk, it said, adding Asia-Pacific's growth is susceptible to energy shocks (widening

Middle East conflict) and slower global demand (risk of U.S. hard landing).

"We lowered our projection for the region's growth (ex-China) in 2024 from 4.4 per cent to 4.2 per cent. The prospects for industries also differ, with export-centric manufacturing faring worse," S&P said.

TCS' Rs 17,000 cr share buyback to open on Dec 1

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rs 17,000 crore-share buyback programme of India's top software services exporter Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) will open on December 1. The buyback, where investors can sell to the company their shares at an offer price of Rs 4,150 apiece, will close on December 7. TCS said in a regulatory filing on Tuesday. The information technology bellwether is aiming to repurchase up to 4.09 crore shares (1.12 per cent of the total equity share capital) at Rs 4,150 apiece in a buyback valued at Rs 17,000 crore.

For small shareholders, as defined by those with investments less than Rs 2 lakh, the entitlement ratio has been fixed at 1 share for every 6 shares held on the record date of November 25. For other qualifying shareholders, the entitlement ratio is set at 2 shares for every 209 shares held.

"The company believes that the buyback is not likely to cause any material impact on the profitability or earnings of the company except to the extent of reduction in the amount available for investment, which the



company could have otherwise deployed towards generating investment income," TCS said.

"The company believes that the buyback will not impact the growth opportunities of the company," it added.

Tata Sons Private Ltd, which holds 26.45 crore of 72.27 per cent of TCS, intends to tender 2.96 crore equity shares. Tata Investment Corporation Ltd intends to tender 11,358 shares out of 10,14,172 crore shares it holds in the company.

The total buyback size is 4,09,63,855 shares.

Assuming the response to the buyback is to the extent of 100 per cent from all the shareholders up to their entitlement, the aggregate shareholding of the promoters will increase to 72.41 per cent as against 72.3 per cent now.

FLOATING IPOs

India Shelter Finance, DOMS Industries, 3 others get Sebi nod

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Five firms, including affordable housing finance company India Shelter Finance, pencil maker DOMS Industries and lender Jana Small Finance Bank, have received capital markets regulator Sebi's go-ahead to raise funds through initial public offerings (IPOs).

The other two firms that obtained the regulator's nod to float maiden public issues are -- Vadodara-based Shiva Pharmachem and FMCG firm Onest Ltd.

These five firms, which filed preliminary IPO papers with the regulator between July and August, obtained observation letters from November 7-16, an update with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) showed on Tuesday.

In Sebi's parlance, obtaining observation letters means its go-ahead to launch the IPO.

Going by the draft papers, the Rs 1,800-crore proposed IPO of India Shelter Finance



Going by the draft papers, the Rs 1,800-crore proposed IPO of India Shelter Finance comprises a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 1,000 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of Rs 800 crore by investor shareholders.

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Those offering shares in the OFS include -- Catalyst Trusteeship Ltd, Madison India Opportunities IV, MIO Starrock, Nexus Ventures III

Ltd, and Nexus Opportunity Fund II Ltd. India Shelter Finance, which is backed by Westbridge Capital and Nexus Venture Partners, plans to utilise the proceeds of the fresh issue to meet future capital requirements towards onward lending and for general corporate purposes.



Stock markets close higher on fag-end buying

Snap two-day losing streak

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty snapped two days of losses and closed higher on Tuesday following last-hour buying in auto, power and metal shares helped by fresh foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 204.16 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 66,174.20 in a volatile trade. The During the day, it hit a high of 66,256.20 and a low of 65,906.65.

The Nifty gained 95 points or 0.48 per cent to settle at 19,889.70 as 39 of its components closed in the green and 11 ended lower. Among the Sensex firms, Tata Motors, Bajaj Finserv, UltraTech Cement, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, Taitel and Axis Bank were the major gainers.

Adani group stocks in heavy demand

NEW DELHI: Shares of Adani group firms continued to attract heavy investors' demand on Tuesday, with Adani Total Gas climbing nearly 20 per cent. Investors flocked the counters of all the 10 listed companies, with shares ending with sharp gains even as the equity market depicted huge volatility during the day. Shares of Adani Total Gas zoomed 20 per cent, Adani Energy Solutions surged 19.06 per cent, Adani Power soared 12.32 per cent, Adani Green Energy jumped 12.27 per cent, NDTV advanced 11.73 per cent, Adani Wilmar went up by 9.96 per cent and Adani Enterprises climbed 8.66 per cent on the BSE.

ITC, Hindustan Unilever, ICICI Bank and Power Grid were among the laggards.

Meta to support project for using Gen AI in consumer grievance redressal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Social network major Meta on Tuesday said it will support a National Law School of India University's research project for using generative AI technologies to enhance efficiency in consumer grievance redressal system.

The research initiative will explore the feasibility of leveraging Llama 2, Meta's openly available large language model (LLM), in creating a citizen-centric chatbot and a decision-assist tool in the area of consumer law, to guide consumers on the procedural aspects of drafting a complaint and answering questions relating to consumer law in India, the company said in a statement.

The research project will explore how LLMs can assist consumers or judicial authorities in the context of ongoing oversight and control by human decision makers.

National Law School of India University (NLSIU) is undertaking the research project in collaboration with IIT Bombay and the Department of Consumer Affairs. NLSIU and IIT Bombay will also release a white paper explaining the risk mitigation approaches implemented and how responsible design principles have been deployed at every layer of stack.

FPIs investment in debt market hits 2-yr high at Rs 12,400 cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have infused about Rs 12,400 crore into the Indian debt markets in November so far, making it the highest inflow in more than two years, on attractive yields offered by the country's debt.

The inclusion of Indian G-Sec in the JP Morgan Government Bond Index Emerging Markets has spurred foreign fund participation in the Indian bond markets, market experts said.

FPIs have been bullish on Indian debt since the beginning of 2023 and have invest-



ed throughout the year, except March, when they had pulled out Rs 2,505 crore, data with the depositories showed.

With the latest inflow, the net investment by FPIs into debt reached Rs 47,900 crore so far this calendar year.

According to the data,

overseas investors put in a net amount of Rs 12,400 crore into the debt market this month (till November 27). This was the highest inflow since September 2021, when they had poured Rs 12,804 crore.

This came following a net investment of Rs 6,382 crore in October.

Indian debt is relatively attractive compared to debt in other emerging markets, and it offers a relatively high yield compared to debt in developed markets, Bhuvan Rustagi, COO and Co-Founder, of Per Annum and Lendbox, said.

'US\$ 13.5 tn needed to fast-track decarbonisation of key sectors'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Transitioning to a more sustainable and carbon-neutral future will require US\$ 13.5 trillion in investments by 2050, particularly in the production, energy and transport sectors, a new World Economic Forum report said on Tuesday.

The report noted that major producing countries and regions such as India, China, the US, and EU have now committed to net-zero targets, making it imperative for businesses within their jurisdictions to align their operations and strategies with the evolving regulatory landscape.

However, complex and

ever-changing policy regimes result in businesses allocating substantial resources towards compliance, impeding progress, and therefore establishing more consistent and stable regulatory frameworks with well-defined timelines is imperative for mitigating these risks, it said.

Taking stock of progress towards net-zero emissions for eight industries that emit 40 per cent of global greenhouse gas, the World Economic Forum Net-Zero Industry Tracker 2023 report said global funding and stronger policy incentives are needed to scale clean power, clean hydrogen and carbon capture around industrial clusters.

30-plus countries to participate in Bengaluru Tech Summit

PNS ■ BENGALURU

The Karnataka government's annual global Bengaluru Tech Summit (BTS) will begin on Wednesday, bringing together tech leaders, startups, investors and research labs from 30-plus countries.

Organised by the Karnataka government's Department of Information Technology and Biotechnology along with the union government's Software Technology Parks of India, the three-day 26th BTS, with the theme 'Breaking Boundaries', will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at Palace Grounds here.

Kazakhstan's Minister of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace

Industry Bagdat Mussin and Semiconductor company AMD's EVP & CTO Mark Papermaster will be among the VIP dignitaries present at the inauguration.

A recorded message from Finland's Minister of Science and Culture Sari Multala as well as one from Germany's Minister of Digital Affairs and Transport Volker Wissing will be relayed at the opening event.

Key figures from Indian industry, including Rishad Premji, Executive Chairman of Wipro Limited; Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairperson, Vision Group on Biotechnology, and Executive Chairperson of Biocon Ltd; S Gopalakrishnan, Chairman, Vision Group on IT and Co-founder of Infosys; and Prashanth Prakash, Chairman,



Vision Group on Startups, and Founding partner of Accel Partners India will be a part of BTS.

A fireside chat on the topic 'Legend, Legacy & Leadership', featuring Infosys Founder N R Narayana Murthy in conversa-

tion with Zerodha Co-founder Nikhil Kamath, and another featuring Union Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar are a part of the event.

Some of the key speakers

BTS 2023 will feature a variety of events, including a multi-track conference on IT & electronics, deep tech, start-ups & biotech, an international exhibition on 'Global Innovation Alliance', India-USA Tech conclave, R&D-Lab2Market, B2B meetings, STPI IT Export awards, Smart Bio awards, VC awards, ATF awards, Rural IT quiz, Bio quiz and Bio posters.

addressing this year's BTS include Former Director General of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Dr R A Mashelkar and Nobel Laureate American Biologist Dr H Robert Horvitz, among others.

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ety of events, including a multi-track conference on IT & electronics, deep tech, start-ups & biotech, an international exhibition on 'Global Innovation Alliance', India-USA Tech conclave, R&D-Lab2Market, B2B meetings, STPI IT Export awards, Smart Bio awards, VC awards, ATF awards, Rural IT quiz, Bio quiz and Bio posters.

One of the highlights of this year's BTS is the Chandrayaan 3 ISRO-Industry Pavilion, symbolising India's significant presence in space exploration.

The pavilion not only showcases ISRO's achievements but also emphasises the contributions of SMEs, startups, and private industries in ensuring the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission, organisers said.

Netweb partners NVIDIA to make GPU servers in India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic computer server maker Netweb Technologies has partnered with chipset company NVIDIA to make servers for artificial intelligence (AI) and high-end computing applications, the company said on Tuesday.

NVIDIA dominates the GPU (Graphics Processing Unit) chipset market globally with about 88 per cent market share as they are in huge demand for the development of AI technologies.

Netweb Technologies said that it is now a manufacturing partner for the NVIDIA Grace CPU Superchip and GH200



Grace Hopper Superchip MGX server designs.

"Netweb will build and produce more than ten server variations under its Tyrone range of AI systems meant for a wide range of AI and high-performance computing/supercomputing applications," the company said in a statement.

Creative powerhouses who have elevated storytelling to an art

Entertainment trends are mercurial, but what stands the test of time is a good story. Today, more than ever before, good storytelling is gaining primacy over formulaic narratives. As content becomes more diverse than ever before, here are a few creative storytellers who have rewritten conventions to redefine entertainment and expand its meaning in unprecedented ways.

Shailja Kejriwal, Anurag Kashyap, Vishal Bharadwaj, Meghna Gulzar, and Zoya Akhtar have left an indelible mark on the way stories are told and heard.

SHAILJA KEJRIWAL

Shailja Kejriwal has rewritten the rules of entertainment across the small screen, cinema, and theatre. In the 2000s, with *Star Bestsellers*, she launched talents like Imtiaz Ali, Rajkumar Hirani, Anurag Kashyap, Hansal Mehta, and Sriram Raghavan. She has also produced acclaimed films like *Madaari* and *Qarib Qarib Single*. As the Chief

Creative Officer of Special Projects, Zee Entertainment Enterprises, she initiated Zindagi, which launched over 50 acquired shows across the border such as *Humsafar*, *Zindagi Gulzar Hai*, and created original shows like *Churails*, *Qatil Haseenaon Ke Naam*, *Barzakh*, *The Pink Shirt* amongst others. Under her stewardship, Zee Theatre has played a seminal role in mainstreaming, digitalising, and archiving multi-lingual theatre. By bringing international productions like *The Sound of Music Live* to Indian television and collating classic South-Asian stories in anthologies like *Yaar Julahay* and *Koi Baat Chale*, she has demonstrated that entertainment can build bridges between languages and cultures.

ANURAG KASHYAP

This winner of France's Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters), began his career by writing television serials, often without credit, and then got a break as the co-writer of Ram Gopal Varma's cult hit, *Satya*. His first film *Paanch* never saw the light of the day but his next *Black Friday* announced that a new cinematic voice had arrived. *Dev.D* cemented his reputation as a maverick maker who was subversive, unapologetic, and brave. Through var-

ious highs and lows in his career, what remained constant was his hunger to carve his own path as an independent maker. *Gangs of Wasseypur-1 and 2*, and in failure (*Bombay Velvet*), he remains true to his quirky vision.

His latest film, *Kennedy*, is a neo-noir thriller that won much acclaim at the 2023 Cannes Film Festival.

VISHAL BHARADWAJ

Vishal Bharadwaj would have been a cricketer if a thumb injury and a family tragedy had not put an end to his sporting career. It was his passion for music that eventually took him towards cinema, the path he was truly destined for. He made his mark as a composer in Gulzar's poignant masterpiece

With an array of accomplishments, including eight National Film Awards and a Filmfare Award, he is now known for his ability to create complex, yet relatable characters and tell authentic Indian stories that are truly clutter-breaking.

MEGHNA GULZAR

The teaser of *Sam Bahadur*, a biographical war drama based on the life of India's first field marshal, Sam Manekshaw, has created a sensation. And reminded the trade watchers and audiences that Meghna Gulzar is a filmmaker with a distinct ability to bring unheard stories to life. Her first two films, *Filhaal* and *Just Married*, did not however do well, even though they tackled unusual subjects like surrogacy and incompatibility. The gifted daughter of Gulzar and Rakhee then proved her mettle with *Talvar*, a gut-wrenching investigative thriller, and followed its success with *Raazi*, a blockbuster spy drama headlined by Alia Bhatt and Vicky Kaushal. It grossed over Rs 1.96 billion worldwide and also earned her the prestigious Filmfare Award for Best Director. What sets her apart is her eye for detail, her sensitive portrayal of a diverse range of characters, and her empathy as exemplified in the Deepika Padukone starrer *Chhapaak*.

All eyes are now on *Sam Bahadur* and on how she has handled an important chapter of history.

ZOYA AKHTAR

One of the leading female directorial voices in the industry, Zoya Akhtar now also heads a bustling production house, Tiger Baby Films, along with longtime associate Reema Kagti. She is currently making news for the impending release of the nostalgia-evoking *The Archies*, a live-action musical comedy set in the 1960s. What defines her trajectory is her ability to tell fresh stories in a commercial format. Be it the introspective gaze of her debut film *Luck By Chance*, the themes of self-discovery and complex human relationships in hits like *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara* and *Dil Dhadakne Do*, or the gritty portrayal of Mumbai's underground hip-hop scene in *Gully Boy* (India's official entry for the Best International Feature Film category at the Oscars), she has always told stories that she believes in. Two seasons of her production *Made in Heaven* have also established her as a maker who wants to find nuance even in something as conventional as the great Indian wedding.

Jennifer Lawrence denies plastic surgery rumour, says her face changed due to ageing

Hollywood star Jennifer Lawrence's appearance has shifted because she's ageing and not because of plastic surgery, says the actress.

The 33-year-old actress agrees that her appearance has changed over recent years, but she says she hasn't gone under the knife.

"I started at 19, so I get the before and after pictures from when I'm 19 to 30 and I'm like, 'I grew up. I lost baby weight in my face, and my face changed because I'm ageing.' Everybody thought I had a nose job, and I'm like, 'I've had the exact same nose. My cheeks got smaller. Thank you for bringing it up,'" Lawrence told

Interview magazine. She highlighted the influence of Hung Vanngo, the acclaimed make-up artist, reports aceshowbiz.com.

She explained, "I also think it's incredible what make-up can do because I work with Hung, who overlines the lip, and I call him a plastic surgeon because everybody in the last few months, since I've been working with him, is convinced that I had eye surgery."

Meanwhile, Lawrence previously revealed that she struggles with mom guilt. The award-winning actress confessed that she was still trying to come to terms with the demands of motherhood.

Tiffany Haddish on DUI arrest: 'I'm going to get some help'

Actress Comedienne Tiffany Haddish has talked about her arrest for falling asleep behind the wheel.

The *Girls Trip* star was cited by authorities for driving under the influence after dozing off in the middle of the street. In an interview, Haddish addressed the incident and said that she is going to seek help following the incident, reports deadline.com. "I'm going to get some help so I can learn balance and boundaries," she told ET.


Haddish also assured that "this will never happen again."

According to the actress, before the incident, she was at The Laugh Factory helping feed the underprivileged on Thanksgiving day and also performed a special comedy routine.


Haddish addressed the arrest during a performance at The Laugh Factory in California.

"What happened last night?" Haddish said hours after the news broke she was cited with a DUI. "Ah, damn. You tell me. I don't know."

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



REALITY CHECK




SPEED BUMP




CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	
6			7		8
9			10		
12		13		14	15
17				16	
18					

NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



SUDOKU

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- Saying again
- These brown fruit grow on a palm tree
- A clothing size
- A hard black fuel
- Beat in a battle
- A fire-breathing monster
- The number in a quartet
- Frown
- Played a part in a play
- Replying

DOWN

- More than is needed
- A compass direction
- Had a conversation

SOLUTION 798

P	E	R	I	G	N	A	N	T
A	L	I	E	S	P	O	N	
A	N	V	E	S	D			
A	N	S	E	R	R			
C	N	M						
H	E	E	P	A	S	E		
U	P	C	H	A	I	S		
T	E	E	T	H	A	L	I	V
E	A	O	I	N	D			
R	A	I	P	P	I	N	G	

AUSTRALIA BEAT INDIA BY FIVE WICKETS

OZ reduce margin to 2-1 to stay alive in T20I series

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

Glenn Maxwell's fiery unbeaten hundred carried Australia to a five-wicket win over India in the third T20I here on Tuesday. With this win, Australia managed to cut India's series lead to 2-1 in the five-match rubber. Maxwell made 104 off 48 balls (8x4, 8x6) as the Aussies went past India's 222 for 3 in the last ball of the match. Skipper Matthew Wade remained not out on a crucial 28 off 16 balls. Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi took two wickets for India. Earlier, Ruturaj Gaikwad's maiden international hundred was the cornerstone of India's big total. Gaikwad made a rollicking unbeaten 123 off 57 balls. Ruturaj Gaikwad displayed brute power and wonderful technique in equal measure with a maiden hundred that propelled India to a commanding 222 for 3 against Australia in the third T20 International here on Tuesday. Gaikwad slammed a career-best 123 not out off just 57 balls



with 13 fours and seven sixes, a first ton by an Indian batter against Australia in T20 Internationals. The 30 runs that Gaikwad took off Glenn Maxwell in the 20th over could prove to be a game-

changer. Skipper Matthew Wade's decision to give a part-time off-spinner 20th over of the innings backfired big-time. On a wicket that had some extra bounce and swing, India had a

shaky start losing their both their in-form batters Yashasvi Jaiswal (6) and Ishan Kishan (0) cheaply after Matthew Wade opted to bowl to make use of the dewy conditions. Skipper Suryakumar Yadav (39;

29b) looked set for a big knock with two sixes and five boundaries before debutant pacer Aaron Hardie dismissed him with a short ball just after the halfway mark. With run-rate not an issue --

eight per over -- they needed someone to anchor their innings, and the Indian vice-captain Gaikwad played the role to perfection. From 13 off 15 balls, the right-hander with orthodox technique, who often drew flak for his slow starts, switched gears after Surya's dismissal, displaying the wide array of shots in his repertoire. His knock was not just about classical drives in the V but also a testament to his brute power. He packed a lot of punch in his pulls and an inside-out maximums. It was a different Gaikwad on display during last six overs. Once he got his first 50 off 32 balls, he then went berserk, taking another 20 to bring up his maiden triple digit score in the last over of Maxwell. Gaikwad muscled Maxwell over wide long to bring up his century with a six as he smashed two more in the same over that yielded 30 runs as India amassed 200-plus totals in each of the three T20Is so far. **Brief scores:** India: 222 for 3 in 20 overs (Ruturaj Gaikwad 123 not out, Suryakumar Yadav 39, Tilak Varma 31 not out; Jason Behrendorff 1/12) lost to Australia: 225 for 5 in 20 overs (Glenn Maxwell 104 not out, Matthew Wade 28 not out, Ravi Bishnoi 2/32) by 5 wickets.



When Kohli's wicket fell, stadium was quiet like library: Cummins

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australian captain Pat Cummins couldn't believe his ears when he found a near 100,000 people at Narendra Modi Stadium go pin-drop silence after Virat Kohli's dismissal giving the vibe of a "quiet library" during the World Cup final against India. Australia won their sixth title beating India by six wickets but many believe that Cummins getting India's No. 1 batter played on, became the turning point of the match. "We're in a huddle after the wicket of Kohli in the final & (Steve) Smith says, Boys, listen to the crowd." And we just took a moment of pause, and it was as quiet as a library, 100,000-plus Indians there & it was so quiet. I'll savour that moment for a long time," Cummins told "The Age" during an interaction. Late, he spoke to reporters and said that to hold the Trophy, it took a lot out of him and his team. "To hold one trophy takes a lot. But, to hold them across formats really shows our amazing coaching group and also the squad of players," Cummins told reporters here on Tuesday during a World Cup event. "You can't do that with 11 players. You need 25 really good players. So, it shows the strength of Australian cricket at the moment and the appetite of the guys to compete whenever they play." "Everything takes a lot out of you, but the guys keep rocking

up and performing, which is as pleasing as anything else." **WORDS LIKE REST AND ROTATIONS GET THROWN AROUND:** Workload management might be in vogue in world cricket for past few years but Cummins believes that words like "rest" and "rotation" are loosely thrown around when reality is nobody likes to miss a Test if he is fully fit. Cummins, who has led the Australian team to World Test Championship and ODI World Cup glory in 2023, said that despite a long season, his unit is raring to go during the coming Australian Summer which starts with Test series against Pakistan on December 14. "Realistically, the word rest and rotated gets thrown around a lot, but you never miss a Test if you are fully fit," "While over the last couple of years, we might have been rested from the odd game, the bulk of work we've been able to do is because of those small gaps. If we are fully fit, we won't be resting." He recalled that as pacers, the players are bound to feel some niggle somewhere or the other but they should not be bogged down by it. "You are always dealing with something as a bowler. When your hamstring starts to feel, then you feel a pain somewhere else, then you wake up the next day, and it's moved somewhere else," Cummins continued. Currently, a second-string Aussie squad is currently competing in a five-match T20I series in India.



NZ offspinner Phillips takes 4 wickets to reduce Bangladesh to 310-9 after Mahmudul's 86

AP ■ SYLHET (BANGLADESH)

Offspinner Glenn Phillips claimed 4-37 in only his second match as New Zealand reduced Bangladesh to 310-9 on day one of the opening test on Tuesday. Phillips' haul helped the visitors gain an edge after Bangladesh won the toss and opted to bat first on a pitch ideal for batting. Bangladesh made a good start with opener Mahmudul Hasan playing serenely to put the side in the driving seat in the first session but his teammates' rash shots undermined his effort. Mahmudul made a team-best 86 off 166 balls with 11 boundaries. He shared stands of 39 for the first wicket with Zakir Hasan and 53 for the second with Najmul Hossain Shanto as Bangladesh made steady progress. Shanto, who led the home team in the absence of Shakib Al Hasan, was dismissed just before lunch after playing an attacking 37 off 35 deliveries. He was particularly harsh on left-arm spinner Ajaz Patel (2-76), hitting him for three sixes to entertain the sparse crowd. Patel, one of only three bowlers ever to take 10 wickets in a single test innings, gave the visitors an early breakthrough when he dismissed Zakir Hasan for 12 in the 13th over with a delivery that turned sharply to rattle the stumps. Shanto targeted Patel and opened with a six over mid-on.

And he used his feet effectively to dominate New Zealand's other spinners — Ish Sodhi and Glenn Phillips. But he paid for his aggressive batting when he charged a full toss from Phillips and skied a catch to Kane Williamson in the deep, making the score 92-2. Mahmudul and Mominul dug in to defy the New Zealand bowlers who were relentless in attack and Mahmudul raised his fourth test fifty, driving Patel for a boundary through cover off 93 balls. As the innings seemed to turn in Bangladesh's favour, Phillips made the crucial breakthrough when Mominul's attempted cut resulted in a catch behind the wicket, ending the 88-run partnership. Mominul scored 37 off 78 with four fours. Mahmudul fell in the next over. After playing with soft hands throughout his stay, he went after legspinner Shodi, only to be caught by Daryl Mitchell at slip. With Bangladesh at 184-4, the onus was on veteran Mushfiqur Rahim to lead the side but he needlessly charged Patel to be caught by Williamson at deep mid-off for 12. Debutant Shahadat Hossain appeared to be solid against the spinners but the rash shots of Mehidy Hasan against pacer Kyle Jamieson (2-52), further deepened Bangladesh's crisis. Shahadat was undone by a slower delivery from Phillips as he chipped straight to short mid-wicket after adding 24.

PCB in deadlock with ACC on compensation for flights during Asia Cup

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) was on Tuesday caught in a deadlock with the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) for demanding additional compensation on organising chartered flights between Pakistan and Sri Lanka during the Asia Cup, which it co-hosted in August-September. The Asia Cup 2023 was organised in a hybrid model in Pakistan and Sri Lanka after the ACC accepted PCB's hybrid model, with majority of the matches organised in the island nation. A reliable source in the PCB informed PTI that apart from seeking the tournament hosting fees - around \$250,000 - as well as shares from ticketing and sponsorship fees, they have also demanded additional compensation. The source said, "The additional money is for expenses

incurred on renting chartered flights for teams between Pakistan and Sri Lanka and other extra expenses like additional hotel and transport fees, which were not included in the initial budget for the Asia Cup." The source, however, informed that the ACC is not willing to pay additional expenses to the PCB since it believes that Pakistan had agreed for matches to be held in Sri Lanka under its hybrid model, in return for hosting four games of the Asia Cup at home. A Sri Lanka-based company named Classic Travel was paid \$281,000 for arranging four chartered flights to and from between Pakistan and the island nation - something that PCB's Cricket Management Committee (CMC) was not comfortable paying upfront as advance. The tournament was moved to a hybrid model after India refused to play in Pakistan citing security reasons.

Fans to get free entry for India women's cricket team's matches in Mumbai

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Fans have been spared the hassle of running around for match tickets during Indian women's cricket team's upcoming fixtures against England and Australia at the Wankhede Stadium and DY Patil Stadium as the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) on Tuesday made the entry free for all those matches. The cricket fest here will start with India Women's A team taking on their England counterparts in a three-match T20 series from Wednesday, with all matches to be played at the Wankhede Stadium on November 29, December 1 and 3 from 1:30pm. India women's senior team will then take on England in a three-match T20I series starting on December 6, and the second and third match will be played on December 9 and 10 respectively at the Wankhede Stadium. These games will have a 7:00pm start.

"MCA president Amol Kale and the apex council unanimously passed the decision to encourage support for women's cricket," said secretary Ajinkya Naik. "Unlocking the gates for free entry not only fills the stadium but also opens the door to a world of empowerment through women's T20 cricket," added Naik. India and England will then engage in a one-off Test to be played at the DY Patil from December 14-17. India will begin their home series against the Australian Women's team with a one-off Test to be played at the Wankhede Stadium from December 21 to 24, followed by a three-match ODI series. While the first ODI will be played on December 28, the second will be on December 30 and the third ODI will be on January 2, 2024 with the Wankhede Stadium serving as the host for all these matches, starting at 1:30pm.

India Women's A team looks to utilise most of opportunity against England counterparts



Mani also played for Delhi Capitals in the inaugural Women's Premier League. The focus will also be on future

India prospect, Karnataka's Shreyanka Patil who had a promising run in the WPL earlier this year and also became the

first Indian player ever to sign up for the Women's Caribbean Premier League. Among those to watch out for will be the young and dashing Punjab batter Kanika Ahuja, who delivered an all-round show — 30 runs and two wickets — in the final of the ACC's Women's Emerging Teams Cup. Mannat Kashyap's progress as a young off-spinner will also be under watch and among batters, the likes of G Trisha, Dinesh Vrinda and Gnanananda Divya will be expected to deliver the goods. While the visiting England A are yet to announce their squad for

the series against India A, they are coming here after a training camp in Oman. Among those who featured in the camp were exciting young fast bowler Mahika Gaur, Charlie Dean and Lauren Filer, who took a handful of wickets for England against Sri Lanka in their recent series. **India Women's A:** Minnu Mani (c), Kanika Ahuja, Uma Chetry (wk), Shreyanka Patil, G Trisha, Vrinda Dinesh, Gnanananda Divya, Arushi Goel, Disha Kasat, Rashi Kanojia, Mannat Kashyap, Anusha Baredy, Monica Patel, Kashavee Gautham, Jintamani Kalita, Prakashika Naik.

Don't keep so much hopes that people end up with broken hearts: Kapil

PTI ■ GURUGRAM

Excess hype often leads to broken hearts and hence it is always necessary to strike a balance, legendary Kapil Dev said on Tuesday in context of India's six-wicket defeat at the hands of Australia in the World Cup final earlier this month. The 1983 World Cup winning skipper said that the Indian fans should refrain from creating too much pressure and treat cricket just as another sport. "Don't keep so much hopes that people end up with broken hearts. We need to keep a balance. Other teams also came to India to compete in the World Cup. We shouldn't create so much hype. We need to look at sports as sports only. Whoever plays good on the day, we need to respect that. We are too emotional," Kapil said on the sidelines of the inaugural tee off ceremony of Kapil Dev Grant Thornton Invitational golf tournament here. India won 10 games, most of which were lopsided as contests, before Australia

turned the tables on them at the Narendra Modi Stadium on November 19. For past 10 years, India have lost seven knock-out games out of eight ICC tournaments that they took part between 2014 to 2023. Kapil doesn't know if the pressure of occasion gets to them. "I think today's players can answer how much pressure they feel. We can only feel," he said. However there are shortcomings which needs to be taken care of, Kapil stated, without specifying what they were. "If they (India) win it feels really good. There are shortcomings which we need to address. It is not that you won't have shortcomings after a win. What's most important is to rectify them," the 63-year-old said. He urged fans to celebrate what India achieved rather than what they missed out. "They (India) won 10 matches in a row. Is it not enough? We should look at other teams as well. We shouldn't compare anyone. What is important is to see whether they played good cricket or not.



We played very good cricket. Final day was not ours so be it," the 1983- World Cup-winning captain added. Kapil cited the examples of South Africa and defending champions England to prove his point. "We should look at performance of other teams as well like, South Africa, England who were the defending champions, they finished last (seventh)." Kapil also lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's gesture to visit the Indian dressing room and console the players after the final loss in Ahmedabad on November 19. "If the Prime Minister doesn't encourage, who will? He is the No.1 man in the country and if he supports, it feels good," he said. The former all-rounder also refrained from commenting on Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma's future in T20 Internationals. "This is selectors job and we should leave it to them. It is not good to comment on everything. They are responsible and what they feel good, they should do," he

said. The second edition of the Kapil Dev Grant Thornton Invitational golf tournament, sanctioned by Professional Golf Tour of India, will have prize purse of Rs 2 crore this year, double the amount from last year. Title holder Varun Parikh will try to defend his title in the tournament beginning on Wednesday at the DLF Golf and Country Club here. Kapil said some former cricketers including Murali Karthik, Madan Lal, Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh are expected to be present on the final day of the event on December 3. He also said he would request Sachin Tendulkar to grace the occasion. "Already the prize money has been doubled. It feels good that some former cricketers will be coming for the event. Why can't cricketers play other sports? "If we can support other sport apart from cricket, why not? In India, there is not just one game," said the man, who has been an amateur golfer since his retirement.

Pranati Rai Prakash: O DOLLAR PILLAGAA CHALLENGED MY PHYSICAL STRENGTH AND FLEXIBILITY

PNS | HYDERABAD

Actress Pranati Rai Prakash, widely recognized for her role in *Love Aaj Kal 2*, has graced the screen with a special dance number titled *O Dollar Pillagaa* for the movie *Das Ka Dhamki*, starring popular actor Vishwak Sen.

O Dollar Pillagaa has garnered immense praise from audiences, and Pranati is thrilled about the positive response.

The actress reveals her excitement for her debut project and says, "Making my debut in Tollywood with *O Dollar Pillagaa* was an incredible experience. The Tollywood industry is very wide and accepting, and personally, I really had a lot of fun challenging myself personally with the song. The beats and the steps are very unique and catchy, and so even with the song, I really had a very fun time shooting this entire song with the team, and they really made it one of the most memorable journeys for me. The song challenged my physical strength and flexibility, and I am really happy and grateful for this amazing opportunity."

Pranati Rai Prakash had the privilege of sharing screen space with the talented actor Vishwak Sen in *Das Ka Dhamki*. She expressed her admiration for her co-star, saying, "Working with Vishwak Sen was a fantastic experience. He is not only a skilled actor but also a wonderful person. Our on-screen chemistry translated effort-

lessly, making the entire filming process enjoyable."

The actress also credited her choreographer, Sathish Krishnan, for bringing out the best in her during the dance sequence. "Working with Sathish Krishnan Sir was a privilege for my debut project, and he was very impressed with my flexibility and dancing skills, and that really boosted my confidence. The choreography added a unique flair to the song, and I thoroughly enjoyed the creative process," Pranati shared.

In the music video, Pranati, apart from Vishwak Sen, is also seen sharing screen space with actors like Rao Ramesh, Prudhvi Raj, and Murali Goud in the song. The song is composed by Leon James, the lyrics are written by Purnachary, and Mangli and Deepak Blue have lent their voices to this high-octane number. The song is choreographed by Satish Krishnan.

O Dollar Pillagaa has now released on television and the song has struck a chord with the audience, earning applause and praise for its catchy beats, and Pranati's electrifying dance performance has just added fire to the entire song. Pranati looks stunning in the song as she dons a sexy black delicate leotard along with a mini embellished glittery skirt paired with



Rohini Hattangady to play a significant role in Family Star

Family Star, an eagerly awaited film, stars Vijay Deverakonda and Mrunal Thakur in lead roles, directed by Parasuram Petla. The movie is progressing swiftly with its shooting in Noida.

Adding to the excitement, there's a robust buzz that National award-winning actress Rohini Hattangady, known for her roles in *Seethamma Vakitlo Sirimalle Chettu*, *Brahmotsavam*, and *Chitralahari*, is playing a significant role in the film. An official announcement about this notable addition is imminent.

Jagapathi Babu is also part of the movie, and Rashmika Mandanna has recently wrapped up shooting for *Family Star*. Dil Raju for Sri Venkateswara Creations is producing this biggie. Gopi Sundar is tasked with creating the film's soundtracks.



tollywood



Vishwak Sen's gritty tale Gangs of Godavari in cinemas on Mar 8, 2024

Mass ka Das Vishwak Sen has created a niche and a great fanbase for himself with entertaining and varied films in Telugu cinema. He has joined hands with writer-director Krishna Chaitanya and popular production house Sithara Entertainments for his next film, *Gangs of Godavari*.

The team has been gaining traction and increasing buzz for the film since the date announcement. The first look posters and updates on NTR's birthday and the viral hit melodious song, Suttamla Soosi, have created expectations in public about the film.

Popular actress Neha Sshetty is playing the female lead in the film. Well-known and very talented actress Anjali is playing an important role in this saga that narrates the story of a man who rises from rags to riches in a very dark world. His gritty journey has political implications too and the makers have hinted about them in the updates released before.

Vishwak Sen will be seen as a very gray character, and the actor is highly confident and excited to show the film *Gangs of Godavari* to Telugu audiences. Makers have decided to release the film worldwide on March 8, 2024.

Yuvan Shankar Raja is composing music for the film, and already Suttamla Soosi is going viral with his compositions for the film. Suryadevara Naga Vamsi and Sai Soujanya are producing the film for Sithara Entertainments and Fortune Four Cinema. Venkat Upputuri and Innamuri Gopi Chand are co-producing it. Srikrana Studios is presenting the film.

Anith Madhadi is handling cinematography while Gandhi Nadikudikar is handling Production design. Navin Nooli is editing the film. More details regarding *Gangs of Godavari* will be announced soon.

'Couldn't have asked for a better series for my Telugu debut,' says Prachi Desai on Dhootha

Prachi Desai, celebrated for her impactful performances in the world of Bollywood, takes a bold step into the realm of OTT platforms with her unconventional debut in the Telugu language supernatural thriller, *Dhootha*. This marks a significant shift for the actress as she embraces the episodic format of storytelling, a departure from the traditional cinematic experience and also acts in a language that's unfamiliar.

In her own words, Prachi describes her journey on *Dhootha* as a truly unique experience. The extended storytelling format of the series allows for a more profound exploration of characters and plotlines.

She says, "Working on *Dhootha* was indeed a unique experience. The primary difference was the extended storytelling format, which allowed for more in-depth character development and plot exploration. The episodic nature of a series provides a different rhythm of performance and character arc development. Couldn't have asked for a better



series for my Telugu debut. Heartening to know that my work will reach audiences in 240 countries and territories. Stories from all over the country and different regions and languages are reaching a global audience, which is an excellent opportunity for any artist."

She adds that the lure was the genre which she found enticing. "The supernatural genre has always intrigued me, and I was eager to experiment with it. When I was approached for *Dhootha*, I realized that it was an actual 'stepping out of the comfort zone' experience for me and venturing into a genre that I've always been curious to explore as an actor. While I can't reveal too much, I can say that my character experiences a fascinating arc throughout the series, and it was a challenging yet rewarding role to take on."

Dhootha drops on Amazon Prime Video on 1st December.

Nupur Sanon: Doing a Pan-India film is a game-changer

Actress Nupur Sanon, who shared screen space with Ravi Teja in Telugu film *Tiger Nageshwara Rao*, helped her to understand a different demographic, contributing to the evolving Indian cinema landscape.

She said: "Global films are breaking barriers, with Indian stories gaining recognition at the Oscars and Emmys. In my third film, venturing into Telugu cinema has been a valuable experience, fostering growth and learning. It allowed me to understand a different demographic, contributing to the evolving Indian cinema landscape."

She added: "Despite cultural differences, emotions connect us, and stars now play a vital role in reaching diverse audiences nationwide, making films a universal language."

Sharing her observation of the current aspiration among actors to become pan-Indian stars, she notes the global shift in filmmaking and the universal appeal of Indian stories.

She added: "Doing a Pan-India film is a game-changer, moving away from the typical Hindi film heroine role. It brings diversity to my work and mirrors the changing narrative where actors go beyond stereotypes."

"A Pan-India approach expands my reach, connecting with audiences across the country, going beyond the usual limits of a Hindi film heroine."



Ivana to play Vijay's sister in Thalapathy 68

Amid the triumph of Leo, *Thalapathy Vijay* is currently engrossed in the filming of his latest venture, *Thalapathy 68*, helmed by director Venkat Prabhu and starring Meenakshii Chaudhary as the female lead.

A buzz circulating online suggests that Ivana, renowned for her role in *Love Today* and making her Tollywood debut with *Selfish*, may step into the role of Vijay's sister in the film. This presents a promising opportunity for the young actress, pending an official confirmation from the team.

The ensemble cast includes Mic Mohan, Jayaram, Sneha, Laila, Yogibabu, VTV Ganesh, Ajmal Amir, Vaibhav, Premgi, Ajay Raj, and Aravind Akash in this AGS Entertainment production. Yuvan Shankar Raja is the music director. Stay tuned for more updates.



Rashmika Mandanna's The Girlfriend with Geeta Arts officially launched

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

With National crush and phenomenal performer Rashmika Mandanna in the lead role, talented filmmaker Rahul Ravindran helming the project. Rashmika has delivered compelling performances in all of her films and is now poised to deliver a path breaking performance in a women-centric film.

The team also revealed a sneak peek, which promises to be a one-of-a-kind cinematic experience for audiences of all ages. The title of the film is *The Girlfriend*. The film launched with a grand pooja ceremony today on the occasion of Karthika Pournami.

Ace producer Allu Aravind clapped for the opening scene while blockbuster director switched on the camera. Sensational director Sai Rajesh directed the first shot. Hero Adivi Sesh and directors VI Anand and Pavan Sadineni attended the ceremony gave thier best wishes for the team. The film's principal photography will commence soon.

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



RGV on Rajamouli comparing him to Sandeep Vanga: 'Never heard of Ram Gopal Varma'

Recently, at the pre-release event of *Animal*, SS Rajamouli invoked RGV as a maverick of sorts. Ever since, cinephiles have been extending condolences to the diminished stature of a once-great filmmaker.

In his speech, the *RRR* maker suggested that RGV is a once-in-a-generation filmmaker who not only shook the audience and the cine industry but also proved his mettle by setting aside all the received wisdom pertaining to movie-making. "In my generation, I can think of Ram Gopal Varma who has done that. He ignored the set norms and carved a path of his own. Sandeep Reddy Vanga is another such filmmaker of our times," Rajamouli said, praising the *Arjun Reddy* maker.

Soon after the speech by the *Baahubali* maker, several movie buffs on social media tagged Varma and asked him to realize what a great filmmaker he once was. "This is your range. Even Rajamouli believes you are a legend," a fan wrote.

However, later RGV took to his account on X and wrote, "Never heard of Ram Gopal Varma."