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PM launches world's



CUSTODIAN

the pioneer VIPs are getting killed in road accidents in recent times due to inexperienced drivers. The Transport Department will conduct fitness tests for drivers driving the vehicles of Ministers, MLAs, MLCs, IAS and IPS officials soon. VIPs should choose only the selected drivers when they travel long distances

QUOTE OF THE DAY

- Ponnam Prabhakar, Transport Minister P4

Ganta planning to join YSRCP?

Ganta Srinivasa Rao, TDP leader and MLA representing Visakhapatnam North, has faced a setback as the TDP high command opted not to field him in the upcoming elections. Despite their indication to field him in Srikakulam (Chipurupalli) district, a move Ganta wasn't keen on, his name was conspicuously absent from the first list announced by the TDP-JSP alliance. This development has prompted Ganta to explore other political options.

India, Maldives & Sri Lanka's...

Highlighting the importance of "collaboration and interoperability" among the coast guards personnel of the Maldives. India and Sri Lanka, Maldivian Defence Minister Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon said the trilateral exercise Dosti' will unite the troika to address "shared maritime security concerns through collaboration." Maumoon was speaking at an event to formally inaugurate the 16th iteration of Dosti," the biennial exercise, which began on Thursday and would continue until Sunday. Indian Coast Guard ship Samarth and ICGS..

IRF calls for making seat belts...

International Road Federation (IRF) -- a global road safety body -- has urged the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) to make the use of seat belts mandatory in all heavy vehicles. school buses, to minimise casualties and injuries in road accidents. IRF President Emeritus K K Kapila in a letter to MoRTH said there is an urgent need to provide seats belts in buses, which need to be made mandatory. "There have been heart-wrenching passenger bus accidents resulting in loss of innocent... -PAGE: 6

Scientists measure gravity at...

Scientists have measured gravity at the microscopic scale in a new study, which they say paves the way for finding the elusive quantum gravity theory. The gravitational force, originally discovered by physicist and mathematician Isaac Newton, is known to be fundamentally weak gaining prominence and being detectable only at macroscopic scales. Einstein's theory of general relativity - the widely accepted theory of gravity - has been confirmed through experiments multiple times, more recently by directly observing gravitational waves from the merging of two black holes in 2016 and other black hole imaging studies. However, in the quantum realm, or at the atomic scale, how the gravitational force..

TDP-JSP ANNOUNCES FIRST LIST OF SEAT ALLOCATION TO CANDIDATES

TDP to fight 151, JSP 24 seats position, says Sajjala

Jana Sena gets 3 LS seats

PNS VIJAYAWADA

TDP supremo N Chandrababu Naidu and Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan on Saturday announced their first joint list of 118 seats for the forthcoming Assembly polls in Andhra Pradesh

The two leaders, however, said the seat allocation has been done keeping in mind the "need to accommodate" BJP in case the saffron party decides to join the alliance.

TDP candidates will be contesting from 94 constituencies while Iana Sena will contest from 24 seats, as per the first list.

"On this auspicious occasion, both TDP and Jana Sena are ready to go for the polls. I wish this news to be good tidings for everyone in the state. This union is for the future of the state. This is the first step for a great effort," said Naidu, addressing a press conference at his Andhra Pradesh residence in Undavalli on the TDP-Janasena alliance.

Observing that the TDP-Jana Sena alliance "has the blessings of the BJP", Kalyan read out the names of five Jana Sena candidates and promised to reveal the remain-

ing 19 names in a couple of days. Explaining the rationale behind the Jana Sena taking only 24 seats, Kalyan noted that it is important to take a lower number of seats than experimenting with a higher number of seats.



flanked by TDP State president K Atchannaidu, releasing the the first list of Assembly -Pic: Ch.Viiava Bhaskar candidates at Undavalli near Vijayawada on Saturday.

On this auspicious occasion, both TDP and Jana Sena are ready to go for the polls. I wish this news to be good tidings for everyone in the state. This union is for the future of the state. This is the -N Chandrababu Naidu first step for a great effort

Explaining the rationale behind the Jana Sena taking only 24 seats, Kalyan noted that it is important to take a lower number of seats than experimenting with a higher number of seats.

'We have to first put the state on the right track, keeping the future of the state ahead of individual and party prospects,' said the actor-politician.

Taking the opinion of 1.1 crore people from various sources, Naidu said the 94 TDP candidates have been selected after a multi-pronged analysis and filtering.

'Jana Sena chief is unable to nominate candidates for 24 constituencies'

they may undertake,

cent of Chief Minister

have been positively

Pawan in a precarious

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Government Advisor on Public Affairs and general secretary of the YSRCP, Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy, has expressed sympathy for Jana Sena leader Pawan Kalyan's current

predicament. Addressing media representatives on Saturday, Sajjala asserted that the TDP had effectively predetermined the candidates for Jana Sena in the upcoming elections, suggesting that Pawan Kalyan had debased himself by accepting seats offered by Chandrababu Naidu. Sajjala remarked that it would be less demeaning for Pawan Kalyan to simply assume the

role of TDP Vice

across the state. President. Despite any manoeuvres they may undertake, Sajjala affirmed that 87 per cent of Chief Minister Jagan's welfare initiatives have been positively received by the populace across the state. He also stated that concerted efforts were being made to secure victories in all constituencies, including Kuppam.

Regarding the speculated tri-party alliance involving the BJP, Sajjala indicated uncertainty even from the BJP's perspective regarding the allocation of the 24 seats in question.

Sajjala questioned the viability of Pawan Kalyan's campaign strategy, highlighting the

absence of candidates to contest in all 24 constituencies. He criticised Pawan Kalyan for seemingly echoing the directives of Chandrababu Naidu without fielding candidates of his own.

The govern-Despite any manoeuvres ment advisor further alleged that Sajjala affirmed that 87 per Pawan Kalyan appeared directionless regarding Jagan's welfare initiatives his electoral constituency. Notably, w h i l e received by the populace Chandrababu Naidu a n n o u n c e d

Kuppam as his electoral battleground, Pawan Kalyan has yet to reach a decision. Sajjala suggested that Chandrababu Naidu should assume responsibility for nominating candidates in all remaining constituencies, excluding the five seats already announced for JanaSena.

Denied ticket by TDP, Vedavyas faints

MACHILIPATNAM: Telugu Desam senior leader and former deputy Speaker of Assembly, Buragadda Vedavyas fainted after knowing that his name was not figured in the TDP-JSP candidates list on Saturday. TDP leaders said that Buragadda Vedavyas was visiting Chinapandraka village. At the same time, Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan released the list of candidates. The TDP leaders told Buragadda Vedavyas that his name was missing in the list. He was shocked and disappointed. He fainted and collapsed in a chair.

His followers helped him to reach his He was taken to the Primary Health



Centre at the village where he was given treatment. Later Vedavyas left the village for his residence.

No social justice in TDP-JSP first list

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Industries Minister Gudivada Amarnath expressed concern over the candidate list announced by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP)- Jana Sena alliance.

Addressing the media on Saturday, Minister Amarnath high-Saturday, Minister Amarnatin nignilighted the apparent lack of representation for Backward Classes (BC), Scheduled Castes (SC), and Scheduled Tribes (ST) in the alliance's list. He contrasted this with the YSRCP government's record of initiating various developmental and welfare programmes in the past five years.

Minister Ámarnath questioned the strategic rationale behind the Jana Sena-TDP alliance, raising doubts about its efficacy. He employed a metaphorical comparison, describing the alliance as an amalgamation of "a gold-plated,

yet rusty bicycle and broken glasses," implying its potential fragility and lack of effectiveness. Furthermore, he challenged Pawan Kalyan's aspirations to become Chief Minister with the limited number of seats allocated by Chandrababu Naidu. Minister Amarnath emphasised the apparent contradiction between Kalvan's ambitions and the number of seats offered, raising concerns about his ability to fulfil promises made to the electorate.

Shifting his focus to the specific composition of the candidate list, Minister Amarnath expressed concerns regarding the perceived lack of representation for the Kapu community. He questioned the historical commitment of both TDP and Janasena to the community's wellbeing, suggesting past instances of

Continued on Page 2

Naidu turns his back on BCs, Minorities

C PRADEEP KUMAR

Chandrababu Naidu appeared to overlook the interests of BCs and minority communities with the announcement of candidates for 94 seats on Saturday. The TDP is set to contest 151 seats in the upcoming elections, which accounts for the majority of the 175-member Andhra Pradesh Assembly. Notably absent from the occasion was the party's prominent figure and general secre-

Among the 94 declared seats, the opposition TDP has allocated 20 seats to the Kammas, a significant

distribution includes 18 seats for BCs, wages drew criticism. Similarly, the 20 for SCs, 7 for Kapus, and only one TDP administration had confrontaorities constituting 10-15% of the population.

Earlier this year, the TDP launched a 'Jai Ho BC' campaign, reaffirming its dedication to the political empowerment of the community. However, during the TDP's tenure from 2014-19, not a single BC member was nominated to the Rajya Sabha, and the concerns of the marginalized were often overlooked.

In the past, the Nayee Brahmin community faced resistance from Naidu when they sought recognition as contract employees with minimum wage guarantees. Naidu's warning of "clipping their wings" in

caste in the coastal regions of AP. The response to their demand for fair

tions with the fishing of Moreover, Naidu had pledged to reserve 40% of tickets for youth in the upcoming elections. However, following the release of the first list of candidates, the party's youth leaders are now questioning the leadership's commitment to this promise.

Lokesh, who led the Yuva Galam initiative two years ago to encourage youth participation in politics and had assured a significant number of seats for them in the upcoming elections, expressed disappointment with the first list, which seemingly sidelined youth representation.



Narasapur MP Raghu Rama quits YSRCP

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Narasapuram Lok Sabha member K Raghu Ramakrishna Raju on Saturday resigned from the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy-led YSRCP in Andhra Pradesh.

In his resignation letter addressed to Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, Raju, who has been at odds with the former for nearly four years, said the time has come for both of them to free themselves from 'unsavoury association once and for all'.

"I hereby tender my resignation for the primary active membership of YSRC Party and expect you (Reddy) to accept the same with a prompt reply or response at your earliest convenience," said Raju in

his resignation letter posted on 'X. The MP noted that he resigned as a mark of his 'strong conviction towards serving for public good' and observed that the time has come for all to face public probity and mandate, hinting at the forth-

Jaahnavi case: Indian mission raises issue with US

THEY HAVE TO CHANGE CONESS SITA CAN'T BE WITH LION NAMED

New criminal justice laws from July 1

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The newly enacted laws -- the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita and the Bharatiya Sakshya Act -- to completely overhaul the criminal justice system in the country will come into effect from July 1.

The three laws got the Parliament's approval on December 21 last year and President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent on December 25.

According to three identical notifications issued by the Union Home Ministry, provisions of the new laws will come into force from July 1. The laws will replace the colonial-era Indian Penal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Secretary KS Jawahar Reddy has said that extensive arrangements have been made for the conduct of APPSC Group-2 Screening Written Exams to be held across the State on Sunday (February 25). The CS held a video conference with District Collectors, SPs, APPSC and other officials on Saturday. On this occasion, he ordered the District Collectors and SPs to ensure that the Group-2 preliminary screening tests to be held on Sunday are conducted peacefully without any untoward incident. Similarly, it was ordered to ensure that

water and electricity supply are available in the examination centres. The CS stated that these exams will be held in 1,327 centres across

All set for APPSC Group-2 exam today

the State. He said that the exams will be held from 10.30 am to 1 pm. He further said that 24 All India Service Officers, 450 Route Officers and 1330 Liaison Officers have been appointed for continuous supervision of the examinations.

minimum facilities like drinking

He said that 24,142 invigilators and another 8,500 other staff have been appointed in the examination centres. Moreover, as part of the wide security measures, 3,971 police personnel have been appointed and 900 escort personnel have been appointed to ensure the safe transportation of exam papers, answer sheets etc.

PNS WASHINGTON

India's consulate in Seattle has raised with authorities the case of Indian student Jaahnavi Kandula after the prosecution attorney said an overspeeding Seattle police officer who struck and killed her while responding to a drug overdose call will not face any criminal charges citing lack of "sufficient" evidence.

Kandula, 23, from Andhra Pradesh, was struck by a police vehicle driven by Officer Kevin Dave when she was crossing a



street in Seattle on January 23 last year. He was driving 74 mph (more than 119 km/h) on the way to a report of a drug overdose call.

• Family shocked over decision of authorities

Kandula was thrown 100 feet when she was struck by the speeding police patrol vehicle.

In bodycam footage released by the Seattle Police Department, Officer Daniel Auderer laughed about the deadly crash and dismissed any implication Dave might be at fault or that a criminal investigation was necessary.

On Wednesday, the King County Prosecutor's Office said they would not move forward

with criminal charges against Dave due to a lack of evidence to prove a criminal case beyond a reasonable doubt. India's consulate in Seattle also said it was monitoring the progress in the case and will extend all possible support in ensuring justice for Kandula and her family.

"On the recently released investigation report of the King County Prosecution Attorney on the unfortunate death of Jaahnavi

Kandula, the Consulate has been in regular touch with the designated family representatives and will continue to extend all possible support in ensuring justice for Jaahnavi and her family," the mission said in a post on X.

"We have also raised the matter strongly with local authorities, including Seattle Police for appropriate redress. The case has now been referred to the Seattle City Attorney's office for review," the post said on Friday.

. Continued on Page 2

sunday pioneer VIJAYAWADA | SUNDAY | FEBRUARY 25, 2024

With YouTuber, KTR and Cong on the same page

Bharat Rashtra Samithi leaders may send out feelers about an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party even while being on the page with the Congress on political matters. BRS MLA KT Rama Rao has been promoting Dhruv Rathee, a YouTuber based out of Germany, who has made a video against Modi. Dhruv Rathee's latest video depicting Modi as a dictator is being amplified extensively by the Congress at the national level. The Congress has posted Dhruv Rathee's video on their official YouTube

channel. Interestingly, at the local level, BRS has been amplifying it. BRS MLA KTR did the honours on X. Mind you, this

is happening at a time when TPCC chief and CM Revanth alone the gathering, TDP leaders and Reddy has been taunting the BRS and BJP of having a secret alliance.

'Congress' contractors' bills cleared

People from various walks of life cannot help dealing with politicians directly or indirectly. However, it pays them always only if they are apolitical. In Telangana, following regime change, only contractors blessed by the governing 'hand' are having a field day. Ironically, most of the bills kept pending by the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi government, apparently due to political considerations, are being cleared without any visible consideration. That is, bills relating to pro-Congress and Congress leaders, who happen to be also contractors, are being cleared expeditiously. In the erstwhile BRS regime, few bills were cleared and they were not those related to Congress leaders. While Komatireddy brothers, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and others belonging to the ilk are reaping the benefits of the Congress government coming to power, those in the other camp may have to wait indefinitely.

'Break' for CBN-a joke gone awry

The other day, TDP supremo and ex-CM N Chandrababu Naidu's wife N Bhuvaneshwari, who has been campaigning across Andhra Pradesh for her

(Truth must win) yatra, started thinking loudly during a programme at the Kuppam Assembly constituency result-ing in a bit of breaking news spreading like wild fire briefly. Addressing people, she said: "Let me share something and please feel free to react. I felt a certain urge within me. Chandrababu Naidu has been enjoying enduring trust of the people. Kuppam residents have consistently backed him for 35 years. May I suggest that he should take a break, and I should step into the electoral arena?" Let

BRS government, not only scribes but also (present Panchayatraj Minister) Seethakka was not allowed to enter the new Secretariat after its inauguration. Now, the Chief Minister claimed, scribes are visiting every Minister's chamber inside the Secretariat freely.

Scribes write about 'sentimental' CMs and PMs in a sarcastic manner. But their own fraternal colleagues are not beyond sentiments. One of the scribes commented that the Chief Minister will certainly ful-

fil the promise relating to house sites for journalists. For, the one with nose for news for newsmen averred: "The Chief Minister made his promise

at Medaram during Jatara time". In contrast, he recalled the CM's reported comment for effect: "ex-CM K Chandrasekhar Rao paid a heavy price for neglecting the Sammakka-Sarakka Medaram Jatara".

Is media landing **Dharani-Bhumatha in trouble?**

Media persons worth their salt do their job, nothing more and nothing less. As for the Dharani portal, much has been written about its ills during the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi regime. The Congress government, which had promised to clean up the mess with its own portal called Bhumatha, is perhaps scared of media monitoring of the transition. Otherwise, why would the state government ask the Dharani Committee to take a call on organizing press conferences after every sitting?

It is learnt that Chief Minister A

Revanth Reddy has directed the Dharani Committee members not to conduct press meets after its meeting every time. Scribes on the Secretariat beat, who read between the lines, gathered that the CM was concerned that the right message was not going out through such pressers. So, the CM directed the Committee members, particularly Kisan Congress national vicechairman, not to conduct press meet after every meeting of the Dharani Committee.

> (With inputs from Naveena Ghanatê, SŇCN Acharyulu and K Venkateshwarlu)

PM to lay stone for redevelopment of 12 railway stations tomorrow

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a significant move towards enhancing the infrastructure of railway stations and bridges, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to lay the foundation stone for the redevelopment of 12 stations under the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme and the construction of four Road Over Bridges over the Waltair Division on February 26, 2024.

During a press briefing held on Saturday, Divisional Railway Manager Saurabh Prasad outlined the comprehensive redevelopment plans, emphasizing the integration of modern amenities and local heritage at the designated stations. The redevelopment initiative encompasses the construction of new station buildings, the incorporation of world-class amenities, the



installation of 12-meter-wide Foot Over Bridges, and the provision of second entry points to the stations.

The stations identified for redevelopment under the Amrit Bharat Stations initiative span across Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, including Simhachalam, Araku, Parvatipuram, Bobbili, Kothavalasa, Chipurupalle, Srikakulam Road, Naupada, Paralakhemundi, Jeypore, Rayagada, and Koraput. Over Bridges and Underpasses

Additionally, the construction of four Road Over Bridges in Vizianagaram and Srikakulam districts of Andhra Pradesh aims to enhance connectivity and facilitate trade and commerce in the region. The ambitious redevelopment project entails an expenditure of Rs 443.47 crore for the 12 stations and Rs 218.13 crore for the construction of the four Road Over

Highlighting the broader vision behind the initiative, DRM Saurabh Prasad underscored the commitment to provide international-level infrastructure at railway stations across the country to ensure modern connectivity. Prime Minister Modi is set to lay the foundation stone for the redevelopment of 554 stations under the Amrit Bharat Scheme and over 1500 Road via video conferencing from New Delhi, marking a significant milestone in India's infrastructure development.

Enumerating the benefits of the Amrit station redevelopment, DRM Prasad emphasized improved accessibility, wider Foot Over Bridges, enhanced waiting areas, modern toilet facilities, and provisions for individuals with disabilities. Additionally, initiatives such as 'One Station One Product' and the integration of stations with surrounding city areas aim to foster local economic growth and promote sustainable development. Furthermore, the construction of railways over bridges and underpasses is expected to alleviate traffic congestion, enhance safety, and optimize transportation efficiency, thereby benefiting both com-

husband as part of her 'Nijam gelavali' and the BJP. Drawing a parallel, the Chief

cadre were also taken aback at her astounding statement. Although the sound bite had spread from Kuppam to Kanyakumari within minutes, Bhuvaneshwari finally said: "I was just teasing. I have no aspirations for any positions. My husband takes care of me well". People are of the view that this 'joke', call it conjugal teasing or whatever, could prove costly for Chandrababu, coming as it does from his own wife.

Why scribes feel at home with Revanth

Scribes hopeful of getting house sites are happy these days, thanks to Chief Minister Anumula Revanth Reddy's resolve to give them their due, which was revealed after his darshan of the deities on Friday at the Sammakka-Sarakka Jatara. The matter would be handled upon the appointment of the Media Committee chairman, he added.

Like at every available opportunity, when newshounds asked him about house sites for scribes, the Chief Minister made it clear: "the Congress government will solve the issue within 100 days". This implies that the present government, which has completed 75 days, needs only 20 plus days maximum for the issue in question. Mentioning that the government "belongs to journalists", the Chief Minister urged scribes to concentrate on writing about the conspiracies of the BRS

too? Perni Nani PNS VIJAYAWADA

Pawan's seat

Former minister Perni Venkataramaiah (Nani) stated that the Kapus have understood the strength and power of JSP chief Pawan Kalyan. Nani alleged that Pawan would do politics only to help Chandrababu, will Pawan bring power to Kapus with just 24 seats. If you look at Pawan Kalyan's calculations, you will remember 'Mangalavaram' saying. Nani pointed out that with the present alliance with TDP, Pawan will form a suballiance with the BJP.

Nani said that even Pawan Kalyan's seat will be decided by alliance partner Chandrababu and the Jana Sena and TDP cadre should sacrifice. Seats were allotted to Chandrababu and Pawan's families while less than 7 seats were announced for the Kapus. Chandrababu allocated 21 seats to the

Kamma community.
Nani recalled that CM Jagan Mohan Reddy gave high priority to BC, SC, ST, Minority and Kapus. Nani further said that Bhuvaneshwari's fear made Chandrababu declare his seat. Naidu was afraid that Bhuvaneshwari would snatch the Kuppam seat. With this list. the situation of the JanaSena leaders and activists is indeci-

Will Naidu decide RINL initiates land sale to tackle debt woes

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, is initiating the sale of non-core surplus freehold land parcels in Visakhapatnam in a bid to alleviate its debt burden. To trim its debt, RINL has put forward a proposal to sell 13.89 acres of non-contiguous land plots, totalling 111 plots grouped into 19 blocks, through an auction process. In response to mounting debt challenges, RINL has taken proactive steps to address its financial situation. The company, burdened with an estimated loan of Rs 22,000 crore and an annual debt servicing obligation of around Rs 3,000 crore, has opted to leverage its non-core assets by soliciting bids for the

sale of surplus land parcels. The 13.89 acres of land earmarked for sale are scattered across Visakhapatnam's HB Colony, Maddilapalem, Auto Nagar, and Pedagantyada areas. The disposal process is being facilitated by NBCC (INDIA) Limited, which has been appointed as the Technical cum Transaction Advisor for the auction.



opportunity to inspect the properties until March 5, with a pre-bid meeting scheduled for February 28. The e-auction is slated to commence from March 14 onwards. In addition to the land sale,

RINL has unveiled plans to divest its Rs 2,350-crore forged wheel plant located in Raebareli, Uttar Pradesh, to the Indian Railways. This strategic move aligns with the company's broader efforts to streamline its operations and unlock value from its assets. Furthermore, RINL is actively pursuing avenues to secure a captive mine to fulfil its iron ore requirements for the steel plant. The company has reached out to Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra

Pradesh, requesting the reservation of iron ore deposits. Despite participating in e-auctions for the allocation of iron ore mines, RINL has yet to secure a successful bid, prompting it to explore alternative avenues to meet its raw material needs.

As RINL embarks on these initiatives, its endeavours reflect a concerted effort to strengthen its financial position and sustain its operations amidst challenging market conditions. This marks a pivotal juncture for RINL as it navigates through financial restructuring and operational optimization to ensure its longterm sustainability in the competitive steel industry land-

No social justice in...

Continued from Page 1

Minister Amarnath cast doubt on the alliance's claims of promoting social justice through "social engineering." He argued that the bled "package engineering" rather than a genuine commitment to inclusive representation.

Despite his criticism of the opposition, Minister Amarnath reiterated his unwavering loyalty to the YSRCP and Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy. He expressed his willingness to fulfil any responsibilities entrusted to him by the Chief Minister. In conclusion, Minister Amarnath emphasized the importance of alliances in achieving electoral success, sug-gesting that the YSRCP's collaborative approach would ultimately be victorious.

TODAY

ALMANAC

Month & Paksham

Tithi: Pratipada:

Nakshatram:

Purva Phalguni

Uttara Phalguni

Rahukalam

Varjyam:

Gulika:

Yamagandam:

Krishna Paksha

Feb 24 06:00 PM

Feb 25 08:36 PM

to Feb 26 11:16 PM

Feb 24 10:20 PM

Feb 26 01:24 AM

to Feb 27 04:30 AM

4:50 PM to 6:17 PM

12:29 PM to 1:56 PM

3:23 PM to 4:50 PM

09:32 AM to 11:20 AM

06:11 PM to 07:59 PM

Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:06 PM to 12:52 PM

Updated: February 24 2024 5:00 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Partly Cloudy

Temp: 33°° Humidity: 64%

Sunset: 6:13 PM

to Feb 26 01:24 AM

IF THERE WAS NO UNEMPLOYMENT

Youth would not use mobiles 12 hours a day, says Rahul

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi would not be using their mobile phones for 12 hours a day had there been no unemployment in the country.

Rahul Gandhi said this while addressing a gathering in Sambhal as part of his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra.

The Congress leader's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra reached Sambhal via Moradabad and Amroha, where Congress and Samajwadi Party leaders welcomed Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

Speaking at the Chandausi intersection, Rahul Gandhi asked a man, "How many hours do you use your mobile?" to which he replied, "Twelve hours.

Responding to this, Rahul Gandhi said, "There is no



why you use your mobile phone for 12 hours. Did you know that the sons of big businessmen don't watch Reels, they count money 24 hours (a

'If you get employment, you will watch Reels for half an hour and work for 12 hours," the Congress leader said.

Rahul Gandhi -- who has claimed several times during the yatra that people from backward classes, Dalits and employment in India, that is SC/ST communities don't hold

senior positions -- sharpened his attack on their lack of representation.

He said, "If we take out the list of employees of any company take out the list of owners. Not one backward class, Dalit owner will be found. Take out the list of owners of media houses, private colleges or judges of high courts. The same three to four per cent people (from upper castes) keep working in these posi-

All set for...

Continued from Page 1

CS Jawahar Reddy said that many examination centres have been connected with CCTV cameras so that the examination process can be continuous ly monitored. He stated that 14 RTC buses have been arranged to transport men and materials related to the conduct of examinations. District Collectors and SPs of various districts along with APPSC Secretary Pradeep Kumar participated in the video meeting.

TDP to fight...

Continued from Page 1

"We have to first put the state on the right track, keeping the future of the state ahead of individual and party prospects," said the actor-politician.

Including the three Lok Sabha seats allocated for Janasena in the alliance, he noted that it is as good as the party contesting some 40 Assembly seats.

Meanwhile, Naidu highlighted that if the BIP also comes along with their alliance then those issues will also be discussed at the right time to take the right decisions.

"This alliance is for the future of the state, not for any two individuals or two parties. Both parties decided to work together for the welfare of five crore people. This is a historic day for the state," said Naidu.

For his ninth election, Naidu highlighted that he had done the most intense exercise of zeroing in on the candidates, unlike previously, even during the times of united Andhra Pradesh. Taking the opinion of 1.1

crore people from various sources, Naidu said the 94 TDP candidates have been selected after a multipronged analysis and filter-

ing.

He asserted that the selected candidates are people who are in touch with the masses, desired by people, approved by the people and who can 'resiliently' face the polls and opponents.

Further, the opposition leader observed that the TDP gave prominence to youth, women, those from BC communities and educated people in selecting candidates. Out of the 94 candidates,

Naidu said 23 are firsttimers, three doctors, one retired IAS officer, 25 postgraduates, 51 graduates and three doctorates. Naidu called on the

Janasena and TDP leaders to cooperate for mutual benefit wherever both the parties are contesting.
"Wherever Jana Sena is

contesting the TDP should cooperate and wherever TDP is contesting the Jana Sena should cooperate. Both should work with an understanding for creating belief in easy, nobody can stop us...,

Seat-sharing arrangements for the remaining 57 of the 175 Assembly constituencies are expected to be announced soon.

25 from the state.

sible pre-poll alliance.

all the constituencies.

Sajjala lamented the failure of Chandrababu Naidu's administration to nominate candidates for all 175 constituencies despite being in power

Pawan in a...

Continued from Page 1

for numerous years. Additionally, he pointed out JanaSena's inability to finalize candidates for all 24 constituencies. Sajjala warned that should the BJP ally, Chandrababu Naidu may redirect his candidates to

the BJP. Accusing the TDP of attempting to ally with the BJP while simultaneously supporting the Congress to divide YSRCP votes, Sajjala criticised Chandrababu Naidu's inability to showcase his achievements from 2014 to 2019. Sajjala expressed disappointment that JanaSena, as an ally, was

endorsing such a party. Sajjala noted efforts by the TDP to secure a BJP alliance through meetings with top BJP leaders but lamented the lack of progress. He alleged that Chandrababu Naidu's alliance pursuits were solely aimed at enticing

voters for electoral gains. Asserting the electorate's awareness of which party delivers on its promises, Sajjala expressed confidence in Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's administration and predicted his re-election.

Jaahnavi case: Indian mission...

Continued from Page 1

It also said the mission was waiting for the completion of Seattle Police's administrative investigation and will continue monitoring the progress in the case.

Kandula's family in a statement following the announcement said: "We are shocked and disappointed that the King County Prosecutor's office has failed to criminally charge the Seattle police officer whose reckless behaviour killed Jaahnavi Kandula.'

"We are pursuing our legal rights to obtain justice for Jaahnavi even though the City of Seattle has failed to do so," the statement added. Fox 13 Seattle reported that nearly 100 people gathered outside the Seattle Police West Precinct on Friday to protest the decision by the King County Prosecutor's Office not to file charges against Dave. Protesters said there had been a lack of accountability for the officer. The demonstrators accused officers of caring more about themselves than the public, and treating Kandula as if her life didn't matter.

"They are not public safety, they are a public hazard," shouted one of the protesters. "I struggle to understand how these people can go about their day, knowing they refused to let this go to court. It's baffling," said Raymond Mitchell, another protester.

In the statement on Wednesday, the King County Prosecuting Attorney said: "Kandula's death is heartbreaking and impacted communities in King County and across the world." King County Prosecuting Attorney Leesa Manion said that she believes they lack the evidence to prove a criminal case beyond a reasonable doubt, the statement said.

"It is the responsibility of the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office to review all available evidence relating to the case involving Seattle Police Officer Kevin Dave and the January 2023 collision death of Jaahnavi Kandula. After staffing this case with senior deputy prosecuting attorneys and office leadership, I have determined that we lack sufficient

evidence under Washington State law to prove a criminal case beyond a reasonable doubt. The statement also said that the pros-

ecutor's office finds the comments made by Seattle Police Officer Daniel Auderer, recorded on his body-worn video, appalling and deeply troubling". Auderer, who was not involved in the January collision, was captured in the video saying, "But she is dead" and laughing while on the phone. She was 26 anyway," Auderer said in the video. "She had limited value."

"Officer Auderer's comments were also unprofessional and undermined the public's trust in the Seattle Police Department and law enforcement in general," said Manion.

"As egregious as Officer Auderer's comments are, they do not change the PAO's legal analysis of the conduct of Officer Dave. It is the Office of Police Accountability that bears the responsibility of disciplinary investigation and proceedings relating to Officer Auderer's comment, not the PAO.'

people and victory will be Naidu added.

As part of the alliance, Jana Sena will contest three Lok Sabha seats of the total

TDP sources said currently discussions were underway with the BJP for a pos-

Meanwhile, talking to reporters, Andhra Pradesh BJP chief D Purandeswari said alliances in the southern State would be decided by the party high command and as of now the state unit is gearing up its activities in

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TDP fields 5 new faces in combined Krishna district

The opposition Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and Jana Sena Party (JSP) alliance have announced 11 out of 16 Assembly segment candidates who will be contesting in the upcoming general elections in the combined Krishna district. Among the announced candidates, five are newcomers to the TDP, while the remaining six are incumbents for their respective constituencies.

TDP chief and former chief minister N Chandrababu Naidu, along with JSP chief Pawan Kalyan, revealed 99 names in the initial list. Fortunately, 11 seats were confirmed in this first list, with the candidates for Vijayawada West, Mylavaram, Kaikaluru, Penamaluru, and Avanigadda constituencies likely to be announced in the subsequent

In the first list, Kolikapudi Srinivas for Tiruvuru, Kolusu Pardha Saradhi for Nuzvid, Yarlagadda Venkata Rao for Gannavaram, Venigandla Ramu for Gudivada, Kavitha

Krishna Prasad for Pedana, Ravindra Machilipatnam, Varla Kumara Raja for Pamarru, Bonda Uma Maheswara Rao for Vijayawada Central, Gadde Rama Mohana Rao for Vijayawada East, Tangirala Sowmya for Nandigama, and Sreeram Raja Gopal (Tataiah)

for Jaggaiahpet were con-

firmed. Among these, Kolikapudi Srinivas,

Venigandla Ramu, and Varla

Kumara Raja are first-time contenders in the elections. However, there is ongoing discussion regarding the Vijayawada West constituency allocation between the TDP and JSP alliance. Additionally, former TDP MLC Buddha Venkateswara Rao, known as Venkanna, is vying for candidature in this seat. The JSP has its eye on Mylavaram and Avanigadda constituencies.

Meanwhile, there is stiff competition among TDP leaders for the Mylavaram and Penamaluru segments. Former Minister Devineni Uma Maheswara Rao and former MLA Bode Prasad are leading contenders for their segments, considered prestigious by the TDP leadership. Consequently, the party is scouting for strong candidates, party sources disclosed. Kaikaluru is likely to be allotted to the BJP if they join the TDP-JSP alliance.

Former Minister Kolusu Pardha Saradhi's candidature has been announced for the Nuzvid segment in the Eluru Parliamentary Constituency. Similarly, Yarlagadda Venkata Rao will represent the Gannavaram constituency of

Parliamentary Constituency. Both candidates have defected from the ruling YSRCP to join the TDP and previously contested elections under the YSRCP banner from the same

KP Saradhi emerged victorious from Penamaluru, whereas Yarlagadda Venkata Rao faced defeat in Gannavaram. In the recent seven lists released by the YSRCP, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy did not confirm Saradhi's candidacy, leading to his shift to the TDP. Yarlagadda Venkata Rao also switched allegiance from the ruling YSRCP to the TDP, joining in the presence of Chandrababu Naidu, after Jagan Mohan Reddy appointed Dr. Vallabhaneni Vamsi Mohan as the Gannavaram

constituencies.

Regarding KP Saradhi, the representing Penamaluru, although not formally joining the party, the TDP has announced his name for the Nuzvid assembly con-

Only the rich are being favoured in polls: Mandali

PNS VIJAYAWADA



Former Deputy Speaker and senior TDP leader, leader, Mandali Buddha Prasad,

expressed his dissatisfaction in a subtle way with the initial list released by the TDP and JSP leadership on Saturday. He said he was happy at not find-ing his name included in the first round of announcements.

Following the release of the TDP-JSP joint list, Buddha Prasad took to social media platforms to share his reaction. You are well aware of my principles and beliefs. I have never aspired for positions. If entrusted with responsibilities, I have always strived for the development of our region. However, I have never amassed wealth through any position," he conveyed to his followers and TDP supporters.

Addressing the evolving landscape of politics, Buddha Prasad highlighted the increasing influence of money in electoral processes. He lamented the trend of political parties favouring affluent candidates to secure votes, emphasising



OFFICIALS TASKED WIT RANDOMISING EVMs

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In compliance with directives from the Election Commission of India (ECI), officials are tasked with conducting the randomisation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) seamlessly, stated Nageswara Rao Naik, the EVM Nodal Officer for Krishna district and District Panchayat Officer (DPO).

Under the guidance of Andhra Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Mukhesh Kumar Meena and Krishna District Election Officer and Collector P Raja Babu, the Nodal Officer successfully conducted a trial run for the randomisation of EVMs on Saturday.

Addressing the gathering, DPO Nageswara Rao Naik explained that during the initial randomization phase, EVMs, Ballot Units, Control Units, and VVPATs are allocated to the respective constituencies in the presence of political party representatives. Subsequently, during the second phase, these units are assigned to specific polling centres in the presence of

Returning Officers. He further elaborated that following verification by technical experts, all allocated units undergo scrutiny. Any malfunctioning unit is promptly replaced. Upon completion of the randomization process, details of the allocated units are disclosed to political party representatives. Additionally, he mentioned that 20% of units are reserved for each con-

stituency.

Ganta planning

to join YSRCP?

Ganta Srinivasa Rao, TDP leader and MLA representing Visakhapatnam North, has faced a setback as the TDP high

command opted not to field him in the upcoming elec-

tions. Despite their indication to field him in Srikakulam

(Chipurupalli) district, a move Ganta wasn't keen on, his

name was conspicuously absent from the first list announced by the TDP-JSP alliance. This development

has prompted Ganta to explore other political options.

joining the ruling YSRCP for some time, although the

Sources suggest that Ganta had been contemplating

The event was attended by K Chandrasekhar, the ARO of Machilipatnam Parliament, and District Revenue Officer, along with Geetanjali, the joint collector, and assembly constituency Returning Officers M Vani, Padmavathi, D Raju, P Venkata Ramana, Bala Subrahmanyam, among

Constituency surveillance teams appointed in Vizianagaram district

PNS VIZIANAGARAM

District Election Officer Nagalakshmi has issued a comprehensive directive appointing Constituency-wise Surveillance Officers, also known as Static Surveillance Teams to ensure the integrity of the upcoming elections here today. These teams are tasked with vigilantly monitoring the implementation of the model code,

detecting any violations thereof, addressing complaints, scrutinizing candidates, and overseeing election expenditure of political parties. the Under

teams have been meticulously appointed for each constituency. Each team will oper-Deputy Tahsildars and will comprise police constables, revenue staff, and a videographer. The operational schedule has been strategically organized, with one team on duty from 6 am to 2 pm, another from 2 pm to 10 pm, and the third from 10 pm to 6 am, ensuring round-the-clock sur-

Emphasizing the significance of their role, the mandal

revenue officer highlighted that these teams will conduct operations directly from their office premises. They are mandated to promptly report any findings to the respective Returning Officer and coordinate with associated officers for immediate action. The primary focus of these surveillance teams will be at designated check posts, where they will diligently monitor the transportation of ille-

gal cash, illicit liquor, arms, and other prohibited items. Capturing evidence through videography is a pivotal aspect of their duties. All recorded footage will be compiled into DVDs and

handed over to the accounting team for documentation.

Furthermore, the teams are records of seized cash, confiscated items, and complaints in a detailed annexure, ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the process. With these robust surveillance measures in place, Vizianagaram stands resolute in upholding the sanctity of the electoral process, fostering trust among citizens, and ensuring fair and free elec-

Jana Sainiks in disbelief over PK agreeing for just 24 seats: Roja

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The much-awaited TDP-Janasena alliance finally announced the list of candidates who will be contesting the forthcoming Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in Andhra Pradesh.

After several rounds of negotiations and much dilly-dallying, the announcement has caused heartburn to many leaders in the TDP camp while Jana Sena leader Pawan Kalyan is facing criticism for not living up to the expectations of the party cadre. Reacting to the development,

YSRCP leader and minister Ambati Rambabu said Pawan Kalyan has betrayed the trust of his cadre. He said JanaSainiks



were hoping to get 60-70 seats but the party has been reduced to a laughable number of 24.

Terming Jana Sena shameless, he said Pawan Kalyan is now misleading his cadre by asking them to assume that they are contesting on 40 seats, while in reality, the party got only 24 seats. Describing it as the Jana Sena leader's failure, Rambabu advised Pawan Kalyan to go back to movie-making rather than holding Chandrababu Naidu's palanquin in the elec-

"It is better for Pawan Kalyan to merge his party with TDP, just like his brother Chiranjeevi merged his Praja Rajyam Party with the Congress. The TDP + ISP alliance is a big gimmick. Nobody has any clarity. They are not sure whether the BJP is in alliance with them or not," Ambati Rambabu said.

Another YSRCP leader Roja asked Pawan Kalyan if he could share the details of the package deal that he got for agreeing to settle for only 24 seats. She asked how much money did he get for insulting his party cadre.

She said JanSainiks are in a state of utter disbelief that their leader has bowed down to Chandrababu for just 24 seats and compromised the interests of the Kapu community. She added that even Nara Lokesh, who lost as an MLA in the 2019 elections, got a ticket in the first list but not Pawan Kalyan.

"You don't dare to fight CM Jagan alone, hence you cobbled up an unholy alliance. Even though so many days have passed, still there is no clarity. The confusion over seat distribution is so evident.

The collapse of TDP-JSP is imminent," Roja asserted.

party's stance on his candidacy had been uncertain. With his omission from the initial candidate list, Ganta has ramped up efforts to secure a spot within the ruling party. Reports indicate that Ganta's close associate Visakhapatnam, G Venkateswara Rao (GV), an auditor with ties to the YSRCP high command, has been lobbying on his behalf.

Allegedly, Ganta held discussions with GV to the YSRCP. It's rumoured that Ganta is scheduled to meet YV Subba Reddy, the North Andhra YSRCP coordinator, in the coming days to finalize his decision. If these reports hold, Ganta is expected to formally join the YSRCP in early March, following the Siddham meeting slated for

Meanwhile, discontent brews within the TDP ranks over the just announced candidate list, particularly regarding the allocation of seats among different communities. The prioritisation of the Kamma community over others, such as BCs, Kapus, and Minorities, has sparked criticism among TDP leaders, many of whom have expressed their dissatisfaction with the decision.

Minorities up in arms against neglected minorities during his understand that Chandrababu



PNS VIJAYAWADA

against Telugu Desam chief Nara Chandrababu Naidu over showing an empty hand to Muslim minorities in the ticket allotment for 2024 elections as TD has given only one seat against Jagan Mohan Reddy offered four seats out of 67 MLA seats announced so far. Senior minority leader and YSR Congress Medical Wing State Vice President Dr. Mehboob Shaikh said that Naidu earlier

government in 2014-19 by aims to undermine the minoricabinet and further in nominated posts. He deplored that Naidu's disdain for Muslims is once again clear as he has given only one ticket to a minority and it is regrettable that only one Muslim minority has been given a chance for the 94 assembly seats announced by the TD

Dr Mehboob Shaikh pointed out that if we look at the list of TDPs today, the public can

the BJP. He further pointed out that YSRC president and Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has allocated four of the 67 seats officially announced till now for 2024 elections to Muslim minorities including one minority woman. He deplored that Jana Sena chief Pawan Kalyan who is adopted son of Naidu has followed Chandrababu by not giving any ticket to minorities.

ZP CEO stresses election preparedness in training session

Zilla Parishad Chief Executive Officer D. Venkateswara Rao emphasized the need for preparedness and adherence to election protocols during a comprehensive training session for key personnel on Saturday morning. The session aimed to strengthen preparedness and ensure adherence to election protocols for a smooth and transparent electoral process. Rao highlighted the establishment of flying squads, static surveillance teams, video surveil-

lance units, accounting teams, and expenditure inspectors across districts. These teams will play instrumental roles in ensuring the smooth conduct of elections within their respective constituencies. He underscored the impor-

tance of promptly resolving complaints regarding election code violations. Additionally, he stressed the necessity of providing written responses to complaints lodged by political entities and candidates. Rao also emphasized the scrutiny of election-related activities, such as



meetings and rallies, through the Suvidha app and offline chan-

nels. K. Chenna Keshavrao, District Information and Civil Relations Officer, emphasized the pivotal role of the MCMC in verifying audio and video con-

tent used in election campaigns. He reiterated the necessity of obtaining prior approvals for electronic advertisements. The committee will also monitor political advertisements across various media platforms, including social media, e-papers, television, radio channels, and internet-based platforms.

Prasanna Lakshmi, Chief Planning Officer, elucidated procedures regarding the seizure of cash and gold during election inspections. She stressed the importance of providing detailed receipts during seizures and promptly handing over seized assets to designated authorities. Lakshmi emphasized transparency in reporting seized assets to the media and submitting comprehensive reports in prescribed

Trough runs over Marathwada to south TN

March 3.

PNS ■ GUNTUR

The Meteorological Centre reported on Saturday that a trough extending from south Telangana to south Tamil Nadu now stretches from the aforementioned cyclonic circulation over Marathwada and its neighbouring regions to south Tamil Nadu, crossing Interior Karnataka at 0.9 km above mean sea level.

Additionally, another trough extends from the same cyclonic circulation over Marathwada and its vicinity to Coastal



south Chhattisgarh at 0.9 km above mean sea level.

The cyclonic circulation over south Chhattisgarh and its surroundings at 0.9 km above mean sea level has weakened, while the one over south Telangana and its vicinity, extending up to 1.5 km above mean sea level, has also become

Andhra Pradesh, less prominent. Light rain may occur at isolated places in North passing through Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Vidarbha and Rayalaseema over the next 48 hours.

Dry weather is expected to prevail in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema from February 26 to March 1. Rainfall was recorded at one or two places in Coastal Andhra Pradesh, while Rayalaseema experienced dry weather over the last 24 hours, the report further noted.

YSRCP's innovative social media campaign dominates political narrative

PNS VIJAYAWADA

With elections in Andhra Pradesh heating up the YSR Congress Party is dominating the social media space. Following CM Jagan's directions, the party, which is successfully conducting back-to-back campaigns on the ground, is also focussing on building their strength on social media. The YSRCP is simultaneously prepared at the backend - whether it's the finalization of candidates or the formation of booth committees, they have checked all the crucial boxes on their checklist.

'Siddham' rally and advantage animation!

Taking cue from the fierce Bengal election of 2021, the YSRCP is also making use of an animated series - the episodes of which coincide with the Siddham Sabhas

that are happening on-ground. This series is based on the predominant narrative that Jagan is the protector of the poor and will teach all conspirators of Andhra Pradesh the lesson of a lifetime. The series also portrays how the sentiment currently is 'One Versus All'.

The first episode, which was launched on Feb 27, when CM Jagan conducted his first Siddham Rally in Bheemili, was an introductory episode, that depicted how every political party - be it Congress, JSP, TDP or BJP had all conspired against the state of Andhra Pradesh and its people. And all of them were on one side versus Jagan, a man who is the protector of the land, and the poor. The second episode launched on Feb 4, a day after CM Jagan's Siddham rally in Eluru. This episode highlighted the transformation brought by CM Jagan in government schools via the Nadu-Nedu scheme and how TDP



and JSP were opposing reforms. The party launched the third episode of the Siddham series, two days post-CM Jagan's humongous 'One Million Rally' in Anantapur.

The party is expected to release its fourth episode of the series post the last Siddham meeting being planned in Palnadu.

Ooru Marindi' campaign

The party also launched a social media campaign called 'Ooru Marindi' near Sankranti, where they posted various kinds of content – graphics, videos, illustrations, and animated videos on how the villages of Andhra Pradesh have been transformed under CM Jagan's govern-

'Tikamaka Pottulu' series

Harping on the ongoing TDP-BJP-JSP

alliance chatter, the party is also running a series of special episodes called 'Tikamaka Pottulu,' where they are fiercely attacking the opposition surrounded by the alliance confusion and chaos. The party has released 5 episodes of the cartoon series to date.

Jagananna Agenda Song

The party has launched 4 songs to date, which have topped the charts and have kept people hooked. Siddham Song for Cadre, Jagananna Agenda, Anda Danda, and Aapu Babu Natakam are the other songs that have been launched by the party till now. Jagananna Agenda Song became a massive hit among the people as it clocked over 10 million organic views. The song was a big hit on Instagram as well and over 65,000 people made remix reels using the song posted by the party.



Medical officials instructed to prepare for pulse polio campaign

Joint Collector S Ram Sundar Reddy has instructed medical and health authorities to ensure all necessary arrangements are in place for the upcoming pulse polio programme scheduled for March 3 across the dis-

During a meeting held with officials from various departments, including health and medical, on Saturday, the Joint Collector outlined the plans for the campaign. He announced that the booth-level Pulse Polio programme would occur on March 3, followed by a houseto-house campaign on March

Emphasising the importance of comprehensive coverage, Reddy underscored that the Pulse Polio procedures would run from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm for three consecutive days. He urged the establishment of Special Pulse Polio



West Godavari Joint Collector S Ram Sundar Reddy, along with other officials, unveiling a wall poster promoting the Pulse Polio programme in Bhimavaram on

Centers, particularly in densely populated urban areas near transportation hubs, commercial centres, and industrial

The Joint Collector urged coordination among the medical, health, education, and

departments to ensure that all children aged 0-5 years receive the polio drops. "There are approximately 185,953 children within the 0-5 age group in the district, and meticulous arrangements have been made to reach each of them. This includes setting up 1,315 puband 34 transit booths, with 5,520 vaccinators on standby," stated Reddy. Additionally, he mentioned that 181 vehicles would be deployed across the district to manage Pulse Polio operations.

Reddy highlighted that while the prevalence of polio is low, it remains crucial to maintain preventive measures due to the potential risk of virus transmission. He urged proactive efforts from Anganwadi staff, ASHA workers, and ANMs to raise awareness about the campaign, particularly in urban and rural

Addressing past challenges, Reddy urged officials to resolve any issues that may have hindered the polio vaccination

The meeting was attended by DCHS Dr. P Suryanarayana, DMHO Dr. D Maheswar Rao, and RDO K Chennayya among

10 kg ganja seized, 4 held

PNS CHITTOOR

The police seized 10 kg of ganja and arrested four persons here on Saturday.

DSP Rajagopal Reddy told

the media that on a tip-off, a police team led by K Ulasaiah conducted a raid at BANS hotel on the outskirts and seized 10 kg of ganja.

The police arrested

Tulasiraman, Charant Kumar, Madhav and Kannu and seized 10 kg of ganja from the possession worth Rs 4.50

The accused confessed to selling the ganja locally. The accused told the police that they had brought the cannabis Visakhapatnam district at a cheaper price and sold the commodity here at a higher

TDP belittled Pawan by leaving him with just 24 seats'

Minister for Water Resources Management Ambati Rambabu has observed that Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan has been belittled by the Telugu Desam Party by allocating only 24 MLA seats to contest in the

forthcoming elections.

Addressing the media in Sattenapalli on Saturday, Ambati Rambabu said that the Jana Sena party expected to contest in 60 to 70 Assembly segments but it was given only 24 seats by Chandrababu Naidu.

"Instead of carrying a palan-quin of TDP, it is better for Pawan Kalyan to merge the JSP in the TDP," Ambadi ridiculed. The Minister also advised Pawan Kalyan to take a cue from his brother Chiranjeevi who merged his Praja Rajyam party in the Congress.

The JSP cadres raised slogans as Pawan Kalyan CM and hoped that the JSP would be given 70 Assembly seats. Pawan Kalyan backstabbed the Kapu



Irrigation Minister Ambati Rambabu addressing a press conference at Sattenapalli in Guntur district on Saturday.

community people by accepting 24 seats given by the TDP," Ambati flayed. He also advised the Jana Sena leaders and cadres not to be betrayed by package politics.

"The TDP-JSP alliance is embarrassing. The Jana Sena could not announce the constituency where Pawan Kalyan would contest. The JSP cadre is deeply disappointed with the allocation of only 24 Assembly and 3 LS seats by the TDP,"

Ambati claimed. The Minister pointed out

that the BJP has so far not announced joining the TDP-JSP alliance. But the TDP is claiming the BJP will join their alliance. "As long as the people of the state bless Jagan Mohan Reddy, the alliance can not defeat Jagan Mohan Reddy," Ambadi predicted, adding that the YSRCP would contest in all the 175 Assembly constituencies

Elaborate arrangements made for Group 2 exams

PNS BAPATLA

Superintendent of Police Vakul Jindal has said that elaborate security arrangements have been made for the Group 2 examination to be conducted on March 25. SP Vakul Jindal said that arrangements have been made in the district for the Group 2 screening test examinations to be held by

The SP said that a total of 7671 candidates would appear to write Group 2 examinations being held in 25 examination centres across the Bapatla district. "Three DSP level officers, 12 CIs, 25 SSILs and a total of 224 police officers and personnel will be on duty to ensure the peaceful conduct of the Group 2 examination in the district," the SP made it clear.

The candidates appearing

for the Group 2 screening test should follow the rules and regulations mentioned in the hall ticket. The candidates should reach the examination centres by 9 am with the hall ticket and any original ID card recognized by the government. Candidates will not be allowed to leave the examination centre till the completion of the examination, the SP clar-

Electronic gadgets like mobile phones, calculators, Bluetooth and smart watches would not be allowed in the examination centres, the SP said. The candidates should keep the valuable belongings and items they bring with them on their own, he made it

SP Vakul Jindal warned that strict action would be taken as per the AP Public Examinations (Prevention of Malpractices and Unfair Means) Act, 1997 if the candidates indulge in malpractices and misbehaviour.

As Section 144 is in force at the examination centres, the SP advised the public that it is illegal for people to gather at the examination centres and that Xerox and Internet shops should be closed.

44,614 candidates to appear for Group-2 exam in Krishna

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The collectors of NTR and Krishna districts, Dr. S. Dilli Rao and P. Raja Babu respectively, have apprised Chief Secretary of the State, Dr. K.S. Jawahar Reddy, of the arrangements made for the Group-2 Screening Examination scheduled for February 25, Sunday.

In preparation for the smooth conduct of the examination, both district administrations have collaborated with the police department to ensure necessary measures are in place. A total of 41,614 candidates are expected to participate in the examination on

Chief Secretary Dr. KS Jawahar Reddy conducted a video conference with all district collectors from his office in Vijayawada on Saturday.



He emphasized the importance of maintaining incident-free proceedings during the examination.

Additionally, Dr. Reddy inquired about various initiatives including Re-Survey, Jagananna Aarogya Suraksha, Aarogyasri, MGNREGA, and government-prioritized buildng constructions.

In a prior review of the Group-2 screening examination, it was reported that the NTR district has arranged 54 examination centres, with over 24,373 candidates expected to appear. NTR district collector Dr S. Dilli Rao and Joint collector Dr P. Sampath Kumar provided this information.

On the other hand, Krishna district collector Raja Babu stated that 17,241 candidates would participate in the examination across 51 arranged centres. The examination is scheduled from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm, and section 144 will be imposed at all examination centers for security purposes.

YSRC MLA donates 25 desi cows to TTD

Ruling YSRCP MLA M Venugopal on Saturday donat-ed 25 Gir Sahiwal breed cows to the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD).

The livestock donation is expected to supplement the temple body's requirement of 30 kg of ghee per day for Sri Venkateswara temple's daily kainkaryams (rituals). "M Venugopal, MLA from

Darsi in Prakasam district has donated 25 Gir-Sahiwal breed desi cows to TTD in the presence of TTD Chairman B Karunakara Reddy and executive officer A V Dharma Reddy at S V Gosala in Tirupati," said TTD in a press release.

According to the executive officer, the temple body needs 500 desi cows in addition to the existing bovines. Following the donation, spe-

cial pujas (rituals) were held for the cows, including some ceremonial fodder feeding. Later, the temple priests

offered 'theertha prasadams' (consecrated food) to Venugopal (58) and his wife. TTD is the official custodi-

an of the famous Sri Venkateswara temple in Tirupati.

Screening tests for VIP's drivers soon

PNS HYDERABAD

The Transport Department will conduct tests for drivers driving the vehicles of Ministers, MLAs, MLCs and IAS and IPS officials soon, Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar said.

Ponnam said that some VIPs were killed in recent road accidents due to inexperienced drivers. The Minister said that the Transport Department will send letters to all VIPs in this regard. The Minister advised VIPs to appoint only select drivers if they want to travel long distances.

In a chit-chat with scribes at the Gandhi Bhavan on Saturday, Ponnam Prabhakar said that the RTC is suffering from the debts of Rs 6,000 crore contracted during the BRS government.

The Minister said that women are travelling in TSRTC buses in a big way due to the Mahalaxmi scheme free bus travel. He said that women are visiting all temples in the state and subsequently the revenue increased.

The Minister said that 50 lakh people are travelling every day in TSRTC buses after introduction of the Mahalaxmi scheme. The RTC is running in benefit path now and that he had purchased new buses. The Transport Department acted effectively in Medaram Jatara,

Ponnam said that the government will certainly implement the scheme of giving Rs 12,000 per annum to auto drivers. He said that 450 autos purchased were by the GHMC and that there will be 3030 autos in rural areas.

He said that the Congress government is sincere on the caste census and is thinking of implementing reservations like in Bihar. The government is thinking of setting up a team with Rs 1 lakh capital to do a caste census in Telangana.

The government will conduct a meeting with all parties very soon and the government



50 lakh people are travelling every day in **TSRTC** buses after introduction of the Mahalaxmi scheme. The RTC is running in benefit path now and that he had purchased new buses.

is thinking of setting up a commission regarding that, the Minister said.

He said that the Congress government will implement reservations in all sectors after the caste census in the state is

The Minister said the Transport Department will issue driving licenses only if persons pass in all future tests. He said that the TSRTC is running successfully due to the hard work of drivers and con-

He said that they had identified RTC assets in the state. RTC targeted Rs 2000 crore through RTC Cargo and that the RTC got only Rs 150 crore now. He said that the RTC has 90 depots and that the RTC will run buses to all parts of the

Responding to a question that the Congress will not spare if the criminals join Congress from cases, Ponnam said that the Congress government will not leave criminals even if they changed their political affiliations.

Take steps for release of prisoners unable to provide sureties: DC

District Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh directed the officials to provide sureties to the poor prisoners who have been languishing in prison for a long time.

Addressing the Poor Empowered Committee meeting here on Saturday, the Collector said that the prisoners belonging to underprivileged sections have been languishing in prisons unable to pay surety money. He directed the officials to take steps to ensure that the prisoners were

released. The Collector said that the Union Home Minister issued orders to the state governments to take steps for the release of prisoners belonging to the socially backward com-



Eluru District Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh addressing the Poor Prisoners Empowered Committee meeting in Eluru on Saturday

munities and financially poor by extending financial aid help. The prisoners were unable to pay the money for surety as per the court order, the Collector said.

"An empowered committee was formed to assess the financial status of prisoners to free them from the prisons by

extending financial assistance to pay the surety amount. District 7th additional judge M Ramakrishnam Raju, district legal services authority secretary K Rarna Prasad, SP D Mary Prashanthi and prisons department officer CH RV Swamy were among those

who were present.

DELHI LIQUOR CASE

Will CBI arrest Kavitha?

SNCN ACHARYULU

The Centre has again become active in the Delhi liquor scam ahead of the Lok Sabha elections and is getting ready to take action against BRS MLC K. Kavitha, the daughter of BRS supremo K. Chandrasekhar

The CBI has summoned Kavitha to appear before them on February 26 in connection with the Delhi liquor scam. Perhaps, Kavitha may ignore the CBI summons like she did in the past when she was summoned by the ED.

February 26 and 28 are crucial days for Kavitha. The Supreme Court protection for Kavitha from arrest and summoning by probe agencies ended on February 16. Now, only the CBI has summoned Kavitha to appear on February



Meanwhile, the Supreme Court is taking up the petition filed by Kavitha objecting to the CBI summons in which she said that women should be interrogated only at their residences.

Will Kavitha appear before the CBI on February 26 or not? As the Supreme Court's protection for Kavitha from arrest has ended political observers are interested in knowing whether the CBI will arrest her.

At the same time, the Supreme Court's decision on

Kavitha's petition scheduled on interest. During the recent Telangana Assembly elections, the Centre gave the impression that Kavitha may be arrested at any time. But finally, the Centre remained silent on the issue.

round the corner, the Centre has again become active in the Delhi liquor case. The difference now is that the CBI has named Kavitha as an accused in the Delhi liquor scam.

With Lok Sabha elections

In March 2023, Kavitha appeared before the ED in New Delhi and was questioned regarding her role in the Delhi liquor scam.

Meanwhile, Kavitha filed a petition in the Supreme Court saying that women should be questioned only at their homes and objected to the ED action summoning her to appear in their office.

Safety of land records worrying

CM orders probe into agency running Dharani Portal

K VENKATESHWARLU HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy ordered a comprehensive inquiry into the agency running the Dharani Portal.

The CM questioned the handing over of the Dharani Portal's maintenance to a private agency instead of the CCLA (Chief Commissioner of Land Administration) which is expected to handle the portal on behalf of the government.

The CM expressed serious concern about the safety of the land records of lakhs of farmers which is now in the hands of foreign companies.

Attending a review meeting of the Dharani Committee on Saturday at the Secretariat, the Chief Minister blamed the BRS government for keeping highly confidential land data, Aadhaar and bank account details with the agency and



also raised doubts on whether

the land records are safe. The officials informed the CM that the BRS government had entrusted the design, development and management of the Dharani Portal to a company named IL&FS based on technical and financial bidding

and qualifications in 2018. The CM and Dharani Committee members held a detailed discussion on the agency's operations which went bankrupt later and changed its name to Terrasys Technologies Limited, changed all directors and then sold its

shares to Falcon Investment

Company

The Chief Minister inquired how the BRS government permitted the agency which won the bid to change its name as it liked and also change com-

The Chief Minister also inquired with officials on whether there are any rules for handing over land records to foreign companies or anyone

Revanth said it was astonishing that the company, which had won the Dharani tender for Rs 116 crore in 2018, sold its shares for around Rs 1,200 crore later.

Geetha Reddy's absence from Cabinet a shortcoming: CM

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said that the absence of TPCC Working President Geetha Reddy (Gitakka) in the Cabinet is a shortcoming. The 33rd death anniversary of Eshwari Bai was held at the Ravindra Bharati under the auspices of the Telangana Language and Culture Department and the Eshwari Bai Memorial Trust. Chief Minister Revanth attended the function as the chief guest



paying tributes to Eshwari Bai at a function held at Ravindra Bharati in Hyderabad

along with Ministers Jupalli Krishna Rao, Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and Ponnam Prabhakar. The CM paid tributes to Eshwari Bai's portrait and visited the photo exhibition at Ravindra Bharati. Speaking on the occasion, Revanth said that Eshwari Bai had made her mark in politics inspired by Ambedkar. He said that Geetha Reddy had pursued a course in medicine. The CM said that there is a woman behind every man's success and there is a doctor's contribution in every success of Geetha Reddy. He said that he felt it was his responsibility to attend the function and that Geetha Reddy had actively worked as the TPCC's Working President. He said that Geetha Reddy kept her medical problems aside and participated actively in party programmes and that's why she could win the Assembly seats in Nalgonda district. The CM said that Geetha was always with the party for good or bad and that the party would stand by her family.

Resolve all Dharani applications

CM directs officials Chief Minister Revanth Reddy

asked officials to resolve all pending Dharani applications immediately. The Chief Minister told officials to make arrangements in all Mandal Tahsildar offices to dispose of applications in the first week of March. The CM also directed the Revenue Department to formulate terms and conditions for the disposal of pending applications by taking into consideration the suggestions of the Dharani Committee. Around 2.45 lakh applications are pending regarding the Dharani Portal across the state The Chief Minister discussed with officials the possibility of addressing all pending applications in the first phase. The CM asked the authorities to resolve these issues immediately without troubling farmers and to make arrangements for the same in the first week of March. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy held a review meeting with the Dharan Committee at the Secretariat on

Saturday.

Three services used to work in 'silos' earlier

Now they have better coordination to jointly confront challenges: Rajnath

PNS NEW DELHI

India's annual defence production is expected to touch a whopping Rs 3 lakh crore and exports of military hardware is poised to reach Rs 50,000 crore, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Saturday. In an address at a defence conclave, Singh, delving into structural defence reforms, said the three services used to work in "silos" earlier but now they are ready with better coordination to deal with every challenge jointly.

He said capital acquisition projects worth more than Rs 4,35,000 crore have been given in-principle approval in the financial year 2023-24, and the government is aiming for production of high-end systems like aero-engines and gas turbines in India in the next five years.

Singh noted that the government has been focusing on jointness among the Indian Army, the Navy and the Indian Air Force that would ensure enhanced coordination in times of "crisis".

"Earlier, the three Services used to work in silos. We focused on their integration



worth more than Rs 4,35,000 crore have been given in-principle approval in the financial year 2023-24, and the government is aiming for production of high-end systems like aero-engines and gas turbines in India in the next

He said capital acquisition projects

which was an out-of-the-box step and the need of the hour. It was a little difficult in the beginning; but today our military is ready with better coordination to deal with every challenge together," he said at the Firstpost Defence Summit. Singh said restricts on import

of arms was difficult in the short-term but the challenge is slowly turning into opportunity, and India is rising on the defence industrial landscape of the world. "Today, our military is using weapons and platforms, which are manufactured on our own soil," he said.

He asserted that no military can protect its nation from equipment imported from outside and self-reliance in defence production is must for India in today's time, adding the government's persistent efforts have started to bear fruit as the defence production has crossed Rs 1 lakh crore. "Earlier, India was known to be an arms importer. But today, under the leadership of the prime minister, we have come out of our

in the list of top-25 arms exporter nations," Singh said. Seven-eight years ago, defence exports did not even touch Rs 1,000 crore. Today, it has touched Rs 16,000 crore. By 2028-29, annual defence production is expected to touch Rs 3 lakh crore and defence exports

comfort zone and found a place

Rs 50,000 crore," he added. The defence minister added

that Rs 6.21 lakh crore was allocated to the defence budget for 2024-25. He also spoke of the Agnipath scheme, saying it aims to make the country's military as one of the strongest in the world. "These decisions reflect the government's long-term approach towards national security," he said. Singh said the government has firmly set its sight

manufacturer. "When the ability and dedication of our youth is extraordinary and the intentions of the government are clear, the question of setting simple targets does not arise. We will soon embark on an exciting journey towards achieving extraordinary goals," he said.

to make India a major defence

Voters have right to know about fulfillment of vows

PNS CHENNAI

The voters have a right to know about the feasibility of fulfilling poll assurances made by political parties, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar said on Saturday and made it clear that the matter

is, however, sub judice.
Political parties have a right to make promises in their election manifestos and the electorate has a right to know if these are genuine and how these programmes could be funded, he said, adding the entire matter forms part of an ongoing case and the matter was sub judice.

At a press conference here, Rajiv Kumar, answering questions, said the Election Commission has prepared a 'proforma' to make parties to make a disclosure on their election promises. However, this aspect also relates to the pending court matter.

He said enforcement agencies have been directed to stay vigilant and prevent distribution of cash and freebies. National Payments Corporation of India too has been tasked to monitor online

transactions.

To a question on 'fake news,' he said, 'today fake news is running as you mentioned that election dates have been announced,' This fake news has, however, been countered within half an hour and it was made amply clear that it was

A majority of political parties have sought single phase polls. After holding meetings with political parties during the last two days, Rajiv Kumar said "a majority of parties informed him that many parties have commenced parking of funds for distribution to

"We met various political parties both national like the BJP, INC and state parties like the AIADMK, DMK. A majority of their demands were single phase elections, curb on distribution of money and freebies," he said.

The parties also sought action to prevent 'voter impersonation,' distribution of liquor and transfer of money through online mode.

During past elections in Tamil Nadu, parties have often accused each other of 'inducing' voters by distributing cash and gifts.

Ram temple in Ayodhya receives donations of around Rs 25 cr

PNS ■ AYODHYA (UP)

The newly constructed Ram temple has received donations, including 25 kg gold and silver ornament, of around Rs 25 crore in a month after the consecration ceremony on January 22, trust officials on Saturday said.

Prakash Gupta, office in charge of the Ram temple trust, said the amount of Rs 25 crore include cheques, drafts and cash deposited in the temple trust's office along with those deposited in the donation boxes.

"However, we are not aware of the online transactions done directly in the trust's bank accounts," he added.

Gupta said that a total of around 60 lakh devotees have

Gupta said the temple trust is expecting an increase in donations during the days of Ram Navami festival when about 50 lakh devotees will be

present in Ayodhya.

INDIA CORNER

Toddler abducted from govt hospital in Udaipur



n unidentified woman allegedly abducted a 13-month-old girl from Maharana Bhupal Government Hospital in Udaipur in the early hours of Saturday, police said. The toddler, Avyansh, was sleeping with her mother in the corridor of the

hospital when the incident occurred, they said. When the mother woke up around 4 am, she found that her daughter was missing and alerted the hospital administration, police said. An official from the hospital said the woman, whose daughter was abducted, had come to the hospital as an attendant and was not a patient. "They were sleeping in the corridor when another woman, who was also sleeping there, picked up the girl and left the hospital." the official said upon examining the CCTV footage. A case has been registered under the Indian Penal Code section 363 (kidnapping) at Hathipole police station, police said, adding that efforts

Class 6 student detained for schoolmate's murder in Delhi



Class 6 student of a private school in northeast Delhi's New Usmanpur area was detained for allegedly killing a 14-year-old boy from his school, police said on Saturday. The students had a fight over some

petty issue outside the school and the accused punched the victim a student of Class 8 -- on the face, they said. The alleged incident occurred on Friday. The police received a call from JPC Hospital around 4 pm about the victim, a resident of Brahmpuri. The boy had injuries on his head, face and left hand. The place where the alleged altercation occurred was also littered with blood spots, the police said. The victim died due to excessive bleeding from the nose, they added. CCTV cameras installed in the locality were scanned and the 12-year-old accused was identified. He was apprehended late on

Two undertrials escape from UP court lock-up



wo undertrials, one of whom has 47 cases registered against him, escaped from the lock-up on a court premises here by cutting through the window bars, police said on Saturday. A case was registered

against both the accused late Friday night and three policemen have been suspended after the incident. Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ghule Sushil Chandrabhan said four teams have been deployed to nab them. Sub-Inspector (SI) Virendra Kumar said Ankit Yadav and Sachin Saini had appeared before the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate (CJM) and Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate III on Friday morning after they were summoned. A total of 55 prisoners had come with them to appear before the court. After everyone's appearance, the count started at 5.30 pm before sending the

India's traditional system of medicines going global



nion minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Saturday said traditional medicines like Ayush have gained a new lease of life, and are being recognised worldwide for their efficacy. He also said that the traditional medicine sector of India has grown beyond geographical boundaries and reached a global market, under the BJP-led central government. The Union Minister of Ayush was speaking after inaugurating a centre of excellence at the State Avurvedic

College and Hospital here. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. India has taken leadership position in the revamp of traditional medicines worldwide... This has helped our traditional medicine sector to grow out of its regular geography and communities to reach a wider population across communities from different parts of the world," Sonowal said.

'LIVING DOCUMENTS'

India, Bangladesh recognise their constitutions

Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud on Saturday said both India and Bangladesh share the tradition

of constitutional and judicial systems largely aiming to ensure stability and both nations recognised their constitutions as "living documents."

"Our shared tradition aims to ensure stability, but

when stability is desired, the stability must never be confused with stagnation," Chandrachud ne spoke at the valedic tory function of a two-day conference here in the presence of Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who was the

"We recognise our constitu-

PNS HAMIRPUR

Union Minister Anurag Thakur

on Saturday said the Congress

will not be able to open its

account in Uttar Pradesh this

time as party leader leader

Rahul Gandhi has raised a

question mark on the intelli-

gence of the people of the state.

Uttar Pradesh have elected four

generations of the Nehru-

Gandhi family and sent them to

Referring to Gandhi's recent

drunk and addict comment on

the youth of Uttar Pradesh at a

rally in Varanasi, Thakur said

Thakur said the people of

tions are living documents. The constitutions of Bangladesh and India proclaim that they are given to the people by the people themselves' as citizens of sovereign nations,"

Chandrachud said. Bangladesh's Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan chaired the event. Bangladesh's apex court judges took part in the conference, which drew many jurists, senior

lawyers, and government leaders including Law Minister Anisul Huq.

Earlier on Fr Bangladesh Presi Mohammad Shahabuddin opened the two-day conference on 'South Asian Constitutional Courts in the Twenty-First Century: Lessons from Bangladesh and India.

Cong will not be able to open its

account in UP this time: Anurag

the Congress leader has lost his

senses and is not aware of what

media persons here, said

Gandhi has hurt the honour

and respect of the people of

Congress has cheated the pub-

The minister said the

Thakur, while talking to the

he is saying.

Uttar Pradesh.

Bulldozers demolish homes of 'innocent' while 'guilty' escape

■ Priyanka Gandhi attacks UP's BJP govt

PNS LUCKNOW

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Saturday lashed out at the BJP government in Uttar Pradesh, alleging that bulldozers are used to demolish homes of "innocent people" while the "guilty" escape unscathed. Priyanka Gandhi on Saturday

Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, which resumed its journey from Moradabad after a two-day halt for the march's final leg in Uttar Pradesh. She will accompany her brother as the yatra passes

joined the Rahul Gandhi-led

through Amroha, Sambhal, Bulandshahr, Aligarh, Hathras, Agra, concluding at Fatehpur ri on Sunday

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav is set to join the yatra in Agra on Sunday, a development that comes after the parties reached a seat-shar-

lic by making false promises. Congress leader Priyanka

Gandhi's videos are going viral

among the public in which she

had said that five lakh govern-

ment jobs would be given to the youth in Himachal Pradesh

and now Chief Minister

Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has

retracted from the statement, he

Addressing the Tridev conference of Hamirpur BJP

Mandal here earlier, the minis-

ter said the people will vote for

the BJP in the upcoming Lok

Sabha elections as they are fed

up with the Congress' false

added



ing arrangement in Uttar Pradesh for the Lok Sabha polls. "The Bharat Jodo Nyay resumed from Moradabad. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra was also present. As the yatra moved through Moradabad, people from different walks of Manish Hindvi, a spokesperson for the Congress' Uttar Pradesh

unit, told PTI. Priyanka Gandhi was to participate in the yatra when it entered Uttar Pradesh in

Jharkhand HC

proceedings

PNS RANCHI

dismisses Rahul's

petition to quash

The Jharkhand High Court

has rejected Congress leader

Rahul Gandhi's petition seek-

ing to quash proceedings against him in a trial court in

connection with a criminal

complaint. Naveen Jha, a BJP

worker, had filed the case

against Gandhi in 2019 for his

alleged defamatory remarks

against Union Home Minister

Amit Shah. Justice Ambuj

Nath of the high court dis-

missed Gandhi's plea on

Wednesday but the order was

uploaded on the high court

website on Friday.

Chandauli but could not because of ill health and subsequent hospitalisation.

Addressing the public in Moradabad, she said, "When I came here in 2022, we had made a plan in the manifesto on how to stop repeated question calendar, which would have the examination date and the date of appointment. We also spoke about making a commission to address all the injustices that had taken place."

LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

AAP, Cong announce seat-sharing pact for Delhi, Gujarat, Goa, Haryana

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party will contest four Lok Sabha seats in Delhi and the Congress three, the two constituents of the INDIA bloc said on Saturday as they announced their seat-sharing arrangements for the national capital, Gujarat, Goa and

AAP General Secretary (organisation) Sandeep Pathak said his party entered into an alliance with the Congress by sidelining its own political interests as it believes that the "country is important and the party secondary" The BJP termed the Congress-AAP tie-

up as an alliance of the "corrupt", assert-



favours the two parties against the NDA, the ruling combine led by Prime Minister

The Congress and the AAP are constituents of the INDIA bloc formed by opposition parties to take on the BJP in

Narendra Modi.

the upcoming general elections. In a joint press conference here on Saturday, Congress leader Mukul Wasnik announced the AAP will contest the Lok Sabha seats of New Delhi, West Delhi, South Delhi and East Delhi while his party will fight in Chandni Chowk, northeast Delhi and the northwest Delhi seats.

He said the Congress workers in Delhi will ensure that INDIA bloc candidates win all seven seats in the national capital. The BJP won all seven Lok Sabha seats in Delhi in the 2014 and 2019 general elections. In the last Lok Sabha polls, BJP candidates in each of the seats polled more votes than Congress and AAP candidates

Under-employment is a problem for India: Arvind Panagariya

PNS MUMBAI

the Lok Sabha.

Pitching for labour reforms, the chairman of the 16th Finance Commission and former NITI Aayog Chairman Arvind Panagariya on Saturday

said that "unemployment," is not a prob-lem for India but "under-employment" is.

Speaking at a session 'The Economic Whisper: how to fuel growth with jobs' at the concluding day of the two-day ABP Network's 'Ideas of India Summit 3.0' here, he also sounded optimistic that the jobs problem in the country will be solved over the next 10 years.

"Unemployment is really not India's problem in my view. Our problem is underemployment, so productivity is low. So the job that can be done by one person often gets done by two people or maybe three

people. And that is where I think, the real challenge of jobs is creating well-paid high-productivity iobs," he said.

Stating that in the economy s jargon, India is a labour-abundant and capital-scarce country, he said, "What we have done is to put much of the capital in very selective sectors which are in any case very capital intensive"

India, Maldives & Sri Lanka's Dosti-16' kicks off in Maldives

PNS MALE

Highlighting the importance of collaboration and interoperability" among the coast guards personnel of the Maldives, India and Sri Lanka, Maldivian Defence Minister Mohamed Ghassan Maumoon said the trilateral exercise Dosti' will unite the troika to address shared maritime security concerns through collaboration."

Maumoon was speaking at an event to formally inaugurate the 16th iteration of Dosti," the biennial exercise, which began on Thursday and would continue until Sunday.

Indian Coast Guard ship Samarth and ICGS Abhinav along with Sri Lanka Naval Ship Samudura are participating in the

exercise DOSTI-16' while Bangladesh is participating as an observer.

Sri Lanka has described Dosti' as a trilateral exercise that aims to enhance cooperation, strengthen friendship, improve mutual operational capability, and develop interoperability among the Coast Guard personnel of India, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka. "Scheduled from February

22nd to 25, the exercise provides participating forces with opportunities to engage in various maritime activities, including interdiction operations, search and rescue missions, surveillance, and communication drills," the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) said in



These activities aim to enhance their collective capability to respond to maritime security and safety challenges," it said. Ministers of the Maldivian government, as well as the Chief of Defence Force, Lieutenant General Abdul Raheem Abdul Latheef, Vice Chief of Defence

Force, Brigadier General Ibrahim Hilmy, Additional Director General of Indian Coast Guard, ADG S Paramesh, and some foreign ambassadors, took part in the inauguration ceremony that was held on February 22, the MNDF statement said late on Friday night.

Speaking at the event, Maumoon emphasised the importance of greater collaboration between the coast guards of Maldives, India and Sri Lanka to address "shared maritime security concerns.'

Exercise Dosti' focuses on regional cooperation in areas such as search and rescue, medical evacuations, countering piracy, pollution response, as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts.

According to Edition.mv, a news portal, Maumoon said, "President Dr Mohamed Muizzu's administration places the highest priority on ensuring that close relations, peace and stability is maintained between Maldives and neighbouring

He said that the President has assured that he will focus on maintaining regional stability and noted that Sri Lanka's participation in the training since 2012 has brought further advancement to the programme, the portal said.
"Trilateral Joint Exercise

'EX-DOSTI-16' begins. Minister of Defence @mgmaumoon graced the inauguration ceremony, emphasising the importance of this historic event in uniting the Coast Guards of Maldives, India and Sri Lanka to address shared maritime security concerns through collaboration, the MNDF posted on its official X handle along with photos from the event late on Friday night local time.

COOPERATIVE SECTOR

PM launches world's largest grain storage programme

Entailing investment of Rs 1.25 L cr

PNS NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday launched the world's largest grain storage plan in the cooperative sector, entailing an investment of over Rs 1.25 lakh crore, with the inauguration of 11 godowns in primary agricultural credit societies (PACS) in as many

Under the programme, 700 lakh tonne of storage capacity will be created over the next five years in the cooperative sector by constructing thou-sands of godowns and warehouses, Modi said at an event

He also laid the foundation for creating godowns and other agri infrastructure in 500 more



He also laid the foundation for godowns and other agri infrastructure in 500 more PACS.

"Today we have launched the world's largest storage scheme for our farmers. Under this, thousands of warehouses and godowns will be constructed across the country," he said after inaugurating 11 godowns set up by 11 PACS across 11 states. He rued that farmers were forced to bear huge losses due to lack of storage infra-

structure in the country. "Previous governments never paid due attention to this problem. But today through PACS, this problem is being addressed. Under the world's largest food grain storage programme, 700 lakh tonne storage capacity will be created in

the next five years. On this initiative more than Rs 1.25 lakh crore will be spent," the prime minister said.

With the creation of the huge storage facilities, Modi said farmers would be able to store their produce in the godowns/warehouses, get institutional credit against it, and sell their items when market prices are remunerative.

He also asked cooperative organisations to work towards reducing imports of food items, including edible oils and pulses, and also fertilizers.

Modi also emphasised on the importance of bringing transparency in the election system in cooperatives, saying this would encourage more participation of people in the cooperative movement.

Sitharaman inaugurates new campus of BITS Pilani

PNS MUMBAI

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman Saturday inaugurated the fifth campus of the Birla group-run engineering institute BITS Pilani, with which the national institute of eminence also diversifies into law, management and design.

Located in the nearby Kalayan area of the megapolis, the Rs 1,600-crore campus spread across 60 acres will accommodate 5,000 students at full capacity, said Kumar Mangalam Birla, the group chairman and the chancellor of the institute.

Began in 1964 in Pilani, the

native village of the Birlas in the Marward region of Rajasthan, the institute, which was one of the six private institutes elevated as an institute of eminence and houses 80,000 students across its five campuses in Pilani, Goa, Hyderabad, Dubai and Kalyan.

The new campus moves away from its core focus of engineering to law, manage-ment and design. The design school was started just last week while law and management schools were functional from last year from the temporary campus in Powai.

Declaring the new campus open, Sitharaman said.



MONEY MATTERS

Sebi using AI for investigations



ebi is using Artificial Intelligence (AI) for investigations, its Whole Time Member Kamlesh Chandra Varshney said on Saturday and emphasised that entities should keep track of technological developments. Against the backdrop of instances of manipulations in the stock market, he said the message is that abiding with the law

will be more beneficial and violations will cause problems. In response to a question by PTI on whether Sebi is using AI, Varshney said, "we are using Al for investigations... and also using for a lot of things". He was speaking on the sidelines of the 13th international convention of the Association of National Exchanges Members of India (ANMI) in the national capital. As long as the market is transparent and no manipulation is happening, that is fine with the regulator, he noted. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has been taking action against violators as well as measures to enhance transparency.

Odisha approves new industrial projects



he Odisha government has approved 27 new industrial projects to the tune of Rs 6,134 crore across sectors, a senior official said on Saturday. The proposals got the state government's nod at a meeting chaired by Chief Secretary P K Jena on Friday. The potential sectors include aluminium, renewable power, manufacturing, aerospace and defence, food

processing, apparel and textiles and IT infrastructure, the official said. The proposed projects are likely to create employment for 42,275 people, Jena said. In the aerospace and defence sector, Premier Explosives will set up a plant in Rayagada for an investment of Rs 864 crore, while in renewable power, Odisha Hydro Power Corporation Ltd will come up with a Rs 787.48-crore project in Kandhamal, officials said. In the manufacturing space, Texmaco Rail & Engineering Ltd will initiate a 35,000-MT unit for Rs 438.92 crore, and a combined inves tment of Rs 709.13 crore is expected in IT infrastructure, they added.

'Rumours of me being fired firing exaggerated



troubled edtech firm Byju's voted for a leadership change, Byju Raveendran has penned a note to employees saying he continues to remain CEO and the management remains unchanged, as he dubbed Friday's EGM as a "farce". The note to employees assumes significance as it comes after Bviu's

shareholders (prominent investors) on Friday voted for removing om the board ove "mismanagement and failures" at what was once India's hottest tech startup, but the company dug in its heels, calling the voting done in absence of founders as invalid and ineffective. In a note to employees on Saturday, Raveendran alleged that a lot of essential rules were "violated" at Friday's Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). "This means that whatever was decided in that meeting does not count, because it didn't stick to the established rules... It is crucial for

Adani hints at future collaborations with Uber

Billionaire Gautam Adani on Saturday met Uber CÉO Dara Khosrowshahi, who is currently on a visit to India, and hinted at possible future collaborations

between his conglomerate and

the ride-hailing app.
Taking to X, both business leaders appreciated their conversation on the Indian growth story and their vision for the subcontinent.

"Absolutely captivating chat with @dkhos, CEO of @Uber. His vision for Uber's expansion in India is truly inspiring, especially his commitment to uplifting Indian drivers and their dignity. Excited for future collaborations with Dara and his team! #UberIndia," Adani said in a post on X.

The Uber CEO said he met

the head of ports-to-energy conglomerate over breakfast for an "absolutely terrific conversation". He also highlighted the mobility service provider's commitment to accelerate EV

Adani also posted pictures of the meeting but the two did not say where the meeting took place. The pictures seem to suggest the meeting took place at Adani group's

headquarters in Ahmedabad. "An absolutely terrific conversation with @gautam_ adani over a delicious breakfast about India's phenomenal growth and rising entrepre-

neurship. @Uber is committed to scaling up shared mobility and accelerating transition to EVs -- looking forward to take our partnership to the next level," Dara replied to Adani's post.

The Über CEO arrived in India earlier this week. During this time, the ride-sharing platform Uber on February 22 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to explore an integration with the network to expand the range of mobility offerings on the Uber app.

Don't experiment on digital nagriks with 'unreliable' models and AI

PNS NEW DELHI

Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Saturday made it clear to Google that explanations about unreliability of AI models do not absolve or exempt platforms from laws, and warned that India's digital 'nagriks' "are not to be experimented on" with unreliable platforms and algo-

The minister's comments came after Google, which is under fire over AI tool Gemini's objectionable response and bias to a question on PM Narendra Modi, said it has worked quickly to address the issue and conceded that the chatbot "may not always be reliable" in responding to certain prompts related to current events and political topics.

Chandrasekhar, the Minister of State for IT, in a post on X (formerly Twitter) said ensuring safety and trust are legal obligation of plat-

"Government has said this before - I repeat for attention @GoogleIndia...Our DigitalNagriks are NOT to be experimented on with "unreMoS IT warns Google



from law," the minister said. platforms/algos/ model...`Sorry Unreliable' does not exempt from law," the

On Friday, Chandrasekhar had warned that Google AI tool Gemini's response to a question around the prime minister was in direct violation of IT rules as well as several provisions of the criminal

Chandrasekhar has taken immediate cognizance of the issue raised by verified accounts of a journalist alleging bias in Gemini in response to a question on Modi while it

gave no clear answer when a similar question was asked for Trump and Zelenskyy.

'Government has said this

@GoogleIndia...Our

experimented on with

before - I repeat for attention of

DigitalNagriks are NOT to be

platforms/algos/model... Sorry

Unreliable' does not exempt

In an e-mail statement earlier on Saturday, a Google spokesperson said, "We've worked quickly to address this issue.

Google further said Gemini is built as a creativity and productivity tool and "may not always be reliable, especially when it comes to responding to some prompts about current events, political topics, or evolving news". "This is something that we're constantly working on improving,".

65,000 functional PACS to be computerised by Aug: Shah

Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah on Saturday said around 65,000 functional Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) will be computerised by August this year to improve their efficiency.

The computerisation work has already been completed so far in 18,000 PACS. Prime Minister Narendra

Modi on Saturday inaugurated the project for computerisation in 18,000 PACS across the country. "I am happy that out of

65,000 PACs, computerisation of 18,000 PACs has been completed. Before elections, 30,000 PACs will be done," Shah said, while addressing a conference. By August 2024, all PACS will

be computerised, the Union minister said. In June last year, the Cabinet

Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the computerisation of these PACS with an outlay of Rs 2,516 crore. he objective is to increase the efficiency of PACS, bringing transparency and accountabil-



Territories, irrespective of political parties.

Shah also highlighted

that the model bylaws

implemented by all

states and Union

have been

ity in their operations. This will also help in facilitating PACS to diversify their business and undertake multiple activities/services.

Shah also highlighted that the model bylaws have been implemented by all states and Union Territories, irrespective of polit-

With the adoption of these model bylaws, he said PACs can now diversify into new areas.

The Prime Minister formally launched 'World's Largest Grain Storage Plan in Cooperative Sector' with the inauguration of 11 godowns set up by PACS across 11 states.

Modi also laid the foundation

stone for the construction of

godowns in an additional 500 PACS across the country.

On this initiative, Shah said farmers would be able to store 100 per cent of their production with the creation of new capac-

Storage capacity in other countries is higher than production except for India, he added.

Food Corporation of India (FCI) has been bearing the responsibility of storage to date. Godowns set up in PACS will provide all modernised tools for farmers, Shah said. The cooperation minister

said more than 50 initiatives

of the cooperation ministry.

economic ties with India PNS KOLKATA

Brazil eyes deeper

Ambassador of Brazil to India, Kenneth F lix Haczynski da N brega on Saturday said energy, defence and agro-processing are the three key pillars for strengthening economic cooperation between the two coun-

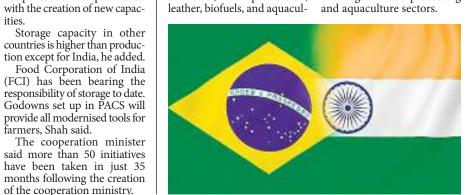
Speaking at a session on 'India-Brazil Fostering Trade Partnership - Focus West Bengal' organised by the Bharat Chamber of Commerce here, the diplomat emphasised on business-tobusiness collaborations in iron and steel, milk production,

ture. He also expressed optimism about the evolving defence sector alliance between the two countries.

Ambassador N brega said the first Brazil-India Defence Dialogue is expected to begin next week, focusing on strategic partnerships and technoogical cooperation.

The interactive session explored avenues to deepen economic ties and leverage West Bengal's potential in various sectors.

The diplomat expressed interest in exploring partnerships and technological exchange in food processing



Foundation stone for POL & LPG project laid in Assam

PNS GUWAHATHI

The foundation stone for a first-of-its-kind combined petroleum, oil, and lubricants (POL) & LPG facilities of Hindustan Petroleum was laid at Kamardanga in Assam's Chirang district, an official statement said..

Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Rameswar Teli attended the programme..

This visionary project, with an investment of Rs 540 crore and sprawling across an expanse of 78.68 acres, underscores Hindustan Petroleum's unwavering commitment to enhancing energy accessibility and fostering socio-economic progress in the North East region," the statement said..

The LPG facility will boast 1500 MT mounded storage vessels, a cutting-edge 4 Bay tank truck Loading gantry, and tank wagon unloading capability, ensuring seamless operations and meeting the wing demand for I the region.

These facilities will ensure energy sufficiency of a minimum of 15 days in Assam, the statement said..

The project will bolster the existing network of 332 retail outlets, with plans for future outlets slated for develop-

everyone to understand the specific issues that make this EGM a farce," he wrote. PTI has seen a copy of the letter. Kerala leads India's healthcare

Demand for male nurses rising

talent migration to MENA

PNS MUMBAI

Kerala leads India's healthcare talent migration to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, especially to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which witnessed a 3.3fold increase in demand in

2023, said a report. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh emerged as the leading states contributing to the migration of healthcare workers, including nurses, doctors, and laboratory technicians, to MENA countries, according to data by blue-collar worker platform Huntr.

Migration of healthcare workers from Kerala, in particular, witnessed a notable increase in migration to the UAE, with a 3.3-fold rise in 2023, the report stated.

The report is based on data on Huntr platform and employer organisations in the Middle East from 2022 and

It further noted that the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar are the most preferred destina-tions for Indian healthcare professionals seeking job opportunities.

These countries offer attractive incentives, including extended residency visas, financial benefits, and state-ofthe-art healthcare infrastructure, the report added.



It further noted that the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar are the most preferred destinations for Indian healthcare professionals seeking job opportunities.

"The rapid globalisation has opened doors for extensive global mobility, and this report is a testament to the crucial role that India plays in meeting MENA countries' rising healthcare talent demands.

"The surge in migration from states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh reflects a significant shift in the region's healthcare landscape. With Huntr's innovative solutions and stakeholder collaboration, we're poised to drive further growth and development in the MENA healthcare sector," Huntr CEO Samuel Joy The report further revealed that employers in MENA

countries seek candidates with

specific skills and qualifica-

tions, including experience in

regional sales, distributor man-

agement, and project management. Additionally, there is also a high demand for healthcare professionals with qualifications ranging from diplomas to higher degrees in nursing and

medicine. The healthcare workers migrating from India to the MENA region are predominantly within the early 30s age group, with a noticeable increase in the number of male nurses joining the workforce segment that is tradition-

ally dominated by women, the report added.

IRF calls for making seat belts mandatory

PNS NEW DELHI

International Road Federation (IRF) -- a global road safety body -- has urged the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) to make the use of seat belts mandatory in all heavy vehicles, including passenger buses and school buses, to minimise casualties and injuries in road accidents. IRF President Emeritus K K

Kapila in a letter to MoRTH



provide seats belts in buses, tory. "There have been heart-

wrenching passenger bus accidents resulting in loss of innocent lives. Many of them would have been saved, had they been wearing seat belts," he

Kapila pointed out that according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's 2021 data, only 14 individuals lost their lives in bus accidents in the

Similarly, based on the

remarkable outcomes due to stringent safety standards for public transport like buses. "The contrasting and alarm-

analysis of the accident propen-

sity of Chinese bus drivers in

2022, China reported 215 fatal-

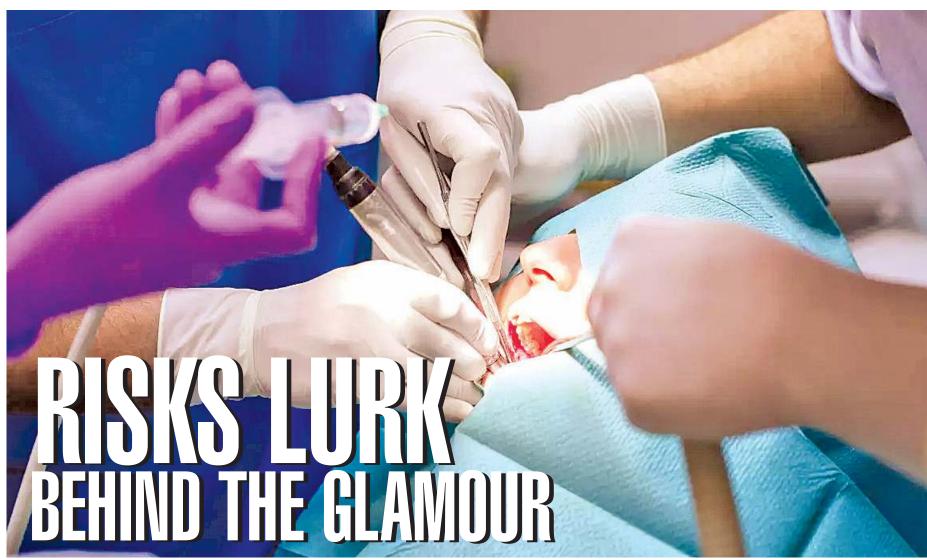
He pointed out that both

developing and developed

countries have achieved

ing data in India suggests a acuna in mandating safety standards in buses.

VIJAYAWADA, February 25, 2024



A recent tragic death during smile enhancement surgery of a 28-year-old man in Hyderabad highlights the risk of cosmetic procedures. In a chat with ARCHANA JYOTI, experts emphasise the need for thorough consideration before surgery, advocating stricter regulations, and increased awareness

Prom smoothing wrinkles to reshaping body contours, the allure of cosmetic procedures often promises transformative results and a boost in self-confidence. Cosmetic surgery has emerged as a popular option for individuals seeking to enhance their physical appearance and address perceived imperfections. However, there lies a landscape fraught with risks and complexities that warrant careful

consideration. Consider a few cases of 2023: *Chethana Raj, a promising young TV actor, who tragically lost her life after undergoing plastic surgery in Bengaluru. Her father, K Varadaraj, revealed that hospital authorities attributed her death to a

cardiac arrest. The untimely Luana Andrade, a 29-yearold Brazilian influencer, following liposuction surgery in São Paulo, serves as a chilling reminder of the risks inherent in cosmetic procedures. Complications during the surgery led to cardiac ultimately claiming her life. *Argentine model and actor Silvina Luna died due to complications related to a kidney illness associated with prior plastic surgery. These reported cases involve celebrities or in some others, complainants managed to reach out to media or vice versa. The recent one that has been reported this year is of LN Vinjam (28) who lost his life on February 18 while

'smile **Dr** undergoing a designing' procedure, just Many endure silent pain as even larger increase than smooth wrinkles over face. their pursuit of an ideal surgical ones. "When it This is also used for

POTENTIAL COMPLICATIONS

Hematoma: Hematoma, a pocket of blood Deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary resembling a bruise, can occur in 1 percent of breast augmentation procedures and is the most common complication after facelifts.

Seroma: Seroma, the pooling of sterile body fluid beneath the skin's surface, is a common complication following surgeries like

Blood loss: While some blood loss is expected during surgery, uncontrolled blood loss can result in severe outcomes such as a drop in blood pressure.

Infection: Despite preventive measures, infections remain common after plastic surgery, affecting around 1.1 to 2.5 percent of individuals undergoing breast augmentation. Cellulitis, a skin infection, is one example, while severe cases may require intravenous antibiotics.

Nerve damage: Many surgeries carry the risk of nerve damage, leading to numbness problems. temporary, nerve damage can sometimes be in the operated area.

embolism: Though relatively uncommon, these conditions can be life-threatening, with rates slightly higher in procedures like abdominoplasty.

Organ damage: Procedures like liposuction pose risks of visceral perforations, where surgical instruments inadvertently puncture internal organs, potentially leading to fatal consequences.

Scarring: Scarring is an inevitable outcome of surgery, with some individuals experiencing hypertrophic or keloid scars, which can be red, thick, and raised, causing aesthetic concerns.

General appearance dissatisfaction: Despite overall satisfaction rates, some individuals may experience dissatisfaction with their postoperative results, particularly if there are contouring issues or asymmetry

or tingling sensations. While often Complications of anesthesia: Anesthesia carries its own set of risks, ranging from permanent, affecting sensitivity or function lung infections to tions, stroke, heart attacks,



DR MANISH JANGRA

appearance is botched by incompetent surgeons. Manish Jangra, Consultant Dermatologist weeks before his wedding. from Park Hospital points There are countless out that craze for cosmetic from Park Hospital points unreported instances of procedures is rising day by individuals suffering after day. Minimally invasive cosmetic enhancements. procedures have seen an

cosmetic individuals often seek treatments to address a variety of concerns related to their skin's appearance and texture, correcting skin tone, wrinkles, removing hair on the face or body and reducing surface

'When we talk about Botox a lot of thing comes in our mind as it is widely used by various media platforms and many famous celebrities for various indications. Botox is a botulinum toxin obtained from bacteria. It is basically used in dermatology for various cosmetic issues like frown lines(Forehead) Crow footprints (Lateral to Eves). These are basically used to

Hyperhidrosis of palms & for excessive sweating.
"Then there are Fillers. These are used to fill the area

that has lost tissue or to fill that gap. "Dermal fillers, sometimes called soft tissue fillers, are

substances designed to be injected beneath the surface of the skin to add volume and fullness. The time they take to work, as well as how long they last, also vary. Some fillers last six months, while others last up to two years or longer. They can be used to enhance lips, enhance shallow area like undereye trough & to soften the static wrinkles. But they must be injected by dermatologist with great experience in aesthetic practice," warns Dr Jangra. He reiterates, this must be

injected qualified dermatologist only various quacks too are flourishing in claiming cosmetologists leading to various must qualification and experience of the doctor first and should cautious about the quacks using term "Cosmetologists." There is no such degree by this name approved by National Medical Commission (NMC),

cautions Dr Jangra.

"Also you must ensure to go to dermatologist with MD/DNB/DVD (Degree in Dermatology). A lot of dentists/MBBS/non medicos/nurse have started practicing as cosmetologists, playing with health of the common people."

at Massh Hospital, stresses on the necessity for hospitals to be equipped to handle emergencies and emphasizes the importance of thorough patient history-taking before any surgical procedureminor or major which he's had in the previous history. If he's had a surgery, what kind of anaesthesia, did he have any kind of complications and if there is any detailed notes discharge summary available with the patient. Before any surgery the medical teams get multiple tests done that



DR SACHIN AMBEKAR Director of Minimal Access Surgery and Medical Director at Massh Hospita



at Fortis La Femme

includes local anaesthesia test dose, IV antibiotic test dose. The anaesthetist or the surgeon takes a detailed history of the medical and surgical history. While it is mandatory for every centre involving dentists, oral maxillofacial, aesthetic ad plastic surgery to have qualified doctors on its panel but it is most important to **Dr Sachin Ambekar**, keep a backup in case there is Director, Minimal Access any emergency. **Dr Madhu** Surgery and Medical Director **Goel,** Director, Gynecologist and Obstetrics at Fortis La Femme highlights several key points surrounding the motivations, types, potential risks associated with these surgeries.

From addressing perceived flaws to enhancing confidence and conforming to societal beauty standards, rise of social media and celebrity culture have also contributed to the desire to emulate certain looks or features, she notes. While many

procedures are generally safe and backed by research, it's crucial for patients to be aware of the potential risks and complications involved. As with any surgical procedure, there are inherent risks such as anesthesia complications, infections, scarring, and in changes sensation. 'Therefore, thorough consultation with a qualified healthcare provider and a realistic understanding of both the benefits and risks are essential steps, advises Dr Goel.

DOCTORSPEAK

India's Over-the-Counter Topical Steroid Crisis

Topical steroids, initially designed for short-term under medical supervision, are increasingly being used without proper guidance, with various factors contributing to this issue. The ease of availability and lack of stringent and lack of stringent regulations contribute to the rampant over-the-counter sales, leading to misuse with Topical Steroid-Damaged Facies (TSDF) standing out as a visible consequence. While steroids are used for medical conditions like medical conditions like psoriasis and eczema, amongst others, their unsafe and unregulated use can leads to multiple problems. Let's delve deeper into the reasons behind this phenomenon:

MISDIAGNOSIS AND SELF-MEDICATION

Many individuals lack proper medical knowledge and may incorrectly diagnose their skin conditions. This leads them to self-medicate with topical steroids without seeking professional advice. This practice not only exacerbates existing skin issues but also puts them at risk of developing dependence on these potent medications.

PROFIT-DRIVEN PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY:

pharmaceutical Some companies prioritize profits over public health by making topical steroids readily available without stringent regulations. This accessibility encourages indiscriminate use among consumers who may not be aware of the potential risks and side effects associated with these medications.



Consultant Dermatologist Ghaziabad Dermatology Čentre

LACK OF AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

There is a general lack of awareness among the public regarding the appropriate use of topical steroids and their potential adverse effects. Consumers may be influenced advertisementsrecommendations from non-medical sources,

further perpetuating the misuse of these medications. For instance, skin thinning occurs due to the inhibition of collagen synthesis by steroids. This can result in skin atrophy, making it more fragile and prone to injuries. Additionally, continuous application of topical steroids can lead to the development of stretch. marks (striae) on the skin, highlighting the detrimental effects of steroids.

This scenario urgently calls for collaboration between regulatory authorities, healthcare professionals, pharmaceutical companies, and the public to ensure the safe and appropriate use of

WHO: Nations must step up tobacco control measures

Despite significant declines in tobacco consumption over the years, the South-east Asia region continues to be the home of the highest number of tobacco users, including smokeless tobacco. Moreover, the use of ecigarettes is on the rise, particularly among young people, posing additional health risks.

Highlighting the gravity of the menace causing health issues like cancer, respiratory issues, and heart disease, newly elected Regional Director of WHO South-East Asia, Saima Wazed, has called for heightened efforts in controlling both tobacco and e-cigarette usage within the

Of particular concern is the increasing number of adolescent tobacco users, indicating a concerning trend among younger populations. Additionally, the rise in ecigarette use among schoolaged children, as evidenced by Thailand's experience, demands immediate

attention, she said. Furthermore, she stressed the lack of evidence supporting the effectiveness of ecigarettes for smoking cessation, underscoring the need for regulatory measures. Key statistics underline the gravity of the situation, with an estimated 411 million tobacco users in the region, further curb accounting for a significant consumption," Wazed said.



portion of global tobacco consumption. Smokeless tobacco usage is particularly prevalent, with the region hosting nearly 77% of global users. Furthermore, there approximately million adolescent tobacco indicating concerning trend among younger populations.

Regarding e-cigarettes, she said, despite efforts by some countries to ban or regulate ecigarettes, comprehensive measures are required.

'Several countries in the region have set ambitious targets for tobacco control, with initiatives such as "Tobacco Free Bangladesh" and "Tobacco Endgame" in India.

"Moreover, countries are implementing reduction strategies advocated by WHO, such as the MPOWER package, to

BOOK REVIEW

Rhythm of the Ruins unveils emotional brilliance

Enter the world of 'Rhythm of the Ruins' by Mukul Kumar, a captivating collection of poignant poems that capture the essence of life's complexities, offering a profound exploration of the beauty found amid chaos and change. From the slums of Bombay to mythic realms, the book promises to touch the hearts and minds of all who dare to delve into its pages

By SWARN KUMAR ANAND

I miss you terribly, Papa My sky stretches, serene Within the fortress of his care, Deluge or draught draws from My shelter a joyous smug stare.

Mukul Kumar's poetry collection "Rhythm of the Ruins" commences with an unwavering dedication to his late father, painting a vivid picture of the poet's profound connection to his Papa. The poem portrays the father as a piece with a unique blend of for resolution amid tumult.

nurturing guardian, providing a sense of eternal peace and security. Evoking imagery of a serene sky sheltered within the fortress of paternal love, Kumar finds solace amid life's uncertainties. The phrase "joyous smug stare" hints at the comfort and pride derived from his father's strength and support.

Rhythm of the Ruins offers a profound exploration of the human experience through thought-provoking poems. Mukul Kumar's mastery of personification infuses each

romance and realism, drawing inspiration from sources as Renaissance diverse as paintings to the chaos of modern life. The title poem, "The Rhythm

of the Ruins," sets a captivating tone for the entire collection, prompting readers to ponder the beauty inherent in and flux. disorder Through introspective exploration, the poem delves into the tumult of inner emotions, conveying a yearning



withholding its rain and the subsequent silence

following a storm portrays the poet's struggle for catharsis. Despite the pervasive sense of emptiness, there emerges a resilient endeavour to impose order upon chaos, driven by a desire for rejuvenation symbolised by the invocation of "Gaia" and "Eros".

Will She Come Back?" is an exploration of longing and uncertainty, where time seems to blur into an unintelligible of imperfection. Each poem is a journey in itself, offering

The vivid imagery of a cloud haze. It delves into the universal question of whether someone departed will return, evoking themes of hope, longing, and the enigmatic nature of fate. With its emotive depth and evocative language, the poem invites readers to contemplate the intricacies of human relationships and the

enduring quest for closure. Throughout the book, Mukul Kumar delves into a wide range of themes, from love and loss to the complexities of human nature and the beauty

readers moments of reflection and insight. "Not Missing the Rainbow" invites us to ponder the significance of common sights and experiences.

What sets "Rhythm of the Ruins" apart is Mukul Kumar's ability to convey deep emotions with simplicity and clarity. His language is accessible yet rich, inviting readers to immerse themselves in the beauty of his verses. One of the most remarkable

aspects of this collection is its ability to resonate with readers on a personal level. Kumar's attention to detail and keen

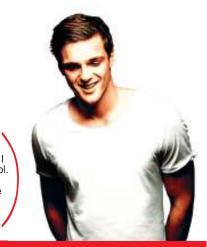
observation of life's nuances ensure that each poem feels like a deeply personal experience. These are poems to return to time and time again, each reading offering new insights and revelations.

From its evocative title to its stunning cover design, Rhythm of the Ruins (The Browser) is a book that demands attention. Whether you are a lover of poetry or simply someone who appreciates the beauty of wellcrafted words, this collection is sure to leave a lasting impression.

VIJAYAWADA, February 25, 2024

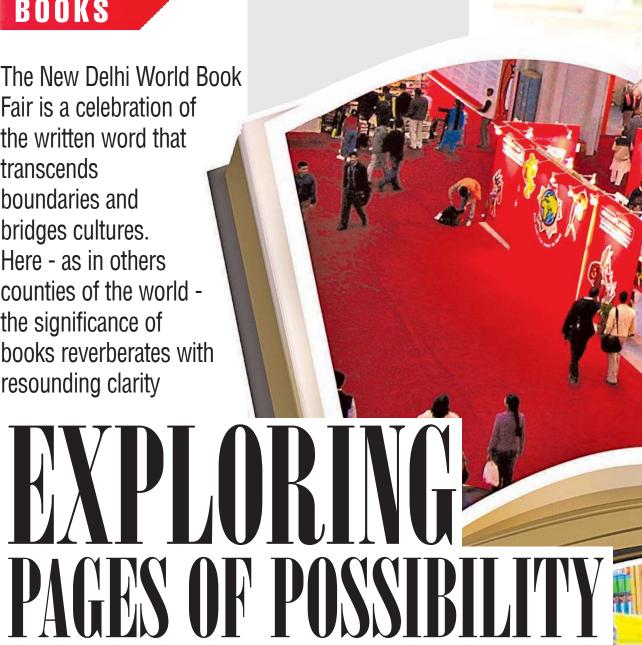
the pioneer

"I didn't finish university, I barely finished high school books I've read, and the plays that I've read"



BOOKS

The New Delhi World Book Fair is a celebration of the written word that transcends boundaries and bridges cultures. Here - as in others counties of the world the significance of books reverberates with resounding clarity





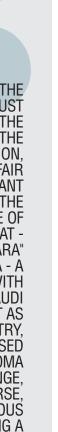
s the vibrant panorama of the New Delhi World Book Fair unfolded its final chapter on February 18, 2024, it bid a fond farewell o nine days filled with the symphony of literary marvels and cultural splendour. Nestled within the expansive embrace of Bharat Mandapam at Pragati Maidan, this majestic event, inaugurated on February 10th, played host to a multitude of nearly 15 lakh book lovers, who traversed its labyrinthine corridors in search of enlightenment and inspiration. Here, amidst the grandeur of more than 1,000 publishers hailing from 40 illustrious nations such as India, the United Kingdom, Argentina, Spain, and beyond, over 2,000 enchanting stalls stood as beacons of literary excellence.

Organised by the National Book Trust (NBT) under the nurturing wing of the Ministry of Education, this year's fair unfurled its vibrant banner under the resplendent theme of "Bahubhashi Bharat - Ek Jeevant Parampara" (Multilingual India - A Living Tradition). With the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia taking part as the guest country, the air was suffused with the heady aroma of cultural exchange, literary discourse, and harmonious dialogues, weaving a rich flavour of mutual appreciation and understanding between the two nations. While traversing through the stalls with long overhanging signages guiding paths for visitors, one could also wonder at the very craftsmanship of the engineers who put up the display in a manner that attracted students, school children, writers, authors, guest speakers, men and women with their families alike from far end - thanks to the event management groups of companies who designed this panoramic extravaganza, the effect was spell-binding.

However, what really attracted once again is the versatility and the imaginative and creative manner of enticing the readers/visitors and capturing (read holding on) to their interest. There were many window shoppers who just passed by. While some stalls engaged children in solving different crossword puzzles through creative games, there were others like ours (Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti), where spinning on the traditional charkha became a centre of attraction for the young and the old who wanted to try their hands on spinning. What came as a surprise in this digital age where Kindle and other such forums have become the latest fad, is that the Autobiography of Mahatma Gandhi, "My Experiments with Truth" was still a popular choice amongst the

The Children's Pavilion became a delightful sanctuary for young book enthusiasts, offering a diverse array of activities including storytelling, illustration workshops, calligraphy sessions, art demonstrations,

ORGANISED BY THE NATIONAL BOOK TRUST (NBT) UNDER THE NURTURING WING OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, THIS YEAR'S FAIR UNFURLED ITS VIBRANT BANNER UNDER THE RESPLENDENT THEME OF "BAHUBHASHI BHARAT -EK JEEVANT PARAMPARA" (MULTILINGUAL INDIA - A LIVING TRADITION). WITH THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA TAKING PART AS THE GUEST COUNTRY, THE AIR WAS SUFFUSED WITH THE HEADY AROMA OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE, LITERARY DISCOURSE, AND HARMONIOUS DIALOGUES, WEAVING A RICH FLAVOUR OF MUTUAL APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE TWO **NATIONS**



drama classes, and explorations into the wonders of space. Notably, the fair has demonstrated its dedication to inclusivity and accessibility in literature through specialized events tailored for children with special needs, in line with its overarching 'Books-for-All' initiative. Further, amidst this vibrant mosaic of India's cultural panorama, as showcased at the World Book Fair, the symphony of myriad languages, dialects, and traditions harmoniously intertwined into a seamless

expression of unity. Here, as one flapped through the pages of literature and glanced at the strokes of artistry, the feeling resonated with a profound testament to the nation's rich heritage. The unveiling of "Jaadui Pitara", an enchanting e-learning oasis, emerged as a beacon of enlightenment in consonance with the vision of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Overflowing with the treasures of puzzles, riddles, and tales, this marvellously inclusive repository, deftly translated into 22 languages through the marvels of (artificial intelligence) AI, stood poised to revolutionize the landscape of childhood education. Alongside, a constellation of specialized modules, meticulously crafted in alignment with NEP 2020, adorned this educational tableau, offering a cornucopia of resources and insights tailored to the modern learner. Embracing the noble vision of fostering a nation of avid readers, an ethereal e-library welcomed all with its boundless offerings, inviting one and all to immerse themselves in the splendour of knowledge.

In this timeless mosaic of human civilization, books stand as luminous threads weaving together the very fabric of knowledge, imagination, and cultural heritage. Like radiant beacons illuminating the path of enlightenment, books beckon us into realms of limitless discovery and profound insight. Amidst this vast literary landscape, book fairs emerge as vibrant marketplaces of intellect, where bibliophiles and seekers of wisdom converge in a harmonious symphony of literary delight. The English author Neil Gaiman once remarked, "Literacy is more important than ever it was, in this world of text and email, a world of written information. We need to read and write, we need global citizens who can read comfortably, comprehend what they are reading, understand nuance, and make themselves understood." His words underscore the contemporary relevance of literacy in an age dominated by digital communication.

Maya Angelou, the celebrated poet and civil rights activist, aptly encapsulated the transformative power of literacy when she asserted, "Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him." She underscored the profound impact that exposure to literature can have on shaping young minds and nurturing a lifelong love for reading. Book fairs, with their wide array of offerings spanning genres and age groups, play a crucial role in instilling this habit of reading and nurturing a generation of literate and intellectually curious individuals.

Book fairs also serve as vital platforms for promoting diversity and inclusion within the literary world. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, the acclaimed Nigerian author, emphasized the importance of diverse representation in literature when she said that "Stories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity". Therefore, by showcasing literature from diverse cultures, perspectives, and voices, book fairs contribute to a more inclusive literary landscape, fostering empathy, understanding, and interconnectedness among readers.

Book fairs, by bringing together a diverse array of literature, empower individuals to engage with various forms of written expression, thereby fostering critical thinking and communication skills essential for navigating the complexities of the modern

world. The New Delhi World Book Fair is a celebration of the written word that transcends boundaries and bridges cultures. Here - as in others counties of the world - the significance of books reverberates with resounding clarity, underscoring the enduring relevance of organizing such transformative events with new creative engagements. It is time when we move beyond just literacy...

(The writer is programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Sansthan, views are



VIJAYAWADA, February 25, 2024

Navalny's death marks Putin path to unchecked power

He was regarded as Putin's most significant political opponent to date and had sparked protests from the heart of Moscow to many other parts of the world.

His death appears to be shrouded in mystery, according to various media sources. However, the Yamal Directorate of the Federal Penitentiary Service, where for alternative ways of he was detained, issued an punishment, official statement regarding his sudden demise. It reads, "On February 16, 2024, in Penal Colony no. 3, the convict Alexei Navalny felt unwell after a walk, almost immediately losing consciousness, according to the representatives of department. Medical from personnel the institution arrived promptly, and an ambulance crew was All necessary resuscitation measures were carried out, but unfortunately, the steps did not yield The positive results. pronounced the convict dead. The cause of death is being

investigated." Navalny died, leaving behind labour camps, it was built by a legacy of resistance. It is Gulag prisoners during the worth knowing about the notorious Stalin Era. Situated horrific prison he was kept in. about 1900 km northeast of French philosopher, in his north of the Arctic Circle, the after receiving prompt famous work titled "Discipline" town of Kharp experiences and Punish: The Birth of the hardly any difference between Prison" (Surveiller et punir: night and day, as it is mostly

Aleksei A Navalny, the fiery French, published in 1975)
Russian Opposition leader strongly condemns the and critic of President Vladimir modern prison system. He Putin, passed away last week. argues that prison did not become the principal form of punishment solely because of the humanitarian concerns of the reformists. Probably, he is right; otherwise, the criminal justice system could have taken an ugly turn by now. Due to the continued fight of reformists, human rights activists, liberals, and many legal experts who advocated punishment has become less prevalent. However, Putin's Russia still maintains a century-old prison system located in the deep Arctic Circle. And this was where Navalny spent the last days of his life.

Commonly known as the "Polar Wolf," Penal Colony 3 (IK-3) or FKU-IK3 was established in the 1960s. It is located in the town of Kharp in the Province of Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous Okrug. It serves as a maximumsecurity corrective colony for men in Russia, although there emergency medical team are nearly 700 such prisons across the country.
Initially established as part of

the Gulag System of forced Michel Foucault, the great Moscow and about 60 km Naissance de la prison in covered by snow year round. to defy Putin, fully aware that



Navalny wrote in one of his posts on X, "When I look out of the window, I can see a night, then the evening, and then the night again." This was a real hell where convicts were subjected to mental and physical torment, and Navalny too became a victim

of the system last week. Navalny was first jailed in 2021 for 11 and a half years on fraud and other charges. In 2023, another term of 19 years was added to the previous ones for various offences, including funding extremism. The first known attempt by state agents to kill Navalny was in 2020 when he was poisoned with the nerve agent Novichok, which was smeared inside his underwear, but he survived treatment Germany. Less than a year later, he flew back to Moscow

he would soon be jailed. During his trial in 2021, he boldly said in the courtroom, "I have morally offended him (Putin) by surviving. He will enter history as a poisoner. We had Yaroslav the Wise and Alexander the Liberator. And now we will have Vladimir the Poisoner of Underpants." He fearlessly spoke out about all the plans Putin made to kill him but stood his ground

As an individual, Navalny never embraced tragedies, and he was a fan of "Star Wars". While in prison in 2021, he wrote, "Prison (exists) in one's mind. And if you think carefully, I am not in prison, but on a space voyage... to a wonderful new

and did not flee Russia.

At 47, when he passed away, he remained hopeful that one day Russia would witness a land of freedom. But alas! The dissident and born activist

Navalny could not see and experience the light of that day. On the way to that blissful voyage, he departed from this world.

The saddest part of this tragedy is that so far Navalny's body has not been handed over to his family. His mother, Lyudmila Navalnaya, who immediately travelled to the remote IK-3 penal colony after his death, was barred from seeing his body.

Investigators gave Lyudmila three hours to agree to forgo a public funeral or else they will bury him immediately on prison grounds.

Meanwhile, Navalny's wife, Yulia Navalnaya, who vowed to continue the struggle against Putin, alleged that her husband might have been killed with a Novichok-style nerve agent. According to her, the authorities are delaying the release of the body because they want all traces of

the poison to disappear. But spokesperson Dmitry Peskov completely rejects Yulia's allegations. Repression is at its peak in

Russia as Putin prepares for the presidential election next month. He is virtually assured of winning the election as there is absolutely no Opposition in Russia today. He has been intensifying his efforts, either through his secret agents or by using state forces, since the beginning of his regime to eliminate almost all of his political rivals. Putin has been in power since

1999. He became President in 2000 and has remained in the Kremlin ever since, firmly holding onto power by eliminating all of his rivals. He aims to restore Russia's past glory in the face of the expansion encirclement of the NATOled West around his country. The traditional inclination to highlight the uniqueness of Russia stems from the moral and spiritual background of the "Russian Idea".

Thus, there has always been a debate within Russia about whether it should align with the West or with the East. However, with Putin, it is well-established that today's Russia stands in opposition to the West (which is also strongly opposed to Russia) and aligns with the rest. In prolonged challenging journey, he has been striving to convey to Russians and the rest of the world the importance of his continued hold on power.

Putin's game plan has become clear to the world. He is not only seeking to maintain his rule but also to assert Russia's glory against the West in the 21st century. Moreover, the bloody war

with neighbouring Ukraine, which began in February 2022, has put Putin and his system in crisis. This war has inflicted significant damage on him. The longer it persists, the more casualties and losses of resources he will incur in the days ahead. However, his objective is straightforward "the capitulation of Ukraine". He aims to restore the Russian Empire and its vast influence over Eurasia. So, 21st-century Russia under Putin is entangled in myths and faces challenges from within and outside. It can be best described with the prophetic words of Fyodor Tyutchev, a 19th-century poet: "With the mind alone Russia cannot be understood,

her greatness: She stands alone, unique, In Russia, one can only

No ordinary yardstick spans

believe." It is evident that Russia, somehow beyond the rational understanding of a commoner, can no longer accept the geopolitical realities and global governance constructed by the West. Thus, the struggle continues between Russia and the West. However, it is better for the US and the rest of the West to engage with Putin.

As Russia's defiance of Western norms continues, engaging with **Putin remains** crucial. However, Navalny's death highlights the need for accountability and space for **Opposition voices** within the regime



MAKHAN SAIKIA

While his vision of a new, powerful, and aggressive Russia may persist, Putin should provide a meaningful platform for opposition voices to point out the flaws in the regime. Whether natural or unnatural, Navalny's death paints a grim picture of Putin.

(The writer is a Senior Faculty at the Department of Political Science in the School of Liberal Education, Ğalgot University, Greater Noida.) Galgotias

OUTLOOK-

Transforming public broadcasting



SHASHI SHEKHAR VEMPATI

decade of reforms in Indian only critical examination, not only for has also freed up valuable the transformation since Prime spectrum for 5G and rural Minister Narendra Modi took office but also for the pivotal role public service media is poised to these transmitter sites towards play in India's developmental managing its fast-expanding FM "Viksit Bharat" by 2047.

India, is often labelled as the "lost breaking the silos within which decade", particularly true for public broadcasting due to the lackadaisical approach of the then government towards reforms. Doordarshan and All India Radio remained entrenched in a status Kisan, challenges of the 21st century. every embarked on an unprecedented journey of public broadcasting reforms, the impact of which was most evident during the COVID-19. This transformation has not only been about technological upgrades but has been driven by

challenges of the internet era. The transformation witnessed since 2014 is staggering in both Internationally, DD India's scale and complexity. The reach growth as a channel has been of DD FreeDish, India's largest remarkable, becoming the free-to-air DTH platform, has number one English news doubled, serving over 45 million channel in India and expanding families. It became a lifeline its global footprint to over 190 during the COVID-19 pandemic, countries through a combination providing critical access to of platforms such as myK in educational content to millions of Korea, YuppTV in North students across India who faced limitations in internet access. FreeDish's role in saving the academic year for these students was recognised by global media outlets, highlighting how India effectively leveraged public been a focus, with Prasar Bharati broadcasting to mitigate the achieving a 13 per cent revenue impact of the pandemic.

Also, Doordarshan's broadcast of

Wall Street Journal. The viewership records established by Ramayan set a high benchmark for Indian television for years to

public broadcasting undertaken terrestrial television transmitters. With this phase-out, Prasar Bharati has not Apublic broadcasting warrants expenditure on electricity, but it communication services. Redeploying the manpower from journey towards achieving a radio network, Prasar Bharati also undertook long-overdue The period between 2004 and convergence between 2014, when the UPA governed television and radio operations, Akashvani and Doordarshan had

long operated. The expansion of Doordarshan's satellite channels from 23 in 2017 to 36 in 2021, including dedicated channels like DD underscores quo of the 20th century mindset, commitment to diversified ill-equipped to meet the content catering to the needs of Indian. Similarly, However, since 2014, under the Akashvani's footprint expanded stewardship of Prime Minister significantly, ensuring the voice Narendra Modi, Prasar Bharati of India reached the farthest corners of the country and beyond. Digitalisation and the integration of IT systems across DD and AIR have made public broadcasting more accessible and inclusive. The introduction of sign language commentary for a vision for how broadcasting major events and the digitisation must evolve to meet the of archival content preserve India's rich cultural heritage while making it accessible to all. America, apart from YouTube. This international outreach is critical for projecting India's perspectives and values on the global stage. Financial sustainability has also

growth in 2021-2022 from commercial operations. This corner of the globe by amplifying epics Ramayan and Mahabharat financial prudence, coupled with during the COVID-19 lockdown technological advancements, has engaged citizens across India and established a strong foundation caught the attention of for a roadmap towards a self-

international media such as the sustaining public broadcasting

Strategic interventions, such as broadcasting weather reports for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and expanding the digital footprint The most significant reform in through platforms like the NewsOnAir App, reflect a bold over the past ten years has been and innovative approach to the phasing out of over 1200 leveraging public broadcasting interest and globs

> The impact of a decade of reforms in public broadcasting is clearly visible, with the Reuters Institute of Journalism Studies ranking Doordarshan and Akashvani as the most credible and trustworthy sources of news in India in its annual surveys. Yet, these reforms are not an end but

a beginning. To realise Prime Minister Modi's vision of a 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047, public broadcasting must continue to evolve. It must serve as a platform for education, dialogue, innovation, and bridging the digital divide and ensuring that every Indian, irrespective of their socioeconomic status, has access to information, education, and entertainment. This becomes apparent when one considers the diversity of India's languages across regions, many of which are either underserved or unserved by the private media. Akashvani's services spanning more than a hundred languages and dialects are a reminder of how challenging it is to disseminate developmental messages to the remotest regions of India in a consistent and accurate manner. Through Prime Minister Modi's Mann ki Baat, Akashavani has only amplified developmental messaging across India but has also contributed to the technologies of the future. Today, AI models are being developed for these languages and dialects by leveraging the corpus of Mann ki Baat recordings and the archives of Doordarshan and All India Radio.

The journey from "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas" to "Viksit Bharat" is long and challenging, but with the strategic use of public broadcasting, India is poised to achieve this vision, ensuring that the voice of every Indian is heard, and the story of India's development reaches every these billion voices.

(The writer is a former CEO of Prasar Bharati)

PERSPECTIVE

Legal support to MSP hurts economy

The tnirieen-monan are granters' protest on the borders thirteen-month-long of the national capital in 2020-21 was called off when three farm laws were repealed. Now, Punjab farmers have demanded statutory guarantees for minimum support prices (MSPs) for 23 crops, loan waivers, pensions, amendments to trade policies such as withdrawing from the WTO, withdrawing criminal cases filed by agencies against them, free electricity, and exemption accountability for any pollution and environmental hazards caused

by farm practices. In several rounds of discussions between the government and farm representatives have explained that a legal guarantee for the procurement of 23 crops at MSP could result in a fiscal disaster and damage the economy. Referring to the 2020-21 data, the total value of agricultural produce is ₹40 lakh crore, and no government can make a provision of this amount from the total outlay of ₹47 lakh crore. Hardly any money would be left for other development works

and achieving social goals necessary for overall growth. The data reveals that the government spent ₹2.5 lakh crore in 2022-23 on procuring wheat and rice at MSP. The Union Government's proposal for a five-year contract with farmers to procure maize, cotton, and pulses - arhar, tur, masoor, and urad — at MSP has also been rejected by farm unions. Furthermore, farmers are demanding to work out MSP based on the formula C2+50 per cent (C2 is the comprehensive cost including the imputed cost of

capital and rent on land), suggested by the Dr Swaminathan Committee, while at present, it is being worked out with all paid-out costs A2+FL, which includes costs incurred towards hiring human labour, leased rent for the land, cost of inputs like seeds, fertilizers, manure, depreciation on implements and buildings, irrigation charges, interest on working capital, and also the

imputed value of family labor. Agriculture contributes 17 per cent to India's economy, while it employs 50 per cent of the workforce. Furthermore, only 2 per cent of Indian farmers own 25 per cent of the land, with the top 7 per cent of farming households owning 46 per cent of farmlands. These households are affluent and have a strong influence on policy

However, the majority, comprising over 80 per cent of farming

households, have land holdings of less than a hectare. The total holding of this 80 per cent household group accounts for only 30 per cent of the agricultural lands.

The protest has garnered global support. Similar to the previous protest at the borders of Delhi in 2020-21, Claudia Webbe, a UK MP from Leicester East, has supported the Delhi Chalo protest emphasising that Indian farmers are peacefully protesting but are met with spiked barricades and tear gas en route to Delhi.

Dr Swaiman Singh's organisation, based in the US, which provided medical services to farmers at the Tikri border during the earlier protest, has urged volunteers to too. Support is also pouring in from many other quarters for this edition of the protest.

In a viral video, Sanyukta Kisan Morcha leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal is heard saying, "cut Modi's graph." This indicates that the entire protest is politically motivated and lacks sincerity in pushing for the demands. It does not appear to be a genuine movement to save farmers; rather, it seems to be a movement to remove Modi from power.

The main Opposition party, Congress, through its national president Mallikarjun Kharge, announced during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Ambikapur, Chhattisgarh, that his party would bring MSP under the purview of legal guarantee if voted to power in the forthcoming Lok Sabha election.

Rahul Gandhi also echoed similar Clearly, sentiments. Opposition has a political agenda, and their only aim is to remove Modi and seize power at the centre. However, all the opinion polls suggest that Modi is poised for a strong comeback for a third

Both jawan and kisan draw sympathy from everyone in the country. The former protects us from aggression and disasters, while the latter provides us with food and is considered Annadata (provider of food). The Food Corporation of India procures grain at MSP and utilises it in the PM Garib Kalvan Yojana to feed more than 800 million people at a rate of 5 kg of wheat or rice per month per person. The government heavily subsidises (80 per cent) in favour of consumers, with only one-fifth of the benefits going to producers for subsidised power, fertilizer, etc. Whenever the price of essential commodities rises, the government either bans exports or increases imports, as the case may be. This is purely to help consumers. If farmers' demands for MSP are met, it would result in a 25 to 30 per cent increase in food inflation. No government will accept such high

Ironically, the MSP of wheat and rice in north India is higher than the market price Puniah has a procurement system at its mandis where Arhtiyas (commission agents) charge a 2.5 per cent commission, and the Punjab Government charges a 6 per cent fee. Procurement of wheat and rice in Punjab exceeds production; in fact, grains from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, where market rates are provide similar support this time 15 to 20 per cent lower than MSP, are transported and sold in Punjab. Punjab has a hundred per cent irrigation potential and provides free electricity up to 300 units for each farmer. Additionally, seeds, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides are heavily subsidised; farmers utilise all these to increase productivity.

Economic principles suggest that if MSP is artificially kept high, a large part of the produce will remain unpurchased, leading to hardship for small farmers. Commodities such as poultry, fisheries, fruits, vegetables, and milk are traded in the free market, and there is no demand to fix MSP for any of these.

The present AAP Government in Punjab has allowed 300 units of free power, which has had a devastating effect on agricultural lands. During my recent visit to Punjab, I observed that farmers switch on the water pump and keep it on auto mode, resulting in excess water being brought out. table and, more importantly, floods marginal lands adjoining agricultural fields. Consequently, the land becomes saline and less suitable for agriculture, making it impossible to grow food crops. The provision of free power is leading to desertification.

Punjab's most eminent farm expert, SS Johl, has estimated that 80 per cent of the State's debt is due to free electricity. The debt-to-GDP ratio in the State is 48 per cent, the highest among all States in India, leaving very little money for infrastructure development. Furthermore, high farm income leads to higher land prices. No industrialist ventures into environment. acquiring land at such high prices (ranging from one to five crores per acre), which is a reason for slow industrial growth in the State.

The farmers protest is politically motivated and lacks sincerity in pushing for the demands. It does not appear to be a genuine movement to save farmers; rather, it seems to be a movement to remove Modi from power



BK SINGH

Studies have revealed that the water table has declined by 25 meters in 20 years in Punjab. It is high time that farmers heed the government's suggestion and diversify agricultural lands for other crops that are less waterintensive. 2023 was designated as the International Year of Millets. This causes a lowering of the water Growing millets aligns with more natural agricultural practices and offers crops with higher nutritional value. To prevent overexploitation of the land, the cultivation of paddy needs to be minimised. Studies have shown that every hectare of paddy crop causes 5 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

> Given our efforts to reduce emissions to mitigate climaterelated disruptions and catastrophes, it is imperative to shift our crop cultivation practices away from paddy and towards millets. Furthermore, if farmers continue stubble burning, it will take a toll on health and harm the

(The writer is retired Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force) Karnataka)



Idli, chicken jalfrezi featured among foods with highest biodiversity footprint

ndia's idli, chana masala and rajma featured in the top 20 dishes with the highest biodiversity footprint, along with chicken jalfrezi and chicken chaat, according to a new study analysing 151 popular local dishes from around the world.

However, researchers found that dishes with beef as the main ingredient such as fraldinha - beef cut dish originating from Brazil - formed the bulk of the top 20. Chili con carne (spicy stew with chili peppers, beef and beans) and beef tartare were other such dishes.

The scientists from National University of Singapore analysed lists of popular dishes taken from CNN.com and TasteAtlas.com to estimate their biodiversity footprints when globally and locally produced.

The researchers found that dishes made from ingredients like beef, legumes and rice encroaching on biodi-



versity hotspots with already very high agricultural pressure such as India end up having a high biodiversity footprint.

"India was observed to be involved with the production of mostly high bio-diversity footprint dishes with biodiversity impacts driven by ingredients (e.g. rice, legumes, chicken) that are not

commonly flagged as having a high environmental footprint," the researchers wrote.

Brazilian beef dishes also had high biodiversity impacts due to the conversion of Amazon rainforest and other diverse ecosystems to pasture, they said.

Vegan and vegetarian dishes were

starchy foods comprising potato and wheat such as mantou and Chinese steamed bun were among those with the lowest biodiversity footprint, the researchers said in their study pub-

to dishes containing meat, the

researchers said.

found to have a consistent significantly lower biodiversity footprint compared

lished in the journal PLoS ONE. They said this was partly explained by the lower weights of these dishes with below-average biodiversity foot-print per keal per gram in both locally

and globally produced scenarios.

The researchers calculated the biodiversity footprint of each dish's ingredient by looking at the richness, conservation status, and range of wild mammals, birds, and amphibians within the agricultural land used for the specific product. They then added each ingredi-



ent's footprint together to generate the dish's overall biodiversity footprint score, which shifted depending on whether the ingredient was locally or globally sourced, and industrially or small-scale farmed.

Estimating dishes' biodiversity footprints across countries can empower

consumers and facilitate transitioning towards sustainable diets to mitigate the impacts of producing food on biodiversity, the researchers said.

Small changes in the dish we choose to eat and where we get the ingredients from can go a long way in preventing species extinctions, they said.

FIGHT AGAINST RUSSIA

Questions abound on whether Kyiv can sustain



¬he future looks bleak for war-weary Ukraine: It is beset by shortages in soldiers and ammunition, as well as doubts about the supply of Western aid. Ukrainian forces also face a Russian enemy that has

recently seized the initiative on the battlefield. Two years after Russia's full-scale invasion captured nearly a quarter of the country, the stakes could not be higher for Kyiv. After a string of victories in the first year of the war, fortunes have turned for the Ukrainian military, which is dug in, outgunned and out-

numbered against a more powerful opponent.
As the war enters its third year, here is a look at the situation on the ground, the challenges ahead and some of the potential consequences if Ukraine does not acquire the people, ammunition and assistance it needs to sustain the fight.

WHAT IS THE STATE OF PLAY?

Ukraine along the snaking front line in the country's east. With Russia gaining advantages, shortages mounting and a major military shake-up still fresh, questions abound about whether Kyiv can keep going.

"As things stand, neither side has won.

Neither side has lost. Neither side is anywhere near giving up. And both sides have pretty much exhausted the manpower and equipment that they started the war with," said Gen. Richard Barrons, a British military officer who is co-chair of a defense consultancy.

Ukraine suffered setbacks after the muchanticipated summer counteroffensive failed to produce any breakthroughs. The armed forces switched to a defensive posture in the fall to repel new advances from Moscow.

On Feb. 17, Russian forces took control of the embattled city of Avdiivka, where Kyiv's troops were under constant fire with Russians approaching from three directions. Ukrainian had complained for weeks of

personnel and ammunition shortages. It was the biggest battlefield victory for Russia since the fight for Bakhmut, and it confirmed that Moscow's offensive was gaining steam.

Away from the battlefield, Ukraine has proven successful in the Black Sea, where it has used long-range weapons to strike military installations in Crimea and maritime drones to sink Russian warships. Ukraine has disabled a third of the Black Sea Fleet. according to the Atlantic Council. Ukraine is looking to acquire more long-range missiles to strike deep into Russian-occupied territo-ry, a move that some European countries fear may spark escalation from Moscow.

HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED?

Both Russia and Ukraine have sought to keep casualty figures under wraps. Few details about Ukrainian military deaths have emerged since the full-scale invasion began in 2022. But it's clear that tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilians have been killed.

In 2023, the first independent statistical analysis of Russia's war dead concluded that nearly 50,000 Russian men had died in the war. Two independent Russian media outlets, Mediazona and Meduza, worked with a data scientist from Germany's T bingen University to analyze Russian government data.

WHAT HAPPENS IF UKRAINE CAN'T FIND MORE

Without more soldiers, Ukraine's defensive lines will be overstretched and more vulnerable to Russian attack, especially if Moscow launches intense multi-pronged assaults along the 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) front line.

The Ukrainian military has an average personnel shortage of 25% across brigades, according to lawmakers. Military commanders are unable to give their soldiers enough rest, and Russia has recently increased the tempo of attacks. As a result, soldiers are and more easily injured exacerbating

effects of the shortage.

Ukraine's military command has said 450,000 to 500,000 additional recruits are needed for the next phase of the war. Even if Ukraine succeeds in mobilizing that number, which is unlikely, it still would not be able to match the manpower of Russia, which has more than three times Ukraine's population.

Lawmakers have spent months mulling over a controversial proposal to increase the conscription pool, as many Ukrainian men continue to evade the war in Ukrainian cities.

Commanders say they don't have enough men to dig trenches or carry out offensive operations. Shortages have also required them to switch tactics and focus on preserving the lives of the soldiers they do have, sometimes at the expense of holding territory.

WHAT ABOUT WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION?

If they continue, ammunition shortages will jeopardize Ukraine's ability to hold territory and keep soldiers alive.

Military leaders appear to be rationing shells, sending trickles of ammunition to firing positions to preserve stockpiles, while promises for more ammunition from Western allies have gone unfulfilled. The European Union failed on its promise to deliver 1 million rounds by the start of the year, delivering only a few hundred thousand.

At the same time, Russia is mobilizing its defense industry and may soon be able to fire 5,000 artillery rounds a day, Barrons said. Ukraine is building up its domestic arms production but will not be able to match Moscow in scale in the short-term.

Military commanders have complained for months of ammunition shortages for infantry fighting vehicles, machine guns, artillery and multiple rocket launch systems. Those shortages grew particularly acute by the end of 2023, with some artillery commanders saying they can meet only 10% of ammunition



Zelenskyy hosts Western leaders in Kyiv

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy welcomed Western leaders to Kyiv Saturday to mark the second anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion, as Ukrainian forces run low on ammunition and weaponry and foreign aid hangs in the balance.

Zelenskyy posted a video from the Hostomel airfield together with Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni, Belgian Prime Minister Alexander De Croo and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, as well as the the European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

"Two years ago, here, we met enemy landing forces with fire two year we meet our friends and our partners here," Zelenskyy said at the airport just outside of Kyiv, which Russian paratroopers unsuccessfully tried to seize in the first days of the war.

The Western leaders arrived shortly after a Russian drone attack struck a residential building in the southern city of Odesa, killing at least one. Three women also sustained severe burns in the attack on a residential building Friday evening, regional Gov. Oleh Kiper wrote on his social media account. Rescue services combed through the rubble looking for survivors.

Italy, which holds the rotating presidency of the Group of Seven leading economies, announced that the G7 will meet virtually on Saturday with

Zelenskyy and would adopt a joint statement on Ukraine.

"More than ever we stand firmly by Ukraine. Financially, economically, militarily, morally. Until the country is finally free," von der Leyen said in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

On the front line in the eastern Donetsk region, Ukrainian soldiers pleaded for ammunition.

"When the enemy comes in, a lot of our guys die. ... We are sitting here with nothing," said Volodymyr, 27, a senior officer in an artillery bat-

"In order to protect our number of shells, which we do not have now," said Oleksandr, 45, a commander of an artillery unit. The two officers only gave their first names, citing security concerns.

In a message on the war's second anniversary, Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, the commanderin-chief of Ukraine's armed forces, thanked Ukrainian soldiers for their sacrifices and Western allies for their support, saying, "Every projectile, every tank, every armoured vehicle is, first of all, saving the life of a Ukrainian soldier."

Earlier this month, Zelenskyy fired top military commander Valerii Zaluzhnyi and replaced him with Syrskyi, marking the most significant shakeup of top brass since the full-scale invasion.

Astronomers spot new tiny moons around Neptune and Uranus

A stronomers have found three previously unknown moons in our solar system two additional moons circling Neptune and one around Uranus.

The distant tiny moons were spotted using powerful land-based telescopes in Hawaii and Chile, and announced Friday by the International Astronomical Union's Minor Planet Center.

The latest tally puts Neptune at 16 known moons and Uranus at 28.

One of Neptune's new moons has the longest known orbital journey yet. It takes around 27 years for the small outer moon to complete one lap around Neptune, the vast icy planet farthest from the sun, said Scott Sheppard, an astronomer at the Carnegie Institution for Science in Washington who helped make the discovery. The new moon orbiting Uranus, with an estimated diameter of just 5 miles (8 kilometers), is likely the smallest of the planet's moons. "We suspect that there may be many more smaller moons" yet to be discovered, he



World War II-era bomb whose Adiscovery prompted one of the largest peacetime evacuations in British history has been detonated at sea, the Ministry of Defense said on

The 500-kilogram (1,100-pound) explosive was discovered Tuesday in the backyard of a home in Plymouth, a port city on the southwestern coast of Britain. More than 10,000 residents were evacuated to ensure their safety as a military convoy transported the unexploded bomb through a densely populated residential area to a ferry slipway, from which it was taken out "I think it is fair to say that the last

few days will go down in history for Plymouth," said Tudor Evans, the leader of Plymouth City Council.

Plymouth, home to major naval bases for centuries, was one of the



most heavily bombed cities in Britain during the World War II. Fifty-nine separate air raids killed 1,174 civilians,

according to local officials. The raids destroyed almost 3,800 homes, and heavily damaged another 18,000.

Scientists measure gravity at microscopic scale

Say it paves way for understanding quantum gravity

Scientists have measured gravity at the microscopic scale in a new study which the a new study, which they say paves the way for finding the elu-

sive quantum gravity theory.

The gravitational force, originally discovered by physicist and mathematician Isaac Newton, is known to be fundamentally weak, gaining prominence and being detectable only at macroscopic scales.

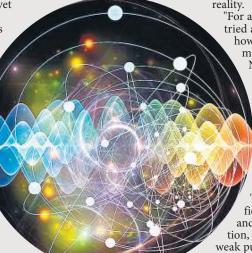
Einstein's theory of general relativity - the widely accepted theory of gravity - has been confirmed through experiments multiple times, more recently by directly observing gravitational waves from the merging of two black holes in 2016 and other black hole imaging stud-

However, in the quantum realm, or at the atomic scale, how the

gravitational force works is not yet fully understood, even as it is believed that particles and forces

at this scale interact differently than regular-sized objects. In this study published in the journal 'Science Advances', physicists at the University of Southampton in the United Kingdom along with those in the Netherlands and Italy, report that they have suc-

cessfully detected a weak gravitational pull on a tiny particle using a new technique involving levitating magnets. Lead author Tim Fuchs, from the University of Southampton, said the results could help experts find the missing puzzle piece in our picture of



"For a century, scientists have tried and failed to understand how gravity and quantum mechanics work together.

Now we have successfully measured gravitational signals at the smallest mass ever recorded, it means we are one step closer to finally realising how it works in tandem," he said.

Using a sophisticated setup involving superconducting devices, or 'traps", with magnetic fields, sensitive detectors and advanced vibration isolation, the scientists measured a weak pull of just 30 attonewtons (aN) -- 30 quintillionths (10 raised to -18) of a newton -- on a tiny

particle of weight 0.43 milligrams by levitating it in freezing temperatures a hundredth of a degree above absolute zero -- about -273 degrees Celsius.

The results open the door for future experiments between even smaller objects and forces with their novel technique employing extremely cold temperatures and devices to isolate vibrations of tiny particles likely proving to be the way forward for measuring quantum gravity, said professor of physics Hendrik Ülbricht.

"From here, we will start scaling the source down using this technique until we reach the quantum world on both sides. By understanding quantum gravity, we could solve some of the mysteries of our universe - like how it began, what happens inside the black holes, or uniting all forces into one big theory," said Fuchs.