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'He went ahead with Aa Okkati *ADAKKU*²



the pioneer Chief Minister Revanth Reddy lost credibility after the allegations he made regarding reservations. It is the people's karma that they have Revanth Reddy as their CM and KCR as the opposition leader. KCR is dreaming that he will play a key role at the Centre after a hung Assembly comes into being. It is ridiculous that KCR who is not in a position to protect his MLAs is now saying that he will play a key role at the

QUOTE OF THE DAY

- G Kishan Reddy, Union Minister

Army of 4.5K YSRCP social media...

Backed by a strong army of 4,500 social media volunteers, the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leaves no stone unturned in disseminating information regarding the state government's welfare programmes and swiftly issues fact-check messages to counter misinformation around the clock. The YS Jagan Mohan Reddy-led party is keen on retaining power in the state and also put up a good show in the Lok Sabha polls. Parliamentary elections and Assembly polls are scheduled to be held simultaneously..

'Dinosaurs smart reptiles, not...

Dinosaurs were "more like smart giant crocodiles" but not as intelligent as monkeys as an earlier study had found, according to new research. In a study published in January 2023, neuroscientist and author Suzana Herculano-Houzel of Vanderbilt University, US, had said that brains of theropod dinosaurs, a species of which is T. rex, had neurons comparable to those in the brains of monkeys and baboons. Dinosaurs like T. rex, or Tyrannosaurus rex, had an exceptionally high number of neurons, "which..



China gives all clear nod for Tesla cars...

In a big relief for Tesla, its vehicles passed the key test of compliance with China's data security rules as its billionaire CEO Elon Musk who air dashed to Beijing on Sunday met Premier Li Qiang to press for which faced stiff competition from local rivals. Musk's Tesla, which in recent months faced entry bans in Chinese government-affiliated buildings besides military bases due to security concerns over data leaks, "passed" the security assessment by a state-owned Chinese industrial.

-PAGE: 8

Focus on Rahul during LSG, MI...

With T20 World Cup selection round the corner, KL Rahul will have one final chance to stake claim on the second wicketkeeper's spot in the Indian team when Lucknow Super Giants host Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday Rahul's strike-rate in T20 cricket has always been a bone of contention. Despite the advantage of field restrictions in the Powerplay, Rahul has often started his innings on a slow note in the IPL. However, the LSG captain has managed to change..

JAGAN SAYS IF NAIDU IS VOTED TO POWER...

Welfare Govinda Govinda

Recalls how TDP failed to fulfil its promise of farm loan waiver



PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, in his addresses at election rallies held in Chodavaram, Ambajipeta, P Gannavaram, and Ponnur on Monday, emphasised the importance of continuing the State's welfare schemes that benefit all sections of society. He expressed doubt that if Chandrababu Naidu were to return to power, these vital programmes would be jeopardised. Reflecting on the aftermath of the State's bifurcation, CM Jagan highlighted how Hyderabad was initialJagan highlighted how Hyderabad was initially designated as the joint capital for a decade and how Naidu frittered away this chance.

 CM says TDP govt had failed to achieve special category statu for AP despite assurance to the people.

Jagan termed the upcoming election as a battle between the interests of the poor and the habitual deceit of Chandrababu Naidu.

ly designated as the joint capital for decade. However, due to Chandrababu Naidu's entanglement in the cash-for-vote scandal, this arrangement was disrupted, lamented CM Jagan.

CM Jagan underscored the failure

of Naidu's administration to secure special category status for the state, despite assurances given to the electorate. He warned against placing trust in promises that are unlikely to materialize, likening it to courting danger.

Withdrawal of nominations ends in AP

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Battle lines have been drawn for the simultaneous polls for Assembly and Lok Sabĥa on May 13 in Andhra Pradesh, with the withdrawal of nominations ending on

The Élection Commission scrutinised the nominations on April 26, which it received between April 18 and 25.

AP Chief Electoral Officer M K Meena had earlier stated that as many as 503 Lok Sabha and 2,705 Assembly nominations had been accepted after scrutinising them.

The main political parties, including the ruling YSR Congress, NDA constituents (Telugu Desam Party, Janasena, and BJP), and Congress, are expected to intensi-

fy their poll campaigns henceforth.

The Election authorities are expected to release the final list of candidates tonight.

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is seeking reelection from Pulivendula, while his rival and leader of the opposition in the state assembly, Chandrababu Naidu is trying to retain his bastion of

Jagan's sister and AP Congress chief Y S Sharmila is fighting tooth and nail for the Kadapa Lok Sabha seat against sitting ŶSRCP MP Avinash Reddy.

'Land Titling Act will strip ownership rights'

Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan has expressed concern over the Land Titling Act proposed by the YSRCP government, warning that it could strip away ownership rights to lands. He criticised the legislation as highly controversial, alleging that the Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government aims to exploit it for land and

resource grabbing.

Addressing a sizable election gathering near Pithapuram on Monday, Pawan Kalyan accused YSRCP leaders of exploiting potential loopholes in the Act to seize lands from the less fortunate. "Do we lose all rights to our land? Under this Act, the government seizes original land documents, leaving us with only photocopies," he lamented. He also raised concerns about the fate of assigned lands under the proposed Act.

Urging people to oppose the legislation and thwart YSRCP in the upcoming elections, Pawan Kalyan predicted victory for the TDP-JSP-BJP alliance. He likened YSRCP to a banana peel, implying its fragility.

Promising to prioritise irrigation projects for agricultural sustainability if elected, Pawan Kalyan assured the crowd at Pithapuram. The event saw speeches by TDP's SVSN Varma and Kakinada LS candidate Tangella Uday Srinivas.

At another rally in Ganapavaram,



A sizable election gathering near Pithapuram on Monday, Pawan Kalyan accused YSRCP leaders of exploiting potential loopholes in the Act to seize lands from the less fortunate. "Do we lose all rights to our land? Under this Act, the government seizes original land documents, leaving us with only photocopies," he lamented.

Eluru district, Pawan Kalyan questioned the priorities of the government, contrasting the presence of gambling clubs with the absence of educational opportunities like the 'mega DSC' notification.

Sajjala: Naidu will face wrath of pensioners

in Delhi through his agents, Sajjala

condemned Naidu's

consistent attacks on

senior government

officials and CM Jagan,

faced by pensioners

will haunt Naidu.

PNS VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP general secretary Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy has accused TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu pension distributions to benefici-

Speaking to the media

Tadepalli on Monday, Sajjala said that the YSRCP government has streamlined pension disbursal, ensuring it reachbeneficiaries promptly at their doorsteps, with volunteers rendering essential civic servic-

Sajjala criticised Naidu for initially opposing volunteers' involvement in pension distribution, only to backtrack later out of fear of backlash. He questioned Naidu's motives behind such obstruction and accused him of orchestrating complaints to the Election Commission to disrupt social security pension distribution through volunteers, alluding to Naidu's alleged manipulation

of the media to spread false narra-

Further alleging Naidu's influence in Delhi through his agents, Sajjala condemned Naidu's consisunteers and deliberately delaying officials and CM Jagan, suggesting an obsession with undermining the current administration.

> He attributed the difficulties faced by pensioners during the TDP regime to Naidu's policies, insinuating that Naidu's actions have earned him the ire of pensioners, whose curses he claims will haunt Naidu.

lleging Naidu's influence Sajjala also accused Naidu and his ally Pawan Kalyan of stoking caste tensions and predicted electoral defeat for the TDP/BJP/JSP alliance in the upcoming elections, asserting that Naidu's suggesting an obsessior with undermining the irresponsible opposition stance disqualifies him urrent administration. He from holding any posiattributed the difficulties tion of authority.

Highlighting CM Jagan's efforts, Sajjala during the TDP regime to Naidu's policies, insinuating that Naidu's praised the resolution of long-standing actions have earned him issues such as dotted the ire of pensioners, lands, signalling whose curses he claims progress under the current administra-

TDP questions delay in pension disbursal despite ample staff

Telugu Desam Party (TDP) chief N Minister for not taking steps to Chandrababu Naidu raised concerns on Monday regarding the doorstep, alleging that the CM is delay in distributing pensions to prioritizing political gains over beneficiaries directly at their citizen welfare. He highlighted doorstep. Despite an ample work- the directive from the poll approximately 1.26 lakh secretariat staff members, 15,000 panchayat secretaries, 5,000 employees each from the Velugu and agricultural departments, and 3,000 horticulture staff members the Jagan-led govavailable at the village level, Naidu pointed out that the task of pension distribution could be efficiently accomplished in a single day if these resources were utilised effectively. straints as an

Naidu expressed his views to the media during his visit to Gudur. Regarding recent deaths to operate under its guidance. Attributing the delay in pen Naidu criticized the Chief

nanel instructing the Government not to engage volunteers in pension distribution. Naidu accused

ernment of politicizing the issue, citing alleged funding con-

issues, Naidu condemned them as "official murders," placing responensure pension distribution at the sibility on the ruling YSRCP. He criticised government offi-

cials for their alleged Naidu emphasised

the importance of Election Commission'soversight during the Model Code of Conduct period, urging the State machinery

Attributing the delay in pension distribution to officials like Chief Secretary Jawahar Reddy, as well as Dhanujay Reddy, Muralidhar Reddy, and Sasibhushan, Naidu stressed that adherence to the involvement in these inci- Model Code of Conduct should dents and warned against supersede directives from the Chief nister Additionally concerns about potential deductions by banks if pensions were directly credited to beneficiaries' accounts citing possible outstanding dues.

Naidu's statements underscore the need for efficient and transparent governance, particularly in essential services like pension distribution, to ensure the well-being of citizens.

Naidu, Jagan stooges of BJP: Sharmila

PNS KAKINADA

Andhra Pradesh Committee (APCC) chief Y S Sharmila on Monday alleged that YSRCP president Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy and TDP head N Chandrababu Naidu are stooges of the BJP. Sharmila made the allegation

at Kakinada during a public meeting as part of her election campaign for the May 13 simultaneous polls for the 175 assembly seats and 25 Lok Sabha

"The state did not witness even a the APCC president alleged that the single step forward in the past 10 Congress years. No benefit with Babu (Naidu) and Jagan. Both are hand in glove with the BJP. One is in

alliance and the other is a stooge," alleged Sharmila. According to Sharmila, the BJP has dealt an irrecoverable blow to the southern

state. She said the saffron party promised 10 years' special category status Andhra Pradesh but

cheated it.

realities, Naidu and Reddy are tagging along with the saffron party. She claimed that "only Congress can develop" Andhra Pradesh and also vowed to accord 10 years' special category status if the INDIA bloc is voted to power.

She called on people to vote for M M Pallam Raju, former Union HRD Minister, who is contesting from the Kakinada Lok Sabha constituency on a Congress ticket.

BJP has neglected the Polavaram Project and added that despite these

The Communist Party of India (CPI), the Congress and the CPI(M) are INDIA alliance partners in

23 Naxals surrender in Dantewada

PNS DANTEWADA

At least 23 Naxalites, including seven women, surrendered before the security forces in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada on Monday, a senior police official said. The Naxalites, who were part of the Bhairamgarh Area Committee of the Maoists in south Bastar, laid down arms before the police and officials of the Central Reserve Police Force

(CRPF), Dantewada Superintendent

of Police Gaurav Rai said. They were impressed by the police's rehabilitation drive 'Lon Varratu' and disappointed with the hollow Maoist ideology, he said.

Telecom industry seeks ban on sale of WiFi 6E routers

PNS NEW DELHI

Telecom industry body COAI has sought a ban on the sale of wifi 6E routers which utilise 6 Ghz spectrum band for data transmission as the government is yet to decide on the use of these fre-

quencies. The Cellular Operators Association of India (COAI) has alleged that such routers are being sold through various ecommerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart and Moglix and

by offline traders.
The COAI, whose members include Reliance Jio, Airtel, and Vodafone Idea, in a letter to the Department of Telecom on April 15 said the sale of equipment for 6 GHz band utilization, which has not yet been assigned for this purpose or has not been declared



as licence-exempt by the government, is illegal and should be banned immediately in the coun-

try.
"We would like to submit that

DoT is yet to take a policy decision related to the 6 GHz band utilization. Therefore, any sale of such Wi-Fi 6E products, which utilizes the 6 GHz spectrum band

in delicensed manner, is illegal and such sale would only result in unauthorized transmissions in our country," COAI Director General SP Kochhar said in the

The industry body submitted an annexure with the letter citing sample links of wifi routers of TP-Link and Google that operate in 6 Ghz band radio frequency, being sold online on Amazon, Flipkart, Moglix etc websites.

Email queries sent to Amazon, Flipkart, Moglix, and Google did not elicit any reply. However, Moglix removed the product after the query was shared with the company.

"The websites/online platforms listed in Annexure-A are engaged in selling wireless equipment for 6 GHz band utilization, which has not yet been assigned for this purpose or has not been declared as license-exempt by the Government," Kochhar said.

He said that the utilization of such wifi devices operating in the 6 GHz band will render customers responsible for these unauthorized transmissions, placing the burden of liability on consumers and shifting the onus of responsibility for such unauthorized transmissions from the real offenders to the consumers.

"We earnestly request the Department to kindly intervene in the matter and take strict measures to put a complete ban on the sale of Wi-Fi products operating in the 6 GHz band, whether offline or online through e-commerce websites/platforms, through an appropriate notification to sellers of such products in the country," Kochhar said.

4 killed, 4 others hurt in auto-lorry collision

PNS AMALAPURAM

Four youths lost their lives and four others sustained injuries in a devastating collision between an autorickshaw and a lorry. The incident occurred during the early hours of Monday in Bhatnavilli village, located in the Amalapuram rural mandal of Konaseema district.

The fatal crash marred what was supposed to be a celebratory occasion, as the group had been returning from a birthday party for one of the deceased on Sunday night. Eight young individuals had ventured to Yanam to mark the birthday of Kollabattula Jatin. However, their journey back to their native vil-



lage turned disastrous when their auto-rickshaw collided with a lorry, claiming the lives of four passengers on the spot.

Continued on Page 2



tions underscore the fluidity

and unpredictability of politi-cal alliances in Andhra

Pradesh, raising pertinent

questions about their potential

impact on the electoral for-

tunes of both parties. As the

countdown to the elections

continues, the constant shuffle

of leaders' casts doubts on the

stability and effectiveness of

eleventh-hour maneuvers in

shaping the state's political

The electorate, amidst this

tumultuous backdrop, finds

itself faced with choices influ-

enced not only by party plat-

forms but also by the ever-shifting allegiances of its lead-

ers. The ramifications of these

defections extend far beyond

mere political calculations, affecting the lives and aspira-

tions of millions of Andhra

Pradesh residents. As the dust

settles, the true winners of this

political chess game will emerge, but until then, uncer-

tainty reigns supreme over the

future trajectory of the state's

landscape.

AP political landscape rattled by last-minute defections

As the assembly and Lok Sabha elections loom over Andhra Pradesh, the state's political arena resembles a turbulent sea, with waves of defections crashing between rival parties, casting uncertainty over the electoral landscape. In a relentless flurry of political maneuvering, leaders from the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) are making headlines by crossing over to the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), while YSRCP members are defecting to the TDP. These strategic shifts, often orchestrated in the presence of prominent figures like Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy and TDP President N. Chandrababu Naidu, are perceived as attempts to sway voter sentiment by exposing fractures within rival camps.

The latest episode in this high-stakes drama involves the resignation of senior TDP stalwart Yanamala Krishnudu, a towering figure with a four-decade-long association with



the party. Citing a lack of recognition within the TDP and decrying what he calls "dirty politics," Krishnudu has announced his intention to join the YSRCP. His decision follows disappointment over being denied a party ticket for the Tuni assembly constituency, a seat he contested unsuccessfully in both 2014 and 2019.

Meanwhile, the YSRCP faces its setback with the resignation of former minister and party MLC Dokka Manikya Vara Prasad from the Guntur district. A two-time MLA from Tadikonda, Dokka had previously defected to the TDP after the 2014 elections before returning to the YSRCP in 2020. His departure comes after being overlooked for a party ticket in

prising twist of events. These last-minute defec-

the current assembly elections,

a decision that prompted his

return to the TDP fold in a sur-

Withdrawal of...

Continued from Page 1

AP BJP chief Purandeshwari has filed her nomination Rajamahendravaram LS constituency. Naidu's son, N Lokesh, is again testing his electoral fortunes in Mangalagiri, where he unsuccessfully contested the assembly polls in 2019.

Founder of Janasena and actor Pawan Kalyan is vying for the Pithapuram assembly segment. He lost in the 2019 assembly polls from Bhimavaram and Gajuwaka constituencies.

Sitting TDP MLA and actor Balakrishna is contesting from Hindupur assembly segment.

Jagan's campaign revolves around the welfare measures his government initiated during the past five years, while the NDA parties are pinning hopes on the anti-incumbency factor and the failures of the state government.

The YSRCP has already released its manifesto and the NDA is expected to announce it in a day or two.

Andhra Pradesh has 175 assembly seats and 25 Lok

CANCELLATION OF MUSLIM QUOTA

YSRCP asks TDP, Jana Sena to spell out stand on BJP's announcement

PNS VIJAYAWADA

YSR Congress Muslim Minority leaders are voicing their objections to the BJP announcement of the cancellation of reservations for minorities. They have called upon TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu and Jana Sena president Kalyan to clarify their stance on Muslim reservations.

Khader Basha, the president of the YSRC Minority Cell, questioned Chandrababu Naidu's authority to toy with the lives of Muslims by endorsing the cancellation of their reservation.

He pointed out the BJP's consistent rhetoric about scrapping Muslim reservations if they assume power and challenged Naidu to disavow those statements.

Referring to Union Minister Piyush Goyal's recent remarks in Vijayawada, Khader Basha highlighted the BIP's intent to revoke the Muslim reservations in Andhra Pradesh, criticising Chandrababu's silence on the matter. He said that the

Muslim community will not Chandrababu of reneging on forgive Chandrababu Naidu for any misstep concerning their reservations, citing instances where Naidu pur-sued legal action against Muslims advocating for the implementation of promises

made during the TD regime. Khader Basha urged Chandrababu and Pawan Kalvan, both formerly aligned with the NDA, to break their silence on the crucial issue of Muslim reservation cancellapast promises, contrasting this with Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's efforts, who has appointed 11 minorities to key positions in his government, including a Deputy CM.

Other minority leaders from the YSRCP also criticised Naidu and Pawan for their silence on the BIP's decision to cancel Muslim reservations, demanding that these prominent leaders clarify their stance on the issue.

No abnormal rise in seasonal flu cases in **country so far: Centre**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

There has been no abnormal rise in cases of seasonal flu in any part of the country as of now, the Union health ministry said on Monday, underlining that it is keeping a close watch on the situation through its Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme network.

Since the detection of the first case of Influenza-A H1N1 in 2009, India every year witnesses two peaks of this seasonal influenza -one from January to March and other in the post-monsoon season, the ministry said.

"As of now, there has been no seasonal flu in any part of the country," it stated in a statement.

Payakaraopeta: A saga of political evolution and electoral showdowns

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Payakaraopeta, a constituency rich in history and political significance, has seen numerous transformations since its inception. Named after Jagannatha Payakarao, a prominent figure in the fight against British colonialism, the constituency has witnessed shifts in power dynamics and electoral outcomes over the decades. As the upcoming elections loom, the stage is set for yet another showdown between traditional contenders.

stituency, represented ini- Payakaraopeta. The con- from coastal villages wielding has witnessed landmark vic- for the upcoming elections, people.

tially by Geddam Sanyasi Rao. The subsequent years saw a series of electoral battles, with Raja Sagi Suryanarayana Raju becoming MLA in 1952, marking the onset of a dynamic political landscape. In 1962, Payakaraopeta transitioned into a Scheduled Caste (SC) Reserve Constituency, paving the way for diverse electoral contests. Since its establishment, the constituency has hosted 15 elections, showcasing a varied political spec-

Despite being designated Following India's indepen- as an SC constituency; the Payakaraopeta dominance of the Kapu social class has been notable in

IF VOTED TO POWER



stituency encompasses Kapu, significant influence in elec-SC, and BC communities, tions. Throughout its elec-

toral

tories and shifts in power dynamics. Notable victories include Mande Picchiyya's triumph under the CPI banner in the 1962 elections and Maruti Adiyya's win for Indira's Congress Party in

The emergence of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in 1982 reshaped the electoral landscape, garnering support from BC communities and securing six consecutive victories from 1983 to 2004. Notably, Kakara Nukaraju's three consecutive wins for TDP in 1985, 1989, and 1994 underscored the party's stronghold.

contest between the TDP and YSR Congress Party (YCP). Vangalapudi Anitha, representing TDP, and Kambala Jogulu, fielded by YCP, emerge as key contenders, with their respective political trajectories adding intrigue to the electoral narrative. With its storied past and diverse electorate, Payakaraopeta stands as a microcosm of Andhra Pradesh's political landscape. As voters prepare to cast their ballots, the constituency braces for another chapter in its electoral saga, where the echoes of history resonate with the aspirations of its

the stage is set for a fierce

'Land Titling Act...

Continued from Page 1

He criticized the alleged financial mismanagement under the current administration, citing issues like dwindling school attendance and corruption scandals.

Pawan Kalyan highlighted corruption allegations, including the purported Rs 67 crore scam involving the purchase of 'Chikki packets' for women. He criticized Jagan Mohan Reddy's leadership, highlighting his decade-long legal battles and accusing him of compromising law enforcement.

Assuring swift resolution of concerns like the CPS and drinking water shortages once in office, Pawan Kalyan emphasised the need for effective governance in the region, particularly in agricultural significance.

23 Naxals...

Continued from Page 1

Of the surrendered cadres, Sonu Madvi (40) was the vice-president of Dandakaranya Adivasi Kisan Mazdoor Sangthan (DAKMS) under the Hurrepal Panchayat, Paro Madvi (38) was the vice-president of the Krantikari Mahila Adivasi Sangthan (KAMS) and Parvati Barsa (33) headed its finance team, the official said.

"The cadres were tasked with digging up roads, felling trees to block roads and putting up posters and banners during shutdowns called by the Naxalites."

TODAY

ALMANAC Month & Paksham Apr 29 07:57 AM to Apr 30 07:05 AM Apr 30 07:05 AM to May 01 05:46 AM May 01 05:46 AM Tithi: Shashthi: Saptami Ashtami: to May 02 04:01 AM Nakshatram: Apr 30 04:42 AM to May 01 04:09 AM May 01 04:09 AM to May 02 03:11 AM Shravana: Rahukalam: 3:23 PM to 4:57 PM 9:03 AM to 10:38 AM 07:59 AM to 09:31 AM Varjyam: 12:13 PM to 1:48 PM Gulika: 09:54 PM to 11:28 PM Amritakalam: Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:48 AM to 12:38 PM VIJAYAWADA WEATHER Forecast: Mostly Sunny **Temp:** 42°° Humidity: 47% Sunrise: 5:43 AM Sunset: 6:26 PM

Updated: April 29, 2024 5:00 PM

Will conduct caste and economic survey: Rahul PNS GUJARAT "Ninety per cent Congress leader Rahul

Gandhi on Monday said if his party is voted to power, it will conduct a nationwide caste and economic survey on priority to enhance participation of Dalits, tribals, poor for the general category and OBCs.
Gandhi, who was

addressing a poll rally in Patan town of north Gujarat in support of the party's Lok Sabha candidate Chandanji Thakor, also said the BJP and RSS planned to change the Constitution after retaining power.

"Ninety per cent of the country's population comprises SCs, STs, and OBCs, but you will not find their representation in the corporate, media (sectors), private hospitals, private universities, or as bureaucrats in government. We will first do a caste and economic survey after coming to power," he said.

These communities are working as farmers, labourers, small traders or are said, adding that only three of the 90 IAS officers at the helm of affairs at the Centre are from the backward classes, and they too have been given insignificant

of the country's population comprises SCs, STs, and OBCs, but you will not find their representation in the corporate,



media (sectors), private hospitals, private universities, or as bureaucrats in government"

Accusing the BJP of bringing about wealth inequality in the country during its 10year rule, Gandhi said just 22 individuals possess as much wealth as 70 per cent of the population.

Our solution is that the Congress will first conduct a caste census and economic survey after coming to power to find out the exact population of Dalits, OBCs, tribals as well as the poor from the general category. Then a survey will be held to find out their participation in media, government secsimply unemployed, he tors, private colleges and universities etc and also financial status," he said.

After this exercise, India will have a fair idea of everyone's proportion in population, their participation

details, money in their hands, and institutions they are working in, Gandhi claimed.

Hitting out at the RSS and BJP, he said the ruling dispensation is against the system of reservations and it also wants to change the Constitution, which is the basis on which people received their rights, facilities like education, health care, water, as well as rights.

"BJP leaders are saying they will change the Constitution, which protects the poor and the downtrodden. Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants only 22-25 people to control all wealth, power, and natural resources.

That is what happened in their 10-year rule," Gandhi

4 killed, 4 others... Continued from Page 1

Among the deceased are Sape Naveen, Kollabattula Jatin, Valluri Ajay, and Nalli Naveen Kumar. Four others sustained injuries in the accident, two of whom are reported to be in critical condition. They have been admitted to the Government General Hospital (GGH) in Amalapuram for treatment.

The victims hailed from various villages, including Nagaram, Mamidikuduru, and Pasarlapudi. Following the tragic incident, the police have initiated an investigation and have transferred the bodies to the GGH for post-

in 2 phases of polls, says PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said the Congress, despite its "tainted background", is dreaming of snatching power in the country unaware that the INDI alliance is already vanquished in the first two phases of Lok Sabha elections.

Addressing a rally in Solapur, Modi said a 'mahayudh' is going on in the INDI bloc over leadership and they have come up with a formula of "five PMs in five years", who will eventually loot the country. He said the people have tested him for 10 years whereas there is a leader-



Oppn bloc already vanquished

ship crisis in the INDIA bloc.

"In this election, you will choose the guarantee of development for the next 5 years. On the other side, there are people, who before 2014, gave the country corruption, terror-

ism, and non-governance. Despite its tainted history, Congress is once again dreaming of snatching power in the country but they do not know that in the first two phases of polls, the INDI alliance is vanquished," said Modi. You have tested Modi for 10 years, you have seen his every step and measured his every word. On the other hand, a 'mahayudh' is going on in the INDI alliance over leadership, he said.

"Will you give the reins of the country in someone's hand who has not decided the name or face (of PM candidate)? Will anyone make that mistake?" he

Welfare Govinda...

Continued from Page 1

mortem examination.

He urged the electorate to consider the repercussions of supporting an opposition that he characterized as anti-poor.

Drawing attention to the unfulfilled pledges of the previous regime, CM Jagan cited examples such as the promised unemployment benefit of Rs 2000, a farm loan waiver of Rs 87,612 crores, and the retrieval of pledged gold from banks. He reminded the audience of the disillusionment that followed Naidu's victory in 2014, emphasising the need for

accountability.

neglect Visakhapatnam's potential and his proposal to relocate the capital, labelling it as a missed opportunity. He pointed out the failure of Naidu's ambitious plans, including the proposed graphical Rajadhani,

as evidence of his administra-

tion's shortcomings.
Addressing the crowd in Ambajipeta, CM Jagan termedthe upcoming election as a decisive battle between the interests of the poor and the habitual deceit of Chandrababu Naidu. He contrasted Naidu's record of

CM Jagan further criticised unfulfilled promises with his administration's accomplishments, emphasizing the stark difference between rhetoric and action.

Asserting his resolve to confront the opposition alliance led by Naidu, CM Jagan highlighted the diverse forces aligned against his party. He portrayed the opposition as consisting of disparate elements, including Naidu's adopted son Pawan Kalyan, biased regional media, and politically insignificant parties.

In Ponnur, CM Jagan continued his criticism of Naidu's governance, accusing him of failing to deliver on promises outlined in the 2014 manifesto. He challenged Naidu's credibility by highlighting his inability to substantiate claims of progress with tangible achievements.

CM Jagan reiterated his commitment to social justice, citing the composition of his cabinet and the allocation of legislative seats to marginalised communities. He contrasted this with the lack of inclusivity during Naidu's tenure, positioning his party as the champion of equity and representation.

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Kin campaign for candidates as election fever catches on

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Main contenders have intensified their election campaigning in NTR and Krishna districts, gearing up for the impending polling day on May 13. Not only are the candidates themselves active in their grassroots out-reach, but their family members have also taken up the mantle, engaging in door-to-door can-

The Election Commission of India (ECI) recently unveiled the final list of candidates for the Vijayawada and Machilipatnam Lok Sabha constituencies, along with 16 other Assembly constituencies spanning the NTR and Krishna districts. With the list finalised after the withdrawal of nominations, the electoral fervour has surged as candidates and their kin rally for

In a curious turn, family members including spouses, offspring, and other relatives of the candidates have plunged into separate campaign efforts, soliciting votes from constituents. Notably, these surrogates have not shied away from levelling allegations against rival candidates from opposing par-

With the polling day looming closer, the battleground is primarily dominated by the ruling YSRCP and the TDP-JSP-BJP alliance. However, in select assembly constituencies, candidates from smaller parties such as India Bloc, Congress, CPI, and CPM are putting up formidable resistance against the backdrop of mainstream political contenders. Additionally, a handful of independent candidates, often dissenters within their own parties, are also posing significant challenges. In the Vijayawada Lok Sabha

constituency, a total of 50 nom-





YSRCP candidate Devineni Avinash's sister Kranthi and Kesineni Nani's daughter Hyma participating in the canvassing.

18 deemed invalid and five withdrawn. Presently, 27 candidates remain in contention. Key figures vying for the seat include Kesineni Sivanath alias Chinni (TDP), Kesineni Srinivas alias Nani (YSRCP), and Valluru Bhargav (Congress).

Turning Machilipatnam Parliamentary Constituency, 37 nominations were submitted, out of which four were rejected, leaving 33 valid contenders. The incumbent MP Vallabhaneni Balashowry (Jana Sena Party) Chandrasekhar (YSRC) are locked in a battle for supremacy. Meanwhile, the Congress party has fielded Gollu Krishna,

albeit facing minimal competi-

Across the 14 assembly constituencies in the NTR and Krishna districts, a multitude of candidates are vying for victory. While the primary contest is between the YSRCP and the NDA alliance parties comprising TDP, JSP, and BJP, there are notable exceptions. In the Vijayawada Central assembly constituency, for instance, CPM

candidate Ch. Babu Rao is mounting a formidable chal-

Vijayawada-East Assembly constituency

TDP candidate Gadde Rama Mohana

Rao's son Rajesh participating in the

lenge against contenders from the YSRCP and TDP.

Similarly, in the Tiruvuru Assembly constituency, stiff competition ensues between the Congress party candidate Lam Thantiya Kumari, YSRCP candidate Nallagatla Swamy Das, and TDP candidate Kolikapudi Srinivasa Rao. The India Bloc has pitched CPI candidate G. Koteswara Rao against heavyweight candidates in the Vijayawada West assembly constituency.

Elsewhere, in the Mylavaram segment, Congress party candidate Borra Kiran Kumar is in contention, while the YSRCP and TDP field their candidates. Noteworthy battles also unfold in other assembly segments like Nandigama, Jaggayyapet, and Vijayawada East in the NTR district, as well as Pedana, Machilipatnam, Avanigadda, Penamaluru, Gudivada, and Gannavaram assembly con-

NTR district

21 candidates in contest for Narasapuram LS seat constituency

PNS BHIMAVARAM



District Election Returning Officer and district Collector Sumit Kumar said that after scrutiny 21 candidates left in the fray in the Narasapuram

Parliamentary constituency.

"No candidate withdrew nomination on the last day on April 29. With this, all the 21 candidates, who filed nominations remained in the fray in Narasapuram parliamentary constituency," Collector Sumit Kumar. "In the West Godavari district, after scrutiny in seven Assembly constituencies, 99 nominations were approved. As many as 10 candidates withdrew their nominations on the last day leaving 89 candidates in the fray in seven Assembly constituencies," the Collector said.

Strong rooms and counting halls at KR varsity inspected

General Observers appointed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) conducted a thorough inspection of the strong rooms and counting halls at Krishna University (KRU) in Machilipatnam on Monday, covering the Machilipatnam Lok Sabha constituency and seven Assembly constituen-cies situated on the university premises.

Among the observers were John King's Le AR, and Narahari Singh Bangar, overseeing the Machilipatnam Lok Sabha and the assembly segments of Machilipatnam, Pedana, and Avanigadda. Additionally, Narahari Singh Banga supervised the Gannavaram, Gudivada, Pamarru, and Penamaluru segments, while Vikas Chandra Carole, the expenditure observer, focused on Gudivada, Pedana, and Gannavaram assembly constituencies.

During the inspection,



General Observers for the Machilipatnam Lok Sabha and the other seven Assembly constituencies inspecting the facilities of strong rooms and counting halls at the Krishna University in Machilipatnam on Monday.

Manisha Tripathi, Assistant Director of the Krishna District Survey Department, provided comprehensive explanations regarding the strong rooms, counting halls, and the operational plan to the observers. The observers conveyed their satisfaction with the arrangements and amenities provided for the storage

and counting areas.

Key figures present during the inspection included Krishna University Vice Chancellor Prof G Gnana Mani, ASP SVD Prasad, Bandar DSP MD Abdul Subhan, and University Registrar K Sobhan Babu, alongside the general and

engaged in discussions with

residents, seeking their input

on the voting process and facilities available. Following

these interactions, he expressed

satisfaction with the efforts of

officials from different depart-

ments in ensuring suitable

arrangements.

Facilities at polling stations inspected

Narinder Singh Bali, the appointed general observer for the Mylavaram, Nandigama, and Jaggayyapet Assembly constituencies by the Election Commission of India (ECI), undertook an inspection of the facilities provided at the polling stations across several villages in the Mylavaram Assembly constituency on Monday.

In addition, he convened a meeting with residents to assess their experience and gather feedback on the arrangements.

Commencing his visit, Bali first assessed the polling stations set up at the school in Kattubadipalem village of G



Kondur mandal in the district. Kuntamukkala, Subsequently, he proceeded to inspect polling stations in Kavuluru, Velagaleru, Mutyalampadu, Atkuru, Throughout his visit to the Chevuturu, Venkatapuram, various polling stations, Bali

Gurrajupalem villages to ensure the adequacy of the

Addressing those gathered, Bali emphasised the importance of exercising one's voting rights in the forthcoming elections. He underscored the significance of each citizen's role in the democratic process and encouraged attendees to actively promote voter awareness within their communities, urging them to encourage fellow residents to participate in the



4 employees of V'wada Division get 'Man of the Month' awards

Manager, South Central Railway, on Monday, presented the General Manager's 'Man of the Month' Safety Awards to four employees of Vijayawada Division for showing alertness in duty and taking timely action to prevent unsafe conditions. Narendra A Patil, Divisional Railway Manager, Vijayawada, attended the virtual safety meeting along with Principal Heads of Departments and Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) of all the other five Divisions viz., Guntakal, Guntur, Secunderabad, Hyderabad, and Nanded from their respective offices.

Narendra Patil congratulated the staff for their alertness and prompt action. S. Srinivasa Rao. Senior Technician of the Mechanical Department. received the award for noticing a hot axle box in Train No. 18045 East Coast Express on Rolling In examination. The coach was detached at Rajahmundry.

S Satish, Secondly, Technician-1, Rajahmundry, of the Mechanical Department noticed a hot axle box and leakage of vertical damper oil under the bogie in Train No. 12841 Coromandel Express Express on March 25, while conducting a rolling in examination at Rajahmundry. The coach was detained at Vijayawada Railway Station.

M Suresh, Station Manager, Aravalli, of the Operating Department received the award for noticing hot axle symptoms in a wagon from a goods train passing Aravalli Station on March 6. He immediately informed the Guard and the Loco Pilot over a walkie-talkie and also exhibited a danger signal.

VOTER REGISTRATION STATUS IN 9 VILLAGES

Verification an ordeal for residents

DASARI SRINIVASA RAO

Residents of nine villages in Vijayawada Rural, namely Gudavalli, Nidamanuru, Enikepadu, Prasadampadu, Ramavarappadu, Nunna, Pathapadu, P Nainavaram, and difficulties verifying their voter registration status on the Election Commission of India (ECI) and Andhra Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) websites. Despite efforts to confirm their inclusion in the voters' list, they are unable to locate their names.

These villages, situated in the NTR district, now fall within the Machilipatnam Lok Sabha and Gannavaram Assembly constituency in the Krishna district following district bifurcation. Before the division, residents faced no such challenges. However, post-bifurcation, villagers are grappling with the arduous task of locating their names on the electoral roll.

According to ECI guidelines, voters typically ascertain their voting details by selecting their district and Assembly constituency and



providing personal information such as name, father's name, and date of birth. However, this process fails to yield results for residents of these nine villages in Vijayawada Rural Mandal.

For instance, Pamarthi Sivayya, a resident of Nunna village in Vijayawada Rural Mandal, attempted to verify his registration status on the officials websites but was unsuccessful. Only by selecting Krishna district and Krishna

could he retrieve his electoral

Ordinarily, residents select the NTR district and Gannavaram Assembly constituency, assuming accuracy. However, this approach does not provide reliable information. To access their voting details, residents of these nine villages must select the Krishna district and Gannavaram constituency, ensuring comprehensive information retrieval. Residents believe their villages rightfully belong to the Krishna district. Conversely, residents of six village panchayats, namely Gollapudi, Rayanapadu, Paidurapadu, Jakkampudi, Kothuru Tadepalli, and YSR Gram Panchayat, along with Ramarajya Nagar in iwada Riiral encounter no such obstacles in verifying their registration sta-A total of 82 polling stations

Residents believe their vil-

in these nine villages are under the supervision of the Gannavaram assembly constituency Returning Officer (RO) and Joint Collector Geethanjali Sharma, with Dr S. Dilli Rao, the NTR district collector, overseeing the ongoing election process.

Revenue officials attribute this issue to district bifurcation, stating that had these nine villages been appropriately assigned to an Assembly constituency in the NTR district during the division, such problems could have been avoided. However, officials failed to adequately inform residents of these villages about this matter during the bifurcation process.

Bharathi campaigns in Pulivendula

PNS PULIVENDULA

YS Bharathi Reddy, wife of AP Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, is known for their soft and humble nature. On behalf of her husband and CM, she Congress party election campaign in the Pulivendula constituency on Monday. She held a door-to-door campaign ahead of simultaneous Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the state on May 13.

YS Bharathi met young and old voters in the constituency and sought their votes for the ruling party to keep the development and welfare programmes continuing in the state. She received an overwhelming response from the people of all walks of life

During a recent public meeting, Naidu had said what would happen if the chief minister is killed. When asked about Naidu's objectionable remarks on CM Jagan, YS Bharathi gave a befitting counter. Condemning the comments

of Naidu, she said that it is not proper for a senior leader and



aged person to make disparag ing remarks against the chief minister of the state. She said such hateful comments have no place in democracy. Bharathi said people won't accept such behaviour from the leaders who are in public life.

Meanwhile, talking about the development of Pulivendula and the state, she said the people of the constituency are happy with the welfare schemes of the ruling party. The con-stituency has witnessed a lot of development in the last 5 years and the detractors may not be able to see it.

Nirmala Sitharaman inspires youth towards 'Viksit Bharat' vision

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has lauded India's progress towards the transformative vision of Viksit Bharat, during the Viksit Bharat Ambassador (VBA) Campus Dialogue held at GITAM Deemed to be University. Encouraging over 1,200 students, faculty, entrepreneurs, and professionals in attendance, Nirmala emphasised the pivotal role of each individual in propelling India's journey towards becoming a developed nation by 2047, aligning with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visionary leadership.

The Minister's address

underscored the necessity of coherent policies, visionary leadership, and streamlined administration to foster economic growth and achieve key developmental milestones. She encouraged constructive dialogue and the exchange of ideas,



echoing the Viksit Bharat vision of "140 crore dreams, one purpose". Against the backdrop of global challenges such as the financial crisis and the ongoing pandemic, she highlighted India's economic resilience under PM Modi's governance, citing measures against corruption, skill development initiatives, and governance

enhancements. The dialogue resonated with

the spirit of people-powered development as Nirmala cham-pioned the 'Viksit Bharat Ambassador Programme, urging citizens to actively engage in India's progress. Her engagement with professionals and entrepreneurs centred on bolstering entrepreneurship, supporting small and medium enterprises, and enhancing the business landscape, reflecting the government's commitment to inclusive growth. Dispelling doubts about

India's economic prowess, Sitharaman attributed the nation's improved global rankings to dedicated efforts and effective governance. She spotlighted various government initiatives focused on empowering youth, fostering innovation through the 'Anusandhan Corpus, investing in defense technology, advancing indigenous capabilities in AI and green hydrogen technology.

Naidu has done nothing noteworthy as CM for 14 years: Pothina 'Pawan pledged the self-respect of Kapus'

PNS VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP leader Potina Venkata Mahesh has alleged that TDP chief Chandrababu Naidu is unable to explain to the people of Andhra Pradesh what good he has done to the people during his 14 years as CM. Addressing the media at the party central office at Tadepalli on Monday, Mahesh heaped praise on CM Jagan Mohan Reddy for fulfilling all the

promises given to the people and going for elections.

He said CM Jagan has fulfilled the dream of women across the State to own a house. Every promise made to the people has been implemented. The poor believe in Jagan and the CM showers love on them. Mahesh said that the TDP/BJP/JSP

alliance is of no use to the peo-

Chandrababu has served as Chief Minister for 14 years and has not done any good to the people. On the other hand, Jagan is seeking votes after telling the people what the YSRCP government has done

He said the TDP chief has developed jealousy and hatred towards CM Jagan due to the fear of defeat and planned an attack on the CM. Jagan has brought innovative changes in government schools and introduced the English medium for all. Jagan's photo is seen in every

house because he is doing so

much for the poor.

Mahesh said that they are ready to discuss unemployment and job creation. Does the alliance have the courage to discuss this? CM Jagan was the leader who brought Ambedkar's ideology into reality by doing Justice to people of all communities. Jagan worked for the welfare of the Kapus. But Pawan Kalyan is trying to convert the Kapus into the Yellow

16th century step well craves for attention

A brick-built step well representing Vijayanagara architecture demands a facelift, says Dr E Sivanagireddy, Archaeologist and CEO, of Pleach India Foundation. Based on the information given by Suryadevara Harikrishna, Dr Reddy visited the well along with heritage activist BV Ramana on Minda and revealed that the 20 ft dia and 20 ft deep is circular on plan and the wall is

designed on the lines of the famous stone step well at Hampi in its vertical elevation. He says that the well fitted with stone slabs which form a spiral staircase and water drawing arrangements might have served as a source for drinking Water for the officials of the Chandragiri fort.

He said that the inner surface of the brick wall needs proper cleaning and setting and a railing shall be built with a walkway around the plinth so that people could visit the architectural wonder comfortably.

Sivanagireddy said though there are many stone step wells in Rayalaseema, this is the only stepwell built in typical Vijayanagara style with receding steps frequented by a band all around that adds beauty to the interior of the well.

He appealed to the owners of the mango garden in which the historic brick step well is located to preserve it for posterity.





How can heirs to the corrupt distribute wealth among people?

M Narendra Modi is an expert at simplifying difficult ideological issues. On release of Cong manifesto, he explained to people the Congress ideology in simple

Modi said the Congress would distribute people's prop-erty, land and gold among the

people.

Going by the manifesto, remarks made by Rahul Gandhi and Manmohan Singh (former PM) and Sam Pitroda (Cong advisor), Modi translated in simple language for the people. When Modi explained people imposing inheritance tax and carrying out socioeconomic census to distribute wealth in simple language, the Congress leaders accused Modi of distorting facts.

Former PM Manmohan Singh, who was called a puppet in Sonia's hands, went on record stating that Muslims have the first claim to nation's resources. Is it not true?

Is it not true that Rahul, while speaking at Cong

Manifesto release function in Hyderabad, going on record that the Congress, if voted to power, will redistribute the nation's wealth equally among the people after conducting caste-based and religion-based census?

he pioneer

One should understand whom did Rahul Gandhi send the feelers to by opting to release the manifesto in Hyderabad.

Should Sam Pitroda quoting the example of inheritance tax levied in the USA, be regarded as casual remark? Why did he recommend the government recommend the following sent recommend the solutions of the sent recommend the solutions of the sent recommend the solutions of the solutions of the sent recommend the solutions of the sent recommendation of the sent rec ment recovering 55% of the wealth of an individual after his death? How can the example of Pitroda that government, following the death of a person who earned Rs 1 crore in dollars, getting Rs 55 lakh and his heirs getting Rs 45 lakh be treated as a casual remark?

Why did the Congress, having ruled over 60 years, and caste-based and religion-based parties get the idea of conduct-

Should Sam Pitroda quoting the example of inheritance tax levied in the **USA**, be regarded as casual remark? Why did he recommend the government recovering 55% of the wealth of an individual after his death? How can the example of Pitroda that government, following the death of a person who earned Rs 1 crore in dollars, getting Rs 55 lakh and his heirs getting Rs 45 lakh be treated as a casual remark?

census and distribute the his defeat whenever he con-

wealth among the people? Jawaharlal Nehru, who claims to be socialist, failed to remove economic disparities even after ruling the nation for over 15 years. What is the purpose of Mrs Gandhi giving the slogan Garibi Hathao'? Why did the Congress, which is shedding crocodile tears on Dalits, insult Architect of Constitution Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar during its regime?

tested for LS? Why did the Congress force Jagjivan Ram to float a separate party? The Congress has the history of dismissing Dalit leaders like Damodaram Sanjivaiah from the CM post. Anyone going through history can observe that lynching and repression of Dalits and Adivasis had taken place only in Congress rule.

Today, Congress harps on economic and social inequalities, not knowing what to do



Y SATYA KUMAR **BJP National Secretary**

as it got scent of Modi-led BJP is heading for landslide victory. Cong forgot that creation of inequalities was its own handiwork.

Had the Congress been sincere it would have implemented Mandal Commission recommendations and rendered social justice.

Former PM Rajiv Gandhi lamented that out of every Rs 100 spent by government at least Rs 15 would not trickle down to the people as middlemen corner the majority of funds.

But what he did TRULY do? He resorted to large-scale corrup-tion upon coming to **SPEAKING** power. He was responsible for communal riots in Punjab, Assam, North Eastern states. The Cong boasts of the creation of the PSUs knowing well that several PSUs sustained losses in its regime.

The country would not have achieved economic selfreliance today, had PV Narasimha Rao, hated by Sonia, not introduced economic reforms. PM Modi has been hastening the speedier and more constructive implementation of reforms and developing infrastructure to enable India become the fifth largest economy.

The first thing Modi did on coming to power, he got the bank accounts of people seeded with mobile phone numbers and Aadhaar cards. It enabled direct transfer of money, under various social welfare schemes,

into the people's bank accounts. They were accustomed to check the

receipt of funds into their accounts. Because of seeding of Aadhaar number with bank accounts, middlemen cornering the funds was ruled out. On an average, at least Rs 90 lakh is being credited into bank

accounts of the people daily.

Since Modi coming to power, Rs 6.5 lakh crore was credited into the bank

accounts of people. Which party – Cong or the BJP - took measures to remove economic inequalities? Whom does the Congress going to benefit by starting caste-based census afresh?

When Modi cornered Congress with the question, the Congress leaders fumbled as though they have committed a crime. Cong leaders, who unleashed propaganda that because of Modi the money in the people's bank accounts will disappear, were shocked into the people's accounts.

In Telugu states, we have come across the phenomenon of son and daughter of CM looting the State. For example, everyone knew how Jaganmohan Reddy amassed several thousands of crores even though his father did not hold the office of CM at least for six years. He acquired shares in business acquired shares in business from every businessman forcibly. The funds he spent for undertaking pada yatras and to fund his poll cam-paign. The people believed his words and made him the CM. One can imagine how much more he would have earned during the past five years. We can also imagine why his younger sister took Cong_reins in her hands in AP. Cong leadership promoted such persons across the nation. These individuals have been bleeding the country. How can they distribute wealth among the people?

Army of 4.5K YSRCP social media warriors reach Andhra voters

Backed by a strong army of 4,500 social media volunteers, the ruling YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leaves no stone unturned in disseminating information regarding the state government's welfare programmes and swiftly issues fact-check messages to counter misinformation around the

The YS Jagan Mohan Reddy-led party is keen on retaining power in the state and also put up a good show in the Lok Sabha polls. Parliamentary elections and Assembly polls are scheduled to be held simultaneously in the southern state on May 13.

Sajjala Bhargav Reddy, the YSRCP's social media incharge underscores the wing's mission--to ensure accurate



voter in the state while effectively thwarting the opposition's "malicious" campaigns across mainstream and social

Bhargav highlighted that in addition to the party's official social media channels across multiple platforms, individuals ranging from those with modest following to those com-manding nearly a million fol-

lowers actively participate in sharing information about the party's initiatives and offering insightful analyses of current

events.
"We have a massive network of people who voluntarily work for the party. Starting at the district level, we have a social media committee and at the constituency level, there is one more social media committee and to the mandal level. In all, it represents close to 4500 office bearers exclusively in social media," he said.

"We aim to reach every single voter in the state and predominantly we keep our approach organic. The reach is so high that we don't have control where it goes or reaches," Bhargav further said.

YSRCP's official account on microblogging platform 'X' has 8.86 lakh followers and its YouTube page channel has over five lakh subscribers. Its Instagram account has 1.72 lakh followers while Facebook page has a whooping 1.2 million admirers.

Bhargav outlined that a significant portion of the YSRCP social media team's efforts is dedicated to fact-checking and presenting accurate information to counter the spread of misinformation by the opposi-

He emphasized that the party's WhatsApp groups, spreading from local villages to international communities, boast active membership totalling over a million. Their primary objective is to ensure that Chief Minister Reddy's messages resonate across the globe while adeptly highlighting the shortcomings of the opposition.

Severe heatwave likely in R'seema on May 2 & 3

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Severe heatwave conditions are likely to occur at isolated places in Rayalaseema on May 2 and 3, the Meteorological Centre said on Monday.

A daily weather report said that heatwave conditions are likely to occur at isolated places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema during the next five days.

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers are likely to occur at one or two places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh & Yanam during the next 48 hours. Dry weather is likely to occur in Rayalaseema, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, during the next seven days, and in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh from May 1 to 5.

Woman and her 2 teenage children commit suicide

PNS KADAPA

In a shocking incident, a woman, along with her teenage son and daughter, committed suicide by hanging to a tree in the agriculture field on the out-skirts of Chennur in the dis-trict on Monday.

Police said that Umamaheshwari (40) was married to Srihari 18 years ago. The couple had two children. Differences cropped up between the couple on family and financial matters. She deserted her husband and was living separately with her children. She filed a case against her husband. On the evening of Sunday, she left the house along with her children and sent a video message to her relatives that she was going to commit suicide.

The relatives lodged a police complaint. The woman and her



two teenage children were found hanging to a tree. The deceased were identified as Umamaheswari (40),Dhanalakshmi (16) and Phanikumar (17). The deceased woman left a suicide note in which she stated that her husband, sister-in-law and mother-in-law harassed her,

forcing to take the extreme step. The police registered a case under suspicious deaths and shifted the bodies to the GGH for postmortem. A pall of gloom descended on Gorla Pullaiah Street at the village with the death of a young woman and her two teenage

99 candidates left in fray in Eluru district

PNS ELURU

As many as 99 candidates were left in the fray in the seven Assembly constituencies the Eluru Parliamentary constituency in the district.

District Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh said here on Monday that a total number of 17 nominations were in the Parliamentary constituency of which four nominations were rejected and 13 nominations were approved. Since no candidate withdrew on the final day, all 13 candidates remained in the fray in the Eluru Parliamentary constituency.

In the seven Assembly constituencies, after the conclusion of withdrawal, 86 candidates remained in the fray. He said that 12 contestants are in the fray in the Ugatur

Assembly constituency, 15 in Dendulu, 14 in Eluru, 12 in Polavaram, 8 in Chintalapudi, 10 in Nuzvid and 15 in Kaikalur.

Since the number of candidates is less than 16 in each constituency, one EVM is sufficient for the polling. A training programme would be conducted for the election staff in the second phase, he said stating arrangements were made to 18,465 voters to avail postal ballot facility of which 12,480 voters would be in election duty and 2134 voters would be in emergency services. "So far, Rs 2.20 crore cash,

Rs 1.63 crore liquor and Rs 10.30 crore worth gold and other valuables have been seized in the district. As many as 2343 approvals have been sanctioned to organize election programmes and 459 complaints have been received through cVIGIL.

Deep fake video national security issue: Kishan

The deep fake video on Union Home Minister Amit Shah is an issue connected to national security, Telangana BJP President G. Kishan Reddy

He demanded that Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy

should withdraw his comments on reservations immediately or else the BJP will drag him to court. He said that he feared law and order problems could arise due to the CM's statements.

Kishan said that the morphing of Amit Shah's video is a serious issue and demanded serious action against the culprit. It is an effort to create enmity between people, he added. Chief Minister Revanth

Reddy posted the Union Home

Minister's fake video on his offi-

cial social media handle. Addressing the media at the State BJP office here on Monday, Kishan said that Revanth is degrading the CM's

"Revanth lost credibility due to the statement he made about reservations. It is the misfortune of the people that they are

having Revanth Reddy as their CM and KCR as their oppo-sition leader. Was it not KCR who signed the agreement accepting 299 TMCs of Krishna River waters? KCR is dreaming that

he will play a key role in forming the next Central Government saying that the next parliament will be hung. It is ridiculous that KCR who is not in a position to protect his MLAs is saying that he will play a key role at the Centre," Kishan

YSRC complaints to **EC** against Pawan, Naidu

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) has complained about Telugu Desam, Chandrababu Naidu, Pawan Kalyan and Kurnool TD MP candidate Nagaraju who are acting against the election rules. YSRC MLA Malladi Vishnu, Party Grievance Cell President Narayanamurthy, and Legal Cell Leader Srinivasa Reddy complained to Chief Election

Meena MLA Vishnu stated that TD is spreading misinformation against YS Jagan regarding the non-implementation of the Land Title Act through IVR calls. As this is against the model code of conduct, he has provided evidence asking him

Officer Mukesh Kumar

to take appropriate action.

He said that secondly, Chandrababu made inappropriate comments against Chief Minister Jagan during the



campaign held in Kodumuru and Mantralayam on the 28th of this month. He further said that thirdly, Pawan Kalyan made inappropriate comments against Chief Minister YS Jagan during the election cam-paign held on the 28th of this month in the Prathipadu constituency. Malladi Vishnu added that as this is against the election rules, they asked to take appropriate action against



'Vigraha Prathista' ceremony held

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Prasad Chalavadi, Managing Director, Sai Silks Kalamandir Ltd. (SSKL), and his wife Chalavadi Venkata Jhansi Rani have organised a grand 'Vigraha Prathista' ceremony at reconstructed Shaneeshwara and Kashi Vishweshwar Swamy Temple located at the Pushkar ghat in Vijayawada, before it opened

for devotees. The consecration of the idol, known as Vigraha Prathista, and other rituals, was done by Satchidananda Saraswathy in the presence of temple establishers Prasad Chalavadi, and his wife Chalavadi Venkata Jhansi Rani alongside SSKL Directors. The temple priests blessed the promoters and offered them the holy prasadam. Prasad Chalavadi, said,

"The temple shall certainly bless the people of Vijayawada with peace, prosperity, health and good fortune."

With a strong presence in Pradesh, Andhra Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, SSKL offers a diverse range of products

including ultra-premium

and premium sarees, lehen-

gas, and men's and children's ethnic wear.

Congress committed to special status for Andhra Pradesh: Gidugu

ll India Congress Committee (AICC) member and senior party Lleader Gidugu Rudra Raju has expressed his conviction that the Congress party in Andhra Pradesh has gained momentum since the appointment of YS Sharmila as APCC president. Raju, who is contesting the elections from the Rajahmundry Lok Sabha constituency, says that the promise of granting Special Category Status (SCS) remains the cornerstone of the Congress's electoral strategy.

In an interview with The Pioneer's Mukkamala Chakradhar in Rajahmundry on Monday, Rudra Raju highlighted the party's commitment to addressing the needs of the State through a robust election manifesto. He noted that despite the Congress being a national party, its focus lies on the progress and welfare of Andhra

The excerpts:

Q: The Congress party lost power in Andhra Pradesh a decade ago, with the BJP at the Centre and the YSRCP in the State now. How does

the Congress plan to confront this alliance and the ruling party in Andhra Pradesh?

A: Our primary political leverage lies in the assurance of granting Special Category Status (SCS). We have crafted a manifesto that prioritises the welfare of the people. Despite being a national party, Congress is deeply committed to the advancement of Andhra Pradesh. The enactment of the AP Reorganisation Act 2014 during the Congress-led Union government underscores our dedication to the State's development. Regrettably, the BJP's failure to implement the Act has resulted in significant injustices to Andhra Pradesh. If entrusted with power, Congress pledges to fully implement the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act 2014.

Q: Do you believe that the Congress party in Andhra Pradesh has gained strength since YS Sharmila assumed the role of APCC presi-



dent? Will she campaign in Rajahmundry?

Undoubtedly, the Congress has witnessed a resurgence following Sharmila's leadership. Her resemblance to the late YS Rajasekhar Reddy resonates strongly with the people. Sharmila will indeed be actively campaigning, not only in Rajahmundry but also in Kakinada and Amalapuram.

Q: Do you think the successive governments of TDP and YSRCP have failed to secure the provisions of the AP Reorganisation Act 2014

Absolutely. Despite assurances from leaders like YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, the necessary pressure on the BJPled Centre to fulfil its commitments has been lacking. Furthermore, the TDP's shifting stance on SCS and its subsequent alignment with the BJP only exacerbate the situation. It's evident that whichever party comes to power in Andhra Pradesh, aligns itself with the BJP, further delaying the rightful provisions for the State.

Q: Is granting SCS to Andhra Pradesh the primary strategy to counter the YSRCP and the alliance?

A: Indeed, it serves as both our electoral weapon and a means to mobilise the support of people.

Q: This is your first time contesting in

the general elections from Rajahmundry. Does this hold any significance for you?

A: Hailing from the combined East Godavari district, I take immense pride in representing this region. The legacy of notable figures like Aadikavi Nannayya and Kandukuri Veereshalingam inspires me. Moreover, the developmental strides undertaken in Rajahmundry during the tenure of the Rajasekhara Reddy government instil confidence in me that the electorate will choose wise-

Q: What strategies do you employ to confront your opponents in the

election? While my opponent Daggubati Purandeswari has a history with the Congress, her opportunistic departure to join the BJP speaks volumes. In contrast, my allegiance to the Congress remains steadfast, and I am committed to strengthening it fur-

ther. As for the YSRCP candidate,

while he may be a newcomer to politics, I trust the electorate to recognise his experience and dedication.

Is megastar Chiranjeevi still associated with the Congress? His recent campaigning for certain candidates has raised questions.

Chiranjeevi's allegiance to the Congress remains apparent, despite his recent campaign activities. His contributions to the party, including his tenure as a Rajya Sabha member and Union Cabinet induction, affirm his continued association.

Q: Will Telangana ministers and MLAs be participating in the campaign here in Andhra Pradesh?

Certainly. Ministers such as Duddilla Sridhar Babu, and Ponnam Prabhakar, along with other leaders, will actively campaign for Congress candidates. Besides, national leaders of the Congress will lend their support to our endeavours here.

Centre asks NCERT to update textbooks on yearly basis

he Ministry of Education (MoE) has asked the NCERT to conduct a review of its T textbooks and update them on an yearly basis, according to sources. So far, there has been no mandate on the frequency of updating the NCERT textbooks. "In the fast changing world of today, it is important that the textbooks are absolutely updated. The NCERT has been asked to conduct a review on yearly basis and update them ahead of the

beginning of new academic session," a source said. Currently the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is in the process of developing textbooks according to the New Curriculum Framework (NCF) announced last year. "The textbooks as per the new curriculum will be ready for all classes by 2026," the source added. This year, the NCERT has introduced new textbooks for classes 3 and 6



NEET aspirant from Haryana hangs self in Kota

20-year-old NEET aspirant was found hanging from the ceiling fan of his hostel room in Kunhari area here, with his parents suspecting he was murdered, police Asaid on Monday. This is the eighth case of suspected suicide by a coaching student in Kota since January. The number of student suicides in Kota stood at 26 in 2023. Sumit Panchal, who hailed from Haryana's Rohtak, had been preparing for NEET at a

coaching institute here for over a year, the police said. His parents have demanded the registration of a murder case against unidentified persons and an impartial investigation into the matter. On demand of the student's parents, a medical board was constituted to perform the autopsy, said Assistant Sub-Inspector Kaptan, who is investigating the case. The body was handed over to the family after the post-mortem, they said.



Man kills friend for talking to his wife in Delhi

39-year-old man was arrested for allegedly killing his friend in north Delhi's old A Laipat Rai market over suspicion that he used to talk to his wife, police on Monday Asaid. The accused has been identified as Gulab Jha. "On Saturday at 12.34 pm, information was received at the Kotwali police station regarding an unknown body of a man lying on the roof of old Laipat Rai market close to the Red Fort. A team was sent to

the spot and they found that a man was lying in a pool of blood with injuries on his head, body and deep lacerated wound on neck " Deputy Commissioner of Police (north) M K Meena said. An FIR was registered and further investigation was launched into the matter, police said. "Three separate teams were constituted to crack the case. The team checked around 200 CCTV footage



Top leaders of INDIA bloc will scramble for PM's post: Shah

PNS ■ JHANJARPUR (BIHAR)

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday warned that a victory of the opposition INDIA bloc, "even by mistake", will lead to a scramble among top leaders of the alliance for the prime minister's post.

Shah claimed that leaders like M K Stalin, Sharad Pawar, Lalu Prasad and Mamata Banerjee may agree to a year each of premiership, by turns, and "Rahul baba (Rahul Gandhi) will have to settle for whatever is left of the tenure".

In contrast, he said, "a third term for Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead to elimination of corruption from the entire country, including Bihar, and eradication of casteism in the state".

"Modi's return to power is certain. But, suppose, even by mistake, if the INDIA alliance comes to power, what will happen? Who will be the prime minister? Will it be Stalin, Sharad Pawar, Mamata Banerjee or Rahul Gandhi? They will all settle for sharing the top post for a year each. Is it how the country can be run?" Shah said.

The senior BJP leader, who addressed election rallies in Jhanjharpur and Begusarai Lok Sabha constituencies of Bihar, also charged the opposition bloc with seeking restoration of triple talaq.

"Should we have triple talaq?

INDI alliance leaders like Rahul Gandhi and Lalu Prasad say they will protect Muslim forget their plans. The BJP



BJP to EC: Take action against Cong over circulation of Shah's morphed video

NEW DELHI: The BJP on Monday lodged a complaint with the Election Commission against the Congress, alleging that it circulated a "deep fake and morphed" video of Home Minister Amit Shah to derail the poll process, and demanded strict action against the party. A BJP delegation comprising Union minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and the party's national media department incharge Anil Baluni also complained against the Trinamool Congress (TMC), alleging that Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee-led party has been using violence as a weapon, and demanded that the poll panel ensure a free and fair election in the state "The Congress wants to derail the entire election process through a deep fake and morphed video (of Amit Shah). We raised a

complaint before the Election Commission today against it. The Congress has tried to create confusion among people by posting a deep fake video from its official handle. Vaishnaw told reporters after meeting the poll panel officials "We requested the Election Commission to take strict action," he added. The Special Cell of the Delhi Police had on Sunday registered an FIR after the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), which is under the Ministry of Home Affairs, filed a complaint about the doctored video of Shah where his statements indicating a commitment to abolish quota for Muslims on religious ground in Telangana were changed to make it seem that he was advocating scrapping of a reservations.

Uniform Civil Code across the country," Shah asserted.

Claiming that Modi's victory and a third term in office were certain, he also cautioned against "political instability" that may follow if the INDIA coalition manages to form a government "even by

"We need a leadership that is strong and not helpless. If the INDIA alliance comes to power... M K Stalin, Sharad Pawar, Mamata Banerjee, Lalu Prasad, all of them may become PM for a year each. Rahul baba will settle for whatever is left of the tenure," Shah

The home minister, who is often credited with abrogation of Article 370, also accused the Congress and its allies with having protected special status to Jammu and Kashmir like an "auras Putra" (one's own off-

"Rahul Gandhi had tried to scare us by claiming that scrapping Article 370 will cause rivers of blood to flow. But, when the Modi government made the move, nobody even dared to throw a pebble," said

Slamming Gandhi for his "new-found concern for OBCs", the home minister said "the Congress party has always been against the Other Backward Classes. It had opposed the Mandal Commission. Modi has emerged from among the OBCs and the community has tenure as never before".

Ramdev crossed red line with false claims of curing Covid: IMA

PNS NEW DELHI

Baba Ramdev crossed a red line when he claimed he could cure COVID-19 and at the same time maligned modern medicine by calling it a "stupid and bankrupt science", Indian Medical Association president Dr R V Asokan said on Monday.

This is IMA's first comment since the Supreme Court's tongue lashing to Ramdev and his multibillion-dollar consumer goods empire Patanjali Avurved last month over misleading ads. It comes a day before the top court is scheduled to hear the matter next.

The apex court is hearing IMA's 2022 plea alleging a smear campaign against the Covid vaccination drive and modern systems of medicine. The court had asked Ramdev, his aide Acharya Balakrishnan and Patanjali Ayurved Ltd last month to issue a public apology for not following its orders



also said it was "unfortunate" that the Supreme Court criticised IMA and also the practices of private doctors. The "vague and generalised state-ments", he added, have demoralised private doctors. "We sincerely believe they

need to look at what was the material before them. They perhaps did not consider that this was not the issue that was before them in the court."

'You can say anything but still a majority of doctors are conscientious... practicing

according to ethics and principles. It does not behove the Supreme Court to take a broadside against the medical profession of the country which after all sacrificed so many lives for the Covid war," he added.

Asokan was replying to a query about the Supreme Court's observations in its hearing on April 23 that when it was pointing one finger at Patanjali, the remaining four fingers were pointed towards IMA.

During the same hearing, the top court questioned Patanjali's public apology and asked whether it was the same size as that of the advertisements published by the company for its products. The matter related to the apology published by Ramdev and his associate Acharya Balkrishna will be considered on April 30.

Asokan said Ramdev went against the medical profession by saying "modern medicine is stupid and bankrupt

Veteran politician **S** M Krishna hospitalised

PNS BENGALURU

Veteran politician and former Karnataka Chief Minister S M Krishna is undergoing treatment for a "minor ailment", the private hospital where he has been admitted said on Monday. The 91-year-old is "medically stable" and is recovering well, it said.

Manipal Hospital said the former union minister is being treated under Dr Satyanarayana Mysore and a team of medical experts. "Krishna is medically stable. He is recovering well and there is no need for worry," the hospital said in a state-

The veteran politician was reportedly admitted to another super-speciality hospital in the city earlier this month, as he suffered an acute respiratory infection, and was discharged after treatment.

'Manifold surge in forest fires in Uttarakhand'

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Fire incidents, including forest blazes, in Uttarakhand recorded a multifold surge during March-April compared to the same period in 2023, with some districts such as Nainital registering an over seven-fold increase.

An analysis of fire point images captured by NASA's Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite conducted by



Haridwar, increased many times shows that fire incidents in all Balyan, the study's lead Nainital in March-April 2023 areas of the hills, she said.

Hindus in no way

districts of Uttarakhand, except researcher, told PTI on Monday. Citing an example, she said

-- a seven-fold increase -- during the same period this year. Similarly, the number of fire incidents in Champawat rose to 1,025 in March-April compared to 120 during the year-ago peri-

od, she said.

was 207. This jumped to 1,524

The ambit of fire incidents includes forest fires, stubble and garbage burning. In the context of Uttarakhand, it is more about forest fires as the satellite images show most of the

Will PM still remain silent? Priyanka slams BJP over K'taka 'sex scandal'

PNS NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday attacked the BJP over the alleged sex scandal involving the grandson of JD(S) supremo H D Deve Gowda, with party leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra asking whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi will remain silent on the matter.

The opposition party also asked why the BJP went ahead with its alliance with the JD(S) when a BJP leader had written to the party's Karnataka unit president, exposing the presence of a pen drive full of "sleaze videos of Prajwal Revanna".

The Congress also asked that whenever there is crime against women, the prime minister, his government, the BJP and its machinery always protect the perpetrators of such crimes.



A case of sexual harassment and stalking was registered on Sunday against former prime minister Deve Gowda's son H D Revanna and grandson and Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna respec-

The case was registered on a complaint by their cook, who alleged that four months after she started working for them, H D Revanna used to sexually harass her and Prajwal Revanna used to make video calls to her daughter and have "vulgar conversations" with her.

In a post in Hindi on X, Priyanka Gandhi said, "The leader with whom the PM gets photographed by placing his hand on his shoulder. The leader for whom the PM himself campaigned 10 days ago. Praised him on stage. Today, that leader of Karnataka is absconding

from the country."

"Just hearing about his heinous crimes committed is heart-wrenching. This ruined the lives of hundreds of women. Modi ji, will you still remain silent?" the Congress general secretary said. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said that in December 2023 itself, a BJP leader had informed the party leadership about the atrocities of Prajwal Revanna.

TEACHER RECRUITMENT SCAM

SC stays **CBI** probe into WB govt officials' role

PNS NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed a Calcutta High Court order directing the CBI to probe the role of West Bengal government officials in a teacher recruitment scam. It,

however, refused to stay for now the cancellation of the appointment of over 25,000 teachers and nonteaching staff.

The top court was hearing a plea by the West Bengal government against a high court order invalidating the appointment of 25,753 teachers and non-teaching staff made by the School Service Commission aided schools.

Observing that taking away the jobs of about 25,000 persons is a serious matter, the top court asked if it is possible to segregate the valid and invalid appointments on the basis of the material available and who the benefi-

ciaries of the fraud are.

"We will stay the direction which says the CBI (Central

Bureau of Investigation) will

undertake further investiga-

tion against officials in the

state government," the bench

(SSC) in state-run and state-

A bench of Chief Justice DY

will benefit from **UCC: Mamata** PNS JANGIPUR/ BHAGWANGOLA

Chandrachud, Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj

West Bengal Chief Minister Misra, however, refused to Mamata Banerjee on Monday stay the high court order cancriticised the BJP for using the celling the appointments and Uniform Civil Code (UCC) as said it will hear the matter on a political ploy in the elections, asserting that Hindus will not benefit from it.

Addressing back-to-back rallies in minority-dominated Murshidabad and Jangipur constituencies in Murshidabad district, Banerjee accused the BJP of resorting to divisive tactics fearing defeat in the initial phases of polling.
"Whenever there are elec-

tions, they use one issue or the other to flare up communal tensions. This time they are talking about the UCC and propagating that it is against a particular community. But this UCC is nothing but political rhetoric, and Hindus in no way will benefit from it," she said.

Lok Sabha polls are churning of Constitution: Akhilesh Yadav

PNS ■ ETAH (UP)

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav Monday termed the ongoing Lok Sabha elections as "samvidhan manthan" (churning of the Constitution) between the protectors and destroyers of democracy and said the Constitution and democracy will be saved only if INDIÁ bloc wins.

Yadav alleged that the BJP will not only take away reservation by abolishing the Constitution but will also take away the right to vote from the people if it comes to power for the third time. Everyone knows that every promise of the BJP has turned out to be false, he said while addressing an election rally in Etah.

These are the same people who had once said they will double the income of the farmers, give the right price to the farmers for their produce, and make them happy. But none of



these things were done," said. About a thousand farmers were martyred in the farmers' movement against the three "black laws", he said.

Without taking names, Yadav referred to the RSS as "the most dangerous family in the world" and alleged that the family that intended to end reservation is now talking against it for getting votes in elections. The SP president alleged that the BJP wanted to end reservation as part of a major conspiracy by putting everything in the private hands but, he said, the "samajwadis" (socialists) would not let them succeed.

ICG apprehends Indian fishing boat with 173 kg of narcotics

PNS AHMEDABAD/ **NEW DELHI**

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) has seized 173 kg of narcotics from an Indian fishing boat and detained two crew members on board the vessel off the Gujarat coast, an

official said on Monday. The ICG and Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) apprehended the fishing boat in a joint operation in the high seas on Sunday afternoon, the coast guard said in a release in

Ahmedabad. The seizure comes a day after the ICG, ATS and

Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), in a joint operation, recovered heroin worth Rs 600 crore from a Pakistani boat with 14 crew members. According to official sources, a total of 173 kgs of Hashish (extracted from cannabis) along with two Indians have been caught as part of a joint operation.

Based on specific and credible intelligence inputs from the ATS, the ICG strategically deployed its ships and aircraft, ensuring that the boat does not evade the sea-air coordinated surveillance," the release said.

PNS NEW DELHI

Dinosaurs were "more like smart giant crocodiles" but not as intelligent as monkeys as an earlier study had found, according to new research.

In a study published in January 2023, neuroscientist and author Suzana Herculano-Houzel of Vanderbilt University, US, had said that brains of theropod dinosaurs, a species of which is T. rex, had neurons comparable to those in the brains of monkeys and baboons.

Dinosaurs like T. rex, or Tyrannosaurus rex, had an exceptionally high number of neurons, "which would make these animals not only giant but also long-lived and endowed with flexible cognition, and thus even more magnificent



the Journal of Comparative Neurology. In the latest research, an international team of palaeontologists, behavioural scientists and neurologists re-examined the brains of dinosaurs, including T. rex, and found them to behave more

like reptiles. They were more like "smart giant crocodiles," according to study author Darren Naish from the School of Biological Sciences, University of Southampton, UK.

The team found that the size of the dinosaur brains had been overestimat-

showed that gauging the intelligence of a species based on neuron count estimates is not reliable. The findings are published in The Anatomical Record

iournal. "Neuron counts are not good predictors of cognitive performance, and using them to predict intelligence in long-extinct species can lead to highly misleading interpretations," said study author Ornella Bertrand from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona,

The research follows along the lines of decades of analysis in which

palaeontologists and biologists have examined dinosaur brain size and anatomy, and used these data to infer behaviour and lifestyle, the authors said. Information on dinosaur brains comes from mineral fillings of the brain cavity, termed endocasts, as well as the shapes of the cavities themselves,

they said.

"We argue that it's not good practice to predict intelligence in extinct species when neuron counts reconstructed from endocasts are all we have to go on," said lead researcher Kai Caspar from Heinrich Heine University, Germany.

They said that to reliably reconstruct the biology of long-extinct species, researchers should look at multiple lines of evidence, including skeletal anatomy, bone histology (study of the microscopic structure of tissues) and the behaviour of living relatives and

trace fossils.

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

North by Northeast

Internal strife, insurgency and a sense of alienation plague the Seven Sisters, much like the Kashmir of vore

ndia's Northeastern region has for long experienced insurgency, internal conflict and unrest and the challenges have often been exacerbated by its complex history, geographical isolation and perceived neglect by the Central Government. One of the most prominent facets of the restive Northeast is the internecine wars within its borders, fuelled by a variety of factors ranging from ethnic tensions to resource disputes, leading to cycles of violence and displacement. The region's strategic importance, owing to its proximity to China and Southeast Asia, has made it a battleground for competing geopolitical interests, thus complicating the situation. Traditionally, the conflict in the Northeast has been fuelled by a lack of identity with the Indian mainland, the role of external powers like China, Myanmar and Bangladesh, tribal/communal differences among its inhabitants and fault lines in the subdivision of Assam which led to the creation of other Northeastern states. Indeed, the region's woes stem from several factors, which are



reflected in its turmoil. Economic underdevelopment and lack of infrastructure exacerbate feelings of marginalisation and deprivation, providing fertile ground for insurgent movements to recruit disaffected youth. Moreover, the region's porous borders, particularly with Myanmar and Bangladesh, help insurgent groups set up base and launch attacks on our security personnel. Cross-border infiltration and support to insurgent groups by external actors have been persistent challenges for India's security establishment.

The Army's long presence in the region Delhi's apathy has been a recurring theme in the Northeast. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), enact-

ed in 1958 amidst the Naga Hills 'uprising', is a constant irritant that the locals feel reflects New Delhi's deliberate attempt to strip them of their rights and dignity. It is one of the most despised Acts in the region and stands between the Centre's goodwill and the Northeastern people. Currently, the AFSPA is enforced fully in 31 districts across four Northeastern states and partially in 12 districts. The alienation has manifested in various forms, including widespread boycott of elections, as communities express their disillusionment with the political process. The latest manifestation has been in Manipur, bordering Myanmar, where violence began on May 3 last year when hill tribal groups clashed with the ethnic majority Meitei over economic benefits and job and education quotas. Regrettably, since Independence, this area has not been fully integrated into the mainstream. Not only have many insurgent groups representing various communities been waging war against the Indian Union, internal strife and communal differences have also not been reconciled. The lack of inclusive approach to addressing the root causes of the unrest, coupled with sporadic attempts at peace talks and development initiatives, has led to instability that shows little sign of abating. Only through sustained efforts and genuine political will can the region hope to achieve peace and stability.



Members of a dance group perform on a road on International Dance Day, in Nadia

Why are the young not joining politics?



A large number of voters belongs to the younger generation; their apathy towards the electoral process is a cause of concern

he country belongs more and more to its younger citizens. It is, therefore, all the more disturbing that the youth who have lately crossed the age of 18 and have registered themselves as voters in fewer numbers. The country belongs more to the younger ones who're 18, on an overage, the country for say, sixty years more, or probably twelve general elections. To a fifty-year-old, in terms of time, he might get to see five, possibly six more general

In Uttar Pradesh, our largest state only 25 per cent of the eligible youth have registered themselves as voters. What could be the reasons for this lack of desire to have a say in the running of their country? Do most young people expect Government representatives to approach them in the old maibaap fashion? Or do they feel that there isn't likely to be much competition among the political parties for their votes? Could it also be that the younger generation has come to nurse an indifference towards the entire political process and the instituion of democracy itself? Over the years, a large body of the youth of the country has come to believe that whoever comes to power, won't make any difference to their lives, as the country's politicians are perceived to be a class that acts only in its interest. However, in this cynicism, the youth forget that by their indifference, they abdicate their right to have a say in the running of their nation.

At the other of the age spectrum, the necessary interest in entering the political arena and playing a meaningful role in the life of the country has not been there to the extent required. Public life of a political nature had existed for some fifty years before independence. It began with the founding of the Congress by a retired itish bureaucrat Octavian Hume, in 1885. The Muslim League was founded in the year 1906, the Hindu Mahasabha in 1916 and the Communist Party in 1925. Indians, therefore had the opportunity to have a feel of political



public life. The motivation wasn't power, but an idealismdriven desire for the country's freedom. Soon thereafter, there might have been disil-lusion; the earlier idealism began declining rapidly. With the decline was seen a fall in ethical and social values in the

Could the disillusionment have been due to disappointment with the quality of politicians? Not all parties indeed have members hailing from the most educated or knowledgeable sections of society. Although the current central Government is not a rough and tumble of the hitherto political dispensations that have ruled the country, it has still not been able to overcome the cynicism about politicians and politics in general, which continues to hold sway in the minds of a large section of the people. This is not to say that good people are disinterested in

We have in recent years, seen many academically and professionally qualified people enter politics; some of them have even become ministers. But clearly, there is a long way to go in this regard.



ANOTHER REASON WHY WEALTHY CANDIDATES ARE ATTRACTED TO POLITICS IS THE TRADITIONAL BELIEF THAT ONCE ELECTED, THE CANDIDATE WOULD BE ABLE TO EARN BACK THE MONEY SPENT ON **ELECTIONEERING** AND THEREAFTER GENERATE MUCH

the number of people in a constituency, as well as the high cost of electioneering. Hopefully, some answer to this problem should emerge from the delimitation of electoral constituencies, which would be set to increase, by (approximately) 50 per cent. No ordinary entrant can afford to spend astronomical sums of money to cultivate nearly two million voters per

Delimitation and increased seats alone will not solve the problem of election expenses. Another reason why wealthy candidates are attracted to politics is the traditional belief that once elected, the candidate would be able to earn back the money spent on electioneering and thereafter generate much money. Once the doors are closed to corruption, the attraction for opportunists to become candiminished. This also applies equally to any new avenue for making money.

Compulsory voting is a way of not only upgrading the system but also reducing the cost of electioneering. It would also eliminate the perpetuation of

One great discouragement is vote-bank politics. For example, there was a time when the total voting used to be 50 per cent or less. Therefore, if the candidate had a secure vote bank, it wasn't difficult for him to win.

With the rise in the percentage of voting, the power and effect of a committed votebank is reduced. For instance, in an electorate of a lakh people, a committed vote-bank of a particular candidate is say, 25 per cent, i.e., 25,000 voters out of a population of one lakh. If the normal voting is no more than 50 to 55 per cent for that seat, this captive vote bank is assured victory for that candidate. However, if the voting percentage is 100 per cent, such a vote-bank will be of no decisive advantage. The role of freebies has to be curbed for any meaningful participation in the political process. Freebies reduce the exercise of elections in a didates would be much democracy to nothing more than bribing voters futile to talk of democracy, or why the young don't participate in it in greater numbers.

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

Reflections on rituals from around the world



From the tranquil Nyepi Day in Bali to the vibrant street celebrations in Japan, rituals surrounding life's milestones offer glimpses into cultures

ancestors. Prayers are

offered, followed by meals

specially prepared. What

surprises me, though, is

the fact that these 15 days,

in honour of our ancestors

are considered inauspicious

for any new purchases, or

even though we are because

A very close Parsi friend

passed away a few years back. The family invited us

for a celebration of her life

a few days later. There was

laughter all around as we all

recounted the happy times

that we had spent with the

7e had lunch in the resort restaurant during a vacation to Thailand a few months back. There was a slight drizzle as we walked along a narrow walkway hemmed in by walls and tastefully planted beds of flowers, vines and shrubs.

I remember a late evening in our beach resort in Bali a few years back. The day after our arrival was Nyepi Day, a public holiday. It is a day of silence, fasting and meditation. No lights are lit in the evening. It is believed that spirits roam in the evening on this day. Any loud sound or bright light may attract them to come down to explore and some of them may cause harm.

We had walked to the resort restaurant along walkways at the back, which were lit up with muted lamps placed along the path to guide the guests. Even the lighting in the restaurant was subdued. We were also caught up in the spirit of the local folklore and walked silently along the dimly lit narrow path, surrounded by flowers, vines and shrubs,

apprehensive of catching the fancy of an evil spirit. A few decades back, I was in Japan for a study tour. There was a public holiday, which was celebrated as the day of the ancestors. Groups of people were out dancing on the streets, moving from one house to the other. Each household

had set up a table in the front, loaded with beer and other alcohol and savouries to be partaken by the dancing people. I also joined the celebrations.

We have a fortnight-long annual ritual, called Pitru Paksha, to honour our lady over drinks and food

The gracious hostess, her daughter, had prepared a special Parsi-style chicken dish, which had been both a speciality and a favourite of the departed soul. We also have the thirteenth-

day ceremony in our Hindu religion which is formally the close of the mourning period. Guests are intimated to join prayers and then partake of our special food prepared for the occasion. Though sometimes tearyeyed, everyone remembers the time spent with the person who has joined the

supreme being.
Why mourn death, which is only the passing away to another life? When my time comes, I hope my near and dear ones remember me, not for my beliefs, but for the happiness that I gave any other auspicious work, them.

A life led to spreading happiness all around is to be celebrated. Thomas Campbell rightly said, "To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die!"

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

PAKISTAN'S AFGHAN DEBACLE

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Pakistan paying for its misplaced priorities," published on April 29, this is my response. Ambassador Asif Durrani's acknowledgement of Pakistan's failures in Afghanistan reveals a stark reality: the cost of tensions along the Durand Line surpasses all wars with India combined. The fixation on India as the primary adversary stems from historical wounds and institutional agendas. However, the Afghan debacle exposes the fallacy of such fixations and challenges the 'two-nation theory'. The resurgence of Taliban attacks and Afghan nationals participating in strikes against Pakistan signal a seismic shift in regional dynamics. Pakistan's strategic ambitions in Afghanistan have backfired, eroding trust and isolating it on the global stage. Despite efforts to rewrite the narrative, Pakistan remains entangled in its past missteps, with Afghanistan looming as a permanent fix-

ture in its regional calculus.
As the world watches with scepticism, Pakistan's plight underscores a fundamental truth: religion alone cannot sustain a nation. Bangladesh and Afghanistan stand as testaments to the folly of such notions. It's a sobering lesson for Pakistan to reassess its identity and recalibrate its foreign policy away from religious rhetoric towards pragmatic diplomacy.

Rohit Kapoor | Kolkata

ENVIRONMENTAL MANIFESTO

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Political parties must prioritise environmental preservation," published on April 29, this is my response. As an avid reader of daily news, it's disheartening to witness India's political landscape during election time fail to address pressing environmental concerns. Despite lip service in manifestos, concrete actions are conspicuously absent. The proliferation of plastic waste during political campaigns exacerbates the crisis. Plastic pollution poses a grave threat to ecosystems and human China Kitchen tantalizes with its immerhealth, with marine life suffering the

Bihar on progress path



MONEY

propos the news article, "Chronicle of Bihar, Beyond Elections," published on April 28, this is my response. Deepak Kumar Jha's narrative in The Pioneer paints a vivid picture of Bihar's rural landscape, where traditional thatched homes have given way to brick dwellings amidst agricultural abundance. Yet, glaring issues persist: healthcare and education

Political parties wield considerable influ- a modern flair to Vietnamese classics, ence and should champion sustainable practices to combat plastic pollution. Yet the lack of urgency is alarming. With the planet reaching critical thresholds, we can't afford complacency. The need for immediate action to safeguard our only home, Earth, is paramount. It's high time political will transcended rhetoric to enact meaningful change. We must remember

that there's no Plan B for our planet.

Aditya Mehta | Mumbai

CULINARY ESCAPADES

Madam — Apropos the news article, "Feast of hot summer menus," published on April 27, this is my response. Reading through these descriptions feels like leafing through a gourmet guidebook. Each venue promises not just a meal but an experience, a journey through flavours and cultures. Olly offers a tranquil haven from urban chaos, serving up classics with a twist amidst a serene ambience. The sive dining experience, bringing Chinese culinary traditions to life. Viet: nom adds

lag, despite decades of political promises. The narrative exposes the complexity of Bihar's socio-political fabric.

While leaders tout progress, caste-driven politics remain entrenched. Migration continues, disillusioning locals with governance. Jha's storytelling captures the essence of Bihar's electoral fervour, where political discourse blends with everyday life. Amidst discussions over leaders, the grassroots yearns for tangible change. The article's depth extends beyond politics, delving into healthcare woes. The anecdote of the patient's struggle highlights systemic failures, contrasting with Bihar's rich cultural tapestry. Ultimately, Jha's piece is a poignant portrayal of Bihar's struggles and resilience. It underscores the urgent need for holistic development and the preservation of its cultural heritage amidst the political clamour.

Vishal Kumar | Delhi

while L'Opéra delights with French finesse, especially with its seasonal mango collection. Café Delhi Heights, ever-evolving, captures the essence of Delhi's vibrancy through its diverse offerings.

The must-try dishes read like poetry, each a symphony of flavours designed to tantalize taste buds. From crispy sweet potato skins to succulent Peking duck, from vibrant summer rolls to creamy Alfredo pasta, there's something to suit every palate. Akanksha Dean's culinary journey adds a personal touch, showcasing a deep passion for food and an impressive resume. Her influence undoubtedly enhances the richness of each dining experience. As a regular newspaper reader, these culinary adventures beckon, promising not just a meal but a story to savour, making the dining experience more than just a necessity but a delightful escape.

Sneha Patel | Ahmedabad

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FIRST COLUMN THE POWER OF

Settle your mind and clear accumulated dust, only then it gets purged

THE HUMAN MIND



RAVI VALLURI

eons ago lived, Suddhodana, chieftain of the Sakyan republics. He was captivated with the thought of perpendicular that However, his battle fatigued son Siddhartha, was not ensured by the Mara of trappings of power, carnal pleasures and a family life.

Siddhartha eschewed violence, cast away royal clothing and adorned ochre robes in search of the quintessential truth and was to become Buddha after intense tapas. Upon attaining enlightenment, the Compassionate One dissected the bewildering characteristics of the human mind. He was soon to quantify in a plain sailing manner, "We are what we think and our thoughts shape our lives."

The human mind is not resplendent with ennobling thoughts if the prana levels are low. The prana level increases (through yoga, pranayama, meditation and Sudarshan Kriya) and at that moment an individual realises the magnetic potential of the human mind.

Once there was a Good Samaritan, Sudhakar. He happened to read the maiden effort of a civil servant called the Magic of the Mind. This gentleman, with trepidation, became a 'Facebook friend' of the mandarin and persuaded him to be interviewed by a few T.V. channels.

However, the thought process of the public functionary- who was a recovered alcoholic- doubted the sincerity of the Facebook friend. In disgust, he 'blocked' and then 'unblocked' the gentleman, perhaps more to quell the pangs of his own conscience. Finally in sheer vexation he gave in to the entreaties of the 'Facebook friend'. Soon an amazing pattern emerged and the administrator was invited by several media houses and estimable institutions to deliver lectures as to how he combated and conquered the battle against the bottle. Only much later did he realise that Sudhakar had lost some close relatives to the perils of alcoholism.



The autarchic mind of the bureaucrat was ossified and looking at life through the prism of tunnel vision. One day, after a series of interviews, the functionary received a distress call from a lady, who had happened to listen to one of his interviews and was also reading the book penned by the bureaucrat, which captured his triumph over alcoholism.

On receiving the call, he could empathise with the woman's husband who was fighting a grim battle against alcoholism. There was a sudden transmutation in the mind of the public servant and went on to guide the husband on how to attain sobriety.

Realisation and awareness are two iconic qualities that shine the light on the amazing power of the human mind. Several centuries ago, Gautama Buddha was travelling with a group of disciples. The Compassionate One felt thirsty and desired some water to quench his thirst. He asked a disciple to fetch some water from a nearby lake. The enthusiastic disciple rushed to the lake but was horrified to find the water turgid as a farmer had just crossed the lake on his bullock cart.

He returned back remorsefully as he could not fulfil the wish of the holy Master. Buddha sent the disciple a couple of times to fetch water to quench his thirst. But to the dismay of the tutee on each occasion the water remained dirty and turgid. While the devotees were fidgety and distraught, Buddha remained patient. Eventually, the devotee animatedly brought fresh water from the lake and offered it.

Buddha smiled and drank the water. He was to say, "You did nothing. The mud settled down and the water was purged of the impurities. Let your mind settle all the dust accumulated over a period of time." This is the amazing power of the human mind. Just let it settle down.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

Challenges loom ahead of July Union Budget



SHIVAJI **SARKAR**

The incoming Government would face the uphill task of navigating through a myriad of fiscal hurdles to foster sustainable growth



espite it being too early to discuss the union budget to be presented in July, it is certain whichever combina-tion comes back to power it would have to majorly review the February interim budget given the debates generated during elections.

The election is veering around more on economic issues than the religion or Ram temple, though in certain regions these remain a potent issue and so the brands Narendra Modi and Yogi Adityanath. A larger section is concerned with the core economy, unemployment, farmers' issues, irrationally high prices, medical and health care costs, school and university fees, shooting costs of houses, high toll-jacked inflation and similar other

Even showcasing of Indian economy as the fifth largest economy is not being accepted by a large section as reality. The farmers and citizens wonder while cars and tractors are allowed to run for 40 years like aircraft across the world, why a pro-people Government should be in a hurry to send these to junkyards in India, particularly when household debts are skyrocketing. The rural wisdom calls it weird and tries to locate the linkages of Government functionaries with the car makers.

Questions are also raised on the Rs 16.87 lakh crore debt repayment in the 2024-25 budget. This effectively cuts the actual budget of Rs 47.65 lakh crore to about Rs 31 lakh crore. The repayment burden in 2025 is slated to be higher. The opposition's sharp angling on core economic issues is being rebutted by the ruling combine by charging that if the opposition gets to power it would sell "mangalsutras" and delve into divisive politics. The Election Commission has issued warnings to the ruling party for its wry comments.

Low voting in 190 constituencies in major States like UP, Bihar and Maharashtra raises concern among all parties. The voter is apathetic despite

Commission. Is that a reflection on governance? This has not put the issues on the back burner. According to RBI, inflation rises at 5.5 per cent a

GOVERNMENT

TAKE DRASTIC

DOWN THE

PRICES OF

EDIBLE OIL,

WOULD HAVE TO

year and has shot beyond 55 per cent in compounded terms causing a huge rise in prices. Nobody has got such a raise in their salaries, not even Government employees. The new Government would have to take drastic steps to bring down the prices of edible THE NEW oil, food grains, vegetables, potatoes and onions as well as school fees and expensive health care,

milk and other commodities. People are unwilling to buy the argument that inflation is built STEPS TO BRING into the system. They rather equate it with corporate electoral bond doles to parties. The Government accepts the petrol prices are high, cut it by Rs 2 just before the polls. It has no impact on the voters' psyche.

FOOD GRAINS. The voter is not happy with the so-called demonstrative develop-VEGETABLES, ments like demolition and con-POTATOES AND struction of large office buildings, rail stations and rampant con-ONIONS, AS WELL struction of roads or metro. AS SCHOOL FEES Constructions devastate the hills of Himachal, Kashmir, AND EXPENSIVE Uttarakhand and the North East. Kisans who became millionaires HEALTH CARE, overnight with the acquisition of their land for roads are not happy MILK AND OTHER about losing their livelihood. COMMODITIES Most villagers rue the roads that divide their habitats and relationships for a road they can't use without paying a toll. It is a serious issue because the Kisan also pays Rs 30 per litre petrol cess toll introduced with the promise of ending the toll. All these benefit bulk profiteers and the least of

many moves by the Election A new Government has to initiate drastic changes and reorient policies. The major reason for joblessness is attributed to ad hoc decisions. Such constructions erode Government finance and build little assets. Southeast Asia

tried it in the late 1990s and got into trouble in 1997. It would be wise on the part of the new Government to revive PSUs and ask the private sector to compete with them. It would create jobs, add to the national economy and create a fair playground People question the rationale of

parting a part of Indian Oil to a private giant or giving out ports to private players. At least one such port has become notorious for being a smugglers' den. The universities, IITs and

Government institutions have been given a mandate to raise tuition fees every year. The private ones hike far more. Schools and universities need financing from the Government and education costs must be cut down. Congress promises apprenticeship to every graduate. Looks good but it is not practical. The scheme has failed several times. India's overall exports fell by 8.1 per and exports to its free trade partners shrank by 18 per cent in the first half of 2023. The country's trade deficit ballooned to \$78.2 billion in the last financial year. India's export values across all commodities declined to \$351 billion during April-January from \$366 billion a year ago, underlining the impact of the global economic slowdown and tightening of interest rates in Western countries. These numbers have emerged amid India's push to sign free trade deals with the UK and the European Union. The International Monetary Fund

says that the global slowdown is on. However India projects its march to a \$5 trillion economy and it is not easy. The West has become more protectionist and keen on imposing a carbon tax. The West needs to protect its bread.

Lower productivity can result in reduced job creation within the manufacturing sector, leading to unemployment or underemployment. The International Labour Organisation finds low pay and wages as serious challenges.

When productivity declines, the incentives for firms to invest in research and development or adopt new technologies diminish, leading to a slower pace in the manufacturing sector. However, the challenge of rising household debt and falling savings could weigh on long-term growth sus-

The FDI flow is low at \$ 17.96 billion. Despite a supposed buzzing market, it has not risen much. The new Government also has the challenge to cut personal income-tax rates from 39 per cent to 22 per cent in tune with the corporate tax. High taxation hits the purchasing capacity and concomitant market problems.

In short, the new Government has to stress issues regarding taxes, education, health, livelihood, low tolls and better deal with farmers. Both manifestos of the BJP and Congress speak of too many doles and caste-related benefits. If the Government can address the basic issues and make it one of the most affordable economies, India's journey will be smooth. It is a dream, if comes true it will be the most liveable

(The author is a senior journalist; views are personal)

Celebrating the universal language of dance

From traditional Indian classical dance forms to contemporary global dance phenomena, dance continues to inspire, heal and unite communities

n April 14 last year, history was made in Assam, India, as a Guinness World Record was set for the largest gathering of Bihu dancers. Over 11,000 dancers from different communities and backgrounds came together to perform the traditional dance of Assam, watched live by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It was a spectacular display of cultural diversity and unity. This event was a shining example of how cultural diversity can bring in Ayodhya. İn this rich mosapeople together and foster a sense of emotional bonding and appreciation of one anoth-

er's culture and traditions. More recently as part of the 'Raag Seva' in a breathtaking display of timeless grace and unwavering passion, the 90-



Padma Vibhushan awardee Vyjayanthimala Bali, enchanted spectators with her ethereal Bharatanatyam performance ic of human expression, dance emerges as a timeless gem, casting its spell across generations and captivating hearts through the ages. Beyond mere movement, it embodies a symphony of creativity, infusing the soul with unbridled joy. A

from the burdens of modern life, intertwining threads of happiness into the fabric of

Welcome to the rhythm of life, we celebrate the 'International Dance Day' on April 29th every year, since 1982. Dance helps to change lives. The 'Navras', which is used to express joy, sadness, love, anger and many other emotions, is a way of celebrating life and creating a sense of

This Day serves as a platform aimed at fostering awareness regarding the intrinsic value of dance and facilitating the widespread promotion of the dance community's endeavours. Central to its mission is the aspiration that Governments year-old actor-dancer and graceful interplay of rhythm and influential figures will

and emotion, it offers solace recognize the significance of dance and extend support towards its cultivation. We are all aware of Yo-Yo Ma's

> 'Silk Road Ensemble', a musical group founded by the cellist Yo-Yo Ma, where musicians from China, Iran, India and Spain come together and use their music to create a bridge between cultures and promote understanding between people from different backgrounds. Through cultural collaboration, this is a forum for the exchange of ideas, tradition and innovation across borders.

> Also, the 'OneBeat' initiative, which brings together musicians from around the world to collaborate and create new music - was funded by the U.S. Department of State - aims to promote cultural exchange

and create a global community of musicians. 'OneBeat' has brought together musicians from countries such as Syria, Russia and Cuba, to name a few, not only providing a platform for musicians to share their music but also creating new collaborations that transcend cultural and linguistic

Dance also helps in promoting intercultural dialogue. Dance companies worldwide come together to create new works that reflect their cultural traditions and explore common themes. One such example is the 'Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater', which has been promoting diversity and inclusion through dance for over 60 years. The company's performances celebrate the African-American cultural

experience and explore universal themes such as love, loss and identity.

Not only this, the 'National Ballet of Cuba' is a dance company that promotes intercultural dialogue through its performances. Founded in 1948 by Alicia Alonso, one of the most famous ballerinas of the 20th century, it is known for its unique style that combines elements of classical ballet with Afro-Cuban and Spanish dance traditions.

Back in India, 'The Kalakshetra Foundation, - of the many foundations and institutions that exist to popularize Indian classical dance forms - Chennai-based dance school, founded by Rukmini Devi Arundale in 1936, sought to revive and promote Indian classical dance forms and is that trains students in various forms of Indian classical dance, including Bharatanatyam, Kathakali and Kuchipudi.

Similarly, the 'Nrityagram Dance Village, near Bangalore, which was founded in 1990 by Protima Gauri, a renowned Indian classical dancer, is a unique institution that offers a holistic approach to dance training, focusing not only on dance techniques, but also on aspects such as yoga, meditation and Indian mythology. The institute has gained global recognition and has collaborated with many international dance companies to create new works that blend Indian classical dance with contemporary dance forms. We cannot miss Bollywood dance, which has become a

today a leading institution global phenomenon and has created a platform for people from different backgrounds to come together and celebrate India's vibrant culture. Using different dance styles from Indian classical forms to ballet; to cabaret; to hip-hop, break dance and so on - each step encompasses a unique rhythm and style involving different generations tap to the

As we celebrate the universal language of dance and its ability to unite people, it is also important to acknowledge the Guru-Shishya Parampara and celebrate the beauty of dance and its ability to create a better world for all.

(The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

Birlasoft posts 60.5 pc rise in profit to Rs 180 cr

T company Birlasoft on Monday reported a 60.55 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 180.08 crore during the March quarter. The company had recorded a net profit of Rs 112.16 crore in the year-ago period. The Pune-based company's revenue from operations stood at Rs 1,362.5 crore in the fourth quarter of FY24, up 11.10 per cent from Rs 1,226.3 crore a year earlier. According to a company statement, growth during the March quarter was driven by ERP and infrastructure among service lines and banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI), E&U (Energy and Utilities) and manufacturing

among verticals. The revenue was led by manufacturing (Rs 571.02 crore), followed by Life Sciences and Services (Rs 301.49 crore), BFSI (Rs 288.36 crore), and E&U (Rs 201.66 crore). "We are pleased to report a robust operating performance for both the quarter and the full year, delivering revenue growth as well as margin expansion in the face of continued macro uncertainty," Birlasoft CEO and MD Angan Guha said.



Gold drops Rs 130; silver remains flat

old prices dropped Rs 130 to Rs 72,750 per 10 grams in the national capital on Monday in line with weak trends in the overseas markets, according to HDFC Securities. The precious metal had closed at Rs 72,880 per 10 grams in the previous session. However, silver prices remained flat at Rs 84,500 per kg. "Spot gold prices (24 carats) in the Delhi markets are trading at Rs 72,750 per 10 grams, down by Rs 130 against the previous close," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. In the international markets, spot gold at Comex was trading at

US\$ 2,333 per ounce, down by US\$ 5 from the previous close. "Gold traded steady... as expectations of interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve faded and as geo-political tensions eased. "The delay in the interest rate cut has supported the US dollar index and US Treasury yields which weighed down on the yellow metal prices," Navneet Damani, Senior VP of Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said.



Poonawalla Fincorp profit jumps to Rs 332 cr

oonawalla Fincorp on Monday reported a 67 per cent jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 332 crore in the March quarter. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 199 crore during the corresponding quarter of the same in the corresponding quarter of the correspon 199 crore during the corresponding quarter of the previous financial year. Its total income during quarter also rose to Rs 922 crore, against Rs 581 crore in the year-ago period, Poonawalla Fincorp said in a regulatory filing. The non-deposit-taking nonbanking financial company (NBFC) also registered growth in interest income to Rs 844 crore from Rs 552 crore in the year-ago quarter. Assets under management (AUM) grew

25 per cent Rs 25,003 crore at the end of March 2024, Poonawalla Fincorp said in a statement. Pune-based Poonawalla Fincorp (formerly Magma Fincorp), which is owned by Cyrus Poonawalla group, which focuses on consumer and small business financing, reported a net interest margin of 11.06 per cent while capital adequacy ratio stood at 33.8 per cent for the year ended March 2024



'India needs stable govt to achieve goal of Viksit Bharat'

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday underscored the need for a stable government to achieve the goal of becoming Viksit Bharat by 2047.

"Our Prime Minister has set a target that by 2047, we need to reach the destination of a developed India," she said while addressing students of GITAM University here.

"We have to make efforts, so the GDP grows, and the benefits reach to all. GDP growth doesn't happen automatically; efforts are required at micro and macro levels and on the ground," she said.

The image of the country is also important, along with the ranking of your GDP, she said, adding that all these factors matter, along with per capita income calculations.

"Unless the GDP is widened, we are not going to be able to meet the demands of the econ-

vices to grow, educational institutions, and money for people to buy houses, start businesses." she added

She also criticised former

women now prefer digital payments, disproving doubts about common people's capabilities raised by the former



Finance Minister Sitharaman said the India Chidambaram for questioneconomy, during the UPA ing the developmental pace of regime, suffered a lot and lan-Indian economy under the guished as supposed to the leadership of Prime Minister NDA rule where it reached the Narendra Modi and for saying that it was arithmetic inevitabiltop 5 and now is on the way to become the world's 3rd largest ity that India will become the third largest economy.

economy in the coming years. So, to say that India will automatically become the third

largest economy was nothing

India economy, during the UPA regime, suffered a lot and languished as supposed to the NDA rule where it reached the top 5 and now is on the way to become the world's 3rd largest economy in the coming years.

Sitharaman said the

but undermining the efforts made by the Modi government for the nation, she said.

The Government of India has allocated nearly 100,000 lakh crore for Anusandhan Corpus and this investment aims to bolster India's research budget across various sectors, fostering inclusive growth in the nation, she added.

Travel, tourism sector expected to add 5.82 cr jobs

PNS MUMBAI

With a continued growth momentum, the travel and tourism sector is all set to add 5.82 crore jobs across the country by 2033, a top executive of global technology and digital talent solutions provider NLB Services said on Monday.

"The growing synergy of the sector has led to steadfast employment generation across the country both in tier I and II locations. In the pandemic year 2020, the tourism sector accounted for 39 million jobs. Post the pandemic recovery tenure, this was one of the sectors that saw the quickest recovery," NLB Services CEO Sachin Alug said.

quate freedom to them as regards loan pricing policy. "During the course of the onsite examination of REs for

Concerned over some banks

and lenders resorting to unfair

practices in charging of inter-

est, the Reserve Bank of India

(RBI) on Monday directed

them to take corrective action

and refund excess charges to

The guidelines on Fair Practices Code issued to vari-

ous regulated entities (REs)

since 2003, inter-alia, advocate

fairness and transparency in

charging of interest by the

lenders, while providing ade-

customers.



Follow fair practices, refund

excess charges to customers'

the period ended March 31, 2023, the Reserve Bank came across instances of lenders resorting to certain unfair practices in charging of interest," the RBI said in a circular. The central bank has also highlighted certain unfair practices being followed by certain lenders.

...in the interest of fairness and transparency, all REs are directed to review their pracsal of loans, application of interest and other charges and take corrective action, including system level changes, as may be necessary, to address," the issues concerning charging of interest, the circular said.

During onsite examinations of REs, the RBI said it observed charging of interest from the date of sanction of loan or date of execution of loan agreement and not from the date of actual disbursement of funds to the customer.

It also came across instances where interest was charged from the date of the cheque whereas it was handed over to the customer several days later.

Sebi gives nod to ICRA's arm to provide ESG ratings

PNS NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi has given approval to ICRA's subsidiary Pragati Development Consulting Services Ltd (PDCSL) to provide environmental, social, and governance (ESG) ratings.

This development positions the ICRA Group among the few Indian entities offering holistic risk-monitoring solutions, including ESG ratings

"Sebi has granted its approval for registration of PDCSL, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ICRA, as a Category-I ESG Rating Provider (ERP) under the Sebi's Credit Rating



Agencies Regulations," ICRA said in a statement on Monday. PDCSL applied for the ERP reg-

Sensex rebounds by 941 pts, Nifty closes above 22,600

From cities to rural villages,

UPI is transforming lives, she

PNS MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex rebounded sharply by 941 points while NSE Nifty closed above the 22,600 level on Monday on the back of buying and a rally in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 941.12 points or 1.28 per cent to settle at 74,671.28. As many as 26 Sensex shares closed in the green while four declined. During the day, Sensex zoomed 990.99 points or 1.34 per cent to a high of

The NSE Nifty soared by 223.45 points or 1 per cent to



close at 22,643,40 with 32 of its constituents advancing and 18 settling lower.

From the Sensex basket, ICICI Bank climbed nearly 5 per cent after the bank reported an 18.5 per cent growth in net profit for the March quarter to Rs 11,672 crore, helped

UltraTech Cement rose by 2.7 per cent after the cement maker reported around 36 per cent jump in profit after tax for the last quarter of

IndusInd Bank, State Bank Mahindra Bank, Consultancy Services, Bajaj Finance, and HDFC Bank were the other major gainers.

HCL Technologies tanked nearly 6 per cent after the company reported a flat year-onyear growth in net profit in the March quarter at Rs 3,986 crore. ITC, Wipro, and Bajaj Finserv were the other lag-

'Construction sector entities' revenues to see 12-15% growth'

PNS NEW DELHI

India's construction sector grow by 12-15 per cent in the current financial year, while margins will expand by 25-50 bps, rating agency ICRA said on Monday.

It further said that the government's infrastructure push will result in double-digit revenue growth for the construction industry in FY2025.

The rating agency said it maintains a stable outlook on

the sector with steady growth in operating income, moderate leverage, and healthy cov-

The aggregate order bookto-sales ratio of ICRA's sample set of companies stood at around 3.9x as of December 2023 (compared to 3.4 times during March-2023), thereby indicating a healthy revenue growth prospect over the medium term," ICRA vice president and co-group head - corporate ratings Ashish Modani said.

Sebi comes out with directive on regulatory fee for BSE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Leading stock exchange BSE is expected to shell out more regulatory fee after the markets watchdog Sebi asked the bourse to pay the fee based on options contracts rather than on the premium value.

Also, the exchange has been asked to remit the differential payment for past years with interest. Initial data provided by BSE suggest an outgo of Rs 165 crore plus GST by the

Reacting to the development, shares of BSE have slumped as much as 18.64 per



2,612.0 on the NSE on Monday. Finally, the stock settled 13.31 per cent lower at Rs 2,783 on the NSE.

There could be an increase in the BSE's regulatory fee payments to Sebi due to the significant variance between the notional and premium values. This discrepancy arises from the calculation

method, which involves mul-

tiplying the contract size by the underlying price. Notional turnover represents

the overall strike price of all contracts traded in derivatives. whereas premium turnover is the sum of premiums paid on contracts trade notional value exceeds the premium turnover, opting for notional turnover as the basis entails a higher fee outlay.

"BSE is hereby advised to pay the regulatory fee based on annual turnover to Sebi considering the notional value in case of options contract," the exchange said in a filing to the National Stock Exchange (NSE) on Friday.

Ola Mobility CEO Hemant Bakshi quits

PNS NEW DELHI

Ride-hailing company Ola Mobility CEO Hemant Bakshi has resigned from the company within four months of joining it, according to sources privy to the development.

Sources also said that the company is planning to lay off 10-15 per cent employees.

"Hemant Bakshi has resigned from the company with immediate effect. Ola Cabs division might lay off 10-15 per cent employees," a





source said.

Bakshi had joined the company in January, 2024.

Another source said the company had around 900 people in the Ola Cabs division in January and the lay-off might impact 90-140 people.
When contacted, Ola

declined to offer any comment on the information.

Ola Mobility, the ride-hailing division, had reported a narrowing of loss to Rs

1,082.56 crore in financial year 2023. It had a loss of Rs 3,082.42 crore in fiscal year 2021-22.

The total accumulated loss of ANI Technologies, Ola Mobility's parent firm, at the group level increased to Rs 20,223.45 crore, and on a standalone basis, it stood at Rs 19,649.27 crore as of March 31,

The company has received a total funding of about Rs 31,441 crore as of January

Mcap of BSE-listed companies soar to all-time high of Rs 406.52 lakh cr

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies soared to an all-time high of Rs 406.52 lakh crore on Monday thanks to a rally in equities where the BSE Sensex climbed over 1 per cent.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rallied 941.12 points or 1.28 per cent to finish at 74,671.28. During the day, it zoomed 990.99 points or 1.34 per cent to 74,721.15. The market capitalisation (mcap) of BSE-listed companies reached a record peak of Rs 4,06,52,419.94 crore (USD 4.90 trillion). Investors' wealth climbed by Rs 2,48,043.51 crore on Monday.

"Markets witnessed phenomenal buying support as Sensex quickly moved towards the crucial 75K mark after investors cheered strong corporate earnings from select frontline banking and cement companies, indicating their smooth sailing despite the global vagaries.

"Optimism prevailed from the start of the trading session as cooling of US bond yields and letdown in the Middle East conflict coupled with a drop in crude oil prices generated a lot of enthusiasm amongst the investors," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

The two-day Fed's monetary policy meeting starting Tuesday will be closely watched by global investors, although markets don't expect any change in the policy outcome, he added. From the Sensex basket, ICICI Bank climbed nearly 5 per cent after the company on Saturday said its March quarter consolidated net profit grew 18.5 per cent to Rs 11,672 crore, helped by lower provisions.

China gives all clear nod for Tesla cars

PNS ■ BEIJING

In a big relief for Tesla, its vehicles passed the key test of compliance with China's data security rules as its billionaire CEO Élon Musk who air dashed to Beijing on Sunday met Premier Li Qiang to press for all clear approval for his cars which faced stiff competition

from local rivals. Musk's Tesla, which in recent months faced entry bans in Chinese government-affiliated buildings besides military bases due to security concerns over data leaks, "passed" the security assessment by a stateowned Chinese industrial asso-

ciation on Monday. The China Association of

Automobile Manufacturers and the National Computer Network Emergency Response Technical Team/Coordination Centre of China on Monday published a list of 76 models of intelligent connected vehicles that meet the country's auto data security requirements, including those from Tesla.

The list was released after security tests jointly conducted by the two organisations clearing models of local Chinese electric vehicles, including Li Auto, Lotus, New Hozon Energy Automobile, and NIO besides BYD and Tesla, state-run

Xinhua news agency reported. In tests starting in November 2023, cars were assessed to see



if they met four compliance requirements — the anonymisation of facial and other information from outside the car, the default non-collection of in-car data, the in-car data processing, and the conspicuous notification of personal information processing.

The tests were carried out according to related laws and standards, and the carmakers submitted their models voluntarily, according to the associ-

The association said the test aims to help regulate auto data processing, protect the rights of car users, and build a sound environment for auto data

security and the industry. Significantly, Tesla was included in the list that was released as Musk air dashed to Beijing on a surprise visit and met Chinese Premier Li Qiang

and other officials. This is Musk's second visit to China which is Tesla's secondbiggest market. Built and put into operation in 2019, the Shanghai factory, Tesla's first gigafactory outside the US, delivered 947,000 vehicles last year, which was 33 per cent more than in 2022.

Increasing global uncertainties may impact demand, exports: FIEO

PNS NEW DELHI

The escalating geopolitical tension may have implications for the country's exports in the first quarter of 2024-25 as it is likely to impact global demand, apex exporters body FIEO said.

The global uncertainties caused by the continuing war between Russia and Ukraine have impacted India's outbound shipments in 2023-24, which recorded a decline of 3.11 per cent to USD 437 billion. Imports too dipped by over 8 per cent to USD 677.24

"If the global situation continues to be like this, it will impact global demand. In the first quarter numbers, the demand slowdown may be visible," FIEO Director General Ajay Sahai said.

He added that despite all the challenges, freight rates are softening and it is giving an indication that demand may be impacted in the times to come.

He cautioned that further escalation of the current situation could have serious impli-

cations on world trade. tainties, high inflation and

"Besides geopolitical uncerhigh interest rates are also

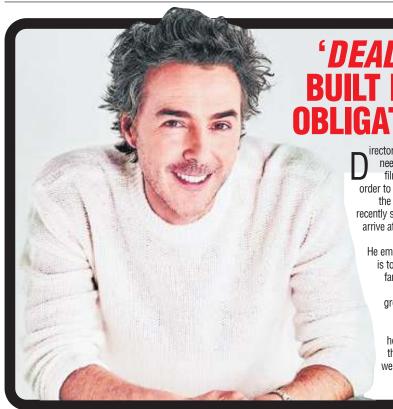
crucial reasons for demand slowdown," he said, adding certain advanced economies like Europe may witness more slowdown.

He also said that India's domestic currency depreciated only about 1.3 per cent during 2023-24 as against Chinese Yuan's 4.8 per cent; Thai Baht 6.3 per cent and Malaysian Ringgit's 7 per cent. When asked about the

impact of the Israel-Iran war, he said certain exporters from the engineering sector have stated that the demand for goods that are going to the UAE and then to Iran has come down.

Vijayawada | Tuesday April 30, 2024

what's brewing?



Auron Mein Kahan

Dum Tha to release

on July 5, 2024

A cclaimed writer and director Neeraj Pandey's Auron Mein Kahan Dum Tha will theatrically

Featuring the blockbuster duo Ajay Devgn and

Tabu, the film is an epic musical romantic drama

spanning across 23 years, set between 2000 and

The film also features a stellar ensemble of Jimmy Shergill, Saiee Manjrekar and Shantanu

release on 5th July 2024.

"DEADPOOL AND WOLVERINE BUILT FOR ENTERTAINMENT, NO

irector Shawn Levy claims that fans do not need to be familiar with the prior Marvel films or the current MCU knowledge in order to enjoy the highly anticipated movie of the year, Deadpool and Wolverine. Levy recently said that moviegoers have no need to arrive at the movie already having done their

He emphasised that the purpose of the film is to entertain rather than gauge viewers' familiarity with the Marvel universe. He declared, "I did well in school. As a grownup, I'll complete my schoolwork. But when I go to the movies, it's obviously not my intention to do my

homework. The mythology and lore of these characters and this world are so well-known to their ardent fan base that I made this short with a great deal of

respect and thanks. I didn't want to assume that, though. There is no requirement to watch this film beforehand: it is meant to be enjoyed." Additionally, the director talked about how the players' friendships off-set gave them the freedom to try new things without fear. "The true advantage of having friends off-set is that you can try crazy things without worrying about falling," Shawn stated. "Because part of it won't work, which will be unpleasant for a little while, but if you're among friends, it's acceptable to look foolish while doing something novel and unexpected. There are a lot of unexpected funny and character-based moments in this film that arise from the freedom that comes from

friendship. The movie, which will be the first in the Marvel Cinematic Universe and the third in the Deadpool franchise, will be released on July 26.



Rohit Saraf, Sanya Malhotra to play pivotal role in SSKTK

Rohit Saraf and Sanya Malhotra are on a signing spree. The actors, who have often proven their acting prowess, have reportedly joined the Shashank Khaitan's upcoming the district of the Shashank Khaitan's upcoming the district of the Shashank Khaitan's upcoming the state of the Shashank Khaitan's upcoming the Shashank Chaitan's upcoming the Shashan

ing directorial, Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari, which will feature Janhvi Kapoor and Varun Dhawan in the lead role. As per the reports, the two will be seen playing a pivotal role in the film, which is being described as a pure family entertainer with romance in its backdrop.

The premise of SSKTK is very close to the kind of films that Dharma is known for as it celebrates love with colour, music, scale, and a strong star cast," revealed a source close to the development. The source further informed that both Sanya and Rohit will share a very interesting dynamic with Varun and Janhvi in Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari. Interestingly, the project also marks the two actors' first project together!

"The makers are all set to take the film on

floors in a fortnight. Apart from some international shoots, the journey on *SSKTK* begins with a schedule in Mumbai, followed by Rajasthan," the source further stated, adding that the makers will be shooting for the film until the end of this year.

On the work front, while Rohit is looking forward to the release of his OTT project Mismatched 3. He will also be seen in Ishq Vishk Rebound, which is set to have a theatrical release. Sanva, on the other hand, will be seen in *Mrs*, which was showcased at the Hawaii International Film Festival 2024, Palm Springs International Film Festival 2024, and Tallinn Black Nights Film

Meryl Streep reveals interesting secrets about Nicole Kidman

eryl Streep and Nicole Kidman have carved out incredible careers for themselves. Many of the actresses' admirers continue to give them high marks for their performances in *Big* Little Lies.

Some interesting secrets about Kidman were revealed by Streep during the AFI Life Achievement Award Gala. Later, at the Los Angeles presentation, Streep expressed her admiration for Kidman's outstanding effort.

Apparently, this secret about Nicole Kidman was shared with Meryl Streep by Reese Witherspoon. During the event, The Devil Wears Prada actress said, "Reese (Witherspoon) told me the very first night we were up in Monterey, before we started shoot-

ing, she said, 'You know what she does?" To which Streep answered, "I said, 'No, Nicole?". The *Legally Blonde* actress goes on to share that Kidman "goes out at 5, before dawn," and skinny dips in the ocean behind the hotel. Meryl Streep shockingly reacts while looking at

> Kidman expresses that she loves it. At the ceremony, Nicole Kidman received the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Kidman and says that the

in the month of March.

Pacific Ocean is 48 degrees

Streep showed no hesitation in praising Kidman. "You're like a mustang, a workhorse, and a champion racer all in one, but one whose spirit, they'll never break," Streep

remarked to Kidman in a moving speech Streep also discussed Kidman's incredible body of work. She claimed that a typical individual would need three lifetimes to accomplish Kidman's list of accomplishments and good actions.

ARCHIE











REALITY CHECK

CALVIN AND HOBBES







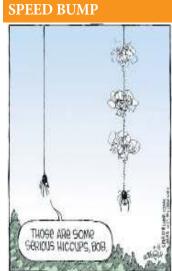
GARFIELD











CROSSWORD



GINGER MEGGS







SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ***

Yesterday's solution								
8	5	4	3	2	7	6	9	1
9	1	2	8	6	4	3	5	7
7	6	3	9	1	5	2	4	8
1	3	7	5	4	9	8	6	2
5	2	8	7	3	6	9	1	4
6	4	9	2	8	1	7	3	5
2	9	1	6	5	8	4	7	3
3	7	5	4	9	2	1	8	6

Rules

- 486173529 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.

4 Beneath

- ACROSS Fish tank
- 7 Fewest
- 8 Narrow shelf
- 9 Ottawa is the capital
- of this country
- 10 Journey
- 12 Slightly hot
- 14 Thief 17 Sweeten a drink with this
- 18 A feeling of rage 19 Obstinate

DOWN 1 Once more

2 Messy, disorganised

3 Tumble over and over

5 A watch's hands move in

11 A red fruit used in salads

16 A creature with nippers

this direction

6 Not permanent

13 Correct

15 Start

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Tuesday April 30, 2024

Rhythmic escape with veteran maestros in Hyd

SUBODHINI PUROHIT

ecently, the Jadavpur University Alumni Association Hyderabad Chapter (JUAAH) arranged a captivating musical event to highlight the nation's rich cultural diversity in our

Ravindra Bharati auditorium served as the setting for the rhythmic mastery of tabla player Bickram Ghosh and his critically acclaimed group, Rhythmscape.

This occasion was merely one part of the yearly custom maintained by JUAAH, in which charity and music were well matched. They organise a music event with renowned classical virtuosos every year with the goal of raising money for charitable organisations! Renowned artists like Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, Vidushi Kaushiki Chakraborty, flutist Rakesh Chaurasia, and Santoor player Rahul Sharma collaborated with great success on this esteemed event, enthralling audiences with their spiritual performances throughout the twin cities.

Abhishek Mallick on sitar, S Pranav Dath on drums, Pulack Sarkar on keyboard, Nirmalya Roy on vocals, V Suresh demonstrating his skill on the ghatam, and Bickram Ghosh himself on tabla comprised the ensemble Rhythmscape. They created a tapestry of sound together that captivated the

crowd and gave the music life!

There was a sense of awe and expectancy in the air as the evening's cultural spectacular came to an end. The distinguished chief guest, Jayesh Ranjan, chief secretary for the Telangana Government's Department of Industries and Commerce and

Department of Information Technology, Electronics, and Communications (ITE&C), was positioned in the front. He was accompanied by Aniruddha Sengupta, President of JUAAH, who both carried the honour and humility befitting their distinguished positions.

The master of the tabla, Bickram Ghosh, took some time before each performance to explain the complex web of *ragas*, taking the listeners on a voyage of musical discovery. The evening's symphony opened with a mesmerising performance of the "Shiv Dance" (*Tandav*), a devotional and dynamic work. This performance, which had its roots in the Jog Raga's deepest regions, was more than just a musical arrangement; it was a spiritual voyage that evoked Lord Shiva's cosmic dance.

Bickram Ghosh provided an insight into the creation of the second piece, "Zinc," by narrating a story about how the busy streets of New York City served as inspiration. He tells us confidentially, "There's this iconic Zinc Bar in New York. I had the amazing good fortune to hear some of the greatest jazz musicians of all time there. I called our performance "Zinc" in honour of it because of this. We included a little jazz because we wanted to convey the spirit of those special jazz evenings."

The musicians in this musical composition expertly captured the sounds of nature with their expertly captured the sounds of nature with their instruments, creating a lovely ode to rain. They gave the impression that they were in the middle of a stormy symphony by minicking the pattern of rainfall and the roar of thunder. Later in the show, the group's next piece, "Little Krishna," took them into the world of classical music. This composition, which made its premiere in 1999, was a masterpiece embellished with the imposing *Charukeshi Raga*, a melody that arouses strong feel-



ings. The musicians integrated the complex rhythms of the *Matt Taal* into its elaborate structure, giving the musical story more nuance and complexity.

Suresh on the ghatam and Ghosh on the

tabla performed an amazing duet. Speaking more with Jadavpur University alumnus and tabla player Bickram Ghosh about the worlds of classical and fusion music, he says, "I find myself navigating through contrasting landscapes like a blind man when I delve into the realms of classical and fusion music. Indian classical music has its ragas, talas, and rules to follow, just like a clearly defined road. It's similar to walking forward, albeit symbolically blind, with a feeling of direction. However, fusion is akin to navigating new waters without a guidebook. I let my sense of aeswaters without a guidebook. Het my sense of thetics guide me through this huge expanse. Our goal with Rhythmscape is to remain faithful to rhythm. We don't perform the protracted *alaaps* that are a defining feature of the classical tradition, but we do

embrace the heartfelt and enjoyable elements of Indian classical music. Rather, we concentrate on the subtle rhythmic elements that propel our work along. I've always had a tendency to try new things, even if it meant receiving criticism in the beginning. I've taken chances that weren't always well appreciated, like tossing my tabla into the air and using other practices that seemed out of the ordinary. But as time has gone on, I've seen a change in perspective. Irony and introspection creep into my path when I realised that what was formerly criticised is now hailed as iconic."

Ghosh also discusses his background in

music, who started out as a tabla player, sharing the stage with legends like Ravi Shankar Ji and Shiv Kumar Sharma Ji. "Engrossed in the opulent customs of Indian classical music, I worked closely with Carnatic musicians, refining my

technique and broadening my repertoire. After studying under and performing with these legends for years, I finally dabbled in fusion in my mid-30s. As I thought back on my experiences, I realised that a deep comprehension of the musical elements being blended is necessary for true fusion. Many artists jump into fusion too quickly, failing to understand the core of both traditions. This stratunderstand the core of both traditions. This strategy looked foolish to me. Rather, I decided to start my fusion efforts with a solid classical music background. I conducted a thorough investiga-

tion and searched to find a middle ground where various musical genres could coexist. This method was made clear by works like "Zinc," which skillfully combined aspects from several traditions to produce

aspects from several traditions to produce something wholly original."
He is now working on three film projects. The first is a Hindi movie called *Band Of Maharajas*, which is helmed by Girish Malik. "This is my first acting role in almost 20 years. I play an Afghan in the movie, which is different from any of my prior roles. The film's main subject matter is music and fatures. I'm also writing the cound track for the fatwas. I'm also writing the soundtrack for the movie. Among other things, I'm working on *Devi Chowdhurani*, a Bengali movie. In addition to movies, I celebrated a wonderful milestone by releasing Hanuman Chalisa on Hanuman Jayanti

to a warm reception. In addition, I founded my own music label, a large-scale endeavour with backers, putting out 200 tracks a year on average across Bollywood, reli-





RAISING AWARENESS OF SOCIAL PROGRESSIVISM IN SOCIETY

SHIKHA DUGGAL

ahashatavadhani Pujya Ganivarya Shri Ajitchandra Sagar ji Maharaj, the renowned disciple of Acharyashri Nayachandrasagar Suriji Maharaj, has attracted attention worldwide by showcasing his extraordinary skills in Shatavdhan (memorising 100 things), Mahashatavadhan (memorising 200 questions), and 500 Avadhan (memorising 500 things) in front of thousands of spectators. He is now ready to begin the incredible and historic Sahastravadhan-1000 Avadhan project!

We learned a lot of fascinating information in an exclusive interview we had with this saint in order to learn more about him! For instance, when he said, "I want to achieve such remarkable feats, my memory power has improved through consistent study of Agams (Jain holy scriptures), moments of silence, Saraswati Sadhana, and ongoing penance, which helped me reach such significant milestones."

Sahastravdhan's next historical program will feature a variety of questions, including difficult mathematics problems, quotations, and poetry, all of which Munishree will thoroughly address. "While the normal person occasionally finds it difficult to focus and concentrate, people who have achieved mental stability find that this kind of concentration comes naturally to them. All questions must be focused on in order to be permanently retained in memory. The upcoming obstacles presented by these 1000 questions require both memory and concentration to overcome," the Jain saint discusses an interesting concept of combined

This event's joint attention feature, in which 15 processes happen all at once all around him, is fascinating. These procedures include *Dhant* games, puzzle presentations, visual displays, letter transfers between bowls, and math question presentations. Furthermore, he educates us by stating, "The conscious and subconscious minds are the two components of the human mind. Therefore, people who have more control over their subconscious minds are able to process up to fifteen things at once. Nowadays, those who want to maintain their cognitive ability, memory, and mental sharpness can practice Saraswati Sadhana in order to improve their whole mental and spiritual health."

At the age of twelve, in Unjha and Kumud Bhai, he took up the life of renunciation. After being initiated, he also attained the rank of Maharaj. Under the tutelage of Gurumaharaj, he set off on a voyage of profound experience, starting his ascetic jour-ney with Diksha at the age of 12. He had remembered 350 gathas and fortnightly sutras in one day in the early phases. And for us, what else was in store?
As it happens, "Saraswati Sadhana

provides practical

answers to the various problems that kids encounter; these include raising IQ, improving memory, and improving focus. Under the direction of renowned neurologists, physicians, and scientists from ISRO, this research has been carried out. Given the growth of dentist clinics over the past ten years, it is likely that growth in psychiatrist clinics will stagnate as well. Therefore, if humans are to fully utilise the potential of the brain, we must embrace meditation, which is the only route to inner peace."

Following his mastery of sutras that promote self-control, he quickly became proficient at memorising more than 27,000 verses from 23 of the 45 *Agamas* in the style of Prabhuvir's speech. Munishree was silent for eight years straight! "I am a monk first, and I only attained these Siddhis through the path of Sadhana after my monastic journey began," he continued. "From now on, my continued spiritual activities will also contribute to any future successes I achieve. It would therefore be pointless for me to ignore and forget the lessons and Sadhana that I have acquired throughout my monastic life. Religion and sci-

ence have always been compared to railroad tracks-they never converge, they go parallel. Though it was frequently observed that religion always leaned toward science. this is changing, with science increasingly leaning toward religion. As soon as feasible, I want to provide Saraswati *\$adhana* to 500,000 youngsters. I want to raise awareness of social progressivism and take society to new heights through personal sadhana." my

Mahashatavadhani Pujya Ganivarya Shri Ajitchandra Sagar ji Maharaj, who is now ready to begin the incredible and historic Sahastravadhan-1000 Avadhan project, speaks exclusively with *The Pioneer* about reaching significant milestones in his life,

practicing Saraswati Sadhana, and more.

Is sleep deprivation sabotaging your health?

Tt could be the late-night work, assignment submission, your new bundle of joy, a fun night out, just the heat wave or even pening you up at ungodly hours of the night. The next day is a punishment. Your concentration wavers, head gets heavy, eye strains to keep up, fatigue sets in, and productivity dips to an all time low. Sleep deprivation is a common issue, and while an occasional sleepless night might not cause lasting harm, chronic sleep loss can significantly impact your physical and mental health.

One of the first consequences of sleep deprivation is impaired cognitive function. When you're sleep-deprived, your attention span suffers, making it difficult to concentrate, reason, and solve problems effectively. This can have a negative impact on daily activities, from driving, working, and studying, leading to decreased productivity and increased risk of accidents. Lack of sleep can also affect mood and emotional regulation. Persistent lack of sleep is linked with heightened irritability, mood fluctuations, anxiety, and depression. These emotional disturbances can strain relationships and decrease overall quality of life.

One of the first consequences of sleep deprivation is impaired cognitive function. When you're sleep-deprived, your attention span suffers, making it difficult to concentrate, reason, and solve problems effectively. This can severely hinder everyday tasks such as driving, working, and studying, heightening the risk of accidents, and diminishing productivity. These emotional disruptions strain relationships and detract from

overall life satisfaction. Sleep is important in maintaining physical health. Repeatedly being sleep deprived is linked to an increased risk of various health problems, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovas-cular disease, and weakened immune function. Over time, these conditions can significantly impact longevity and overall well-being.

Here's how sleep deprivation disrupts your body's delicate hormonal balance: It throws off the production of key hormones like cortisol (stress hormone), insulin (blood sugar regulation), and growth hormone (important for tissue repair and muscle growth). These hormonal imbalances can contribute to weight gain, difficulty managing blood sugar levels, and impaired immune function. Additionally, research suggests a link between chronic sleep deprivation and an increased risk of developing chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, and certain types of cancer. Poor sleep can also worsen existing health conditions, making them more challenging to manage.

Adequate sleep is essential for a healthy immune system. Chronic sleep deprivation can weaken the immune response, making individuals more susceptible to infections and delaying recovery from illness. Longterm sleep deprivation has been linked to a shortened lifespan. Individuals who consistently get less sleep than recommended have a higher mortality risk compared to those who get sufficient sleep.

At least six to seven hours of sleep are required for the body to support various vital functions and to promote optimal physical and mental performance. During sleep, the body engages in crucial restorative processes such as tissue repair and muscle growth. Additionally, adequate sleep is essential for maintaining hormonal balance, supporting immune function, and regulating metabolism.

Even a single day of sleep deprivation, though seemingly harmless in the long term, can give rise to a host of short-term challenges. These include difficulties with concentration, heightened irritability, drowsiness, and decreased productivity. The resulting fatigue can compromise coordination and reaction time, elevating the risk of accidents and injuries. Furthermore, diminished performance at work or school can exacerbate the adverse effects of sleep deprivation.

TIPS FOR GETTING THROUGH A SLEEP-DEPRIVED DAY:

If you find yourself facing a day after a restless night, here are some tips to help you cope:

> hvdrated: Staying Drinking plenty of water can help improve alert-ness and combat fatigue. • Avoiding strenuous activity: Opt for light exercise or stretching instead of pushing your-

self physically. Also avoid activities like driving or lifting heavy weights or operating machinery. Take breaks: Give your

mind and body short breaks throughout the day to help you stay focused.

• Skip caffeine in the after**noon:** While a morning cup of coffee might be helpful, avoid caffeine later in the day as it can disrupt nighttime sleep.
• Power nap (if possible): If

you have the opportunity, a short 20-minute nap can significantly improve alertness and cognitive

function Avoid making important decisions: When sleep-deprived, your

judgment might be clouded. Wait to make important decisions until you've had a chance to rest and recharge.

The recommended amount of sleep varies by age group. For adults aged 18 years and older, it's generally advised to aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night, although individual needs may vary. Infants need the most sleep, with 14-17 hours recommended for those aged 0-3 months, gradually decreasing as they grow older. For children and teenagers, the recommended sleep duration ranges from 12-15 hours for babies aged 4-11 months to 8-10 hours for teenagers aged 13-18 years. Following this will ensure you have a productive day, and your body and mind are well-

> (The author, Dr. Suchismitha Rajamanya, is aLead Consultant & HOD - Internal Medicine, at Aster Whitefield Hospital.)

FOCUS ON RAHUL DURING LSG, MI CLASH

with T20 World Cup selection round the corner, KL Rahul will have one final chance to stake claim on the second wicketkeeper's spot in the Indian team when Lucknow Super Giants host Mumbai Indians in the Indian Premier League here on Tuesday. Rahul's strike-rate in T20 cricket has always been a bone of contention. Despite the advantage of field restrictions in the Powerplay, Rahul has often started his innings on a slow note in the IPL. However, the LSG captain has managed to change gears this season.

In the 2024 edition, he has scored 378 runs at a strike rate of 144.27 but it is still less than that of Rishabh Pant (160.60) and Sanju Samson (161.08). While comeback man Pant has all but sealed the first wicketkeeper's spot in the marquee event in the Caribbean islands and the USA in June by displaying some sharp work behind the stumps and sensational knocks with the bat, Samson has also made a strong case for himself by playing match-winning knocks for Rajasthan Royals at a brisk pace. In such a scenario, Rahul needs to play more fearlessly and exploit the



strengthen his Indian team selection prospects but also to help his side score in in excess of 200 runs, which has become a norm in this edition.

LSG were handed a seven-wicket loss by Rajasthan Royals, who chased the 197-run target with six balls to spare. The onus will also be on the team's big hitting troika of Quinton de Kock, Marcus Stoinis and Nicholas Pooran to hit those towering maximums and get

field restrictions not only to match-winning totals as the race for the playoff heats.

They will fancy their chances against a struggling Mumbai bowling unit which was carted all over the park by the Delhi Capitals batters the other day. MI bowlers struggled to find answers against young Jake Fraser-McGurk, who wreaked havoc in the Powerplay. Even the world class Jasprit Bumrah conceded a 19-run over before returning to his frugal self while the likes of Luke Wood and

skipper Hardik Pandya were pummelled into submission. They would look to do better. Mumbai Indians find themselves

in a precarious position sitting ninth on the points table. They need to win all their matches to stay alive in the competition.

The five-time champions need to fire as a unit and the likes of Indian skipper Rohit Sharma, premier T20 batter Suryakumar Yadav would be like to get into the rhythm and churn out some

T20 has always been a batters game and that

consistent performances ahead of the World Cup. All-rounder Pandya has flopped with the bat and ball this season.

He did get his highest score this season the other day but more

season the other day but more
would be needed to make it to the
World Cu squad.

SQUADS:

Mumbai Indians: Hardik Pandya
(c), Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar
Yaday, Dewald Brevis, Jasprit Bumrah, Piyush Chawla, Gerald Coetzee, Tim David, Shreyas Gopal, Ishan Kishan (wk), Anshul Kamboj, Kumar Kartikeya, Akash Madhwal, Kwena Maphaka, Mohammad Nabi, Shams Mulani, Naman Dhir, Shivalik Sharma, Romario Shepherd, Arjun Tendulkar, Nuwan Thushara, Tilak Varma, Harvik Desai, Nehal Wadhera, Luke Wood.

Lucknow Super Giants: Quinton de Kock, KL Rahul (c & wk), Deepak Hooda, Ayush Badoni, Marcus Stoinis, Nicholas Pooran, Krunal Pandya, Ravi Bishnoi, Mohsin Khan, Shamar Joseph, Thakur, Manimaran Siddharth, Prerak Mankad, Arshad Khan, Krishnappa Gowtham, Amit Mishra, Kyle Mayers, Ashton Turner, Matt Henry, Naveen-ul-Haq, Devdutt Padikkal, Yudhvir Singh Charak, Mayank Yadav and Arshin Kulkarni.

Gaikwad is one step ahead of bowlers more often than not: Hussey

The ability to remain one step ahead of the bowlers has allowed Ruturaj Gaikwad to flourish in this Indian Premier League, reckons CSK batting coach Michael Hussey.
After an unbeaten 108 in the previous

game, CSK skipper Gaikwad was on the cusp of another century on Sunday but fell two runs short of the milestone against Sunrisers Hyderabad.

"Gaikwad is such a wonderful player. He is a brilliant timer of the cricket ball. I've been asking him what his secret is in terms of his placement since he always finds the gaps," said Hussey after the win over Sunrisers. "He is a smart batsman as well. He

knows when to attack and when to soak up pressure. He plays spin and seam well. He can score all around the ground. "He's almost one step ahead of the bowlers a lot of times. He is wonderful

to watch. Very thankful that he is in our team." The 27-year-old was announced as the new skipper of the defending

champions a day before the IPL opener, replacing the legendary MS Dhoni. Talking about how Gaikwad has

adjusted to the leadership responsibility, Hussey admitted that it has been challenging to succeed the 'GOAT'.

"It has been challenging for him as well. He has taken over as captain to which you have to take your hat off to him. He is succeeding the greatest of all time in this country," he said. Strike rate is more important than

batting averages in the T20 format but at CSK, that aspect of the game is not discussed much.

"We don't talk about it (S/R) much at all. We talk about each player since they need to assess the conditions out in the middle as quickly as they can. The batter needs to take up the responsibility and the ownership in the middle," he continued.

"Sometimes, as coaches, we put too much into the players' heads. I am trying to take as much out of their heads as possible, let them be as clear as they possibly can, see the ball and

react accordingly.
"The strike rate keeps changing, depending on the way you play and the conditions."

Hussey was delighted with Daryll Mitchell finally delivering for the Yellow Brigade at number three. He scored a 32-ball 52 against SRH, which also happened to be his maiden IPL half-century.
"It's not easy. He's a new player who

comes to the team, even Rachin Ravindra, for that matter, and we expect them to come in and fit in right away and go out and perform. But in reality, it's not that easy," he explained.
"This is the IPL, the best T20 competition in the world. So sometimes, it takes time. We feel like he's been playing well. Although not getting the big score, he has been contributing down the lines well.

'He has been moving up and down the batting order, which can be destabilizing for him, but he has found a nice role in number three, and he can feel comfortable at it. Hopefully, it is the start of some consistent form moving forward."

PTI CHENNAI

 $T_{
m favoured}^{
m 20}$ format has always favoured the batters and that has gone to a 'whole new level' in this Indian Premier League, feels Sunrisers Hyderabad skipper Pat Cummins.

The Australian gave his thoughts following SRH's 78-run loss to defending champions Chennai not much on the wicket either. Super Kings here on Sunday. IPL 2024 has witnessed six 250

edition, 250 was only breached twice in the history of IPL. T20 is always on the batting side, and it has gone to a whole new level this season. The way we set up, we had the best chance if we got some really aggressive batters, and that's the way to win

the tournament," Cummins said

has gone to a new level this IPL: Cummins

So, a lot of times, the best way to get a wicket is to try and defend. plus totals already with 200 no
Batters are getting better at more a safe total. Prior this hitting the ball out and even getting confident. It challenges you as a bowler. But, if you have a big total like 270-280 and if you can go at 9.00 as a bowler and make an impact, it could be match-winning," said the Australian. Analysing the reason for the loss to CSK, he admitted that the side has some work to do

at the post-match press conference.

"Frankly, we don't have much (bowling) options. It's not Test cricket, with the ball swinging that the side has some work to do while chasing.

"Hard to put a finger on it. Nothing really went (according to) to plan tonight. We're pretty well-suited to chasing, but it



work on," Cummins reckoned. 'There was definitely dew there; haven't seen so much at any other venue across the country. But, we failed to make the most of it, and they bowled well as well. So, it (dew) didn't really factor in this match as much as we would have liked." Of their four losses, three of them have come chasing. Cummins said while their have been openers commendable, middle-order

few chases, we felt that we set up really well," he analysed.

hasn't really come off yet. So "Different batters have stepped yeah, it is something (we need) to up throughout the tournament, and you need two or three guys to make an impact. But tonight, we never really got going, unfortunately. "I am really happy about how the

boys have been going about it. Even tonight, there were not too many reckless shots."

As for the struggles for the bowlers this season, Cummins felt that it could be possibly due to the wickets being drier. "Haven't really seen too much of

a difference with the (new) white ball. It doesn't have as much swing as before, maybe because the wickets are drier. It's a tricky format, and I don't think there's a lot with the new ball," he said.

OTHER SPORTS

Video reviews have changed face of European soccer

One country is holding out

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

As the Swedish league got underway this spring, yellow-and-black-clad supporters of Stockholm club AIK held up an enormous banner containing a long, vivid story about the dark forces of modern soccer conquering the world.
"The whole world? No!" read

the words on the giant display. "There was, in fact, a small area that successfully resisted the intruders, surrounded by modern football's smoldering ruins."

written into the laws of soccer in 2018 to help referees make the right calls in the biggest moments. While most leagues around the world are now using this technology, Sweden is an outlier in holding out

"VAR is a symbol of modern, commercialized-to-the-point-of-destruction football," says Ola Thews, vice-chairman of AIK's largest supporter organization, ASK.

Thews is more than just a diehard AIK fan. He played a part in mobilising anti-VAR sentiment among Sweden's top clubs and helped push through a motion at AIK opposing the introduction of the technology, before the Swedish soccer federation had the

chance to bring it in.

controlled by members imperfections. essentially, supporters — under a regulation that states

members should control at least 50% of their club's shares, plus one. Although the federation initially appeared to want VAR in operation — the technology is, after all, used at European and international level — it will not go against the wishes of its member-run clubs. As a result, the federation has held off on further discussions about adopting VAR and said last week it doesn't envisage

any in the foreseeable future. The intruder in this case is VAR — the high-tech video review system formally That's a big win for Swedish match-going fans who are proud of their rebel status in European soccer. No VAR. No out-of-touch

American owners or oil money from the Middle East. A culture where fans matter. Soccer as it should be, in their

and, in its view, retaining the game in its purest form.

The Swedish league is the only one of Europe's top-30 ranked leagues yet to have rolled out the system. It won't be happening anytime soon, either.

"YAP"

view.

VAR "ruins the euphoria" that soccer can bring, Thews says.

"The absolute happiness and passion, or grief and sadness, that comes from a goal being conceded or a goal being scored if you're not sure what has been also for the control of the control scored if you're not sure what has happened until it has been reviewed and decided in a VAR room."

Compared to other sports, soccer is a latecomer to video replays. In the United States, the NFL introduced instant replays in the mid-1980s but scrapped the system in 1991 after widespread discontent. They returned in 1999 and have spread to other major North American leagues and international sports, such as cricket and rugby.

In soccer, pausing for video reviews can appear more disruptive. Not least because That's possible because disruptive. Not least because allian Swedish clubs are majority- the VAR system has its Press.

In the English Premier League, a communications mix-up between the official running the video review and the onfield referee cost Liverpool a valid goal in a loss at Tottenham in October. Weeks later, a Tottenham-Chelsea match had a total of 21 minutes of stoppage time added on largely because of a raft of video reviews.

Earlier month. Nottingham Forest put out an inflammatory statement, questioning the integrity of a match official, after being denied what it perceived to be three clear penalty shouts overlooked by the video

In Spain, Barcelona threatened legal action to force a replay after a VAR-related controversy in the recent "clasico" against Real Madrid. Meanwhile, across the Swedish border in Norway, Swedish border in Norway, fans already unhappy at VAR being adopted by the country's federation last year before its member-run clubs could establish a unified position have become increasingly disillusioned with the technology after just one season. In one match, it took seven minutes for VAR to decide on an offside call — FIFA's original vision was that FIFA's original vision was that it should take no more than six

seconds. "Throughout the season, after seeing VAR in full effect, opposition has grown a lot and there's been a lot of disgruntled supporters, football staff and coaches, and players as well," Anders Kjellevold, chairman of the Norwegian supporters' alliance, told The Associated

needs to step up. "Whenever the openers have gone off (to score), it's been match-winning and crazy. In a

Silva to leave Chelsea at end of season

 $B^{\text{razil}} \ \, \text{defender} \ \, \text{Thiago Silva will} \\ \text{Bleave Chelsea at the end of the} \\$ season after four years at the club.
The 39-year-old Silva made the announcement on Monday, saying he is leaving the door open for a return to

Chelsea "in another role." "Goodbyes are for those that leave and don't come back," he said in a message to Chelsea's fans. "I intend on coming

back one day." Silva joined Chelsea in 2020 after his contract at Paris Saint-Germain expired. He said he only planned to stay at the English club for one season.

He continued playing for the team after winning the Champions League at the end of his first season there. Now his sons are playing in Chelsea's youth

"It's a source of great pride to be a part of the Chelsea family - literally because my sons are here," Silva said. "I hope they can continue their careers here at this victorious club that many players wish to be part of."

Tust call him Xabi Houdini.

Bayer Leverkusen coach

Xabi Alonso has seen his team

pull off several scarcely

believable escapes from defeat this season as it remains

Leverkusen, which has already secured the Bundesliga title, is

on a 46-game run without a loss - a record across Europe's

It has been achieved in

Robert Andrich scored with

the last kick of the game for a 2-2 draw with high-flying

Stuttgart on Saturday. The goal came in the sixth minute of

stoppage time when there was

Stuttgart had won seven of its

stuttgart had won seven of its nine games since losing to Leverkusen in the German Cup and led 2-0 against

Leverkusen, but even that

wasn't enough of a cushion to

prevent Alonso's team from

coming back and extending its

only supposed to be five.

across

AP ■ BERLIN

unbeaten

competitions.

"big five" leagues.

extraordinary fashion.

Chelsea has five league games left this season but is languishing in ninth place after an inconsistent campaign under first-year coach Mauricio Pochettino. Rory McIlroy and Shane Lowry rally to win Zurich Classic team event in a

playoff New Orleans, Apr 29 (AP) Rory McIlroy and Shane Lowry received a standing ovation at historic, creole French Quarter restaurant Arnaud's on the eve of their final round at the Zurich Classic of New Orleans team event. They also had the largest, loudest

the charismatic, 34-year-old McIlroy, had not previously played.
"He's getting old, but he still moves the needle a little bit," Lowry joked as McIlroy chuckled. "Rory brings a crowd and people love him and we've gotten a lot of love in New Orleans.

galleries at the TPC Louisiana, where

We've had just the best week." McIlroy and Lowry won Sunday, beating Chad Ramey and Martin Trainer with a nervy par on the first

hole of a playoff.

Trainer pushed a 6-foot par putt to the

trainer pushed a 6-foot par putt to the

closest file has we've known each other for a long, long time, probably like over 20 years," McIlroy said. "To

right of the cup to end it, with Lowry lifting a laughing McIlroy off the ground with a bear hug on the green. To win any PGA Tour event is very cool, but to do it with one of your closest friends - we've known each think about where we met and where we've come from, to be on this stage and do this together - really, really cool journey that we've been a part of."

McIlroy, of Northern Ireland, won his 25th PGA Tour title and first of the season. Lowry, of Ireland, claimed his third PGA Tour victory. Each walked away with about \$1.29 million and 400 FedEx Cup points apiece.

"People have come out in the thousands to support us. It's not lost on me how cool that is," McIlroy said. "Every time I get to play in front of thousands of people, the little boy in me just thinks it's so cool and so exciting."
The Irish tandem closed with a 4-under

68 in the alternate-shot final round in windy conditions to match Ramey and Trainer at 25-under 263.

Ramey and Trainer began the day tied for 27th at 16 under and shot to the top of the leaderboard with nine birdies between the seventh and 18th holes. They tied the alternate-shot tournament record of 63, but then had to wait nearly three hours to see if their

lead would stand up.

Bayer Leverkusen late escapes are keeping

Xabi Alonso team unbeaten this season

The previous weekend, Josip Stanisic scored in the seventh minute of stoppage time for a 1-1 draw at Borussia

Dortmund. And in Leverkusen's previous game, Amine Adli scored in the 90th minute for a 1-1 draw at West Ham in the Europa League. In all, Leverkusen has eight draws this season to go with 38

"We've scored so many goals in stoppage time this year," Adli said after the latest drama on

Saturday. "But we should score earlier. It would be better for us."

Andrich's equaliser against Stuttgart was the 16th goal that Leverkusen has scored in the 90th minute or later across all competitions this season, and the 21st that was scored from



the 86th.

Alonso said.

happens so often, but it's good

Those late goals helped "It's not easy to explain what we did again after last week -Leverkusen again in the last minute," "There's no explanation why it

Bundesliga title ahead of 11time defending champion Bayern Munich with five rounds to spare.

"We've already reached our main target - to be champions but we want to keep going, we don't want to stop. There are still three games (in the Bundesliga). We want to stay unbeaten for the rest of the season," Alonso said.

Leverkusen's next game is against Roma in the first leg of their Europa League semifinal on Thursday. The teams met at the same stage last season, when José Mourinho's team eliminated Alonso's thanks to a 1-0 win in Rome. They drew the second leg 0-0 in Leverkusen.

"From the first Europa League game against (Swedish team) Häcken, we spoke about our experience in Rome and now we're back in the same situation, semifinal vs Roma,"

tollywood

Vijayawada | Tuesday April 30, 2024

TWO OUT OF FOUR OF NARESH'S FILMS PUSHED BACK!

'HE WENT AHEAD WITH AA OKKATI ADAKKU'

With the buzz all

around Aa Okkati

Hyderabadi media

here, sharing some

set to hit theaters

on May 3.

interesting insights about

the upcoming film, all

Adakku, director Malli

Ankam speaks to the

PNS| HYDERABAD

a Okkati Adakku is a new film that is creating a lot of excitement and buzz lately.
With a strong creative team led by actors Allari Naresh and Faria Abdullah, this upcoming comedy project is expected to be a welcome change of pace for the genre with its premiere on

With the production skills of Rajiv Chilaka and the innovative directing of Malli Ankam, the film is being presented by Chilaka Productions and promises a look into the intricacies of contemporary relationships in addition to humour. As the film is nearing its release, director Malli Ankam speaks to the media here, sharing interesting tidbits about the film. "The title of this story is rather fitting, *Aa Okkati*

Adakku," says the director on a brighter note. "It was Naresh's idea to give this title as well. We have only taken the title; this story has no relation to that movie. What feelings are associated with the wedding? How are those feelings felt by some? We have made a strong emotional connection by presenting these subjects in a fun manner. Everyone may relate to this concept. It is a fun family entertainer that will keep everyone entertained." The film, he says, is inspired by social events in the community. "A few of my friends are single. If they inquire as to why they don't go on stage at events, they all inquire about marriage. They claimed they were unsure of how to respond. That startled me a lot. I experienced their suffering. Moreover, some of the news in the media and occurrences pertaining to marriage are unexpected. All of this is combined with fiction to create this story."

The lead actor, Allari Naresh, has already got four films in his kitty. However, there was something about Aa Okkati Adakku that made him get on board. What is it? Let's hear from the filmmaker. As he says, "Naresh has four flicks on his plate. I wasn't initially all that excited about the story because it was a comedy. I commenced narrating the tale. Let's do this tale,' he urged, shaking hands after hearing the first part. Two of the four films were pushed back, while this one was moved forward. He was very fond of this story. It's humorous and has a nice emotional depth. Naresh's portrayal and acting will provide the audience

He also adds, "Naresh was ecstatic to view the first draft. Their father holds this title. More accountability, without a doubt. He believed that he had maintained his faith after seeing the film. The crew as a whole is thrilled and optimistic about the results. The movie has been edited. The censors were pleased with themselves since they had a valid point. I

Biggest digi-deal for Naga Chaitanya's *Thandel*

aga Chaitanya and Chandoo Mondeti joined forces for the third time for the beautiful rural backdrop love story Thandel which is progressing with its shoot. Sai Pallavi is the female lead opposite Naga Chaitanya in the movie produced ambitiously by Bunny Vasu, with Allu Aravind presenting it under the Geetha Arts banner.

The movie has been carrying a strong buzz ever since it was announced. The first look, teaser, and other promos were also wellreceived. Meanwhile, the film's business started on a massive note. The leading OTT platform Netflix obtained the digital rights of *Thandel* for all South Indian and Hindi languages for a staggering price of Rs 40 Cr. This is the biggest digital deal for Naga Chaitanya.

While Naga Chaitanya is one of the most bankable stars, Chandoo Mondeti delivered the

biggest hit of his career to date with Karthikeya 2, and Geetha Arts is one of the biggest production houses in India. All these factors impacted *Thandel* to get such a fancy offer.

Apart from a beautiful love story, *Thandel*

will also have patriotic elements, as shown in the teaser, which has set high expectations for the movie. Shamdat cranks the camera, while rockstar Devi Sri Prasad provides the music. Srinagendra Tangala is the art director.

Kanguva

filmed in seven

actual locations

magnum opus, was released by Studio Green and Suriya Sivakumar, it has caused

different nations at

Since the much-sought teaser for Kanguva, a

pandemonium everywhere. This outstanding

a Hollywood production: the expertise, the

the exciting background score, and the

teaser has everything that puts it at the level of

creative thinking, the originality of the content,

execution. Everyone is intrigued by the teaser

and eager to witness the epic battle between

Suriya, who portrays a Mighty Warrior. Apart

movie was shot at several actual locations by

ambitious films coming this year, and to bring a

Bobby Deol, who plays the opponent, and

from this, you might not be aware that the

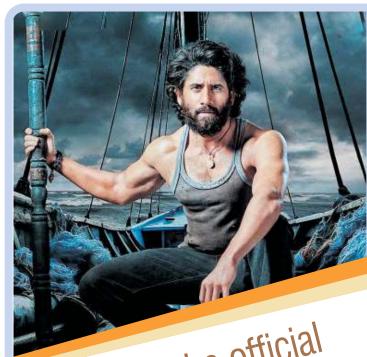
Kanguva is undoubtedly one of the most

cinematic marvel to audiences, the makers

the makers!

Touted as the film of the

major sequences in the



Polimera 2 is the official Polimera 2 is the Official Dada Selection at 14th Dada Festival Saheb Phalke Film, Festival Saheb Phalke Film,

which stars Satyam Rajesh, Deviyani Sharma, and Getup Srinu in the

which stars Satyam Rajesh, Deviyani Sharma, and Getup Srinu in the key parts, is receiving attention once more.

The film has been officially selected for the esteemed 14th Dada Saheb Phalke Film Festival – 2024, which takes place on April 30, 2024, in New Delhi, India. The entire team is pleased about this distinction. Shree Krishna Creations is the proud home of Gowr Krishna's spine-tingling horror film, directed by Anil Vishwanath. The director of music is Gyaani. Kamakshi Bhaskarla, Baladitya, Chitram Seenu, Ravi Varma, Rakendu Mouli, and Sahiti Dasari are among the ensemble cast members



Telugu trailer of Tamannaah Bhatia and Raashi Khanna's

ranmanai 4, starring Sundar C, Tamannaah Bhatia, and Raashi Khanna from the highly successful horror comedy series Aranmanai, is all set for theatrical release on May 3rd. This film, coming in Telugu with the title Baak, is directed by Sundar C. Kushboo Sundar and ACS Arun Kumar. Produced under the Avni Cinemax P Ltd. banner. The makers launched the theatrical trailer at a grand pre-release

of four living happily together and unfortunately, one person loses his life under suspicious circumstances. The husband, who had a fight with his wife and went to the forest and died, will face charges in the trial. As a lawyer, Sundar C takes action against the police. The trailer also showed other characters, including Raashi, living in the haunted house. Heroine Raashi Khanna, speaking at the grand pre-release event,

shared, "Director Sundar C. Garu is the backbone of this movie. He makes films with a very clear vision. I like horror movies very much! But it is very difficult to get them. This time, the glamour of Baak has increased. Tamanna is going to be seen in a new role, which she has not played till now. Already, the songs are going viral. The beautiful women characters are beautifully crafted. It is a pleasure to be a part of this film. This is the perfect summer treat! Thanks to Suresh Productions for releasing it in Telugu."

Meanwhile, the other leading lady, Tamannaah Bhatia, says, 'Baak is a film that gives a very new experience. The trailer is an example to show that Sundar is such a good director. He celebrates women's power. It is a great pleasure to have Kushboo present on his behalf at this celebration. I would like to see more simple women in Telugu movies."

event. The trailer begins with a family

STANDALONE

As everyone celebrated International Dance Day, Regina Cassandra





Ranveer Singh and Prasanth

Varma's next titled *Rakshas*

Indian mythology. The producers also stated

that they were in talks with other studios to

include them in the project and that a formal

prepared to begin production on the film.

People with knowledge of the development

Nagarjuna on the hop with multi-starrers

s an actor, King Nagarjuna has a demanding San actor, King reagar una has a demanding schedule. Setting Bigg Boss aside, he has a number of other ventures in the works. He is now filming Kubera, which stars Dhanush in the title role. Soon, Sekhar Kammula's film will go on floors. Additionally, Nagarjuna is in talks to star in Rajinikanth's upcoming Lokesh Kanagaraj film in a major capacity. Nag's part will be revealed, and the filming will soon get underway. Additionally, Nagarjuna has approved one more multi-star film Naveen, a newbie, is directing this big-budget movie starring Nagarjuna and Akshay Kumar will be produced by Studio Green, will be

together. This massively expensive movie, which released throughout India the following year. The majority of the filming will be done in London. Nag is in negotiations for two more movies, both of which will feature him as the sole lead, in addition to these three multistarrers. Film director Vijay Binni, of Naa Saami Ranga fame, is in advanced talks to

have given everything required to make it a film to be remembered. As it is known, the film helm a project shortly. Additionally, he approved of one more presents the story of two eras, historic and present, and keeping this in mind, the makers movie helmed by Subbu. have filmed it in several real-life locations and a debutant. Ńag is across the globe. To keep the uniqueness and working on five theme of the film, the makers have shot it in projects exotic locations in Goa, Europe, and a major overall! schedule, including war sequences, was shot in Sri Lanka for 60 days. budget worth 350 crores. the makers canned some

outskirts of Chennai and even in the Pondicherry. An important sequence featuring Suriya was filmed recently in Kerala and the Kodaikanal forests. Last year, around October, a three-week marathon schedule with the cast and crew was shot in Bangkok, and the makers used the Alexa Super 35 and Alexa LF camera versions for a better output of the action sequences. The film shows the story of two different eras—the prehistoric and present erasand covers the story of 1000 years, and

the makers have ensured the scale and execution in these two timelines come as a visual delight for the audiences. Director Siva and Studio Green jointly gave the project a global feel and elevated it to the level of Hollywood.

The release of the film is planned for the second half of

According to recent reports, Ranveer Singh and *HanuMan* director Prasanth Varma are claim that Rakshas is the working title for the upcoming movie starring Prasanth in negotiations for a hugely expensive period picture that will be set against the backdrop of Varma and Ranveer Singh. This scene takes place in the Prasanth Varma Cinematic Universe, where the director introduces a lot of characters before bringing them all together in the finale. A source close to the production claims announcement will be made after the finances were established. With confidence, we can now that Ranveer is amazed by his say that Prasanth Varma, Ranveer Singh, and director's long-term vision and Mythri have joined forces as producers and are hopes for the aspirations, and he is excited to embark on the journey of Rakshas shortly. After completing the previsualisation stage of the screenplay and script, the creators are currently planning the shooting schedule. According to the insider 'Ranveer has already performed a

pooja for the film on the occasion of Hanuman Jayanti in Hyderabad and has met Prasanth Varma and the team multiple times over the last