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With a firm commitment to provide drinking water, irrigation facilities, and to revive the lakes..

Changing the facade of irrigation in Rayalaseema, benefiting the farmers, who are solely dependent on rains in endemically drought-prone regions..

Stabilisation of 10,394 acres and supply of drinking water to Dhone, Pattikonda, Alur, and Panyam constituencies..

Feeding of water to 77 Minor Irrigation Tanks..

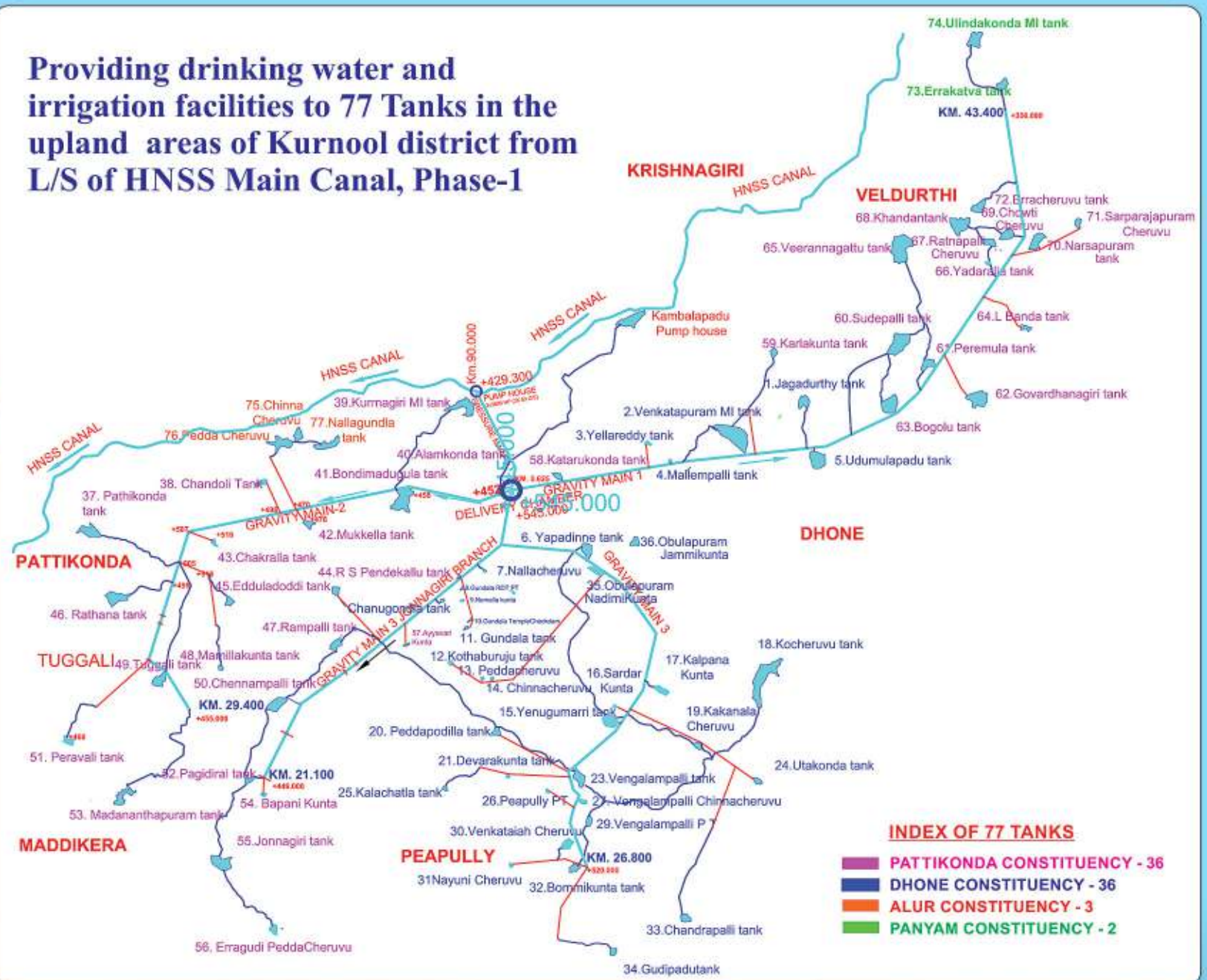
Inauguration of Pump House at Lakkasagaram

Sri. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister to inaugurate Lift Irrigation Scheme in Lakkasagaram, Krishnagiri Mandal, Kurnool district, Tomorrow (19-9-2023), constructed at a cost of **Rs. 224.31 Crores..** The project lifts water from Handri-Niva to feed 77 Minor Irrigation Tanks in **Dhone, Pattikonda, Alur, and Panyam** constituencies to provide irrigation facilities and drinking water.. Later Sri. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister will address a public meeting in Dhone, Nandyal District..

While the previous government ignored the project after issuing a mere GO in their 5-year tenure,

..Jagananna Government has completed the project and is dedicating to the people of Nandyal, and Kurnool districts
THIS IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT AND JAGANANNA GOVERNMENT..!!

Providing drinking water and irrigation facilities to 77 Tanks in the upland areas of Kurnool district from L/S of HNSS Main Canal, Phase-1



Benefits being provided to farmers through Lakkasagaram Lift irrigation..

- To irrigate 10,394 acres ayacut through 77 MI Tanks..
- 4,260 acres through 36 MI Tanks in **Dhone constituency..**
- 5,784 acres through 36 MI Tanks in **Pattikonda constituency..**
- 197 acres through 3 MI Tanks in **Alur constituency..**
- 153 acres through 2 MI Tanks in **Panyam constituency..**
- Drinking water facility to 4 constituencies..
- Increase in ground water level to benefit farmers with abundant crops..
- Feeding of MI Tanks, in upland areas of Western Mandals in Kurnool District which are endemically drought-prone, is a boon to farmers..



Water supply by Gravity

- Construction of pump house on Handri-Niva Main Canal at Lakkasagaram..
- Diversion of water to delivery chamber at Katarakonda by pumping 1.24 TMC water with 3x3,800 HP Motors, through a 5.6 KM Pressure Main in 90 days..
- Supply of water through 3 Gravity pipelines...
- To feed 22 MI Tanks serving an ayacut of 4,217 acres through Gravity pipeline -1..
- To feed 16 MI Tanks serving an ayacut of 3,018 acres through Gravity pipeline -2..
- To feed 23 MI Tanks in Peapully branch serving an ayacut of 2,065 acres, and to feed 7 tanks in Jonnagiri branch serving an ayacut of 830 acres through Gravity pipeline -3..
- Water will be supplied to 77 MI Tanks through pipeline including proposed 68 Tanks and additional 9 Tanks (8 in Dhone and 1 in Pattikonda Constituencies)

Sri. Ambati Rambabu,
Hon'ble Minister for Water Resources

Monday Mirchi

BRS CADRE NEED TO LEARN FROM DANA KISHORE

It is normal for the cadre of any political party to publicly praise their leader to the skies and deify him or her with the sole objective of catching their attention. At times, babus outdo them. The cadre of the Bharat Rashtra Samiti need to take a leaf out of the book of HMWSSB MD Dana Kishore on how to praise Minister K T Rama Rao. At an event where KTR addressed Maharashtra industrialists, the IAS officer, in his closing remarks, said that Minister KTR's speech was 'spellbinding'. He then recounted a private conversation he had had with his friends about KTR. He said, "Recently I met IFS batchmates at a party. They were asking 'How come your Minister talks like this so well?'. I told them, as bureaucrats we need to have good leadership for development. KTR is team leader, whatever work Arvind Kumar, Dana Kishore, and NVS Reddy are doing, it is because of his homogenous, understanding leadership'. He went on to say that he had never seen KTR with an angry face. "He just wants things to be done", Kishore summed up dutifully. Given the impending elections, bureaucratic circles are discussing whether it was a farewell speech.

THE CID CHIEF'S PRIORITIES WHEN IT COMES TO CLARIFICATION

After TDP president and former chief minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu was remanded to judicial custody by the Court, the TDP has been running a campaign against CID chief Sanjay for his press statements. In a slip of the tongue during one such pressers, Sanjay misidentified Nashik as Ganga's birthplace. A little bird told us that Sanjay wanted to give a clarification on this as it seemed to have called into question his GK. For newbies, TDP and its followers are hanging on to everything that the CID chief says and do not miss an opportunity or mince words to attack him for misstatements. A wag commented: "When TDP attacks Jagan, there are social media warriors to defend him, but officials, however, are left helpless".

BUREAUCRATS FORM GINGER GROUP

Ginger groups are common within parties or movements. But if they are formed within a bureaucratic circle, whatever be the level of convergence of the participating

members' interests, the larger question is: Who is their target? Former AP Chief Secretary L V Subramanyam, along with a handful of retired IAS and IPS officers, has formed what they call 'Save Democracy Forum'. They believe that democracy is in peril: in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, or Delhi? That apart, the larger question is: Against whom are they joining hands? N Ramesh Kumar, who had been at logger heads with the Jagan Mohan Reddy government and was shunted out, is part of the group. So, one can imagine the target. Whoever it may, it would be interesting to see what this ginger group is up to.

INTERROBANG IN PLACE OF INTERROGATION

Hyderabad Commissioner of Police C V Anand, himself a cricketer, takes time out to give commentaries on cricket matches. Not far removed from interrogation, he recently shared with an interrobang: "Our team has developed the ability to let down the entire country at the most required time". He remarked that he did not feel like celebrating India's win. "It has not won a single ICC Trophy, in T20, OneDayers, or the Test championships in the last ten 10 years!? Can you believe it! They do well like a flash in the pan and when the entire country is watching, they fall like 9 pins". While India won the match, he said: "Team India, not impressed at all! U need to do more, prove it in the World Cup next month".

TROLLING NO BAR TO TRANSPARENCY IN SOCIAL MEDIA

Trolling does not bother those who know how to take social media comments in their stride. The trick is simple: jhukna nahin. The quintessence of this among officials is CMO Secretary Smitha Sabharwal. Very active in social media, Smitha Sabharwal's posts at times become controversial. Yet she airs her views fearlessly. Due to her sincerity even in social media posts, she has many fans and close followers, almost on par with those of cine stars and sport personalities. Some of these followers do criticise her bitterly. But Smitha Sabharwal, who does not mind sharing her private moments on social media platforms, including a reel that created a sensation recently, seems to have decided to stick to her guns, come what may.

-- Yours truly



Governor greets people

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Governor S Abdul Nazeer said, "I convey my warm greetings to the people of Andhra Pradesh on the occasion of Vinayaka Chavithi festival. This important Hindu festival is celebrated across the country with great devotion and gaiety and with the participation of all family members together. Devotees offer prayers to Lord Vigneswara to remove all obstacles and to bestow prosperity on all people. On this festival day, it is customary to offer invocation prayers to Lord Ganesha, for the success of new ventures. May Lord Vigneswara shower His blessings on all of us to lead a life of peace and harmony."

Union Minister hails 'PM Vishwakarma Scheme'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a resounding call to action, Bhagwanth Khuba, Union Minister of State for New & Renewable Energy, Chemicals & Fertilisers, hailed the progress achieved under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the past nine years. He emphasised the substantial increase in the average income of citizens across the nation and reaffirmed the Modi government's commitment to comprehensive public and national development. Khuba's statement came during the launch of the 'PM Vishwakarma Scheme,' a groundbreaking initiative designed for traditional artisans and craftspeople. The momentous occasion took place on Vishwakarma Jayanti in Vijayawada this past Sunday. Addressing the gathered audience, Bhagwanth Khuba extended his heartfelt greetings on Vishwakarma Jayanti. He characterized this special day



as a celebration of creativity, talent, and the unwavering dedication of artisans and craftsmen, whose contributions to society remain immeasurable. The Union Minister described them as the true 'Karmayogis' who epitomize hard work and dedication. He recalled Prime Minister Modi's statement that under the Vishwakarma umbrella, there are 18 subgroups encompassing various occupations such as barbers, cobblers, tailors, brick masons, welders, and carpenters, whose indispensable roles make our lives unimaginable and unsustainable.

Union Minister Bhagwanth Khuba praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's grand vision, which has elevated the nation to the global stage while ensuring the empowerment of marginalized communities. He highlighted that the Prime Minister's vision extends support through skill development, training, and financial aid without requiring collateral, emphasizing that these dedicated and visionary measures will propel India to become a leading economy by 2047. Khuba

called upon the entire Vishwakarma community to seize this golden opportunity provided by the Central Government and embark on a path to self-sustainability through self-employment. The event witnessed the participation of Malladi Vishnu, MLA for Vijayawada Central; Narendra A Patil, Divisional Railway Manager for Vijayawada Division, South Central Railway; N Yuvraj, Secretary to the Government of Andhra Pradesh, Industries and Commerce; and officials from the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and the senior railway echelons. Approximately 2,000 artisans and craftsmen from Vijayawada and its surrounding areas enthusiastically came forward to participate in this historic event, registering their names under the PM Vishwakarma portal as a testament to their dedication and commitment to their craft.

ENC undertakes beach cleanup drive

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The Eastern Naval Command celebrated the 38th International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) Day and Puneet Sagar Abhiyaan (PSA) together here on Sunday. To commemorate this event, the units in Visakhapatnam carried out a Coastal Cleanup initiative at the Yarada, RK, and Kalinga beaches, as well as all the coastal and waterfront areas.



Around 1,000 Naval and DSC personnel, along with their family members, took part in the event. The objective of the event was to raise awareness among the local community about the importance of maintaining clean beaches, preserving the environment, and instilling a sense of respect for coastal areas, ultimately contributing to the protection

and nurturing of marine biodiversity. In recent years, the significance of the coastal cleanup effort has grown significantly, largely driven by rapid infrastructural development and a substantial increase in industrialization. These developments have had a direct impact

on the environment and the surrounding areas. The Eastern Naval Command (ENC) has been actively engaged in various environmental initiatives aimed at the conservation of the environment, with a particular focus on safeguarding coastlines and waterfronts.

IT employees support Jagan

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In the wake of the ongoing investigation into the skill development scam and arrest of TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu, a large number of employees from the IT sector in Hyderabad staged a huge rally to express their support for Andhra Pradesh chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Sunday. The techies took out a massive car rally which started from Keesara, passed through Outer Ring Road (ORR) and ended at Gachibowli. The participants were carrying YSRCP party flags on their cars and raised pro-Jagan slogans in the rally. They said the ORR, Shamsabad International Airport, and Financial district were built during the YSR regime.

The techies further said the TDP leader cannot claim innocence as the investigating agency has proved Naidu's involvement in the misappropriation of funds in the skill development project and therefore the ACB court has remanded him in judicial custody.



Now, tomato prices...

Continued from Page 3

Expressing their discontent, farmers have bemoaned the fact that even high-quality tomato produce is fetching disappointingly low prices in the market. Distressed by this situation, tomato growers are urging the government to take immediate measures to guarantee Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for their crops. Meanwhile, it is worth noting that tomatoes continue to be sold at prices exceeding Rs 20 at various markets and rythu bazaars.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT SCAM

Merit in case led to Naidu's remand: Retd judge

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Retired High Judge Justice V Eswaraiah has raised questions regarding the defense presented by Nara Chandrababu Naidu's lawyers in the AP skill development case, specifically their inability to argue that the funds in question were not diverted through shell companies. Eswaraiah believes that due to the merit in the case, the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) decided to remand Chandrababu. In response to the arrest of former chief minister Chandrababu Naidu, Justice V Eswaraiah disclosed that he has also reviewed the remand report. Justice Eswaraiah clarified that in the past, many celebrities have faced arrest and punishment, but those who were innocent were eventually released with their honour intact. He emphasised that upon reviewing Chandrababu's remand report, it is evident that there are no corresponding accounts, invoices, or documentation for the sum of Rs 240 crore. It is well-known that this cash is linked to a scam involving counterfeiting invoices.

Regarding the involvement of the Income Tax Department and GST in the case due to non-payment of GST, Justice Eswaraiah opined that the only way to establish the truth is through Chandrababu's arrest, detention, and interrogation. He questioned why Siemens and six shell companies have not come forward to address the scandal if there is no wrongdoing, and why there is so much commotion and confusion. Justice Eswaraiah suggested that a defamation case could be pursued if the allegations were false. He further clarified that, as the scam occurred before the Prevention of Corruption Act came into effect, there was no requirement to seek the Governor's permission for Naidu's arrest. He noted that approximately 141 witnesses were questioned, with seven being remanded for further investigation. He stressed that the arrests of Naidu's personal assistant, Pendyala Srinivas, and Chandrababu Naidu himself are crucial to uncovering the facts, emphasising that this is the opportune moment to conduct a thorough investigation and take appropriate actions.

BRS corruption ridden

Says Rahul at Vijayabheri

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

"We should be aware of who we are fighting with. One should know about the forces working against us. The Congress is not only fighting the BRS but also the BJP and the AIMIM. The BRS, the BJP and the AIMIM are saying that they are separate parties but they are together. I saw BRS MPs in the Lok Sabha extending support to the BJP whenever it was needed. The BRS supported the Farmers' Bill after a wink of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," former AICC president Rahul Gandhi said. Addressing the Vijayabheri public meeting at Tukkuguda on Sunday, Rahul said that the BRS government was stuck in neck-deep corruption. The Congress gave Telangana State sticking to its word and in the same manner, the Congress would implement its six assurances immediately after coming to power in the state, he said. "The BRS, the BJP and the AIMIM tried to block the Congress' public meeting. Sonia gave Telangana as she promised. KCR's family is enjoying all the benefits of the formation of Telangana. Sonia did not give Telangana to one family. Telangana was given to the farmers, women and students.

Unite and overthrow 'dictatorial' govt to save democracy: Kharge to Cong leaders

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Stressing on unity and organisational discipline, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday asked party leaders to set aside personal differences and take on adversaries with their full might in the coming state and Lok Sabha elections. Addressing the extended CWC meeting on the second day of deliberations, the Congress chief said the party's goal must be to defeat the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and work diligently to form an alternative government in the country. In a scathing attack on the Modi government, Kharge accused it of playing politics and distracting people from basic issues. He said the party lead-



ers should stay away from such distractions and remain focused on real issues. "Recently, during the Mumbai meeting of the INDIA alliance, the Modi government formed a committee on 'One Nation, One Election'. In contravention of all conventions, it also included a former President to fulfill its agenda," Kharge said in his opening remarks at the extended CWC. The Congress chief called for remaining connected with

voters and immediately countering the false narrative peddled by adversaries with facts. He said elections are scheduled in five states in the next two to three months and the Lok Sabha polls are only six months away. Kharge also said the party must be prepared for possible assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir. The Congress-led governments in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan have "pioneered a new model of social justice and welfare", he said, and urged party leaders to publicise these welfare schemes across the country. Kharge asserted that the people are looking for an alternative and the party's victories in the Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka elections clearly prove this.

Naidu masterminded...

Continued from Page 3

Sanjay stated that the accused in this case are misleading people by saying that this project was approved by CIDD but this is totally false. He pointed out, "According to the deposition made by the then Principal Director of CIDD, Sujayat Khan, he indicated that he had not been informed about the necessity for an independent valuation. His actions were solely guided by the information he received from the officials representing M/s Siemens and APSSDC. Moreover, Sujayat Khan pointed out that his team lacked the necessary expertise to calculate the value of the software in question. Consequently, his evaluation report heavily relied on the content of emails received from employees of M/s Siemens." CID ADG Sanjay stated that Amit Sehgal, serving as the Legal Counsel and Nodal Officer for SISW, provided testimony under Section 164 of the Cr.P.C. before a Magistrate. He further stated that in his statement, he affirmed that Siemens had no involvement in the agreement and did not receive any funds from the project.

He pointed out that the Enforcement Directorate also had indicated that the Government money to the tune of Rs. 241 Crore was swindled in a dubious manner and established the illegalities. He added that the Enforcement Directorate noted that the money was siphoned off by funds being released to Designtech Systems Pvt Ltd through M/s Skillar Enterprises India Pvt Ltd and thereafter through a web of shell companies.

Govt school...

Continued from Page 3

He stated that the funds allocated to education are viewed as an investment in a brighter future. Kumar also noted that the remarkable aspect of this program is that these students come from humble backgrounds, with some of their parents working as daily wage laborers, auto drivers, mechanics, security guards, and lorry drivers. The opportunity for these students to visit the USA is a testament to Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy's belief that poverty should not hinder access to quality education.


The primary objective of this international tour is to provide deserving students from Andhra Pradesh with a global platform to enhance their learning, engage in meaningful discussions, and share their knowledge and innovative ideas with the world. This experience aims to boost the students' confidence and their ability to articulate their ideas clearly and convincingly in large gatherings focused on developmental issues, Kumar added.

CM to inaugurate Lakkasagaram...

Continued from Page 3

Following the inauguration, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy will also address a public gathering in Dhone, Nandyal district. It is worth noting that the previous government, during its five-year tenure, neglected this crucial irrigation project, only issuing a government order (GO). In stark contrast, the Jagan Mohan Reddy government has successfully completed it and is now dedicating this project to the residents of the Nandyal and Kurmool districts, highlighting the disparity between the previous administration and the current one. Officials from the department have emphasised the manifold benefits that the Lakkasagaram Lift Irrigation Scheme brings to the farming community. A total of 4,260 acres of land in Dhone constituency will receive water through 36 Minor Irrigation Tanks. Similarly, 5,784 acres in the Pattikonda constituency will be irrigated through 36 Minor Irrigation Tanks, while the Aluru constituency will see 197 acres benefiting from 3 Minor Irrigation Tanks, and the Panyam constituency will have 153 acres served by 2 Minor Irrigation Tanks. This totals 10,394 acres of irrigable land receiving water via 77 Minor Irrigation Tanks. Moreover, the scheme will enhance drinking water facilities in these four constituencies and

help boost crop production by raising the groundwater level. This lift irrigation project is particularly vital for the upland areas of Western Mandals in Kurmool District, which are historically vulnerable to drought and heavily reliant on rainfall. Water will be transported by gravity through the construction of a pump house along the Handri Niva Main Canal in Lakkasagaram (Alamkonda). The scheme will lift 1.24 TMC (Thousand Million Cubic feet) of water within 90 days, utilizing 3x3,800 HP Motors, and redirect it to the delivery chamber at Katarakonda through a 5.6 KM Pressure Main. The diverted water will then be distributed through 3 gravity pipelines. These pipelines will cater to 22 Minor Irrigation Tanks, covering an Ayacut (cultivable area) of 4,217 acres through Gravity pipeline -1, 16 Minor Irrigation Tanks, encompassing 3,018 acres of Ayacut through Gravity pipeline -2, and 23 Minor Irrigation Tanks in the Peapully branch, serving 2,065 acres of Ayacut, as well as 7 tanks in the Jonnagiri branch, covering an Ayacut of 830 acres, all via Gravity pipeline -3. Furthermore, in addition to the proposed 68 minor Irrigation tanks, eight other tanks in the Dhone constituency and one tank in the Pattikonda constituency have been included in the project. This results in a total of nine tanks being connected to the pipeline network for water supply.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

 The BRS and the AIMIM are supporting the BJP with a wink of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The BRS, the BJP and the AIMIM tried to block the Congress' public meeting. The Congress is fighting the BRS, the BJP and the AIMIM. In politics, we should be aware of who we are fighting with. Sonia gave Telangana as promised. KCR's family is enjoying all the benefits of the formation of Telangana. Sonia did not give Telangana to a family. The Congress established Telangana as a guarantee for the people. When Congress comes to power, we will fulfil all our six guarantees.
 -Rahul Gandhi, Former AICC president P2

India, Brazil begin talks to resolve sugar-related issue


KAVITA SETH: IT'S A 'BIG VARDAN' THAT INDEPENDENT SINGLES ARE BEING USED IN THE FILMS


Kiran to play a postman for a pan-India period DRAMA


HAPPY GANESH CHATURTHI
 The Pioneer wishes its readers, advertisers, suppliers, vendors, and agents a happy Ganesh Chaturthi. As our offices will remain closed today (18-09-2023), there will be no issue of the paper on Tuesday (19-09-2023)
 — Resident Editor

Kapu voters hold the key in AP politics

The alliance between the TDP and the Jana Sena, the political situation may change. It is clear that if the TDP-Jana Sena alliance comes to power Chandrababu will be the Chief minister. This was mentioned by TDP General Secretary Nara Lokesh in front of Pawan Kalyan.

NSCN ACHARYULU
 ■ HYDERABAD
 In the current political situation in Andhra Pradesh Kapu voters have become a key factor. The fate of all political parties is now in the hands of Kapus. After Jana Sena President Pawan Kalyan announced his alliance with the TDP the decision of Kapu voters regarding that is creating interest. In Andhra Pradesh caste plays an important role. Kapu leaders came out openly in support of Pawan Kalyan. In erstwhile East and West Godavari districts, Pawan Kalyan has gained more support from Kapus who are in a dominant position. Kapus are now split between the YSR Congress and the Jana Sena. Everyone knows the differences between Kammas and Kapus in Andhra Pradesh. In recent times wherever Pawan Kalyan went the people used to raise the slogan 'Pawan Kalyan CM' in the hope that he will become the Chief Minister after the

Assembly elections. But after the alliance between the TDP and the Jana Sena, the political situation may change. It is clear that if the TDP-Jana Sena alliance comes to power Chandrababu will be the Chief minister. This was mentioned by TDP General Secretary Nara Lokesh in front of Pawan Kalyan. After meeting Chandrababu at the Rajahmundry jail along with Bala Krishna and Pawan Kalyan, Nara Lokesh while speaking to the media said that the state needs an experienced Chief Minister. In this situation, whether Kapus will vote for the TDP-Jana Sena alliance to make Chandrababu the Chief Minister is the big question. The ruling YSR Congress also has hopes regarding this and expects to get more support from Kapu voters in the next Assembly elections. The YSR Congress strongly feels that due to the differences between the Kammas and Kapus, the latter may not vote for the TDP-Jana Sena alliance. Moreover, during seat sharing discontent will rise in both the TDP and the Jana Sena as TDP leaders strongly hope that their party will come to power. Jana Sena leaders also think that their leader Pawan Kalyan will become the Chief Minister. In these circumstances, political observers are interested in knowing whether the Jana Sena's tie-up with the TDP will help Chandrababu or Jagan.



CM to inaugurate Lakkasagaram LI scheme tomorrow

Project to facilitate stabilisation of 10,394 acres and drinking water supply to Dhone, Pattikonda, Alur, and Panyam constituencies

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is set to inaugurate the Lift Irrigation Scheme in Lakkasagaram, located in Krishnagiri mandal of Kurnool district, on September 19 (Tuesday), a project that has been realised at a cost of Rs 224.31 crore. This initiative aims to transport water from Handri Neeva to supply 77 minor irrigation tanks across the constituencies of Dhone, Pattikonda, Alur, and Panyam. These tanks will serve both irrigation needs and the provision of drinking water.

Naidu masterminded APSSDC scam: AP CID

Addl DG Sanjay says Lokesh is 'spinning a lie' over the issue

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 AP CID Additional DG N Sanjay has made it clear that as per their investigation, TDP chief Nara Chandrababu Naidu is the prime accused in the AP Skill Development scam and diverted funds to shell companies. Addressing media persons in New Delhi on Sunday, CID chief Sanjay along with Andhra Pradesh Additional Advocate General Ponnabolu Sudhakar Reddy explained the facts of the case and emphasised the irregularities that have taken place in the Skill Development Scam. Sanjay said that Chandrababu was the mastermind and he overruled the officials' recommendations. He explained that the entire project was meticulously orchestrated under the then chief minister Chandrababu Naidu, who exercised his authority to override the recommendations and decisions made by the officials entrusted with its execution. AP CID ADG Sanjay took a jibe at Nara Lokesh for attempting to spin a deliberate lie in the Skill Development Scam. He said, "Nara Lokesh has been going around and claiming that close to 2 lakh students



were trained under Siemens. However, that is totally false. The scam happened in the year 2015-2016 when the swindling of Rs 371 crores in the name of a 90:10 arrangement unfolded. It's easy for them to mix it up and spin a lie saying that they have been training lakhs in the state. It is to be noted that the then government for 4 years released a sum of Rs 770 Cr and this amount, other than the Siemens project, was used towards skill development. But many leaders are trying to pin the entire credit to Siemens and APSSDC project, which in reality had little or no impact in building the student's skill set.

The entire project was meticulously orchestrated under the then chief minister Chandrababu Naidu, who exercised his authority to override the recommendations and decisions made by the officials entrusted with its execution. Nara Lokesh has been going around and claiming that close to 2 lakh students were trained under Siemens. However, that is totally false. The scam happened in the year 2015-2016 when the swindling of Rs 371 crores in the name of a 90:10 arrangement unfolded. It's easy for them to mix it up and spin a lie saying that they have been training lakhs in the state. It is to be noted that the then government for 4 years released a sum of Rs 770 Cr and this amount, other than the Siemens project, was used towards skill development. But many leaders are trying to pin the entire credit to Siemens and APSSDC project, which in reality had little or no impact in building the student's skill set.

DON'T MISS...
Vigil stepped up in Vizag: CP...
 In accordance with the directives issued by Dr. A Ravi Saankar, the Police Commissioner of the city, law enforcement officers and police personnel carried out operations on September 16. During these operations, they filed legal cases against various unlawful activities including illegal sand mining, liquor violations, NDPS offenses, gambling activities such as poker, cockfighting betting, disturbances under the Town Nuisance Act, and instances of public drinking. A case under the Gaming Act was registered under 1st Town Police...
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Ambati pays tributes to...
 Minister for Irrigation Ambati Rambabu paid tributes to freedom fighter and former MLA Vavilala Gopalakrishnayya on his 118th birth anniversary in Sattenapalli on Sunday. The Minister paid tributes to Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah by garlanding his statue at the Vavilala memorial. Vavilala's grandson Mannava Sodekar also participated in the programme. Later on the occasion of Vavilala Gopalakrishnayya's birth anniversary clothes were distributed to poor women and elderly people...
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SBI to send chocolates to...
 The nation's largest lender State Bank of India is adopting a novel way to ensure timely repayments, especially by its retail borrowers, by greeting those likely to default on monthly installments with a pack of chocolates. According to the bank, it has been found that a borrower who is planning to default will not answer a reminder call from the bank. So the best way is to meet them at their homes unannounced. The move, aimed at ensuring better collections, comes amidst rising level of retail lending...
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You get what is in our destiny: Siraj...
 The complex questions that Mohammed Siraj asked during his dream spell of 6 for 21 was mostly due to the simple things that he was able to do perfectly on what turned out to be a Super Sunday for the Indian cricket team. Perhaps, he was destined to have a day like this, said the Hyderabad as India geared up to the World Cup by winning the Asia...
 -SPORTS

Now, tomato prices nosedive to half a rupee



PNS ■ KURNPOOL

In an unfortunate turn of events, tomato prices have taken a nosedive, plummeting to just Rs 0.50 per kilogram at the Pattikonda market. Traders offered a mere Rs 0.50 per kg to farmers on Sunday. Just a week ago, tomatoes were fetching prices of Rs 4 to Rs 5 per kilogram, with variations based on quality. However, these rates have sharply declined, hitting rock bottom. A few months back, tomatoes reached an all-time high, selling for an astonishing Rs 200 per KG. Encouraged by these exorbitant prices, many farmers invested in tomato cultivation, anticipating handsome returns. Unfortunately, their expectations have been shattered as tomato prices have now crashed. Numerous farmers who ventured into tomato farming are now facing substantial losses due to the drastic drop in prices. Some farmers have even been unable to afford transportation costs to transfer their produce to storage facilities.

PNS ■ KURNPOOL
 In an unfortunate turn of events, tomato prices have taken a nosedive, plummeting to just Rs 0.50 per kilogram at the Pattikonda market. Traders offered a mere Rs 0.50 per kg to farmers on Sunday. Just a week ago, tomatoes were fetching prices of Rs 4 to Rs 5 per kilogram, with variations based on quality. However, these rates have sharply declined, hitting rock bottom. A few months back, tomatoes reached an all-time high, selling for an astonishing Rs 200 per KG. Encouraged by these exorbitant prices, many farmers invested in tomato cultivation, anticipating handsome returns. Unfortunately, their expectations have been shattered as tomato prices have now crashed. Numerous farmers who ventured into tomato farming are now facing substantial losses due to the drastic drop in prices. Some farmers have even been unable to afford transportation costs to transfer their produce to storage facilities.

Governor, CM greet PM Modi

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 Governor S Abdul Nazeer and Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy on Sunday greeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his birthday. Nazeer conveyed his warm greetings to Modi. "With great pleasure and privilege, I convey our heartfelt felicitations and warm greetings to Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji on his Birthday, on behalf of the people of Andhra Pradesh and on my own behalf," the governor posted on X. "I pray to God Almighty to shower His choicest blessings on you for a fruitful, happy, long and healthy life to fulfill the aspirations of the people and lead the country to greater heights," Nazeer added. Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy also greeted Modi. "My greetings and wishes to Honourable Prime Minister Narendra Modi garu on his 73rd birthday."

BJP central leadership will decide on alliances in AP: Purandeswari

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA
 In the wake of BJP's local NDA partner in Andhra Pradesh, Pawan Kalyan's Janasena party, declaring a unilateral alliance with the TDP for the next elections, State BJP president Daggubati Purandeswari on Sunday said the final call on alliances will be taken by the party's central leadership. Purandeswari made these comments in Vijayawada on the sidelines of a programme to commemorate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday and to mark Vishwakarma Jayanti. She said that Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan said he would meet the BJP leadership to explain his position. On several occasions, many local BJP leaders have proclaimed that there would be no alliance with the TDP but their local ally, Kalyan, unilaterally declared that Jana Sena and TDP will join forces for the next



elections, following a meeting with Naidu in the Rajamahendravaram central prison recently. "After he explains, the party's central leadership will also discuss with us and later take a decision," said Purandeswari talking to reporters. She added that Janasena is still a part of the NDA. While announcing the tie-up with TDP, Kalyan had also expressed confidence that this newfound part-

nership will have BJP's 'complete support'. The Jana Sena has also decided to form a committee under the leadership of political affairs committee chairman Nadendla Manohar to coordinate with BJP and TDP leaders. Speaking about the arrest of TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu in the multi-crore skill development corporation scam, Purandeswari asserted that it was the BJP that first condemned the arrest -- and sought to quell talk that her party had anything to do with the arrest. She underlined that the CID, which filed the cases against Naidu and arrested him, reports to the state government, and questioned what the BJP has got to do with it. Moreover, Purandeswari noted that BJP's cadre and party's Telangana leadership have also condemned the way Naidu was arrested -- allegedly without due process being followed.

Govt school students turn ambassadors of AP

To speak about educational reforms at UN HQs over next 2 weeks

C PRADEEP KUMAR
 ■ VIJAYAWADA
 A group of students from Andhra Pradesh Government schools, many of whom hail from underprivileged backgrounds, are making history by participating in the SDG (Sustainable Development Goal) summit at the United Nations headquarters in New York City. This marks the first time these students, who had never ventured beyond their villages before, have had such an opportunity. Ten students from Andhra

Pradesh government schools, including two from Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), have been chosen to address the SDG Action Weekend at the UN headquarters. They will be discussing the forward-thinking initiatives of the Government of Andhra Pradesh that have received global acclaim. Over the course of two weeks (September 15 - 28), these students are touring the United States, attending seminars, and engaging in discussions at renowned institutions such as the United Nations, World Bank, US Department of State, and Columbia University. As a gesture of goodwill, they have also received an invitation to visit the White House in Washington, DC.



In addition to addressing Sustainable Development, these students will also highlight educational reforms implemented in Andhra Pradesh, such as Naadu Nedu, Jagananna Ammavodi, Jagananna Vidya Kanuka, Jagananna Vidya Deevena, and Jagananna Vasathi Deevena, which have garnered international recog-



Congress' power sixer

Announces guarantee schemes says her dream is to bring Cong to power in TS

K VENKATESHWARLU
 ■ HYDERABAD
 Stating that her dream is to bring the Congress to power in Telangana, former AICC president Sonia Gandhi appealed to the people of Telangana to bring the Congress to power. Addressing the Congress Vijaya Bheri public meeting held at

Tukkuguda on Sunday, Sonia said that the Congress will develop the state as the party that accorded a separate Telangana state. She said that September 17 is a good day for Telangana as Telangana was freed from Nizam's rule on that day. "I am happy that I am announcing six guarantee schemes today for the people of Telangana. We will implement the assurances immediately after coming to power," she said while releasing the six guarantee schemes.

- SIX GUARANTEED SCHEMES**
- The Mahalaxmi Scheme will provide Rs 2,500 per month for women, free travel in RTC buses and an LPG cylinder for Rs 500 for poor women.
 - Rythu Bharosa Scheme will provide Rs 15,000 per year to farmers and it would be applicable to tenant farmers.
 - Griha Jyoti Scheme will provide 200 units of free power to every family.
 - Indiramma Houses Scheme will provide Rs 5 lakh to houseless families. 250-square-yard house site to the families of activists of the Telangana movement.
 - Yuva Vikasam Scheme will provide Rs 5 lakh to students and International schools in every mandal.
 - Cheyutha Scheme will provide Rs 4,000 pension and the Rajiv Arogya Sri limit will be enhanced to Rs 10 lakh.

Rowdy sheeter murdered in full public glare

PNS ■ BHIMAVARAM
 In a shocking incident, a rowdy sheeter was brutally murdered in broad daylight and full public glare at Kanaka Durga temple here on Sunday. Police said that the deceased Bevara Vijay (26) was a rowdy sheeter in the city. When he was going on a motorcycle, miscreants hit his bike with an SUV. When he fell down, they hacked indiscriminately, killing him on the spot. Interestingly, the gruesome murder took place in full public glare and daylight on the road. The deceased was one of the accused in the murder of another rowdy sheeter Venkat. Superintendent of Police U Ravi Prakash visited the scene of the crime.

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State government committed to welfare of artisans: Amarnath

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Industries Minister Gudivada Amarnath has emphasised the talents of handicraft workers in India, noting their contributions to global recognition. He assured that the State government is unwavering in its support for these skilled artisans.

During his participation in the 'PM Vishwakarma' programme on the occasion of 'Vishwakarma Jayanti', traditional craftsmen and artisans were promised low-interest loans without collateral at the Sagarmala Convention Centre. Minister Amarnath highlighted that the central government has allocated Rs 13,000 crore in financial aid over a five-year period for this initiative, set to benefit around 30 lakh families of traditional artisans and craftsmen, including weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, laundry workers, and barbers.

Expanding on this, Minister Amarnath pointed out that the State government is providing assistance to artisans through the 'Chedodu' scheme. The scheme's aim is to improve the accessibility and quality of products and services offered by traditional artisans and craftsmen. He also commended the Etikoppaka and



Kondapalli dolls, which have gained special recognition for the state. He mentioned that some artisans have even received prestigious awards like the Padma Shri and Padma Vibhushan for their outstanding contributions to handicrafts.

Union Communications Minister Dev Singh Chouhan applauded the launch of the

scheme on Prime Minister Modi's birthday, highlighting its objective to enhance the livelihoods of traditional artisans and craftsmen through skill training, financial assistance, digital transaction incentives, toolkit incentives, and marketing support. He also recognized the significance of Indian art being exported to foreign countries, showcasing

the greatness of these artisans. Chouhan praised the Waltair Division of East Coast Railway for their role in this initiative.

Suneetha Gandhram, CEO of Gandham Agro & Gandham Flora, elaborated on the initiatives undertaken by the Government of India and Andhra Pradesh to uplift skilled artisans in the unorganized sector. She expressed

Minister Amarnath highlighted that the central government has allocated Rs 13,000 crore in financial aid over a five-year period for this initiative, set to benefit around 30 lakh families of traditional artisans and craftsmen, including weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, laundry workers, and barbers.

confidence that the PM Vishwakarma Scheme would significantly boost India's traditional economy. The event featured the felicitation of several artisans, skilled workers, and craftsmen by the distinguished guests. Among the guests were GVL Narasimha Rao, MP (Rajya Sabha) & ZRUCC Member; Saurabh Prasad, Divisional Railway Manager, Waltair; Manoj Kumar Sahoo, ADRM (Operations); and Sudhir Kumar Gupta, ADRM (Infrastructure).

Pawan not qualified to criticise Jagan: Minister Calls the Jana Sena chief a 'psychopath'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Housing Minister Jogi Ramesh accused Pawan Kalyan, the leader of Jana Sena, of selling the party to TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu after a meeting in Rajahmundry jail.

According to Ramesh, this meeting was supposed to be a 'Mulaqaat', but it turned into a collaboration 'Milaqaat' between the Telugu Desam and Jana Sena, all in favor of Naidu. The Minister also criticised Pawan Kalyan for making inappropriate remarks about Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, stating that Pawan lacked the credibility to criticise him.

During a press conference on Sunday, Minister Ramesh pointed out that despite insults from TDP leaders, Pawan Kalyan seemed to have forgotten them in order to support his 'adopted father' Naidu. This, in Ramesh's view, reflected poorly on Pawan's ethics and suggested that he was driven by financial gain. Ramesh strongly disagreed with Pawan's characterisation of CM Jagan as a 'madman' and referred to Pawan Kalyan as a 'psychopath' and a 'madman' himself. He questioned how



long Pawan planned to continue selling out those who had faith in him to Chandrababu, suggesting that even Pawan's fans and Kapu community members were growing disillusioned with him. Ramesh also warned Pawan that people might turn hostile towards him.

Minister Ramesh asked Pawan Kalyan to clarify his actions to the public, reminding him of past political choices. He highlighted that when Pawan's brother Chiranjeevi formed the Prajaraajam party, Pawan could have been its leader. However, the party later merged with the Congress. In 2014, Pawan formed Jana Sena, but in the subsequent elections, he did

not contest any seats for his party and appeared to be closely aligned with Naidu, ultimately merging the party with the TDP. Ramesh suggested that Pawan's identity as Chandrababu's adopted son could never be erased.

Ramesh also took issue with Pawan's assessment of CM Jagan and argued that Pawan had made unilateral decisions regarding political alliances without consulting his party's leaders and members. He asserted that the people of the State viewed CM Jagan as a capable administrator who fulfilled election promises, contrasting this with the perception that Pawan was merely a pawn in Chandrababu's political game.

'Sr Cong leaders should visit AP often'

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) chief and former MLC Gidugu Rudra Raju has told the Congress Working Committee (CWC) that there is a need for senior party leaders to visit the State of Andhra Pradesh frequently to rejuvenate the party cadres. There was tremendous response to the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by AICC former chief Rahul Gandhi, he said.

On the second day of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting which took place in Hyderabad, Rudra Raju submitted his report on behalf of the APCC. He said that the bifurcation of the State was done a decade ago, but the Special Category Status (SCS) has not been accorded so far. The Polavaram project was abandoned and no financial package was announced for the backward districts in Rayalaseema and Uttarandhra, he said.

The Kadapa Steel Plant was denied. A separate Railway Zone in Visakhapatnam was formed for namesake, but no activities have taken place. The Machilipatnam Port was also

Modi govt neglected State by denying Special Category Status and not fulfilling bifurcation assurances



neglected. The NDA-led Central government has failed to bifurcate the institutions under Schedule IX and X between the two Telugu States, he added.

Further, he alleged that the Modi government subjected the Visakha Steel Plant (Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited) to losses deliberately and intentionally by not allocating captive mines to it. The people of the State are worried about this as the BJP-led Union Government had proposed 100

per cent disinvestment in the Visakha Steel Plant, he added.

He said that the people of Andhra Pradesh had an emotional attachment to the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, as it was achieved after a long saga of struggle and sacrifice. Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi established the Steel Plant which was the first plant to get certification from ISO, he said. Former PMs Rajiv Gandhi and PV Narasimha Rao helped the plant grow, he added. Meanwhile, he brought up

several issues at the CWC meeting regarding the Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Act, 2014. But to the utter dismay of the people of the State, the Modi government didn't implement the provisions of the Act. Also, the assurances given in the Parliament were either denied on one or other pretext or implemented some of them for namesake, he said.

In this situation, he appealed to the Congress leadership that senior leaders should visit the State. It was a crucial period before the elections. In the coming months, the party proposed a public meeting in Visakhapatnam against the privatisation of the Steel Plant, he said. Rahul Gandhi should attend the programme, he said.

Moreover, a public meeting should be proposed in Vijayawada with the presence of Priyanka Gandhi and another one in Tirupathi or Anantapur, which should be attended by AICC chief Mallikharjun Kharge, he urged.

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Thunderstorms accompanied by lightning are likely to occur at isolated places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh during the next 24 hours and on September 20 and 21, Meteorological Centre said on Sunday.

The weather report here said the same situation is likely to prevail in Rayalaseema during the next 24 hours.

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are likely to

Heavy rain forecast



occur at a few places or at one or two places or at many places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema during the next seven days.

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are likely to occur at many places or at a few places or at isolated places over Telangana during the same period. Heavy rainfall

occurred at one or two places over Annamayya, Tirupati, and Chittoor districts of Rayalaseema during the last 24 hours. Rainfall occurred at one or two places over Coastal Andhra Pradesh, at few places over Rayalaseema and dry weather prevailed during the same period.

Southwest monsoon has been weak over Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and normal over Rayalaseema. Rain occurred at isolated places over Telangana during the last 24 hours, the report added.

Police vigil stepped up in Vizag: CP

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In accordance with the directives issued by Dr. A Ravi Saankar, the Police Commissioner of the city, law enforcement officers and police personnel carried out operations on September 16. During these operations, they filed legal cases against various unlawful activities including illegal sand mining, liquor violations, NDPS offenses, gambling activities such as poker, cockfighting betting, disturbances under the Town Nuisance Act, and instances of public drinking.

A case under the Gaming Act was registered under 1st Town Police Station and six persons were arrested and Rs 41900/- in cash and six mobile phones were seized. Town nuisance cases have been registered against 26 people in various parts of the city. There were 72 instances of individuals driving under the influence of alcohol recorded within the city, while 2,462 cases were documented for individuals who breached motor vehicle regulations. Cases were registered against 33 people who consumed alcohol in public places and disturbed public peace.

The city police are continuously engaged in vehicle inspections, processing enforcement cases, carrying out visible policing, conducting directional patrols, implementing beach sand barricades, and promoting awareness of traffic safety regulations.



Police, and SEB officials conducted awareness classes on ganja, drugs and other narcotic drugs. Suspicious shops, parcel godowns and shops were checked. Conversely, the Mahila police force is proactively raising awareness within the community about cyber-crimes, fraudulent loan requests, OTP scams, and deceptive schemes promising

convenient loans at reduced interest rates. In tandem with these initiatives, comprehensive police arrangements have been enacted to address the increased tension within the city, coupled with the introduction of multiple programs designed to enhance the city's overall structure and functionality. Furthermore, there will be

the establishment of two checkpoints that will operate round the clock with a complete workforce. These checkpoints, strategically positioned near Tagarapavalasa and Aganampudi within the city, will carry out ongoing vehicle inspections, thereby enhancing the city's security and deterring any illicit traffic.

'Ankurarpanam' held at Tirumala

PNS ■ TIRUMALA

As the annual Brahmotsavam are scheduled from September 18 to 26 at Tirumala Srivari Temple, the festival of prelude, Ankurarpanam was held on Sunday evening.

As part of this, Vishvakenuvaru, who is the Commander in Chief of

Srivaru, went on a procession in the four Mada streets and supervised the Brahmotsavam arrangements for the big event.

Later, special pujas were performed to Mother Earth in the Yagasala of the temple and new grains were sowed in mud pots. The sowing of seeds ceremony is the main episode

in Ankurarpanam also known as Beejavaranam.

TTD Chairman Bhumana Karunakara Reddy, EO AV Dharma Reddy, JEO Veerabrahmam, CVSO Narasimha Kishore, Srivari Temple Deputy EO Lokanadh and other officials participated in this religious ritual.

Advocates urged to take Gandhi, Ambedkar as their role models

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh High Court Judge and Krishna District Administrative Judge Justice AV Sessa Sai has said that advocates take Mahatma Gandhi, Dr BR Ambedkar, Alluri Sitarama Raju and Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu as role models. Then only they would become absolute advocates, he said.

Justice AV Sessa Sai inaugurated the newly constructed building of the Fast Track Court on the premises of the District Courts, along with AP High Court Judge Justice VRK Krupa Sagar and District Chief Judge Justice Aruna Sarika at Machilipatnam on Sunday.

Later, he attended a felicita-



tion function which was held at the Machilipatnam Bar Association Hall. He spoke about the Machilipatnam Bar which gave great judges and

advocates to the judiciary. He expressed happiness that he was part of the Machilipatnam Bar Association.

He added that those Bar

Associations which had active senior advocates would maintain discipline. Senior advocates who are knowledgeable are national assets, he added.

Another AP High Court Judge Justice VRK Krupa Sagar was glad to return to the Machilipatnam Bar Association. He praised the Bar for striving to regain its old glory.

First Additional District Judge Chinnampati Raju, POCSO Court Special Judge Dr Shaik Mahammad Fazululla, 10th Additional District Judge A Narasimha Murthy, Sixth Additional District Judge S Chinna Babu, Machilipatnam Bar Association president T Hari Babu and other judges and advocates were present.

Ambati pays tributes to freedom-fighter Vavilala

PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

Minister for Irrigation Ambati Rambabu paid tributes to freedom fighter and former MLA Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah on his 118th birth anniversary in Sattenapalli on Sunday.

The Minister paid tributes to Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah by garlanding his statue at the Vavilala memorial. Vavilala's grandson Mannava Sodekar also participated in the programme. Later on the occasion of Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah's birth anniversary clothes were distributed to poor women and elderly people.

Speaking on the occasion, the minister recalled the role played by Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah in the freedom movement. "Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah earned a reputation as Andhra Gandhi for his simplicity. He played an active role in the struggle for freedom," he added.

Ambati Rambabu admitted that it is not possible for the present leaders to emulate Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah's simplicity and honesty.



However, all should dry to draw inspiration from Vavilala, he said.

The onus was laid on the present generation to respect and honour Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah. Due respect is being given to Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah in the Sattenapalli constituency by organizing his birth and death anniversaries every year.

The YSRCP organizes his birth and death anniversaries every year and pays rich tributes to him, he stated.

Former ML Yarram Venkateswara Rao recalled that Vavilala Gopalakrishnaiah was elected to the Assembly four times and he brought a reputation to Sattenapalli at the national level. "We all should feel proud

because Gopalakrishnaiah belonged to this area," he observed.

Guntur Mirchi Yard chairman Nimakayala Rajanarayana also spoke. AMC chairman P Babu Rao, and municipal commissioner Kolimi Shammai, state Rythu Advisory board be Kallam Vijay Bhaskar Reddy were also present.



Personal attacks against judges deplored

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh High Court retired Judge G Krishna Mohan Reddy here on Sunday expressed anguish over the criticism against the judiciary.

In a statement, he said that for a section of the elite, it has become commonplace in recent times to indulge in pugilist-bouts on 'judicial verdicts'.

"Judicial norms do not permit personal attacks on judges," the retired judge asserted.

"If the consequences, arising from the judicial verdicts are dealt with acrimony, abuse, and slander, it would be a death knell to the society at large," retired Judge Krishna Mohan Reddy feared.



Guntur city will be made garbage-free: Commissioner

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Guntur Municipal Corporation (GMC) Commissioner Keerthi Chekuri has said that Guntur city will be made a garbage-free city and to achieve this she appealed for the cooperation of people for the same.

Indian Swachh League 2.0 was organised in the BR stadium for which 3,978 people including the secretaries attended on Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, municipal Commissioner Keerthi Chekuri in a bid to create awareness among the people of the city on clean and hygienic conditions, Indian Swachh League 2.0 was organized in which a large number

of youths participated today.

She said that over 13,000 students registered their names to participate in the Indian Swachh League 2.0 programmes which is a record in the country.

She said that a special action plan is being formulated to keep the city clean and hygienic and make the city a garbage-free city. She appealed to the people not to dump garbage in drainage canals and on roads.

Mayor K Manohar Naidu said that the State and Central governments are taking up many programmes under the Swachh Sarvekshan. The people's participation is important to make Guntur city clean and hygienic, he stated.

He recalled that Guntur city secured the 3rd rank at the national level in the Swachh Yavu Sarvekshan. The Indian Swachh League 2.0 held today received an overwhelming response from the youth. In the coming days the same programme would be organized in a big way, he said. MLA Maddali Giridhar appealed to the people to cooperate with the municipal officials to keep the city clean and hygienic.

Later the Mayor administered the Swatcc pledge. Deputy Mayor Vanama Vajrababu, Sheik Sajila and additional commissioner Peddi Roja were among those who took part in the programme.

Women take out massive rally protesting Naidu's arrest

PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

A large number of women took out a massive rally in Vinukonda protesting against the arrest of Telugu Desam party chief and former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu.

The rally was led by former MLA and TDP senior leader GV Anjaneyulu's wife Leelavati. The rally began at Kalvakatta on Karampudi road and went through the RTC bus station, Shivaiah Stupam, and reached Aruna theatre where some activists observed fasts.

The leaders garlanded the statue of TDP founder NT Rama Rao. Addressing the crowds, Leelavati said that the Skill Development Centres were established during the Chandrababu Naidu regime



through which lakh of youths have been imparted technical training and they have got lucrative jobs also. Unfortunately, Chandrababu Naidu was falsely implicated in the false cases and sent him to prison.

People of the state are vehemently opposing the anarchic rule of Jagan Mohan Reddy and they are ready to teach him a lesson in the next elections.

"Chandrababu Naidu is a brand ambassador for development and he is a visionary leader. All should extend support to Naidu and condemn his unjust arrest," she said. ZPTC Para Hymavathi, ex-ZPTC Murugula Adimma former municipal chairperson Sameera Khan, and other leaders were among those who took part in the rally.

Boyi Bhimanna remembered

Awards presented to Pratap Kumar and Sankara Rao

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh State Creative and Culture Society celebrated Padmabhushan Award winner Boyi Bhimanna's 112th birth anniversary at Berm Park at Bhavanipuram on Sunday. Minister for Tourism, Culture, and Youth Advancement RK Roja attended the celebrations and paid tributes to Boyi Bhimanna.

Also, Roja presented the Boyi Bhimanna Memorial Award for the year 2002 to writer Dr K Pratap Kumar and for the year 2023 to Dr Vistari Sankara Rao,



Head of the Department of Telugu, Madras University. She felicitated them with a shawl and Rs.2 lakh prize money each.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister Roja said that Boyi Bhimanna was a great writer. He served the field for 70 years. His

'Gudiselu Kalipotunnayi' received the Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award in 1975. She suggested that more youths should come to the field of writing. Later, Minister Roja felicitated Boyi Bhimanna's wife Hymavathi. AP Planning Board Chairman and Vijayawada Central MLA Malladi Vishnu, West MLA V Srinivas, AP State Culture Chairman V Usha, Sahitya Akademy Chairperson Sri Lakshmi, Official Language Commission Chairman P Vijaya Babu, CEO Mallikharjuna and others were present.



No permission to hold bike rallies in Vja city

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Additional Deputy Police Commissioner (Traffic) D Prasad has made it clear that there is no permission to conduct bike rallies in Vijayawada. He said that CRPC Section 144 and Police Act 30 were being enforced in the city. "If anyone organises bike rallies without obtaining permission from the police, stringent action will be taken," he warned.

Addressing the media at the NTR Circle at Patamata on Sunday, ADCP Prasad said that some people were forwarding WhatsApp messages that they were organising bike rallies and agitations in the NTR circle. It is a false message

and no one has taken permission from the police, he said.

He said that some youngsters misled people saying that there was police permission to conduct rallies in the city. The police should nab these people, he said. Also, youths should not participate in such bike rallies, he said.

The ADCP said that if anyone sought police permission to organise agitations, it would be allowed in certain routes only. The police have given notices to 50 people for staging a protest at Benz Circle, he added. NTR District Central Zone ACP P Bhaskara Rao, Traffic ACP Suresh Kumar Reddy, Patama CI Kasi Viswanath, Machavaram CI Guna Ram and others were present.

Siddhartha Engg College professors visit Indrakeeladri

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As per the directions from NTR District Collector Dr S Dilli Rao, VR Siddhartha Engineering College, Kanuru Civil Department, Dean Prof Pandu Ranga Rao and Prof Ramesh Kumar, on Sunday, visited Indrakeeladri where boulders fell due to heavy rain recently. They suggested steps to prevent boulders and rocks from falling on the road from uphill Indrakeeladri.

The VR Siddhartha Engineering College Civil Engineering Department team

visited the dangerous spots on the Ghat Road where the boulders fell, opposite the Durga Ghat on National Highway 65. They talked to Durga Temple Executive Officer D Bramaramba and Executive Engineers KVS Koteswara Rao and L Rama Devi.

Later, they said that to prevent such incidents, they had made special designs. Also, they supervised the works on structures. Keeping in mind the upcoming Dasara Sarannavaratri festivities, they gave several suggestions to the temple authorities.

3 youths killed as bike collides with truck



PNS ■ ONGOLE

Three youths were killed when the motorcycle on which they were travelling collided with a container truck at Maddiralapadu village in Naguluppalapadu mandal in Prakasam district on NH 216 Sunday.

Circle Inspector Bhaktavatsala Reddy said that the deceased Mariboina Gopi (30), Mariboina Manikanta (25), and Bathina Aravind (25) went to buy a Ganesh idol to perform puja on Ganesh Chaturthi day. When they were going back to their village, the bike collided with a container truck.

The three youths were killed instantaneously. The deceased belonged to Pamidipadu village in Korisapadu mandal in Bapatla district. The police registered a case and shifted the bodies to the RIMS hospital for postmortem. A pall of gloom descended on Pamidipadu village with the death of three persons.

Clay Ganesh idols distributed

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

With hardly a day left over for the Ganesh Chavithi celebrations, clay idols made of seven seeds of various trees have been distributed to the residents and students of Nandigama town by Prayavara Parirakshana Samithi (PPS), an NGO, on Sunday. Nandigama ACP, K Janardhan Naidu, who was the chief guest of the programme, distributed the clay idols. The ACP lauded PPA president Ramireddy Sridhar for taking pains in getting clay idols ready and distributing to the people for the past 23 years to create awareness among the people on protecting the environment by using clay Ganesh idols instead of Plaster of Paris ones. PPA president Sridhar said that every year, he had been distributing clay Ganesh idols but this year he got an innovative idea of getting the



idols made with clay with seven seeds of various trees. He said that after the puja was completed, the Ganesh idols would be immersed and the seeds would grow into plants and trees. He said that 2700 Ganesh idols had been distributed this year and that protecting the environment for the coming generations was the responsibility of everyone. He

expressed gratitude to various officials, police personnel, school management and the students who have been supporting this programme for 23 years. MDO P Srinivas, Traffic SI Naresht, Town SI P Dora, Retired Principal Koteswara Rao, fourth ward councillor Amariah, Ln M Satyanarayana, police personnel and students participated in the programme.

Police counsel rowdy-sheets

PNS ■ ELURU

The police conducted counseling for the history sheets in Eluru, Jangareddygudem, Polavaram, and Nuzvid subdivision limits on Sunday.

Police here on Sunday said that on the directions of Superintendent of Police D Mary Prashanthi, the police conducted counseling to the rowdy sheets in the four divisions.



The police officials warned the rowdy sheets of stringent action if they resort to acts that vitiate tranquility. The police officials told the rowdy sheets that if they maintained good conduct and were away from criminal acts, their names would be removed from the rowdy sheet. The police officials enquired about their present profession and how they were eking out a livelihood.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Something special?

Parliament's special session begins today amid speculation over its true purpose

Though Parliament's special session's date with destiny is today, the real reason for summoning it has remained shrouded in suspense ever since its announcement only days after the monsoon session. Significantly, the BJP Government had called for this special session on September 18 while everyone and everything was focused on making the G20 Summit a resounding success. This unexpected announcement drew attention from across the political spectrum, but had everyone clueless about the agenda or the Government's underlying motive. Since a special session is called only when there is an urgent, important issue, there was a lot of speculation over the issues likely to be taken up: National security to agricultural reforms to legislative initiatives. Making it more secretive, for its part, the Government did not list any business. Only days before the session's start did the Government release the agenda: There is a special discussion on our Parliament's journey of 75 years. The Government also listed the Bill on the appointment of the Chief Election Commissioner to be taken up for consideration and passage. The other listed items for the Lok Sabha include 'The Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023' and 'The Press and Registration of Periodicals Bill, 2023', passed by the Rajya Sabha on August 3, 2023. Besides, 'The Post Office Bill, 2023' has been listed for the Lok Sabha. The session is likely to see the proceedings of Parliament shifting from the old building to the new on the second day.



Congress leader Jairam Ramesh has termed it "much ado about nothing" as all this business, assuming it is all, could have waited till the winter session in November. In the absence of any suitably tangible information, meanwhile, rumours and speculation are rife. Guesses are as wide-ranging as the declaration of Emergency, a Cabinet reshuffle or early Lok Sabha elections by dissolving the House (though all these can be achieved even when Parliament is not in session). The big question remains, why was the special session called in the first place? Given the year-end Assembly polls and the 2024 general elections, it could be a strategic move by the BJP to gain political mileage. To be fair, the sitting of the two Houses provides it a platform to articulate its vision to public. Calling a special session may also help in avoiding parliamentary logjams which have routinely marked the sessions. Having said that, it still remains an unprecedented move. A special session was not called to discuss grave situations like the Coronavirus pandemic, demonetisation or the incidents of violence in Manipur. So why now? Besides, for announcing it barely two months before the scheduled start of the winter session, the Government ought to have very sound reasons, else it would set a bad precedence. The bottomline is that arbitrary moves must be avoided as these create unnecessary confusion, affecting adversely not only the electorate but also the nation's economic sentiment and growth.

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PICTALK



A pandal themed on Chandrayaan-3 is made for the Ganesh Chaturthi festival, in Kolkata

Moral compass in education is a must

Teachers' Day is the perfect occasion to take stock of our education system and where it is headed

Every year we celebrate Teachers' Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who was a distinguished philosopher, scholar, and the second President of India. He was also a prominent educator and believed deeply in the value of education. The significance of Teachers' Day lies in appreciating the immense contribution of teachers to society. Teachers are the main pillar that keeps our nation moving forward. They not only provide knowledge to the students but also groom next-generation citizens. The quality of the society can be deciphered from the contribution of good teachers. On teachers' day, students express their gratitude and respect for their teachers through various activities, such as organizing cultural programs, presenting cards and gifts, and delivering speeches. Many educational institutions also organize events and functions to honour their teaching staff. In between these celebrations, we often forget the philosophy of education emphasized by Dr. Radhakrishnan.



Teachers' Day is a time to reflect on the current education scenario in the country and the changing roles of a teacher.

The educational philosophy proposed by Dr. Radhakrishnan was deeply rooted in the belief that education is not merely a process of acquiring knowledge, but a means to cultivate a holistic and enlightened individual. Radhakrishnan believed in the holistic development of an individual. He emphasized that education should nurture not only intellectual growth but also moral, emotional, and spiritual development. He emphasized the importance of teachers in shaping the intellectual and moral character of students. This emphasis on character formation was central to his vision of education. Unfortunately in today's education, teachers have taken a back seat in delivering moral values to students.

The human touch between teacher and student is hardly seen in their relationship. There was a time when a teacher donned not only the role of a knowledge provider but also a parent. They could even remember the details of family members of their students. Even if a student bunks off the class, teachers used to catch these fellows from movie halls and parks. But with changing times, this culture has drastically shifted, mostly because of the attitudinal change that happened to parents. Similarly, during earlier periods teachers not only discussed the syllabus but also many topics related to values in life. Most of the time these values get imbibed into the sub-conscious mind of the student that helps in grooming a good future citizen. Every student remembers these values taught by teachers till the end of life. With the mushrooming of private educational institutions, even the management and teachers forget the importance of values. The only thing these institutions focus on is to make students suc-

cessful in competitive examinations and making money. Even teachers have become corrupted because of this. They act in a partisan manner to satisfy the needs of the management, fearing loss of jobs. The hands of these teachers are tightly bound by the management and they don't enjoy the academic freedom their predecessors enjoyed two decades back. The higher number of crimes that involve educated people, and increasing malpractices in every sector by the educated people point to our faulty education system. When someone points out a corruption charge in society, be it against a politician or a government employee, it indirectly points to a teacher who moulded them. Value-based education is the need of the hour. Education coupled with moral values empowers individuals to make ethical decisions, even in complex or ambiguous situations for the betterment of society. (The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore; views are personal)



BIJU DHARAMAPALAN

cessful in competitive examinations and making money. Even teachers have become corrupted because of this. They act in a partisan manner to satisfy the needs of the management, fearing loss of jobs. The hands of these teachers are tightly bound by the management and they don't enjoy the academic freedom their predecessors enjoyed two decades back. The higher number of crimes that involve educated people, and increasing malpractices in every sector by the educated people point to our faulty education system. When someone points out a corruption charge in society, be it against a politician or a government employee, it indirectly points to a teacher who moulded them. Value-based education is the need of the hour. Education coupled with moral values empowers individuals to make ethical decisions, even in complex or ambiguous situations for the betterment of society. (The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore; views are personal)

Who actually lost territory to China?

The war of 1962 exposed the inept leadership of a Prime Minister who was thoroughly alienated from the realities of both India and the geopolitics



PRAFULL GORADIA

While receiving the diplomatic credentials from India's Ambassador KM Panikkar, Mao Zedong had said, "India and China cannot afford to have war. We have too many important problems to think about," and added, "China had no aggressive intentions towards any body and least of all towards India". Being a socialist, Jawaharlal Nehru, fell for Mao's sweetness in good faith. Nehru's dear friend VK Krishna Menon, whose intellect the former was in awe of, was also a communist. Menon believed that no socialist country can go to war with another such country. When General Robert Lockhart, the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army in the immediate years after independence, once asked Nehru as to the kind of army he envisaged for India so that he could plan accordingly, Nehru reacted sharply, "What army? India is a peace-loving country and doesn't want war. Our police is sufficient to protect us".

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's advice dated 7th November 1950, proved to be water off a duck's back. Patel had written, "We have practically been alone in championing the cause of China's entry into UN. In spite of this, China is not convinced about our disinterestedness, it continues to regard us with suspicion and the whole psychology is one of, scepticism mixed with a little hostility. In the background of this, we have to consider what new situation now faces us as a result of the disappearance of Tibet, and the expansion of China almost up to our gates".

Impervious to his colleague's advice, Nehru followed the socialist line propagated by his buddy Krishna Menon, choosing to befriend Chinese foreign minister Chou En Lai, going about warmly introducing him to his Asian counterpart heads of state and governments. The Bandung Conference of 1955 was an example when Nehru trotted around chaperoning Chou En Lai.

By the same year, Beijing (then Peking) had already built a highway connecting Tibet with



Xinjiang (then Sinkiang). When the Government of India came to know of this serious development, Nehru tried to explain it away to Parliament by stating that in Aksai Chin, "not a blade of grass grows". I wonder if Rahul Gandhi was referring to this loss of what he called "grazing land" and about which Prime Minister Modi had "not disclosed".

Nehru's pride did not permit him to change India's approach towards Chinese mischief although with Chou En Lai, he shifted from his charm to gradual animosity. The Chinese reacted by assaulting and killing ten Indian border patrol guards and apprehending another ten at Kongka Pass in the Tibetan region in 1959. This was the final portent, followed by Chou's visit to New Delhi in 1960, when he reportedly gave Nehru a 'final offer' of settlement: India should give up claims to Aksai Chin and China would renounce its 'rights' in Arunachal Pradesh, then called North East Frontier Agency (NEFA). The next time India and China met was on the battlefields of Ladakh in the West and Tawang in the east.

While our soldiers fought valorously, the leaders behaved like sissies. Nehru insisted on fighting the Chinese with the

WHILE OUR SOLDIERS FOUGHT VALOROUSLY, THE LEADERS BEHAVED LIKE SISSIES. NEHRU INSISTED ON FIGHTING THE CHINESE WITH THE HELMSMANSHIP OF LT GEN BRIJ MOHAN KAUL, WHO HAD NEVER WITNESSED ACTION ON A BATTLEFIELD

helmsmanship of Lt. Gen. Brij Mohan Kaul, who had never witnessed action on a battlefield. The army that was expected to fight in the mountains did not possess a single mountain howitzer. Defence minister Krishna Menon wanted the country's ordnance factories to produce civilian items like coffee percolators rather than guns and ammunition.

Our jawans thus laid down their lives, having to make do with only the outdated .303 bolt action Lee Enfield rifles. Our troops that went up the hills had only brown canvas shoes and thin woollen pullovers and no warm clothing adequate for the Himalayas. From the distance of Kolkata, it appeared that the Indian high command in 1962 had never heard of anything like strategy. From the days Carl von Clausewitz, the grandfather of modern military science, it was a maxim that a commander should never depend only on terrain for defence, because the enemy, sooner or later, would circumvent it through alternate means of intrusion. This is what the Chinese did at Sela Pass, and Bomdi La had soon to surrender. It did not register on the highest command of our armed forces that an enemy intending to capture and occupy territory does not

invade in the autumn but usually in early spring. The Chinese opened fire on October 20, 1962. Every defending army prefers to fight on a level playing field, something that was ignored.

Our troops were ill-equipped, and therefore, adhering to the above strategy was all the more important. Instead of offering immediate resistance the border, had we withdrawn to the plains of Assam, it would have been much easier to fight the invading Chinese army, especially in our thin pullovers and canvas shoes.

In the event, the sorry saga of 1962 exposed the inept leadership of a Prime Minister who was so thoroughly alienated from the realities of both India and international geopolitics. The country's present leadership, if anything, has not only resolutely stood up to Chinese bullying but has also forced it to eat humble pie at Dokaalam and Galwan. It is important for us to learn of what led to the loss of territory for which the current generation of the dynasty responsible for it, is pointing accusing fingers at the present leadership.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

KOTA STUDENT SUICIDES

Sir — It refers to "Kota shaken by yet another aspirant's suicide." What an irony that a city which used to be known as a coaching factory has turned into the suicide capital. Thirty student suicides in the last eight months in Kota are both unfortunate and unprecedented. And sadly, this does not end here; we are witnessing suicides in IITs too. It clearly exposes the vulnerability of our young minds and the kind of undue pressure we have placed on them. There is no doubt that these young students will face intense cut-throat competition when they enter the corporate world, but that does not mean we put them under extreme societal peer pressure.

Initiatives like having mental health professionals available on call, encouraging light sports activities, and allowing family members to stay with students are good measures taken by a few coaching institutes in Kota. But we need to address this sensitive issue more comprehensively. We need to encourage our children to pursue their dreams and passions, as there is no shortage of other careers in today's time. IITs and medical courses are not the be-all and end-all of life. Ultimately, the mental well-being of our children should be our top priority. Simply chasing high salaries in the IT field will not help us and our children.

Bal Govind | Noida

BCCI: RICH, RICHER, RICHEST

Sir — The BCCI is the richest cricketing body. Asia Cup rules were framed to see India or Pakistan reaching the final stage. Pakistan was beaten soundly. Sri Lanka staged a great comeback but could not upstage India in an interesting encounter between the ball and bat. I fail to understand this reserve day policy, especially only for India vs. Pakistan. Give-and-take policies apply to others. The game of cricket has become highly biased, and there is no sportsmanship in handling international cricket matches. Thus, academic interest in cricket matches is being lost, thanks to ICC. This was reflected in attendance at matches during the initial stages of the Asia

Global biofuels alliance



12 international organizations, including India, Brazil, and the US as founding members. Here is a significant business opportunity and profits for India and its farmers, who are facing significant losses due to weather extremities.

A cautionary note should be sounded: limit biofuel production to 0% deforestation (i.e., avoid fresh agricultural expansion by cutting or burning forests). Forests contribute significantly to healthy oxygen levels in the atmosphere and help reduce unhealthy CO2 pollution, providing a double benefit. Deforestation leads to global warming and weather-related catastrophes. Hence, the solution is to limit biofuels only to current farms' crop residues and stubble (left-over agricultural waste used as raw material to make ethanol). Some of these crops may have a low energy return, and it's important to note that 20% ethanol blended with petrol is not 100% clean energy, unlike solar, wind, and green hydrogen energy.

PV Madhu Niviriti | Secunderabad

Kudos to India for forming the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) during the G20 - 2023 summit on September 9th. It's excellent that GBA comprises 19 countries and

Cup. The teams concerned are more important than the game itself. The World Cup in India is already tipped to favor the home team, and the resultant cup-winning performance is bound to follow the Indian rope trick, which generally takes place in all home series matches.

CK Ramani | Mumbai

OPPOSITION BOYCOTTS TV DEBATES

Sir — The Opposition in India has decided to stop sending its leaders and spokespersons to participate in debates conducted by certain Godi media television anchors, identifying sections of the media as "hounds" and "agents" of the ruling party. After a meeting of the India coordination committee at Sharad Pawar's residence in New Delhi on Wednesday evening, a joint statement said: "The coordination committee authorized the sub-group on media to decide upon the names of the (TV) anchors who are sold-out items

on whose shows none of the India parties will send their representatives. This is probably the first time the entire Opposition bloc has decided to pinpoint journalists who act as agents of power and boycott them. Some media houses would be completely shunned, while specific anchors on other channels would be avoided. There is a consensus among the parties that they should have no link with at least three media houses.

Among the India leaders, this is a stern stand, as they feel there is no scope for any change in their attitude. Godi media selects topics and events that can be used to create communal tension and run propaganda on a daily basis. This is not only about bias; this is unethical journalism that even the media should look into.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN YAMA AND NIYAMA: THE ETHICAL FOUNDATION

They provide moral compass to Ashtanga Yoga on which the entire system rests



SWAMI CHARANSHRIT

Maharshi Patanjali in his treatise Patanjali Yoga Sutra, wrote, Tado drash-tulu swarupe avastham, (Sutra 3), implying that the seer then rests or remains in his/her own nature. This exalted state can be achieved by a disciplined mind. It would be worthwhile to perceive and comprehend Sutra 4; Ashtanga Yoga, often referred to as the Eight-Limbed Path, is a comprehensive system of yoga practice that encompasses various facets of life, ranging from physical postures (asanas) to meditation and spiritual realization. At its core, Ashtanga Yoga is built upon a solid foundation of ethical and moral principles known as Yama and Niyama. These principles provide practitioners with a framework for leading a balanced, harmonious, and spiritually fulfilling life.

Yama: The Five Moral Restraints

Yama, the first limb of Ashtanga Yoga, consists of five moral restraints or ethical guidelines that help individuals navigate their interactions with the external world. These principles are:

1. Ahimsa (Non-Violence): Ahimsa teaches us to cultivate a deep sense of non-violence, not only in our actions but also in our thoughts and words. It promotes compassion and empathy towards all living beings.
2. Satya (Truthfulness): Satya encourages us to be truthful in our words and actions. It involves not only speaking the truth but also being honest with ourselves and avoiding deception.
3. Asteya (Non-Stealing): Asteya teaches us to refrain from stealing or coveting what belongs to others, both materially and emotionally. It promotes contentment and gratitude for what we have.
4. Brahmacharya (Moderation and Self-Control): Brahmacharya emphasizes moderation and self-control in our physical and emotional desires. It encourages us to channel our energy towards spiritual growth rather than indulging in excessive sensual pleasures.
5. Aparigraha (Non-Possessiveness): Aparigraha teaches us to let go of attachments and possessiveness. By reducing our attachment to material possessions, we free ourselves from unnecessary burdens and distractions.



Niyama: The Five Observances

Niyama, the second limb of Ashtanga Yoga, consists of five observances or personal disciplines that guide our inner transformation. These principles are:

1. Saucha (Purity): Saucha emphasizes cleanliness and purity, both externally and internally. It involves maintaining a clean physical environment, as well as purifying the mind and heart through practices such as meditation.
2. Santosha (Contentment): Santosha encourages contentment and acceptance of the present moment. It teaches us to find joy and satisfaction in what we have rather than constantly seeking external sources of happiness.
3. Tapas (Austerity): Tapas involves cultivating self-discipline and inner strength. It includes practices like fasting, self-reflection, and intense self-study to remove impurities and distractions from the mind.
4. Svadhyaya (Self-Study): Svadhyaya encourages the study of sacred texts, self-reflection, and introspection. It guides us on a journey of self-discovery and self-realization.
5. Ishvara Pranidhana (Surrender to a Higher Power): Ishvara Pranidhana teaches us to surrender our ego and will to a higher power or divine consciousness.

The Importance of Yama and Niyama: In Ashtanga Yoga, the principles of Yama and Niyama are the moral and ethical cornerstones upon which the entire system is built. They provide a roadmap for individuals seeking to live a life of integrity, compassion, and inner fulfillment. By incorporating these principles into their daily lives, practitioners of Ashtanga Yoga can enhance their physical health and mental well-being.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher. The views expressed are personal)

Time for 100 per cent FDI in retail sector



UTTAM GUPTA

One hundred per cent Foreign Direct Investment should be permitted to all retailers, online or offline, big or small, for the growth of this sector

During discussions with representatives of e-commerce firms and a domestic traders' body viz. Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) held on August 2, 2023, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry made a presentation on the 'fundamentals' of the proposed e-commerce policy. The policy is being deliberated since 2018.

The DPIIT highlighted seven salient features of the proposed policy: unambiguous demarcation between the marketplace model where foreign direct investment (FDI) is allowed and inventory model where FDI is prohibited; making the policy congruent with the consumer protection rules; inclusive growth of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); enabling free and informed choice by consumers; exports promotion; determining responsibilities of e-commerce entities; and stricter compliance to regulatory measures.

The government's main objective is to harmonize the interests of three key stakeholders viz. foreign investors, MSMEs and consumers. But, the manner in which various contours of the policy have evolved since the DPIIT made its first move on FDI in e-commerce in 2016, it is unlikely that this would happen.

E-commerce is the process of selling goods and services over the Internet. In early 2016, the government allowed 100 per cent FDI under the so-called marketplace model. The marketplace is a platform where vendors sell their products to consumers even as its owner merely acts as a facilitator by providing services such as booking orders, raising invoices, arranging the delivery, etc. She can't hold inventory or undertake direct selling.

The policy intent was abundantly clear. The foreign investor in the marketplace wasn't supposed to invest in inventory model. The 'demarcation' between the two models was intended when DPIIT came out with its Press Note (PN) in 2016. But, a clever bureaucrat blurred this demarcation while drafting the fine print. The PN (2016) prescribed two conditions. First, the foreign entity owning marketplace cannot permit more than 25 per cent of total sales on the marketplace from one vendor or its group companies. Two, it cannot directly or indirectly influence the sale price.

In the absence of specifying as to who that vendor should be, it made way for a company linked to the owner of marketplace to get in. The latter could set up four companies (call them subsidiaries or JVs) and control 25 per cent each of total sales on the platform. Contrary to the policy intent, which prohibited foreign investor in e-commerce, the fineprint did just the opposite.

Having allowed its entities to control almost all of the sales made on the marketplace, the second condition that the latter can't directly or indirectly influence the sale price is laughable.

The MSMEs who were impacted the most by this backdoor entry of Amazon, Walmart/Flipkart etc in direct selling complained to the government. In response, on December 26, 2018, the DPIIT clarified "the owner of the marketplace or its subsidiary or its joint ven-



AFTER SUCCESSFULLY STEERING THROUGH THE TURBULENT TIMES CAUSED BY CORONA PANDEMIC IN 2020-21, THE GOVERNMENT KEPT UP THE MOMENTUM OF INVESTMENT IN THE FOLLOWING TWO YEARS TO LEAD GROWTH FROM THE FRONT

(The writer is a policy analyst)

ture (JV) with an Indian company can't have ownership of the seller." Further, "a seller on the platform can't source more than 25 per cent of its inventory from a firm connected with the latter." It is possible for foreign investors to circumvent the first rider by having less than 50 per cent shareholding in the seller firm and arguing that they have no control (majority) over the latter. The marketplace owner can also sell his 'own' product - albeit through its wholesale arm - on the platform. All that the wholesale arm needs to ensure is to restrict supplies to the seller within the 25 per cent threshold. It isn't just a case of boundaries getting blurred. The official notes recognize and give legitimacy to the connection between marketplace owner and the seller. These don't prohibit foreign firms from keeping inventory and engage in direct selling to consumers. They are doing it at the cost of millions of small traders. For instance, only three dozen firms out of the 400,000 sellers on the Amazon platform account for 67 per cent of sales on it. In this backdrop, one wonders as to how the new policy will promote inclusive growth of MSMEs.

The government is keen on making the policy congruent with the consumer protection rules. In 2020, the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA), in the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, issued the Consumer Protection (e-commerce) Rules, under Section 101 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. The rules bar affiliated entities from selling

on e-commerce platforms, restrict 'flash sales,' and disallow sellers from using the name or brand associated with the marketplace e-commerce entities for the promotion of goods.

In 2021, DCA made amendments to restrict business-to-business, or B2B, sales in e-commerce and a provision to prevent an 'abuse of dominant position' by e-commerce firms. Making the new policy compatible with these rules would require establishing a total disconnect between the owner of the platform and the seller on it. In other words, the government wants to undo all that was done by the commerce ministry earlier. It will be tantamount to a retrospective change of policy and send a wrong signal to foreign investors. No wonder, large e-commerce companies are resisting the proposed changes.

A fourth feature of the proposed policy is to enable 'free' and 'informed' choice (albeit for consumers). This would have been possible only when a large number of entities were able to sell on the platform in a 'fair' and 'non-discriminatory' manner. But, this isn't happening as the foreign major controls all the levers. Apart from its subsidiaries or joint ventures dominating the platform, even amongst others, the foreign firm decides as to 'who gets how much space and visibility'.

As for exports promotion, the MNCs are here to avail of the ever-expanding opportunities in the Indian market and our policy makers have so far helped them by providing an enabling environ-

ment. The talk of promoting export through this route (read: e-commerce) doesn't pass muster.

Fixing responsibilities of e-commerce entities assumes significance in the backdrop of multiple instances of consumers being duped. The foreign majors often get away from their responsibility to protect consumer by saying that they are 'intermediaries', hence they are not liable if any consumer is duped. The extant vague rules (2016/2018 press notes) enable them assume the role which suits them depending on the prevailing situation.

Finally, as for stricter compliance to regulatory measures, to ensure this, the rules need to be crystal clear in the very first place. When, these are vague and susceptible to varied interpretations, it will be difficult to prove violation. That apart, so far the government hasn't even mooted the idea of setting up a regulatory authority.

The present mess owes it to the very idea of marketplace which is flawed. When, the government expects foreign company to do almost everything that a retailer does viz. booking order, raising invoice, arranging delivery, accept rejection and so on, how can the former deny the latter right to sell? The way forward is to shun this idea; instead allow 100 per cent FDI in retail.

In fact, the bureaucrats had already done it but in a 'subtle' way. The government should make it obvious and straightforward. Moreover, 100 per cent FDI should be permitted to all retailers, online or offline, big or small for a level playing field.

India's G20 presidency has shown the way forward

The G20 Summit in Delhi has definitely given an impetus towards resolution of almost all global challenges confronting humanity as of today

India's G20 Presidency has shown the Way forward. The G20 summit in New Delhi has been truly historic in many ways, for it paved the way for the African Union to be a permanent seat holder. Hence, G20 is no longer G20, but G21 now. This is the first time that an expansion of this nature has happened since 1990 when the intergovernmental forum was established. India has emerged as a nation with an ability to bring countries together to facilitate real change in the existing world order. The joint communique, which included 83 paragraphs and not a single note of dissent, speaks volumes of how remarkable India's presidency has been; something that global leaders are already reckoning with. The inclusion of the



UMANG KOHLI

(The writer is expert on geopolitics and international affairs. The views expressed are personal)

African Union as part of the G20 has opened up possibilities for the growth of the Global South like never before. The forum has become more inclusive and multilateral emphasis on sustainability will help in giving a boost to balanced growth. Global initiatives in empowering women, digital landscape, strengthening emerging markets, green development have also been taken and will go a long way in progress of humanity and welfare of all. In a word that is highly polarised right now, this summit has helped in fostering consensus on vital subjects like climate change and war in Ukraine. India has shown remarkable astuteness in forging a consensus, something that many did not anticipate to come about during the sum-

mit. The noteworthy aspect about the summit was that it managed to throw up some important questions to the world community and humanity in general. Some of them were: Are we willing to walk the talk on sustainable development goals (SDGs)? Can the entire world work together to stop climate change, which for sure is one of the biggest challenges confronting humanity in the long run? Is the world ready to include the Global South in its policy making process? Can the entire world progress together and work with each other rather than working in silos to bring prosperity for its citizens? Will the new trade route enable countries to shun the debt trap of China? Will the transfer of technology

benefit the Global South? Have democracies across the world strengthened? And have the nations who propagate war become weaker? These are some of the questions that the G20 summit has not only raised, but also tried to address to some extent. At the G20 summit, Bharat called on leaders to work together ahead of the COP28 Summit to reduce their respective countries' carbon emissions and also support economies of the Global South to deal with the consequences of climate change. The formation of the Global Biofuel Alliance and the pledge to work together to achieve net zero carbon emissions will go a long way in dealing with climate change. The summit has definitely set the agenda for COP28. The US and the EU

have backed an ambitious plan to build an economic corridor, linking Europe with the Middle East and India via rail and sea. The launch of the corridor involving Saudi Arabia, UAE, the US and India is a long awaited trade route which works in the direction of One Earth. It will help counter China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and also the nation's effort to practice debt-trap diplomacy. The corridor will definitely help in connecting the Global South with the western world and it will also foster prosperity for the world. The inclusion of the African Union as a permanent G20 member has huge strategic and geopolitical ramifications. Africa is potentially the next global growth hub, however, it had little say at the glob-

al high table. It is this imbalance that has now been addressed. This is also a huge win for India, as it looks to counterbalance the Chinese outreach and influence in Africa. India also intends to transfer technology of digital payments to the African subcontinent. This looks like a giant step towards inclusion of Africa and the first step towards equitable distribution of resources among the various stakeholders. This statement is a vision for the future, a vision for a better world. Other SDGs like health and gender equality were also mulled over and direction to achieve them was deliberated upon. India's G20 Presidency focused on consolidating the existing digital health initia-

tives and fostering equity in healthcare by incorporating tools like telemedicine and artificial intelligence. As per the agenda of G20 Presidency, women must be at the centre of the development stories, as women are not just passive subjects, but agents, collaborators and decision-makers in the transformative socio-economic change. This is a change from the past. The G20 summit in Delhi has definitely given an impetus towards resolution of global challenges confronting humanity, even if many questions about their complete resolution remain unanswered. A roadmap has been given and the direction has been shown, it remains to be seen if the world is willing to walk on this road.

MONEY MATTERS

Finmin seeks applications for post of whole time IRDAI Member

The finance ministry has invited applications for the post of Whole Time Member (Distribution) at insurance regulator Irda.



Odisha govt signs MoU with Gopalpur Port for expansion

The Odisha government signed an MoU with Gopalpur Port for further development and expansion of the facility in Ganjam district.



CBI arrests Bridge and Roof Company chairman's secretary

The CBI has arrested the executive secretary to the CMD of Bridge and Roof Company (India) Limited (BRIL).



India, Brazil begin talks to resolve sugar-related issue

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Brazil have started talks to mutually resolve a sugar related trade dispute at the World Trade Organisation (WTO).



farmers are inconsistent with global trade rules. A WTO dispute settlement panel on December 14, 2021, ruled that India's support measures for the sugar sector are inconsistent with the global trade norms.

In January 2022, India appealed against the panel's ruling at the WTO's appellate body, which is the final authority to pass rulings against such disputes.

Brazil, Australia and Guatemala, which are members of the WTO, had complained that India's support measures to sugarcane producers exceed the de minimis level of 10 per cent of the total value of sugarcane production.

country cut its reliance on overseas shipments. India currently is 85 per cent dependent on imports for meeting its oil needs.

India would also have to offer something as part of the mutually agreed solution (MAS) to resolve the dispute at the Geneva-based multi-lateral body.

part of the solution, while New Delhi removed retaliatory duties on 8 American products like apples and walnuts.

The official said that India is also following a similar process for other complainants of the sugar dispute at the WTO.



Sidbi to raise Rs 10,000 cr from rights issue

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi), which refines SME loans, plans to float a Rs 10,000-crore rights issue next fiscal to expand its equity capital.

The central government owns 20.8 per cent in Sidbi, while State Bank of India holds 15.65 per cent and Life Insurance Corporation 13.33 per cent.

The lender's loan growth optimism comes from the demand for direct financing that is growing by leaps and bounds, which two years ago was only 7 per cent.

Production of 40 C295 transport aircraft in India will be 'game-changer'

PNS ■ SEVILLE (SPAIN)

The production of 40 Airbus C295 medium tactical transport aircraft in India will be a 'game changer' as it would facilitate the creation of a world-class aerospace ecosystem in the country.

The Indian Air Force received the first C295 aircraft on Wednesday, two years after New Delhi sealed a Rs 21,935-crore deal with Airbus Defence and Space to procure the planes.

Under the deal, Airbus will deliver the first 16 aircraft in 'fly-away' condition from its final assembly line in Seville by 2025.

"The C295 project will be a game-changer project as it

will create a world-class aerospace ecosystem in India," Patnaik told PTI in an interview.

The first 'Make in India' C295 is set to come out of a production facility in Vadodra in September 2026 and the final aircraft is expected to be delivered to the IAF by August 2031.

It will be the first military aircraft to be produced in India by a private consortium.

Officials said India is looking at procuring more C295 aircraft to replace the Indian Air Force's ageing transport fleet.

After Airbus handed over the first plane to the IAF, Patnaik said the C295 project is not only about procurement of the aircraft but it carries much more significance in terms of the creation of an aerospace eco-system in India.

"We still do not have a private aerospace eco-system in India whereas all major countries have such ecosystems.

Nine of top-10 firms together add Rs 1,80L cr in mcap; TCS biggest winner

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The combined market valuation of nine of the top-10 most valued firms rallied by Rs 1,80,788.99 crore last week, amid an overall buoyant trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark jumped 1,239.72 points or 1.86 per cent. The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied for the 11th day running on Friday.

The 30-share BSE benchmark had jumped 319.63 points or 0.47 per cent to settle at a record closing of 67,838.63 on Friday.

During the day, it rallied 408.23 points or 0.60 per cent to hit its fresh all-time intra-day high of 67,927.23.

Hindustan Unilever Limited was the only laggard from the top-10 pack. The list of winners had Reliance Industries Limited, TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Infosys, ITC, State Bank of India, Bharti Airtel and Bajaj Finance.

Closely monitoring demand for battery electric vehicles: JLR India

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Jaguar Land Rover is closely monitoring the demand for battery electric vehicles in India and depending upon the emerging scenario will 'strategise' the entry of more models into the country.

In an interaction with PTI, Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) India Managing Director Rajan Amba said the domestic market is distinct in its demands for a variety of factors.

The company currently sells just one electric model -- Jaguar I-Pace -- in the country. Globally, JLR will open bookings for the new Range Rover BEV by end of this year.

The MLA platform gives the company the flexibility to produce ICE, hybrid, and BEV Range Rovers as required, tailored to meet the demands of different markets, Amba noted.

Diesel sales fall in September, petrol consumption up



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Diesel sales in India fell for the second straight month in September as rains dampened demand and slowed industrial activity in some parts of the country.

While diesel sales by three state-owned fuel retailers fell year-on-year in the first half of September, petrol sales were up marginally.

Consumption of diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country accounting for about two-fifths of the demand, fell 5.8 per cent to 2.72 million tonnes between September 1 and 15.

Month-on-month sales were up 0.9 per cent, when compared with 2.7 million tonnes of diesel consumed in the first half of August.

Diesel sales typically fall in monsoon months as rains lower demand in the agriculture sector which uses the fuel for irrigation, harvesting and transportation.

Consumption of diesel had soared 6.7 per cent and 9.3 per cent in April and May, respectively as agriculture demand picked up and cars yanked up air-conditioning to beat the summer heat.

Petrol sales were up 1.2 per cent to 1.3 million tonnes in the first fortnight of September, when compared with the same period last year. Consumption had dropped 10.5 per cent in the first fortnight of July but picked up in the second fortnight of that month.

India's economy has demonstrated remarkable resilience and is likely to have surpassed the performance of most major economies during the first half of 2023.

NCLAT says IBC not a recovery mechanism

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Insolvency & Bankruptcy Code is "not a recovery mechanism", observed the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal, while dismissing a plea against United Telecoms Ltd filed by one of its operational creditors.

Earlier, it had refused to entertain an insolvency petition against Wipro Ltd after observing that the bankruptcy law cannot be used as a means to recover debt against solvent companies.

Circular Design Challenge announces worldwide expansion

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the aim to give a global platform to fashion design talent across the world, Circular Design Challenge (CDC) has announced its worldwide expansion that culminates at the upcoming season of Lakm Fashion Week in association with FDCI (Fashion Design Council of India).

"Presented by R|Elan, the next-gen fabric brand of India's largest conglomerate Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), in association with the United Nations in India, CDC aims towards a greener and more sustainable future globally by promoting the eco-conscious creatives of the fashion industry," a company statement said.



Five years ago, RIL pioneered the concept of the Circular Design Challenge, driven by a vision to raise consciousness for sustainability and circular practices across every facet of the fashion industry.

champion transformative ideals within the realm of fashion.

Since then, Circular Design Challenge has been pivotal in driving India's fashion industry towards eco-consciousness.

This year, CDC aims to be a global phenomenon with the competition spanning

across the UK, EU, and APAC regions, extending invitations to designers around the world.

Hemant D Sharma, Sector Head - Polyester, RIL said, "The CDC has nurtured, mentored, and promoted environmental champions leading circular and innovative collections using sustainable and recycled materials.

The initiative has played a crucial role in promoting circularity and sustainability in the Indian fashion industry, and after four editions in India, we are now going international to promote sustainability, and circular economy adoption globally."

FPIs take out Rs 4,800 cr from equities

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) have pulled out close to Rs 4,800 crore from equities in the first fortnight of September on rising US bond yields, a stronger dollar, and concerns over global economic growth.

Before the outflow, FPIs were incessantly buying Indian equities in the last six months from March to August and brought in Rs 1.74 lakh crore during the period.

In the coming days, FPIs are likely to press sale as the market is at record highs and valuations are high, V K Vijayakumar, Chief



Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said. "With high bond yields in the US (the 10-year is at 4.28 per cent) and the dollar index above 105, FPIs are likely to sell more," he added.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) pulled out a net

sum of Rs 4,768 crore from the equities so far this month (till September 15). This figure includes bulk deals and investments through the primary market.

"The net outflow (in September) was mainly due to uncertainties surrounding the global interest rate landscape, particularly in the United States, and concerns regarding global economic growth," Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar India, said.



Indian entrepreneur's UK start-up using AI to transform services

PNS ■ LONDON

An Indian entrepreneur's new start-up is sparking worldwide investor interest as among the first companies of its kind globally to offer consumers the option to book plumbers, electricians and other services using its unique conversational artificial intelligence (AI) software.

Opened for a funding round recently, Anuj Gupta's GreenVan uses a simple WhatsApp interface. It is designed as an Amazon of Services' offering that intends to transform the way people book essential tasks online.

It was born out of Gupta's own experience of relocating from the US to the UK around five years ago and finding the experience of sourcing reliable trade people a rather cumbersome word-

of-mouth process. "We were often left in the lurch when chasing trades people and were hit with a system that was too idiosyncratic," Gupta, in his mid-40s, told PTI in an interview.

"As I delved deeper into the industry, I could only find more and more problems largely because 87 per cent of it was driven by mom-and-pop shops which is classically one owner and one or two members of staff. It's very, very fragmented, more so than even the mini cab industry in the pre-Uber days," he said.

His research showed that he had hit upon a highly lucrative marketplace with immense profits, despite all the inefficiencies. In the UK, it is estimated as a USD 120 billion market with USD 20 billion of profits, he said.

SBI to send chocolates to borrowers who may default

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The nation's largest lender State Bank of India is adopting a novel way to ensure timely repayments, especially by its retail borrowers, by greeting those likely to default on monthly installments with a pack of chocolates.

According to the bank, it has been found that a borrower who is planning to default will not answer a reminder call from the bank. So the best way is to meet them at their homes unannounced.

The move, aimed at ensuring better collections, comes amidst rising level of retail

lending in the system coupled with increasing delinquency levels on the back of the upward movement in the interest rates.

SBI's retail loan book grew over 16.46 per cent to Rs 12,04,279 crore in the June 2023 quarter from Rs 10,34,111 crore in the year-ago period, making it the largest asset class for the lender whose total book stood at Rs 33,03,731 crore, growing at 13.9 per cent on-year.

In fact for the entire system, the double-digit loan growth of around 16 per cent has been led by retail loans only.

"With two fintechs which



use artificial intelligence, we are piloting a novel way of reminding our retail borrowers of their repayment obligations. While one is doing

conciliation with borrowers, the other is alerting us on the propensity of a borrower to default. And to such borrowers who are likely to default,

the representatives from this fintech will visit them, carrying a pack of chocolates for each of them, and remind them of the forthcoming EMIs," Ashwini Kumar Tewari, managing director in-charge of risk, compliance and stressed assets at SBI, said here over the weekend.

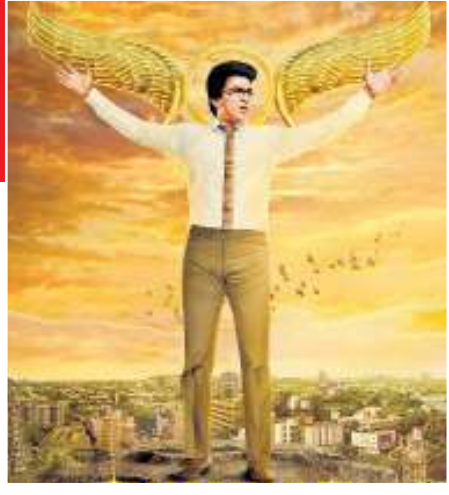
According to Tewari, this novel method of carrying a pack of chocolates and personally visiting them is adopted because it has been found that a borrower who is planning to default will not answer a reminder call from the bank. So the best way is to meet them at their own homes

unannounced and surprise them. And so far, the success rate has been overwhelming, he said.

Tewari refused to name the fintechs saying the move is just at the pilot stage and has been put into place just about 15 days back and "if successful, we will formally announce it".

"We are also talking to a few other fintechs to improve our collection efficiencies and hopefully by the end of the year, we will have formally tied up with at least half of them," he said, adding, "we want to continue the pilot for at least four to five months."

Raaj Kamal Films announces the re-release of Kamal Haasan starrer silent black comedy *Pushpak*



Ulaganayagan Kamal Haasan starrer the ever-green black comedy drama *Pushpak* which released with multiple titles for different language-speaking audiences, is all set to rerelease in theatres. The production house Raaj Kamal Films International, fondly referred as RKFI, took to social media to make this announcement about India's

rarest silent black comedy film. Although they are yet to divulge a date, the announcement on X, formerly known as Twitter, read, "#Pushpak #Pesumpadam, a pioneer in silent black comedy and an iconic masterpiece of Indian cinema, will be re-released in theatres soon." The film is directed by Singheetham Srinvasa Rao. Speaking of the film, *Pushpak* revolves around an unemployed

graduate who encounters a drunk rich unconscious man and takes over his lifestyle after keeping him as a prisoner. However, he does not realise the dangers he has brought upon himself because a hired killer believes him to be his target. The film was released on November 27, 1987 with different titles for different linguistic regions. Its original title was in

Kannada called *Pushpaka Vimana* (The Flower Chariot), *Pushpaka Vimanam* in Telugu, *Pesum Padam* (Talking Picture) in Tamil, *Pushpakvimanam* in Malayalam, and *Pushpak* (Flower) for Hindi-speaking regions. The film featured a star cast from different parts of the country, and apart from Kamal Haasan and Amala, it also starred Samir Khakhar, Tinu

Anand, K. S. Ramesh, Farida Jalal, Pratap Potan, Lokanath, P. L. Narayana and Ramya. Interestingly, the film also doesn't feature any character names because of its silent nature. *Pushpak* received a lot of recognition owing to its experiment of creating a black comedy without dialogues and received rave reviews from critics and art-film lovers.

"I would love to work in multiple regional narratives," says Varun Badola

Inspired by 'Die Panne' (The Breakdown), a 1956 novel by Swiss writer Friedrich Dürrenmatt, Ranjit Kapoor's acclaimed teletext *Wrong Turn* produced by Zee Theatre is now being translated in Telugu for audiences in Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana. Veteran actor Varun Badola who plays a layered character in the teletext is thrilled that now *Wrong Turn* will reach a wider audience and says, "Because of dubbing, subtitling, and translations, multilingual stories are reaching more people than ever before. I have done two Tamil Ad films, but as an actor, I am looking forward to being a part of this shift and would love to work in many more regional narratives."

In *Wrong Turn*, he plays Arun, a man who walks into an old house one rainy night after his car breaks down. Here, he meets three retired lawyers amusing themselves with a game that he agrees to join. The lawyers recreate a trial scene, and soon Arun finds himself trapped in a game of wits. If proven guilty, he may even face an unthinkable fate. Varun is happy that plays like *Wrong Turn* are now being archived for posterity and explains, "Usually a theatre group has to travel to different regions to reach a diverse audience but now a teletext recreates a theatre like experience at home, as even be watched in different languages, offers an enriching intercultural experience and even breaks the language barrier. OTT has familiarized us with so many fantastic regional actors and now via 'Wrong Turn', the audience in Telangana will also get to know us." He believes the play will strike a chord because it is not only an engrossing legal drama but also a story where the concept of poetic justice is explored. He explains, "In an era of excessive content, everyone gravitates towards their favourite genres. So those who are looking for good writing and strong performances will watch this play. Plus, a story about a mock trial where legal and natural justice blur, never ceases to engage audience attention."

Wrong Turn will be streamed on 16th September on Dish TV & D2H Rangmanu Active and Airtel Theatre in Telugu. The play also stars Govind Namdev, Lalit Tiwari, Suneel Sinha, Liliput Faruqui, Suzzane Mukherjee, Anangsha Biswas, Shalini Sharma, Niraj Sah and is directed by Ranjit Kapoor.



RUSSELL BRAND ACCUSED OF RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

Comedian and actor Russell Brand has been accused of rape, sexual assaults and emotional abuse during a seven-year period at the height of his fame.

The allegations were made in a joint investigation by the Sunday Times, the Times and Channel 4's *Dispatches*. Four women are alleging sexual assaults between 2006 and 2013, reports bbc.com.

Brand has denied the allegations and said his relationships have been "always consensual".

During the years covered by the allegations, Brand had various high-profile jobs at different times, including at BBC Radio 2 and Channel 4, and as an actor in Hollywood films.

Other claims made as part of the investigation relate to Brand's allegedly controlling, abusive and predatory behaviour. The investigation is published in the Sunday Times, while the *Dispatches* documentary, *Russell Brand - In Plain Sight*, aired on Channel 4 on Saturday.

Within hours of the allegations being published, Brand performed a scheduled comedy gig at the 2,000-capacity Troubadour Wembley Park Theatre in north-west London, as part of his Bipolarisation tour.

During the set, which lasted about an hour, Brand alluded to the accusations but did not address them directly. He told the audience there were things he wanted to talk about but could not.

Several women have made allegations against Brand as part of the investigation. Four of the women alleged sexual assault.

One woman alleges that Brand raped



her against a wall in his Los Angeles home. She was treated at a rape crisis centre on the same day. The Times says it has seen medical records to support this.

A second woman alleges that Brand assaulted her when he was in his early 30s and she was 16 and still at school. She alleges he referred to her as "the child" during an emotionally abusive and controlling relationship.

A third woman claims that Brand sexually assaulted her while she worked with him in Los Angeles, and that he threatened to take legal action if she told anyone else about her allegation.

The fourth woman alleged being sexually assaulted by Brand and him being physically and emotionally abusive towards her.

On Friday, Russell Brand released a video in which he denied "serious criminal allegations" he said were about to be made against him. The actor and comedian said he had received letters from a TV company and newspaper,

contact police. The Sunday Times said all the women felt ready to speak only after being approached by reporters. The newspaper said several felt compelled to do so given Brand's newfound prominence as an online wellness influencer. Most of the women, who the Times said do not know each other, have chosen to remain anonymous.

The Sunday Times said it gave Brand eight days within which to reply to detailed allegations, and when given further opportunity to respond, Brand published his response video on his YouTube channel.

Prajakta Koli engaged to longtime partner Vrishank Khanal

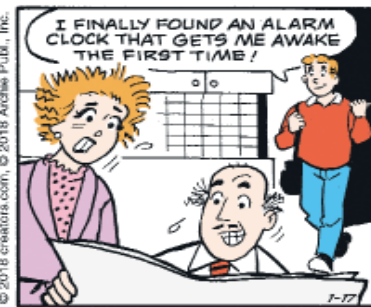


Social media influencer Prajakta Koli on Sunday announced her engagement to longtime partner Vrishank Khanal.

Koli, also an actor known for web series *Mismatched* and film *Jugg Jugg Jeeyo*, shared the news in an Instagram post. "@vrishankkhanal is now my ex-boyfriend, she captioned the photo with Khanal in which she can be seen flaunting her engagement ring. According to reports, Khanal is a legal practitioner with a multinational company. Koli was last seen in *Neeyat*, a mystery film headlined by Vidya Balan.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



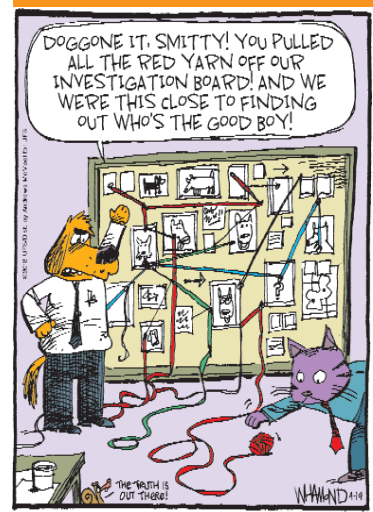
NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



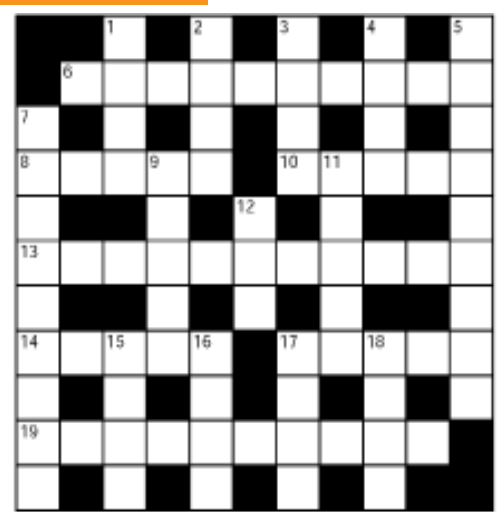
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

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

- 6 Television advertisement
- 8 Group of eight
- 10 A black and white animal in China
- 13 A kind of small glass tube for showing temperatures
- 14 Time of darkness
- 17 Comes to a standstill
- 19 Rang up

DOWN

- 1 Mislaid
- 2 Leave out
- 3 Put paper around something
- 4 A large African cat
- 5 A very large seabird
- 7 Lucky
- 9 Our planet
- 11 Watchful, ready for anything that might happen
- 12 Plaything
- 15 A very strong wind
- 16 Adhesive strip
- 17 Shortly
- 18 Unlock





KAVITA SETH It's a 'big vardan' that independent singles are being used in the films

TEJAL SINHA

Music—something that touches us emotionally where words alone can't. Well, we've heard of it so many times; nothing new. But for many, music is a spiritual 'Sadhana'. Similar is the case for singer Kavita Seth, known for her soulful tracks including *Iktara*, *Jeete Hain Chal*, *Rangisaari*, and *Tum Hi Ho Bandhu*, to name a few. To her, music has always been a 'Sadhana', and every time that she sits down to sing, she always hopes from God that she can sing with honesty, heal people with her music, and be an aid for people to get them away from their difficulties. No doubt, to date, her songs have been more like meditations that dive into the beauty of the song.

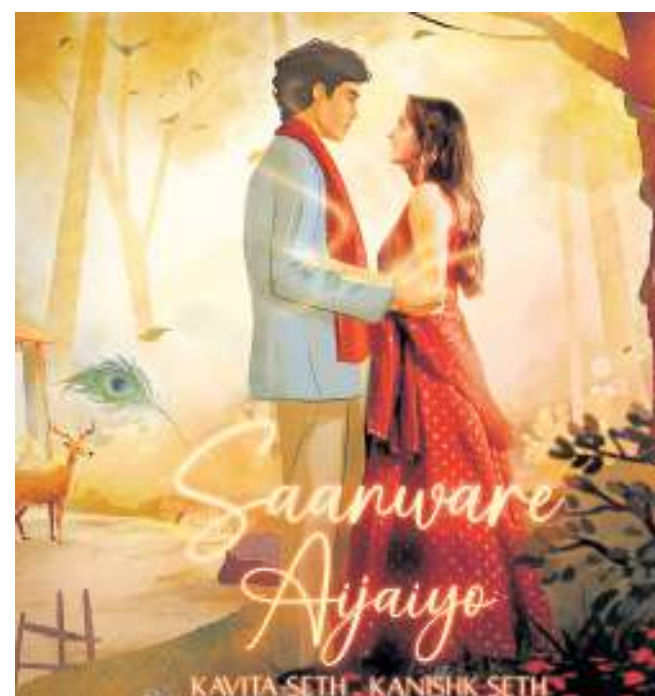
Rattle on her music, and one of the aspects we can think of is that she's been one of the artists who does not make music just for the sake of it, and every time that she comes with a song, it's a BANG! The vocalist has been one of those in the industry who prefers quality over quantity. In fact, she reveals that there have also been songs that she's rejected. "The songs or poetry that I myself don't feel connected to, I don't sing them," enthuses the *Iktara* singer, adding, "Not that it's bad or something,

but I don't feel connected to them. But with the ones that I am connected to, I feel that music is something that helps you connect to the divine. With whatever song or poetry that I am connected to, that in itself goes and reaches heights that even I'm not aware of. But it's just the energy jisko eeshwar bolo, param satta kuch bhi naam de sakte ho, uske saath jab connect ho jaate ho, so all those songs connect through different energy and that reaches the ones who'd need it, and this is what I believe."

The chanteuse, along with her son Kanishk Seth, recently released their new track, *Saanware Aajaiyo*. The musical composition is a touching tribute to the enduring love that Radha and Krishna shared, deftly fusing tradition with modern sensibilities. This soulful track was recently released on her birthday, September 14, and this could be nothing more than special for the duo. *Saanware Aajaiyo* is a beautiful traditional bandish, which she used to hum, and then the mom-son duo decided to work on this song. "I wanted even Kanishk to sing this song, so I immediately wrote a poem for him that he sang, 'Radha gori aai jaiyo', which turned out really well. Luckily, both the audio and video complement each other, making it a masterpiece. I hope the energy of this song also heals people and brings 'Sukoon'. This is how we imagine Radha Krishna in this modern era; that's a story that we try to bring out through this. I feel the main thing is the connection, jisme aap connection feel karte ho. That song itself goes kahan se kahan tak in a way that you can't imagine. Sometimes when you're like, I want to make 10 to 15 songs and want to work in bulk, that becomes a work, and the artistic element of it fades away and the emotions go away from it. It becomes like you have a body but without a soul."

It is no surprise that independent music has created a niche for itself in the Indian music market. So much so that, today, many independent singles are being used in films too. For instance, her own single, *Rangisaari*. And she feels it's like a 'big vardan' that singles are being used in films.

"When we released *Rangi Saari* initially, it was already a hit, and when it went



Folk music has been growing in its own way lately. In fact, today, fusion has become a much better option, which has helped the original folk music reach the ears of new generations as well. And agreeing to the same, she said, "According to me, folk music has been growing of late and coming forward. For instance, Mame Khan! He's become such a big artist, gaining all the fame and name I am just talking about Rajasthani folk music; otherwise, in UP folk music, Malini Awasthi, and in every folk music,

to the movies, it became a massive hit. If the audience likes independent music, and when it goes to the films, it reaches the masses, which is a very good sign for an artist, so it's going to be a very good thing if more of our songs go that way (she laughs)."

She further goes on to highlight how important it is for one to do their 'Riyaz', and work on their 'Sur', to reach the audience.

While the industry has had several duos, Kavita and Kanishk have been the first mom-son duo to create a history of their own. As we asked her, she just laughed out loud and said, "Kya Kahein Hum toh! Socha nahi tha, but we are creating history with every song (she giggles). Even though we never thought that we would work together like this, it's an amazing bond with Kanishk, and so we are making so many songs and releasing them, and the biggest thing is that people love this bond. There's no such bond in the industry. So we are enjoying it and people like it; we are thankful for that."

there are at least one or two big names, so everyone is working on it and people are loving it, and that's what I feel. Yeah, when you add fusion to it, you also attract a young audience, but still, people love folk music the way it is. I just hope, as much as it is meant to come forward, it should, and people give it the importance that it deserves because that is our root."

There have been several reports that claim that she began turning down dance numbers when you were flooded with them after the success of *Tumhi Ho Bandhu* (*Cocktail 2012*) because you weren't comfortable with their lyrics and the innuendos in them. As a composer, are there any deal-breakers? She gleefully laughed and said, "Back then, when I refused to sing dance numbers, it was nothing else but poetry, and it has always been that for me. If there's good poetry and if they try to create it in a dance number, I would definitely sing. Even if I get to compose, I'd surely do it with nice poetry."

Singer Kavita Seth, known for her soulful music, recently released her new album, *Saanware Aajaiyo*, which is a touching tribute to the enduring love that Radha and Krishna shared. The songstress gets candid with *The Pioneer* about her music, the traditional bandish of *Saanware Aajaiyo*, and more.

Sonal Joshi: My mum happened to mention Shilpa Shetty for the role

SHIKHA DUGGAL

Debutant director Sonal Joshi's upcoming film *Sukhee* is about to release featuring the star Shilpa Shetty Kundra. The film perfectly harnesses the feeling of her character of a tired mom who takes a vacation from her routine life to rediscover her zest for life into a groovy and positive, with a filmy touch of life. And, let's be honest! With a movie like this self-care is just sometimes not enough to fix the burnout wives go to. So Shilpa just packs her bag and goes for a reunion according to the plot of the movie. We needed some more interesting details and the director was on board with us for the same.

She reports, "Feeling extremely 'sukhee' on the professional front. I have managed to put so many tiny pieces of my aspirations together and this gigantic dream of mine is coming on celluloid now. As a filmmaker, I usually don't think of casting superstars for the sake of not compromising on originality. So for *Sukhee*, I shared a script narration with my mum and she's always busy watching *India's Got Talent*. She happened to mention Shilpa. I gave a thought, and she was the only actress I gave a narration to and she was seeing eye to eye with me."

She is making this movie to make a point—stop putting pressure on women. They have a life of their own too! Sonal concurs stay-at-home moms don't even have a Sunday to themselves. Just get out of that mental labor. She continued, "I see a lot of my mother in the story. And I like the feel-good genres from childhood. It was really important for Shilpa



Shetty to get into the character's psyche or we would have broken down."

Now Kusha and she go a long way because the director narrated, "We were college friends. We did nukkad natak together! With this movie, we were reconnecting again and sharing that bond for fine arts. The bonding got so easier with Shilpa's badass attitude, and Kusha's jokes. Because it's my first film, even the challenges seemed very fond to me. This is never going to happen again."

The director is hoping she hears those meaningful conversations happening post her release—for instance, help yourself first. Self-care is not selfish, women. It's okay to move away from mundane activities and discover what you used to be passionate about. "Women empowerment was in my mind while writing the script for *Sukhee*. Women shouldn't be judged! Let them prioritize themselves," added the director.



Debutant director Sonal Joshi, who is all excited about her upcoming film *Sukhee*, that's already making the right noise, gets candid with *The Pioneer*, and shares some interesting insights about the film.

Upgrading your bedroom decor that express your style

The bedroom is the most significant area of a home since it provides a haven where one can relax, find energy, and find comfort despite the demanding needs of daily life. It is a place where one may express their individual tastes in fashion, wishes, and level of comfort, making the choice of suitable bedroom furniture design all the more important. A good night's sleep is crucial to overall wellbeing, and the correct bedroom furniture design may improve the room's beauty as well as function. Whether it is minimalist, contemporary, or classic, each person's choice of furniture expresses their taste and individuality.

Tejal Singh Shekhawat, Founder & CEO, of Kalyanam Furniture, shares the best bedroom furniture ideas can give your room vitality and let you express your personal style.

BED: Let's start with the bed, which is the focal point of every bedroom. The appropriate bed design may establish the mood for the entire room, whether you like a low floor design that delivers a contemporary charm or a solid wood master bed that adds timeless culture. Contrarily, upholstered beds offer a touch of velvety luxury and a variety of design alternatives to suit



your tastes. Your bedroom will undoubtedly transform into the space of your dreams with the help of these bed designs.

OTTOMAN: The ottoman comes to the aid of individuals looking for cosy and defining pieces for modest bedroom designs. These adaptable pieces serve as both seating and a platform at different times of the day. Ottomans are a practical way to express your style while also saving space, thanks to the variety of designs and materials available.

DIVAN BEDS: Divan beds are the ideal bedroom furni-

ture style to have if you have a large bedroom to furnish. Divan beds blend practicality and aesthetics with their cosy appeal and generous storage space below. A divan bed can help you create a regal ambience by giving your bedroom a sense of cosy fiction in addition to its majestic appearance.

BEDSIDE TABLES: Bedside tables are a perfect example of how the devil is in the details. These extremely practical yet understated additions enhance the aesthetics and utility of your bedroom while preventing clutter from being visible. Bedside tables, which come in a variety of styles and

materials, complement your mattress well by adding personality and convenience. Place your bedtime necessities nearby, and to finish the appearance, garnish these tables with chic accessories.

DRESSING TABLE: In addition to enhancing the overall character of your bedroom, a dressing table is a necessary piece of furniture for personal care. As you decorate and arrange your bedroom around this magnificent piece of bedroom furniture, use your imagination. Dressing tables represent your personality in addition to providing storage for your requirements for looking good.

CABINETS AND SIDE STORAGE: Regardless of the size of your bedroom, sideboards and cabinets can significantly alter the space. They offer a clever substitute for full-size wardrobes for smaller rooms, keeping your space clutter-free while maximising storage. Cabinets and sideboards provide larger bedrooms with a hint of complexity and serve as the decor's centrepiece. With these multipurpose bedroom furniture designs, embrace the potential of effective organisation and space optimisation.



BEST IN ASIA

Performance like this will be cherished for very long time: Rohit

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma on Sunday hailed his team for an emphatic performance in the Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka, saying the effort will be "cherished for a very long time".

Mohammed Siraj bowled one of the most devastating spells by an Indian fast bowler, taking six for 21, as Sri Lanka were bowled out for 50. The visitors knocked off the runs in 6.1 overs without losing any wicket.

"It was a great performance, especially to come and play like that in a final. Shows the mentality of the team. Very clinical. A performance like that will be cherished for a very long time," Rohit said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

However the skipper was astonished to see the kind of movement that his bowlers, especially Siraj, got off the surface.

"Our seamers are actually working really hard for many years, so it's pleasing for the side to see them get rewarded like that. I never thought the ball was going to be doing that much," the skipper said.

The conditions must have been helpful but it also takes high level of skill to put up a performance like that in a summit clash.

"Again, it comes back to the skill-set of individuals. That's



very rare, you don't see many guys (like Siraj), who can move it in the air and off the pitch. And the other guys also who took part at various stages, they all played their part."

With three match series against Australia and two more warm-up games before the World Cup opener, Rohit feels that the team is moving in the right direction.

"We took all we can from this series, quite pleasing to move in this direction with this kind of confidence."

Having ticked most boxes

that they wanted to tick, Rohit looked back at the team's run over the past couple of weeks.

"The first game against Pakistan under pressure, four down, how Hardik (Pandya) and (Ishan) Kishan batted in that pressure got us to that total. And then KL and Virat getting that hundred was brilliant to see."

"Also Gill, he's in terrific form, he's a batting freak. He likes to keep batting and it's something that works for our team. A lot of the guys at various stages bailed the team out in pressure situations," the skipper

added.

SHREYAS 99% FIT

India captain Rohit Sharma on Friday said left-arm spinner Axar Patel is likely to miss the first two ODIs against Australia next week while middle-order batter Shreyas Iyer is "99 percent" match-fit.

Axar had suffered a left quadriceps strain during the inconsequential Super 4 match against Bangladesh on Friday and was ruled out of the Asia Cup. Washington Sundar was drafted in as Axar's replacement

in India's Asia Cup squad.

"Axar had a small tear. It looks like maybe it will take a week or 10 days (to heal), I don't know. We have to see how that injury progresses. Some guys recover quickly, and I hope that's the case with him," skipper Rohit didn't seem too confident about the speed of recovery for the Gujarat all-rounder.

"As a spinner-all-rounder, Ashwin is in the line. I have been talking to him on the phone. The injury happened to Axar at the last minute. Washington was available, so he had to come and perform the role for us," said Rohit. "He (Washington) was cricket-fit because he was part of the Asian Games camp (in Bengaluru). I have been very clear with players about their roles. Everyone is in the loop," he added.

Iyer had suffered back spasm ahead of India's Super 4 game against Pakistan, and since then he did not take part in the Asia Cup.

Rohit said Shreyas did not tick off certain parameters set for him, hence he was not included in the playing 11 for the Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka.

"Shreyas was not available for this game because certain parameters were kept for him to tick off. I think today, he completed most of it. I should say he is alright 99 percent as of now."

"But he looks good, he batted and fielded for long hours, and he was on the ground long before we came to the ground. I don't think it is a worry for us," said Rohit.

Even though Washington was included in the India squad as replacement for Axar, Rohit said even veteran spinner R Ashwin is very much within the India's scheme of things as a spin bowling all-rounder.

"As a spinner-all-rounder, Ashwin is in the line. I have been talking to him on the phone. The injury happened to Axar at the last minute. Washington was available, so he had to come and perform the role for us," said Rohit. "He (Washington) was cricket-fit because he was part of the Asian Games camp (in Bengaluru). I have been very clear with players about their roles. Everyone is in the loop," he added.

List of records that tumbled as India decimate Lanka

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Records tumbled as India prevailed over hosts Sri Lanka by 10 wickets in the final of the Asia Cup to lift the title after a gap of five years.

Batting first, Sri Lanka were shot out for a paltry 50, thanks to pacer Mohammed Siraj's magical six-wicket haul. In reply, India got the job done easily in 6.1 overs.

Here is a look at the records that were scripted during the match.

■ Sri Lanka registered its lowest ODI score against India after the fall of its fifth wicket (12 for 5).

■ At 12 for 6, Lanka recorded the lowest ODI score at the fall of the sixth wicket by an ICC full-member nation.

■ Siraj scalped his 50th ODI wicket in this game, which arrived in 1,002 deliveries, the second fastest by any bowler in the format. The record is held by Ajantha Mendis (847 balls).

■ India grabbed six wickets in the opening ten overs of the contest, which is the most for the side in the format till date.

■ Siraj is only the second bowler after Mendis to grasp a six-for in an Asia Cup ODI.

■ Lanka's total score of 50 in this fixture is the lowest versus India in the format. Also, it is the lowest in any ODI final to date.

■ Siraj's figures of 6 for 21 is the best by any bowler

against Lanka in ODIs.

■ It was only the second time in the competition's ODI history that the pacers held all ten wickets in a clash. The other instance also happened in this edition when Pakistan seamers achieved the feat against India in a washed out group match.

■ Sri Lanka has become the full-member Asian side to be dismissed in the fewest overs of an ODI (15.2).

■ Siraj's figures are also the best by any Indian pacer in an ODI final, besides being the second best after Anil Kumble's 6 for 12 in the 1993 Hero Cup Final.

■ Siraj also became the first Indian to get four wickets in an over in international cricket.

■ Siraj took just 16 balls to seize his fifth wicket of the encounter, the least by any bowler in an ODI.

■ Siraj is only the second man after Ashish Nehra to clutch a six-for in an ODI versus Lanka.

■ India has become the only team to win an ODI final by ten wickets on two occasions, with the other being against Zimbabwe in Sharjah in 1998 (197 for 0).

■ It is also the biggest ODI win for the Indians in terms of balls to spare (263), besides also being the biggest in an ODI final.

■ It is the briefest ODI involving India, with only 129 deliveries being bowled.



You get what is in our destiny: Siraj

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The complex questions that Mohammed Siraj asked during his dream spell of 6 for 21 was mostly due to the simple things that he was able to do perfectly on what turned out to be a Super Sunday for the Indian cricket team.

Perhaps, he was destined to have a day like this, said the Hyderabad as India geared up to the World Cup by winning the Asia Cup for a record eighth time.

"Jitna naseeb mein hota hai wahi milta, aaj mera naseeb tha (You get what's in our destiny, today it was my destiny)," Siraj summed up the mood while talking to the broadcasters in the mid-innings break.

He was particularly referring to the third ODI in

Thiruvananthapuram during Sri Lanka's tour of India where he got four wickets early but could not manage a five-for as Sri Lanka folded for 73 while chasing a stiff 391.

"Last time, I did the same against Sri Lanka at Trivandrum. Got four wickets early, couldn't get the five-for."

"I've been bowling well since a long time but missing the edges and finally got them today. I did not try too much today. I have always looked for swing in white-ball cricket and did not find much in the previous games."

"But today it was swinging, and I got more wickets with the outswinger. Such was the swing I was getting on this wicket that I tried to entice the batter to go on the front foot and make them drive."

Injuries close to World Cup could really cost you: Dravid

PTI ■ COLOMBO

India head coach Rahul Dravid on Sunday hinted that injuries to the likes of Shreyas Iyer and Axar Patel could cost his team going into the ODI World Cup and makes the task of managing players "trickier".

Iyer could only play the first two games of the Asia Cup due to a back spasm and this was after a six-month injury lay-off.

Left-arm spinner Axar was ruled out of the Asia Cup final due to a left quadriceps strain. Both the players are in India's World Cup squad.

"All teams are in a similar position, injuries so close to the World Cup could really cost you. We just need to keep our fingers crossed, trust our processes."

"We are in a tricky situation where some guys need to be



rested, while some guys need some cricket. It is a tricky balance to achieve," said Dravid before the start of the Asia Cup final.

Besides Iyer, K L Rahul had also made a comeback from injury in the Asia Cup and went on to do well.

India's opponent in the final, Sri Lanka, are also grappling with injuries to their key players. Mystery spinner

Maheesh Theekshana ended up missing the title clash having torn his oblique muscle.

Star player Wanindu Hasaranga, Dilshan Madushanka and Dushmantha Chameera missed the whole of Asia Cup due to injuries.

Pakistan are also fretting over the fitness of pacers Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf ahead of the World Cup beginning in India on October 5.

South Africa post 315 in decider

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG

There was redemption for Australian leg-spinner Adam Zampa but Aiden Markram and David Miller hit half-centuries as South Africa posted 315 for nine in the series-deciding fifth one-day international at the Wanderers Stadium on Sunday.

Zampa bounced back from conceding a world record-equalling 113 runs in the fourth match in Centurion on Friday when he bowled Heinrich Klaasen for six. Klaasen slammed 174 off 83 balls in Centurion and was particularly harsh on Zampa but on Sunday he was beaten by a quicker ball from Zampa which deceived the batsman.

Zampa took two more wickets in the 48th over to finish with three for 71.



Australian captain Mitchell Marsh sent South Africa in for the third match in a row despite his team having lost the previous two - but his reading of conditions proved correct as his pace bowlers extracted movement from the pitch for most of the innings.

Markram (93) and Miller (63) put on 109 for the fifth wicket and lower order batsmen Marco Jansen and Andile Phehlukwayo took the total past 300 with some big hitting towards the end.

Jansen hit three sixes in scoring 47 off 29 balls and Phehlukwayo cleared the boundary four times in his unbeaten 39 off 19 deliveries.

Brief scores: South Africa 315-9 (H. van der Dussen 30, A. Markram 93, D. Miller 63, M. Jansen 47, A. Phehlukwayo 39 not out)

Brook replaces Roy in England's ODI WC squad

AP ■ LONDON

Jason Roy has been axed from England's World Cup squad, with Harry Brook drafted in in his place, after the selectors made a dramatic late amendment to their 15-man squad for the tournament in India which gets underway in just under three weeks' time.

Roy, 33, was an integral member of the England squad that won the World Cup in 2019, and had been named in England's provisional squad for the defence of their title, ahead of their four-match series against New Zealand this month.

However, he was unable to feature in any of the four games after suffering a series of back



spasms. In his absence, Roy's rival for the opener's role, Dawid Malan, made an unequivocal case for a starting role in the tournament, finishing as Player of the Series with 277 runs at 92.33 in three games, including a match-winning century at Lord's.

Consequently, it will be Malan and Jonny Bairstow who will open the batting for England when their tournament gets underway against New Zealand on October 5.

Australia ODIs crucial for Shreyas, Surya

PTI ■ COLOMBO

India's three-match ODI series, starting with the first match on September 22 at Mohali, will be a litmus test for Shreyas Iyer and Suryakumar Yadav albeit for different reasons.

The fitness of Shreyas will be watched closely, while Suryakumar will have to produce an impact innings to vindicate his inclusion in the World Cup squad.

However, Shreyas' progress will be more pressing from the management perspective.

The middle-order batsman spent about half an hour at nets and then engaged in fielding drills for around 15 minutes, heightening hopes around him playing the Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka here on Sunday.

But Iyer was not included in the playing 11. It might be an indication that the team think tank felt the need of giving him more time to recuperate from the back spasm that forced him to sit out of India's Asia Cup Super Four match against



Pakistan.

Iyer had made his much-anticipated return to international cricket during India's Asia Cup league match against Pakistan at Pallekele, and he made 14 before getting out. He also played against Nepal but didn't get chance to bat.

"It will be an important series for him as he needs to bat and field for the full duration of the match, something he has not done since his return. He has made a good recovery but maybe the team does not want to rush him."

"We have some more days for the Australia ODIs, and he

can make proper recovery before that series," a source following the development told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Suryakumar offers a different case. The team management has placed a lot of faith in him to replicate his T20I explosiveness in ODIs. However, Suryakumar has not been able to live up to the expectations so far in the one-dayers.

The Mumbaier failed to build on the start against Bangladesh in the Super Four match on Friday, making a 34-ball 26.

The manner of his dismissal too has not gone down

Smith, Maxwell & Starc return for India ODIs

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australia has brought back Steve Smith, Glenn Maxwell and Mitchell Starc in its 18-man squad for the forthcoming three-match ODI series in India.

The trio were nursing injuries and missed their recent tour of South Africa.

Top-order batter Travis Head missed out after suffering a fracture on his left hand in South Africa and has been replaced by Matthew Short, who is yet to make his ODI debut.

well with the top brass, playing one too many sweep shots, a high-risk shot when the ball grips and turns.

The form KL Rahul and Ishan Kishan might console the think-tank, but Suryakumar needs to make an impression

sooner rather than later to keep his ODI dreams afloat.

While the management might not be mulling any imminent changes to their World Cup squad at present, they have time till September 27 to rethink after weighing all options.

ACC and SLC announce \$50,000 award for curators and groundsmen

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The entire team of ground-staff, who worked tirelessly to get the grounds in Colombo and Pallekele match-ready for the Asia Cup in midst of full-blown monsoon season, will be rewarded with a prize money of USD 50,000, Asian Cricket Council chairman Jay Shah announced on Sunday.

"Big Shoutout to the Unsung Heroes of Cricket! The Asian Cricket Council (ACC) and Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) are proud to announce a well-deserved prize money of USD 50,000 for the dedicated curators and groundsmen at Colombo and Kandy," Shah wrote on 'X', formerly twitter.

USD 50,000 will roughly be 16 million in Sri Lankan rupee. "Their unwavering commitment and hard work made the Asia Cup 2023 an unforgettable spectacle. From pitch perfection to lush outfields,



they ensured the stage was set for thrilling cricket action."

"This recognition highlights the critical role these individuals play in cricket's success. Let's celebrate and honour their yeoman services!" added Shah.

The tournament was originally supposed to be hosted by Pakistan before India's reluctance to play in the neighbouring country, forced ACC to organize the event in 'Hybrid Model' with nine games allot-

ted to Sri Lanka. However, Lanka's weather conditions soon became a challenge, especially for their curators and groundsmen, as they constantly struggled to get the ground ready on time.

While India's opening fixture against arch-rival Pakistan in Pallekele was washed out, a couple more encounters throughout the competition saw rain interruptions bring the Duckworth-Lewis method into effect.



Harsha Sai starrer *Mega's* teaser hits the right cord

Popular YouTuber and philanthropist Harsha Sai who has millions of followers on social media is making his big screen debut with a film being made at a Pan India level.

Written and directed by Harsha Sai himself, the film is produced by Mitraaw under the banner of Shree Pictures. Mitraaw is also the heroine of the movie. Padavala Balachandra is the co-producer, while Kalvakuntla Vamshidhar Rao presents the film. On Sunday, the makers hold a press meet to announce the film's title through a teaser. This Pan India movie is mounted on a big scale and is titled interestingly, *Mega* with a tagline- Lo Don. The teaser introduces us to the premise of the movie.

The teaser begins with a doctor explaining to his driver how hazardous a massive bell hanging there is. The protagonist was tied

with ropes with a massive crowd around him. If a person is tied and hung upside down and when the bell rings, he will die of brain injury. But the protagonist never admits defeat. Comparing the hero to a whale, it is said that he has the force of 100 lions. He is introduced as Mega Lo Don. The story is about a kingly man who shakes a sea full of monsters. His intelligence is immense.

Harsha Sai is given enough elevations in the teaser and we can assume the power of the character through it. The youngster makes a great impression on his debut. The person who takes up the task of killing the protagonist appears like an alien. Overall, the teaser blows our minds for the concept and presentation.

While speaking at the teaser launch event, co-producer Balachandra said, "We thank CM KCR's brother's son Kalvakuntla

Vamshidhar Rao garu for launching the teaser. I would like to thank my entire team for all the support."

Producer Mitraaw said, "This wouldn't have happened without the support of Kalvakuntla Shashidhar Rao garu. I learned a lot during the making of this movie. It started as a small idea. But the scale increased as it was developed into a full script. We got the opportunity to work with DOP Karthik Palani who worked for Adipurush. We're blessed enough to have such a brilliant technical team. It's a fortunate thing for Shree Pictures to present your real hero Harsha Sai as a reel hero. I wish he would win your hearts with the movie."

Hero and director Harsha Sai said, "When I started from the hotel, a person asked me to show the teaser before its launch. After watching the teaser, he asked me why I chose cinema. We can't

remember the lessons we studied in school. But we always remember the stories we heard and the movies we watched in childhood. Human brains are designed to remember stories, nothing else. The biggest medium at present to narrate stories is cinema. That's the reason for me to choose the cinema. We're using this medium to interact with people. It started one year ago. An individual told me that I would earn more money if I could make successful movies. It's true. If I want to give more, I need more money. The other reason for me to do movies is to encourage and young talent. I hope you all liked the title teaser. Karthik Palani's cinematography and Anji master's fights are exceptional." Karthik Palani handles the cinematography, while Vikas Badisa scores the music for this high-budget entertainer which will arrive in cinemas in 2024.

KALKI 2898 AD TO HIT CINEMAS IN MAY 2024

The upcoming sci-fi *Kalki 2898 AD* stars Prabhas in the lead. The buzz is that the film will hit the cinemas in May 2024. Vyjayanthi Movies is in the news for its decision to take legal action against the VFX company responsible for a recent Prabhas image leak. Producer C Aswini Dutt

wants to teach the company a lesson, considering the astronomical stakes involved. He doesn't want to take the leak lightly. Another pan-India film fell victim to a recent leak as a song from Ram Charan's *Game Changer* surfaced on the internet. Recently, producer Dil Raju lodged a police complaint

against the suspect who did the mischief. Coming back to Prabhas' movie, the film is directed by Nag Ashwin. Starring Deepika Padukone, Amitabh Bachchan and Kamal Haasan in other roles, the film also features Dulquer Salmaan in a special role, which has not been made official so far.



After Abhishek Nama, Natti Kumar pick out on VD

When producer Abhishek Nama openly tweeted regarding the losses of *Dear Comrade*, a film that is distributed by Abhishek Pictures in Nizam, the hero's fans have vehemently trolled the distributor for seeking recovery from the hero rather than the producer of that film.

In fact, this happened after Vijay D announced that he would share Rs. 1 crore from his remuneration to 100 families that need it. Here comes another producer-distributor taking the same stand as Abhishek Nama.

"Our Film Industry is accustomed to the habit of 'use and throw' and everyone is getting a taste of it these days. Films like *Liger*, and *Dear Comrade* caused huge losses to distribu-

tors, and even *Kushi* did 3 crores loss in the Vijay area. If hero Vijay Devarakonda garu has real concerns, he should first think about saving his distributors but not his fans. No matter how much you act in the film, you need distributors and exhibitors to take the film to the audience" said Natti Kumar on record today.

In the wake of Devarakonda distributing the cheques of 1 lakh to 100 families the other day, these comments made by Natti Kumar have gained attention. While Vijay's father levelled 'blackmail' comments on Abhishek Nama earlier, we have to see if they will respond to Natti Kumar's demands as well. On the whole, it looks like distributors who lost money with these big-ticket movies are unhappy with the way producers and star heroes are treating them.



'I will undoubtedly consider making a sequel,' said director Atlee on *Jawan* sequel

With Shah Rukh Khan's *Jawan*, Atlee successfully reestablished himself in Bollywood after dominating South Indian cinema. The action movie, which debuted on September 7, is smashing box office records, taking in more than Rs 700 crore internationally in just 10 days. The renowned director has since revealed in an interview that he will make a sequel to the movie, although he hasn't yet thought of a release date.

In a recent interview, when asked if he had a character in mind for a spin-off, Atlee grinned and mentioned Vikram Rathore, who plays Shah Rukh's senior version in the film. As for a sequel, the director said that while most of his movies have open endings, he would only decide to make one if he had a compelling idea.

"I never considered doing a sequel to any of my films; however, I gave each one an open arc, and if something compelling occurs to me, I will undoubtedly consider making a sequel. Let's see," said Atlee. Additionally, Atlee reaffirmed that his team is considering streaming a longer version of *Jawan*. While the movie had the ideal balance of emotions, he claimed that a new rhythm is being considered for streaming. He continued by saying that he has been working on it and hasn't even

taken a vacation as a result. The director was also asked about the alleged Thalapaty Vijay cameo in *Jawan*. He stated that he was explicit about not include him in the movie because he had longer-term goals in mind. He wants to work with SRK in a sizable two-hero movie. There's a reason I refrained from requesting a cameo from Vijay's side. I'll put something together for Vijay and Shah Rukh. They both gave me the best career arc I've ever experienced. One day, I'll write a story for both of them, and they'll appear together in a single film," he said.

Additionally, he projected that the movie will undoubtedly gross more than Rs 1500 Cr at the box office whenever the two superstars collaborate.

Rakesh Varre to play titular role in *Jithender Reddy*

Director Virinchi Varma, known for his work on films like *Uyyala Jampala* and *Majnu*, is making a comeback after a 7-year hiatus with the political drama *Jithender Reddy*.

A few days ago, director Deva Katta unveiled the first look poster, keeping the cast details a secret. According to the latest buzz, Rakesh Varre, renowned for his roles in *Mirchi* and *Baahubali*, will be playing the title role in the movie. An official announcement will be made shortly.

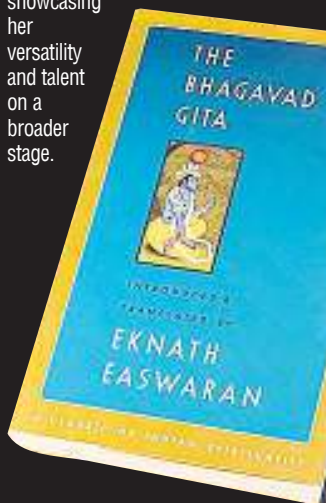
Ravinder Reddy, under the Muduganti Creation banner, is producing the film, with Gnanasekar VS as the cinematographer and music by Gopi Sundar. Stay tuned for more updates on the cast, crew, and release date.



Sam goes the spiritual way; dives deep reading Bhagavad Gita

Samantha, recognized for her exceptional acting, is presently on a break, focusing on her health and preparing for myositis treatment abroad. She has taken a step back from the film projects she had committed to and has even returned the remunerations. Despite her recent social media silence, Samantha has started sharing motivational quotes on her Instagram, along with images of her immersed in reading the Bhagavad Gita, specifying the portions she is delving into. Notably, Samantha recently captivated audiences with her performance with *Kushi*, directed by Siva Nirvana, where she starred opposite Vijay Deverakonda. Their on-screen chemistry was notable, and the film's songs gained traction among music enthusiasts.

Looking ahead, Samantha is set to appear in the film *Citadel*, directed by Raj and DK, in a powerful role. The movie is eagerly anticipated and marks her foray into Bollywood, showcasing her versatility and talent on a broader stage.



Kiran to play a postman for a pan-India period drama

Kiran Abbavaram is committed to doing a pan-India period drama in which he will be seen in the role of a postman.

The untitled flick, whose cast and crew details are yet to be made official, will be set in a fictional village. In a recent interview, the SR

Kalyanamandapam actor said that the kind of movies he is going to do from now onwards will be different from the kind he has done thus far.

The *Vinaro Bhagyamu Vishnu Katha* actor took a break from shootings for about five months earlier this year. Come October 6, Kiran will be seen in a youthful family entertainer titled *Rules Ranjann*. Starring Neha Shetty of *DJ Tillu* fame as the heroine, the film is presented by AM Ratnam.

"We have made the film purely for the purpose of entertainment," Kiran said recently. Vennela Kishore, Hyper Aadhi, Viva Harsha, and Nellore Sudharshan will be seen in funny roles in *Rules Ranjann*.

