www.dailypioneer.com Published From: VIJAYAWADA HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH BHUBANESWAR RANCHI DEHRADUN



INDIA SEEKS PERMANENT SOLUTION

TO FOOD SECURITY



biggest, most intense films in

'I am shooting for some of the MY CAREER' Does change mean power outages and drinking water scarcity? The Congress government cannot run Mission Bhagiratha. Congress leaders did not think that they would come to power and so they gave assurances as they liked. They said that they would provide welfare schemes for everyone but now they are saying the schemes are only for a few.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

the pioneer

- KT Rama Rao, BRS working president

Notices to 256 meat stalls in...

Guntur Municipal Commissioner, Kirthi Chekuri, has taken decisive action to ensure public health standards are maintained in the city's meat-selling establishments. In response to recent concerns over hygiene and the spread of diseases like diarrhoea, the GMC public health officials issued notices to approximately 256 meat stalls and shops in Guntur city on Sunday. Commissioner Kirthi emphasised the importance of maintaining a hygienic environment in all chicken, mutton, and other meat-selling outlets across the...

India to add 18

more N-power...

India will add 18 more nuclear power reactors with a cumulative capacity to generate 13,800 MWe of electricity, taking the total share of atomic power in the energy mix to 22,480 MWe by 2031-32. This was announced by the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) after Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated two home-built 700 MW nuclear power reactors at Kakrapar in Gujarat last week. Presently, the NPCIL operates 24 reactors with a total capacity of 8,180 MWe. The prime

Exports now into Africa, Central...

minister dedicated..

At a time when global trade is facing geo-political uncertainties, India's exports of goods like automobiles and gold jewellery have ventured into uncharted territories of Central Asia, Africa analysis by the commerce ministry. The analysis has shown that India has penetrated into what are termed as "absolutely new markets" in regions such as Africa, Central Asia, Latin America and North America during April-December 2023. The "absolutely new markets" refer...

-PAGE: 8

Ashwin, Jurel, Kuldeep shine...

Dhruv Jurel's defensive chefd'oeuvre found a perfect match in the destructive symphony of spin by fifer-man Ravichandran Ashwin and Kuldeep Yadav as India seized decisive control of the fourth Test against England at the end of a dramatic third day here on Sunday. India walked off at the stumps having chiselled off 40 runs from the 192-run target without losing a wicket. Rohit Sharma (24 batting) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (16 batting) would be confident of the team mustering the remaining 152 runs without much.

-SPORTS

'Cadre upset with 'meagre' 24 seats allotted to JSP'

Criticising the allocation of 24 MLA seats to the Jana Sena Party (JSP), former MP and Kapu Sankshema Sena President Ch Hari Ramajogaiah expressed dissatisfaction, questioning the party's perceived strength in contesting only 24 seats.

In an open letter released here on Sunday, Ĥari Ramajogaiah highlighted that out of the 118 seats announced by both parties on based on demographic statistics.

leaders from the Kamma community, 17 seats to Reddy candidates, 15 seats to Kapu representatives, and 25 seats to BCs (Backward Classes). Ramajogaiah stressed that the

allocation should have been proportionate to the population ratio, suggesting that 50% of seats should have been given to BC candidates, 25% to Kapu candidates, 4% to Kamma candidates, and 6% to Reddy candidates, 'I fail to comprehend why Pawan Kalyan accepted only 24 seats and backed the TDP. The Kapu community aspires to see Pawan Kalyan as the Chief Minister of the state. He should hold the position for at least two and a half years'

"Upon what criteria were 24 seats granted to the JSP? Why did the TDP allocate seats to the JSP without reciprocation?" he queried. Ramajogaiah also doubted the

JSP's ability to win more than 24 seats, claiming that JSP leaders had identified 40 to 50 constituencies as their strongholds.

"I fail to comprehend why Pawan

5 dead; 3 hurt as SUV

Tragedy struck Barlapalle village in Madanapalle mandal, Annamayya district, on Sunday, as a devastating road accident claimed

the lives of five persons and left three others

critically injured. The incident unfolded when

an SUV carrying five passengers veered out of control, first striking and fatally injuring two pedestrians, identified as Chandra (50) and Subramanyam (62), both dairy farmers, before

veers off road, hits lorry

Kalyan accepted only 24 seats and backed the TDP. The Kapu community aspires to see Pawan Kalyan as the Chief Minister of the state. He should hold the position for at least two and a half years," he remarked.

The former MP emphasized that without significant vote transfer, the TDP cannot secure power. He maintained that the JSP cadre was disheartened by allocating only 24



No change in **Group 1 exam** date: Sawang

PNS VIJAYAWADA

In a significant announcement, Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission (APPSC) Chairman Gautam Sawang has confirmed that the Group 1 examinations will not be deferred. Amidst speculation and rumours, Sawang reassured candidates that the scheduled March 17 examination date remains unchanged.

This declaration follows the recent successful conduct of the Group 2 preliminary exam, where a commendable 87.17% of the 4,83,525 registered candidates appeared, totalling 4,04,037 partic-

Sawang lauded the peaceful administration of the Group 2 exam, emphasising stringent supervision and monitoring from the

CM to fulfil Kuppam water promise today

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is set to fulfil a significant promise on Sunday as he releases irrigation water to 6,300 acres of ayacut through 110 minor irrigation tanks in Kuppam constituency, along with providing drinking water to 4.02 lakh residents in Kuppam and Palamaneru constituencies from Kuppam Branch Canal.

The initiative, a part of the AVR HNSS Project Phase-2, constructed at a cost of Rs 560.29 crore in Rajupet, Rama Kuppam mandal, Chittoor district, underscores the government's commitment to addressing crucial water needs. Following the ceremonial release

of irrigation water, the Chief Minister will engage with the public in a meeting at Gundisettipalle, Shanthipuram mandal, Chittoor District.

This endeavour marks a signifi-

THE INITIATIVE BEING TAKEN AS PART OF **THE AVR HNSS PROJECT PHASE-2**

■ Irrigation water to be provided 6,300 acres of ayacut through 110 minor irrigation tanks in the Kuppam constituency, along with providing drinking water to 4.02 lakh residents in Kuppam and Palamaneru constituencies from the Kuppam Branch Canal.

The government has initiated various developmental projects in Kuppam, including the upgrade of Kuppam Gram Panchayat to a Municipality, the establishment of the Kuppam Revenue Division, and a Police Sub-Division. substantial investments, such as Rs 66 crore for developmental works in Kuppam Municipality and Rs 100 crore for the development of four mandals in the constituency, signify the government's commitment to holistic growth.

resources in the drought-prone Kuppam constituency. The government's efforts are aimed at enhancing the quality of life and fostering agricultural prosperity in the region.

cant step towards fulfilling the long-standing demand for water Jagan, the government has initiated Under the leadership of CM

various developmental projects in Kuppam, including the upgrade of Kuppam Gram Panchayat to a Municipality, the establishment of the Kuppam Revenue Division, and a Police Sub-Division.

PM Modi inaugurates microbiology food testing laboratory in Vizag P4

colliding head-on with a lorry. The impact of the collision was catastrophic, instantly claiming the lives of three occupants of the SUV: Tilak, Vikram, and Sreenu. The scene of the accident was harrowing, with the SUV sustaining such severe damage that its roof was completely torn off, trapping the

Gear up for YSRCP challenge: Naidu

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Emphasising that the selection of candidates from both the TDP and the Jana Sena has been meticulously conducted with the welfare of the state in mind, TDP leader Nara Chandrababu Naidu stated on Sunday that the upcoming elections the people's future.

The alliance between the TDP and the Jana Sena is solely for the for navigating the forthcoming elecbetterment of the five crore people of the state," remarked Chandrababu Naidu during a video conference He congratulated them on their inclusion in the initial list and pro-

and meticulously analyzed survey data before announcing our party's candidates. This is an unparalleled undertaking in Indian politics."

"I've consulted with 1.3 cr individuals

Highlighting the unprecedented early selection of candidates, Naidu with the selected TDP candidates. underscored the innovative approach adopted this time. He mentioned seeking input from party vided them with strategic guidance leaders and grassroots workers to

finalize the candidates, emphasizing the extensive effort involved. "I've consulted with 1.3 crore individuals and meticulously analyzed survey data before announcing our party's candidates.



Subba Reddy terms YSRCP candidates 'coordinators'

YSRCP's final

election manifesto

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a move that has sent shockwaves

(YSRCP), senior leader and regional coordinator of North Andhra, YV Subba Reddy, has created significant confusion by declaring the candidates announced in the seven released lists thus far as mere 'coordinators' and not confirmed contenders

and the actual list for the upcoming elecof candidates will only be revealed at Subbareddy's statement has left both party members and the announced 'candidates' themselves

leader further added that the party's final election manifesto and the actual list of candidates will only be revealed during the upcoming 'Medarametla meeting', the final preparatory gathering before the elections.

Experts and party insiders are left speculating about the motives behind Subbareddy's controversial announcement. Some

suggest it might be a strategic move to curb further defections, as the YSRCP has recently witnessed a significant exodus of members, particularly sitting MLAs and MPs, to other political parties. This ambiguity has created significant anxiety among the party's 'coordinator' candidates, who have already begun cam-

the Medarametla paigning under the meeting assumption they are confirmed contenders. scrambling for answers. The senior The uncertainty surrounding their actual status has left many questioning the point of investing time and resources into their campaigns

without a guaranteed seat in the

Continued on Page 2

AP govt slashes VAT on natural gas

In a significant development, gas distribution players and natural gas customers in Andhra Pradesh will now have a cause for celebration as the Andhra Pradesh Government has announced a substantial reduction in Value Added Tax (VAT) on natural gas. The VAT rate, previously at 24.5%, has been reduced to 5%, making Piped Natural Gas (PNG) and Natural Gas (PNG) and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) much more affordable for the existing consumers of AG&P Pratham. would like to thank YS Jagan

This move is set to bring about a positive change in the region, allowing Natural Gas consumers of the Transportation, Industrial and Commercial sectors to enjoy the benefits of CNG & PNG. Effective from 1st April 2024, the CNG prices in Andhra Pradesh are estimated to reduce from Rs 93 per kg to around Rs 79 per kg marking a significant stride towards a gasbased economy.

Speaking on this development Abhilesh Gupta, Managing Director



Mohan Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh for his visionary leadership of Andhra Pradesh and for this significant step of reducing & CEO AG&P Pratham, said "I VAT on natural gas from 24.5% to

This exemplary step paves the way for the state to chart out a whole new path of sustainable development and herald a new age of natural gas-driven industrial growth. Andhra Pradesh is a leading state for industrial development and growth.

This initiative in VAT reduction will augur well for attracting business entities to invest more in the state of Andhra Pradesh as this will reduce the cost of manufacturing substantially and make AP-based businesses competitive with manufacturers in other states.

Free sports from politicians, bureaucrats: Gopichand

PNS NEW DELHI

Legendary shuttler Pullela Gopichand was on Sunday extremely critical of politicians and bureaucrats running sports administration in the country, saying that the government should bring a law to ensure only professionals and people who understand sports are at the helm of affairs.

Speaking during the 'News9 Global Summit' here, the former All England champion, who runs a badminton academy in Hyderabad producing top players said, "One legislation, I would really love to see is the government telling that we (sportspersons) are not under bureaucrats, sports administration is not under politicians. But sports is managed by

professionals and people who know stuff and who are sportspersons.

That, from a legislation point I would really want to see," said Gopichand, who is also currently the chief national badminton coach. He also called upon the government and other stakeholders to streamline the processes where

an athlete could just concentrate on his training and performance without having to bother about other issues. "From policy makers, there are two things that are important. For

performance, there are too many people involved, there are the (sports) associations, government, private parties, managers; there's a whole of ecosystem. Continued on Page 2

Milan 2024 sea manoeuvres showcase Naval unity JAVVADI LAKSHMANA RAO VISAKHAPATNAM

The sea phase of MILAN 2024, a biennial naval exercise, has set sail with an extraordinary demonstration of collaboration among naval forces from various friendly nations, joining hands with the Indian Navy. Marking the commencement on Saturday, this high-intensity sea phase encompasses air, surface, and undersea operations, exhibiting a formidable display of naval prowess. Day 2 of the MILAN 2024 Sea

Phase witnessed a seamless integration of efforts and interoperability as ships from different nations operated collaboratively in the Bay of Bengal. This multinational collaboration not only strengthened camaraderie but also deepened the understanding of operational philosophies and pro-



cedures among the participating

Participants in the Sea Phase engaged in a series of advanced exercises covering all facets of maritime warfare. Activities included precision weapon firings against surface and high-speed

aerial targets, anti-submarine warfare maneuvers, cross-deck landings, carrier operations, and seamanship evolutions such as replenishment at sea. The pace of operations has steadily intensified over the past two days, underscoring the commitment to enhancing



maritime capabilities and fostering

international cooperation.
The MILAN 2024 Sea Phase stands as a testament to the commitment of participating nations in promoting peace, stability, and interoperability in the maritime

domain. As the exercise progress-

es, the world witnesses a united front of naval forces actively building bridges and strengthening global maritime security. This collaborative effort reflects a shared dedication to a safer and more secure maritime environ-

Monday Mirchi

Regimes must and do change; but most of the staff in government offices, like the dog's curly tail, remain unchanged. In Telangana, it took a Minister's 'surprise' visit (for photo-op, says a wag) to discover the unpalatable fact that no officer has been coming in time for over nine years now. After Revenue Minister Ponguleti Śrinivas Reddy's discovery of 'time lapse' in work flow, everyone in the loop responsible for maintaining HR records was left red-faced. For, nobody had ever signed the register for recording attendance. It is understandable; for, they were bindaas en bloc because of the fact that former CM K Chandrasekhar Rao himself largely 'worked from home' and hardly visited the Secretariat. As for those who do not like to work, be it at home or in office, things have changed. 'Working' officials are divided over the sudden accent on sticking to office timings. The Congress government, having credited government employees for its victory in the Assembly elections, cannot afford to kick the ladder of its success. Surprise inspections apart, the ongoing ACB raids have also irked the employees, who, of course, cannot be expected to become nirmohi saints overnight even if they are primed ahead of the Lok Sabha elections.

BABUS NOT PREPARED TO LEAVE OFFICIAL RESIDENCE

For Telangana officials who have continued in their positions long after their retirement because of what they had brought to the table under the previous dispensation, the regime change is yet to sink in. Such officials were evidently not prepared for a tumultuous change. S Narsing Rao, who used to call the shots in the Chief Minister's Office, has taken noticeably a long period for vacating his official residence. It is understood that he has just given notice and is preparing to move out of his official quarters.

TRANSFERS OR GAME OF MUSICAL CHAIRS? Police transfers, particularly at DSP level,

have been equated with the game of musical chairs across Telangana. Some officers, despite being promoted in 2018-19, are yet to get law and order posting, notwithstanding the regime change. There are others who had enjoyed sinecures and plum postings in the BRS regime but who managed to get transferred and posted within the city of their choice by cosying up with the new administration in the context of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Officers who await posting without scope for behind-the-scene action are resentful that, despite change in regime, their fortunes have not changed.

CELEBRATED AS TOPPER BUT DETESTED AS COP

Gaush Alam, celebrated as topper of 2017 batch, is today detested as an insensitive cop.

As the Superintendent of Police, he not only slapped his subordinate Ravi Kumar, ASI, for allowing his family to offer prayers at Sammakka-Saralamma Jatara but also made him kneel down and insulted him otherwise too in front his family members. The ASI, who broke down, gained support and quaffed the milk of human kindness from his peers and others. Official circles are now discussing that cops at top levels are interested more in taking care of political strategist Sunil Kanugolu, chief advisor of Karnataka's Congress unit, than in treating their fraternal colleagues fairly.

AAKU VS MULLU: THE ATTRACTION AND THE INVARIABLE LOSER

Tainted ministers and ministers need to only know how to coordinate their responses whenever scams surface. Those who fail in this dicey task, particularly officials, cannot help facing the music. When scams surface; officials are in the dock first, but ministers manage to wriggle out of the situation at least initially. Going by recent scams, regardless of the party in power, action has been initiated only against officials. No action has been initiated against the minister(s) concerned. Sleuths of the Anti Corruption Bureau in Telangana recently arrested four officials in the 'sheep distribution scam' case relating to the previous BRS government. Official circles believe that only babus have been made scapegoats in the case. This being so, the Telangana High Court recently asked the state government why no penal action had been taken against officials under the erstwhile TDP government in combined Andhra Pradesh over allotting 850 acres of prime land in Hyderabad to IMG Bharat Academies two décades ago. Some bureaucrats feel that only smart officials and wilv politicians who are in power mix like

GOING THROUGH THE MOTIONS AFTER HIGHER LEVEL INTERVENTION

aakeee," goes a Telugu proverb. Babus in particular realize the truth of this quite late.

water and milk to insulate themselves from

scams. "Aaku yegiri mullu medha padda, mullu vachi aaku medha padda chirigedhi

In Andhra Pradesh, it took the hospitalization of over 100 people with diarrhea and intense pressure from Minister Vidadala Rajini, Special CS Krishna Babu and other top officials to wake up officials of the Guntur Municipal Corporation who had remained clueless for over 10 days about the cause of the outbreak. Thanks to reactive measures under watch, the civic officials found out belatedly that certain mineral water plants had supplied contaminated water in the affected areas. Six of those plants were sealed and notices issued to 25 other plants for not maintaining prescribed norms in water quality.

-- Yours truly

Gear up... Continued from Page 1

This is an unparalleled undertaking in Indian politained, urging the chosen candidates to strive for victory in every constituency.

Naidu cautioned candidates and party activists to ensure zero errors at every level of leadership, recognizing the critical nature of the next 40

days for the TDP.
"Remain accessible to the public and inspire confidence in them regarding their future," he advised the party's

"Prepare to face the challenges posed by YSRCP leaders, including Jagan, as part of their schemes. Remember, the Jana Sena is our ally, and it's imperative to treat them with respect and rally their support," Chandrababu Naidu instructed the TDP candidates contesting in the elections.

TODAT	
ALMANAC	
Month & Paksham:	Krishna Paksha
Tithi: Dwitiya:	Feb 25 08:36 PM
	to Feb 26 11:16 PM
Tritiya:	Feb 26 11:16 PM
	to Feb 28 01:53 AM
Nakshatram:	
Uttara Phalguni:	Feb 26 01:24 AM
Heater	to Feb 27 04:30 AM Feb 27 04:30 AM
Hasta:	to Feb 28 07:33 AM
Rahukalam:	8:07 AM to 9:34 AM
Yamagandam:	11:02 AM to 12:29 PM
Varjyam:	01:58 PM to 03:46 PM
Gulika:	1:56 PM to 3:23 PM
Amritakalam:	08:23 PM to 10:11 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	: 12:05 PM to 12:52 PM
VIJAYAWADA	A WEATHER
Forecast: Sunny	
Temp: 34 ^{oc}	
Humidity: 58%	
Sunrise: 6:28 AN	Л 📜 🦲
Sunset: 6:13 PM	

Updated: February 25, 2024 5:00 PM

APJAC defers 'Chalo Vijayawada' stir

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Joint Committee (APJAC) chairman, Bandi Srinivasa Rao, and secretary general, G. Hrudaya Raju, have announced the postponement of the planned 'Chalo Vijayawada' event slated for February 27. This postponement comes as they seek a resolution for the long-standing issues concerning employees, teachers, labourers, and

pensioners. Instead of the originally planned protest, APJAĆ will organize demonstrations opposing police detentions, illegal cases, and notices outside the offices of the AP NGO Associations across the state on the same day.

Following the submission of a representation outlining 49 demands from employees, teachers, labourers, and pensioners, the government has initiated a Group of Ministers (GOM) meeting to address these concerns. Furthermore, the government has disbursed Rs 250 crore for medical reimbursement, travel allowances, dearness allowances for police personnel, and grants for the Contributory Pension (CPS). Additionally, the state government has appointed nine staff members for the 12th

PRC Commission office. A meeting convened by APJAC leaders at the APNGO Association hall in Gandhinagar, Vijayawada, saw participation from some leaders online. It was decided during this meeting to defer the 'Chalo Vijayawada' initiative, while

simultaneous protests will be held at all district AP NGO offices on February

Bandi Srinivasa Rao and Hrudaya Raju addressed the media, stating that the GOM has assured the implementation of the PRC in July. However, they reiterated their demand for 30 per cent Interim Relief (IR). Moreover, they highlighted the government's commitment to implementing the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) for police and teachers appointed after 2004, despite the notification being issued before

The leaders further noted assurances from the GOM regarding the reinstatement of an additional quantum of pension for pensioners, compassionate appointments for local bodies such as ZP and Aided management, and the phased regularisation of contract employees. They also mentioned the assurance of Child Care Leave for women teachers and employees without any time constraints, with the government having circulated the minutes.

Additionally, the government has committed to scheduling a special meeting with APJAC leaders within a week, to discuss pressing issues. Consequently, the proposed 'Chalo Vijayawada' event stands postponed.

The meeting was attended by APJAC Co-Chairmans M Raghunatha Reddy, N Chandrasekhar, Deputy Secretary General Siva Reddy, M Venkateswarlu, and oth-

Sharmila lodges police complaint over 'derogatory' content

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Congress chief YS Sharmila Reddy has complained with the cybercrime police in Hyderabad about some individuals running a "malicious" campaign against her on social media. Sharmila stated in her complaint that the accused were posting social media messages with "criminal intent to frighten" her.

She complained that they uploaded some contests on some YouTube channels and other social media platforms to tarnish her image. Cybercrime police have registered two cases based on the complaint made by Sharmila through her husband Anil Kumar.

She stated that ever since she started touring districts, some people have been targeting her and her followers. Sharmila, in her complaint, cited some of the insulting comments made against her and requested police to take action. The Congress leader also named eight persons in her complaint. A couple of them are reportedly based

Sharmila had earlier slammed YSR Congress Party leaders for making personal comments against her after she joined the Congress party.

PM dedicates AllMS Mangalagiri to nation

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the AIIMS Mangalagiri to the nation along with four AIIMS hospitals in various states across the country. On the occasion, PM Modi virtually congratulated the management, faculty, and students of AIIMS Mangalagiri. He highlighted the significant milestone achieved in healthcare infrastructure, stating, "Till 50 years after independence, there was only one AIIMS in the country, at Delhi. Today, Seven new AIIMS were inaugurated and foundation stones were laid. We are developing the country much faster than what happened in the last six decades."

Prime Minister Modi also laid the foundation for Nine Critical Care Blocks (CCBs) in Andhra Pradesh under the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission, with seven CCBs at Government Medical Colleges and two in District Hospitals. Under this programme, Seven CCBs at Government Medical Colleges of Kadapa, SPSR Nellore, Srikakulam, Tirupati, East Godavari, Kurnool, Vizianagaram and Two CCBs in District Hospitals of Guntur and



Sri Satya Sai districts, will be constructed, at a total project cost of Rs.233 crores. Additionally, he inaugurated a 100-bed State-ofthe-art ESI Hospital in Kakinada constructed for Rs 114 Crores.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated the Microbiology Food Testing Laboratory at Visakhapatnam and Four Mobile Food Testing Laboratories to strengthen the food safety testing ecosystem in Andhra Pradesh the State government in collaboration with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), under the Centrally sponsored schemes.

Governor of Andhra Pradesh S Abdul Nazeer, along with other dignitaries Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Prahalad Joshi, Union Minister

of Coal, Mines & Parliamentary Affairs, Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar, Union Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare and Tribal Affairs and Prof. S.P.Singh Baghel, Union Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers and Vidadala Rajini, Minister of Health, Medical and Family

Welfare of Andhra Pradesh and

Dr Madhabananda Kar, Director

& CEO of AIIMS Mangalagiri

attended the event at AIIMS

Mangalagiri.

On this occasion, Governor Nazeer expressed his pleasure and extended greetings to the people of Andhra Pradesh on this historic occasion. He thanked Prime Minister Modi and other Union Ministers for their support in realizing the long-cherished dream of AIIMS Mangalagiri.

The AIIMS Mangalagiri, constructed with a project cost of Rs.1618.23 crores spread across 183.11 acres, comprises 960 beds, 41 departments, 13 speciality departments, and a 125-seat Medical College. This facility aims to address regional imbalances in quality tertiary-level healthcare and achieve self-sufficiency in medical education and training under the PMSSY.

He highlighted the achievement of AIIMS Mangalagiri, crossing the milestone of 10 lakh outpatient consultations in April 2023, which received praise from Prime Minister Modi.

Governor Abdul Nazeer, Dr Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Prahalad Joshi, Union Minister of Coal, Mines & Parliamentary Affairs, Dr Bharati Pravin Pawar, Union Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare and Tribal Affairs and Prof. S.P.Singh Baghel, Union Minister of State for Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers and Vidadala Rajini, Minister of Health, Medical and Family Welfare of Andhra Pradesh and Dr Madhabananda Kar, Director & CEO of AIIMS Mangalagiri were present at AIIMS Mangalagiri.

Spl CS Krishnababu inaugurates 'Mega Health Camp'

PNS VIJAYAWADA

As many as 450 people participated in the free mega health camp conducted at Nava Bharat Public School, Krishna Lanka on Sunday. The health camp was inaugurated by Special Chief Secretary MT Krishna Babu. The health camp was organized by the Andhra Pradesh Private Nursing Homes Association (APNA), Lions Club of Vijayawada East and Sameera East Lions Eye Hospital.

Speaking on the occasion, Special CS Krishna Babu appreciated the organizers for organizing the health camp to serve the poor. He praised the organizers for the costly tests being done and medicines being given free. He said that are providing good treatment to the poor under the Jagananna Aarogya Suraksha



Lion's district governor Ln Sankara Gupta said that the Lions Club has been organizing various service activities on a regular basis to the poor and the needy for a long time.

Ln Dr Hanumaiah, presi-ent APNA NTR dist. & Vijayawada East said that 17 Rao, Dr Swetha, IMA doctors were involved in Bhuvaneswararao & other docconducting various tests on the tors participated.

people who visited the camp and provided medicines free. DM&HO NTR dist Dr M

Suhashini, Lions past district. governor Ln Gopinadh Ln Raghuram Sharma, Ln Kumudakar, Ln Atyutarao, Dr Choudary President Lions Club of Manohar, Dr Suryanarayana

CM to fulfil Kuppam...

Continued from Page 1

Substantial investments. such as Rs 66 crore for developmental works in Kuppam Municipality and Rs 100 crore for the development of four mandals in the constituency, signify the government's commitment to holistic growth.

Furthermore, administrative approvals totalling Rs 215 crore for the construction of a reservoir as part of the Palar project highlight the government's dedication to ensuring sustainable water management in the region.

The CM's administration

has prioritized welfare initiatives, including the distribution of free house pattas to thousands of underprivileged women and the construction of Jagananna colony houses. strides have been made in

land surveying and issuing

land title certificates to

Economic empowerment of women has been a key focus area, with initiatives like providing loans totalling Rs 991.88 crore to women through self-help groups and creating employment opportunities through various entrepreneurial ventures under YSR Asara and YSR Cheyutha schemes. Over the past 57 months,

the Jagan Government has disbursed substantial benefits amounting to Rs 1,396 Crores to approximately 5.39 lakh beneficiaries in the Kuppam constituency through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mechanisms, underscoring its commitment to inclusive development and social welfare.

The government's multifaceted approach towards development and welfare uplift the lives of citizens and foster sustainable progress across all sectors in the region.

Mediation key to dispute resolution: SC Judge

PNS VIZIANAGARAM

In a significant stride towards legal reform, Supreme Court Judge Justice P S Narasimha emphasised the pivotal role of mediation in dispute resolution, advocating for a departure from the protracted waits for justice. Justice PS Narasimha along with State High Court Chief Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur laid the foundation stone for the state-of-the-art court complex, a project sanctioned with R .99.20 crore by the State government. Envisioned to revamp the judi-



Supreme Court Judge Justice P S Narasimha addressing a meeting after laying the foundation stone for the state-of-the-art court complex, in Vizianagaram on Sunday.

plex, spanning 6.58 acres, will feature modern amenities across six storeys, setting a new

cial infrastructure, the com-

the region.

standard for legal facilities in Addressing the legal fraternity, Justice P S Narasimha

a month (year from the gov-

ernment)."He wondered what

will happen to the "5,600

people who don't make it (to

"Where are they going for

the top)".

underscored the need for legal evolution tailored to the changing dynamics of the country. He urged senior lawyers to mentor aspiring legal professionals, particularly advocating for their engagement in district courts. The ceremony, graced by eminent figures including poets, writers, and academics, celebrated the rich educational heritage of Vijayanagar. Echoing Justice PS Narasimha's sentiments, Chief Justice Thakur articulated the profound expectations vested in the judicial system. He empha-

sised the imperative of conducting judicial affairs impartially and transparently to uphold public trust. Chief Justice Thakur also outlined plans to expedite the construction process, highlighting the substantial government allocations for enhancing court infrastructure.

State High Court Judge Justice U. Durga Prasada Rao, State Advocate General S Sreeram, district Superintendent of Police Deepika Patil, and District Collector S Nagalakshmi were among those present.

Free sports from politicians...

Continued from Page 1

"So, I think that needs to be streamlined. Because on one side is the corporate and marketing side, the entire ecosystem of very different things. But performance is a purely different ball game.
"It needs a set of people

who are really committed, whether it's players, coaches and support staff and an ecosystem which builds performance. We need to keep that isolated from the rest of it. So, I would really say 'boss get this done for us (athletes)'," he added.

While Gopichand was happy with the phenomenal success and growth of sports in the country, he also pointed out the flip side of it, saying, kids could be leaving education for better prospects in sports.

We have grown too fast as a country in sport, we are still pushing forward in big force and that is amazing. But, I think, we need to look at the entire ecosystem, because all it takes is one generation of failed sportspersons to show to the society, or the society will see it and say, 'there is no use playing sports'. So, don't

want that to happen," he said. their jobs? Are they skilled "What is also happening is enough for their next jourthat kids, players are taking up sport (and) leaving education.

"This is a big case of con-For some it's happening at cern for me, who has seen the nine (years of age) and that is entire ecosystem of sport. For me, I think, you fail at 21 (in a big case of concern. Because, at the end of the day, sport has sports) and if you have the education and skill-set. But a very thin margin of people. what happens if that guy has no education at all. This is a "We have people speaking about how there are 6,000 kids across various sports who are cause for concern," he added. given Rs 6 lakh or Rs 3 lakh

"Thousands of people take up sport and a very small percentage is successful. What happens to the huge number who don't make it. How are we going to ensure their lives are secure.

Subba Reddy...

Continued from Page 1

Sources close to the party reveal that the YSRCP is planning its next preparatory meeting next month, where crucial announcements regarding changes and additions to the candidate list are expected. This meeting is seen as crucial for the YSRCP, as the party grapples with the pressure of retaining its members and presenting a clear and unified front in the upcoming elections. The final list of candidates is expected to be revealed only after the Medarametla meeting, bringing an end to the current state of uncertainty and providing some much-needed clarity for the YSRCP and its supporters.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of claim made by the advertisers of the products & services and shall not be made responsible for any kind of loss, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements.

Group 2 exam held peacefully in Eluru, Prakasam

The APPSC Group 2 examinations were conducted peacefully in Eluru district for which 11,696 candidates attended.

District Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh said here on Sunday that out of the total 13,977 candidates, 11,696 candidates wrote the examination which works out to 83.68%. He said that the Group 2 examinations were conducted in 39 centres in the district and the examinations went off peacefully.
Collector

Prasanna Venkatesh inspected the examination centres on the campus of Ramachandra Engineering College and CR Reddy Women's

He examined the signatures of candidates in the registers and also checked the roll number and seating arrangements. He directed the invigilators to ensure that the examinations were held peacefully.

He also inspected the security arrangements at the examination centre. Joint Collector B



Eluru District Collector V Prasanna Venkatesh inspecting an examination centre in the city on Sunday.

Lavanya Veni, RDO NSK Khajavali, and zonal manager K Babji were among those who accompanied the Collector.

In Prakasam district, Superintendent of Police P Parameswar Reddy personally inspected the security arrangements at the examination centres on Sunday. He visited the QUIZ Engineering College, RISE Engineering College, AKVK College, Nagarjuna Degree College and SSN College and gave directions to the police officials. The SP told the media that the Group 2 screening test was conducted in 49 centres in Prakasam district. Section 144 was clamped at the examination centres.

All Xerox and printing centres remained closed till the examinations were concluded. All needed steps were taken to ensure that there would be no traffic congestion during the

80.85% of candidates take APPSC Group-2 exam in combined Krishna

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Group-2 screening examination, conducted by the Andhra Pradesh Public Commission (APPSC), proceeded smoothly in the Krishna and NTR districts on Sunday, without any untoward incidents. Attendance figures indicate that 77.38% of candidates appeared for the exam in Krishna district, while 83.31% attended in the NTR district.

The combined districts witnessed an overall attendance rate of 80.85%. District collectors P Raja Babu and Dr S Dilli Rao oversaw the examination centres in their respective jurisdictions. Dr Dilli Rao inspect-



NTR District Collector Dilli Rao inspecting an APPSC Group centre in Vijayawada on Sunday.

in Vijayawada, while Geetanjali Sarma, Joint Collector of Krishna district, visited centres

For the Group-2 screening

trict administration arranged 51 centres for 17,241 candidates, while the NTR district administration provided 54 centres for 24,373 candidates. Special bus services by

APSRTC were deployed to facilitate candidates' transportation to the exam centres.

Official reports indicate that 13,341 candidates attended the Group-2 screening examination in Krishna district, with 3,900 absentees. In the NTR district, 20,304 candidates took the exam, while 4,069 were absent.

District collectors P Raja Babu and Dr S Dilli Rao credited the successful conduct of the examination to the collaboration of various departments including Revenue, Police, Education, Medical and Health, Electricity, and APSRTC. They expressed satisfaction with the absence of any adverse incidents during the examination



Vijayawada's international archer Bommadevara Dheeraj shows his three gold medals won in the ongoing Asia Cup Stage-1 in Baghdad

City-based archer Dheeraj makes history at Asia Cup Stage-1

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Vijayawada's prodigious archer, Bommadevara Dheeraj, has made history by securing three gold medals in the Asia Cup Stage-1 held in Baghdad. Competing under the Indian flag, Dheeraj emerged triumphant in the individual, team, and mixed events in Archery Recurve, bringing immense pride to his hometown. He formed a formidable partnership with Tarun Deep in the team event and showcased his skill alongside Simrajith Kour in the mixed event during the ongoing tournament, which commenced on February 20.

Honing his craft at the esteemed Cherukuri Volga Archery Academy in Vijayawada, Dheeraj's journey in archery commenced in 2006. Over the course of 18 years, he has ascended to the summit of his sport, becoming India's foremost archer and earning a coveted spot in the Paris Olympics. His stellar performance adds to his already impressive resume, which includes a silver medal in the 2023 Asian Games.

Cherukuri Satyanarayana, president of the Andhra Pradesh Archery Association and Chief Coach at Cherukuri Volga Archery Academy, along with other dignitaries, lauded Bommadevara Dheeraj for his remarkable feat of clinching three gold medals at the Asia Cup Stage-1.

Vijayawada-Central MLA Vishnu and NTR District Science Officer Hussain distributing the Physical Science question bank book at the Puchalapalli Sundarayva Municipal Corporation High School at Prakash Nagar in the city on Sunday.

MLA releases SSC Physics question bank

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Planning Commission Vice Chairman and Vijayawada Central MLA, Malladi Vishnu, in collaboration with NTR District Science Officer (DSO) Hussain, inaugurated the distribution of a Physical Science question bank comprising one-mark questions to class 10 students at Puchalapalli Sundarayya Municipal Corporation High School in Prakash Nagar on Sunday.

The book, authored by Hussain, who also serves as a Physical Science teacher at the aforementioned school, is being provided free of charge to students across all Vijayawada

Corporation Schools.
Expressing his confidence in the utility of the question bank for the upcoming public examinations, MLA Malladi Vishnu commended Hussain for his decade-long commitment to providing this resource to students.

Encouraging students to make the most of the resource and excel in their examinations, Vishnu also urged fellow educators to draw inspiration from Hussain's initiative.

The event saw the participaof Puchalapalli Municipal Sundaraiah Corporation High School Headmaster D. Mohan and other school staff members.

'Suryopasana Seva' sees surge in throng at Durga temple

PNS VIJAYAWADA

A large number of devotees gathered at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam Indrakeeladri in Vijayawada on

Sunday to seek the divine bless-ings of Goddess Durga Devi. With Sunday coinciding with a holiday, a significant surge of devotees made their way to the hilltop to partake in the revered Durga Devi darshan. In anticipation of the influx, temple authorities diligently organized arrangements to facilitate the smooth flow of devotees.

As part of the day's rituals, the

temple conducted the 'Suryopasana Seva' along with a series of other special poojas including Nitya Arjitha Sevas, Sri Ammavari Khadgamala Archana, Kumkumarchana,

Chakrasana, Chandihomam, and Shanti Kalyanam. In a notable gesture of gen-

erosity, K. Venkateswara Rao and Jayanthi, residents of Visakhapatnam, contributed Rs. 1 lakh towards Nitya Annadanam, symbolizing their



Devotees waiting for darshan at the shrine of Goddess Kanaka Durga atop Indrakeeladri in Vijayawada on Sunday.

devotion and support to the temple's philanthropic endeavours. The couple graciously presented the donation cheque to the temple's Executive Officer (EO), KS Rama Rao, within the temple premises.

Expressing gratitude for their benevolence, the temple author-

ities accorded the donors the privilege of witnessing the goddess's darshan. Subsequently, Vedic Scholars bestowed their blessings upon the donors and presented them with Laddu Prasadam, Sesha Vastram, and a Portrait as tokens of appreci-

ACTING TOUGH

Notices to 256 meat stalls in Guntur city

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Guntur Municipal Commissioner, Chekuri, has taken decisive action to ensure public health standards are maintained in the city's meat-selling establishments. In response to recent concerns over hygiene and the spread of diseases like diarrhoea, the GMC public health officials issued notices to approximately 256 meat stalls and shops in Guntur city on Sunday.

Commissioner Kirthi emphasised the importance of maintaining a hygienic envi-ronment in all chicken, mutton, and other meat-selling outlets across the city. She highlighted the risks associated with unhygienic conditions, stressing that it could lead to health complications for consumers. Moreover, she directed that prohibited carry bags must not be used, and waste should be disposed of only through designated waste



Commissioner sternly warned against the dumping of meat waste in canals or roads, stating that such actions would result in the immediate cancellation of D&O trade licenses and the imposition of heavy

Underlining the necessity of obtaining and renewing trade licenses from the city administration, Commissioner Kirthi urged consumers to be vigilant and refrain from purchasing meat from unclean stalls to avoid potential health

Discussion highlights the importance of holistic education

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Edara Ravi Kiran, Additional Director General of the National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes & Narcotics (NACIN), Visakhapatnam, underscored the imperative for education to transcend mere employment prospects. He emphasised that education must empower children to navigate the intricacies of

everyday life effectively.

Speaking during a public discussion on children's education held at Gandhi Centre in Bullayya College on Sunday, Edara Ravi Kiran said in an era dominated by technological advancements like Chat GPT, he decried the diminishing relevance of memory-based rote learning. Kiran advocated for a shift away from undue emphasis on marks and ranks, urging for a pedagogy that fosters critical thinking and inde-



pendent reasoning. He cautioned against the perils of overlooking the cultivation of hobbies in childhood, warning that a dearth of recreational pursuits could render chil-dren's lives mechanical and monotonous.

Prof. V. Balmohan Das, president of the Gandhi Centre and former vice-chancellor of Nagarjuna University, echoed

Kiran's sentiments by highlighting the need to recognise the diverse intelligences inherent in every child. He announced plans for the Gandhi Centre to convene a comprehensive meeting with school management, intending to translate the discourse's outcomes into tangible actions within educational institutions.

Narava Prakasa Rao, honorary president of Bal Vikas Foundation, pledged to unveil a bespoke action plan tailored for schools, delineating essential reforms for the education system. He disclosed that the blueprint would be disseminated to the State Education Department and all schools Statewide. In a bid to empower parents with informed choices, Rao unveiled a curated video playlist showcasing alternative schooling options,

accessible through the link:

https://t.ly/bXYez.

Action warned against vehicles sans high-security number plates

Owners of both new and older vehicles must comply with the installation of specialised plates

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Transport Commissioner Rajaratnam issued a stern warning on Sunday, declaring that stringent measures will be taken against motor vehicles found operating without highsecurity number plates. In a bid to enhance road safety and security, the new directive mandates that owners of both new and older vehicles comply with the installation of these specialised plates.

According to Rajaratnam, effective from March 1, new vehicle owners must obtain high-security number plates directly from authorised dealerships upon purchase. For existing vehicle owners, a reg-



istration process has been facilitated through the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) portal. Under the revamped system facilitated by the SIAM portal, vehicle owners can conveniently apply for high-security number plates from the comfort of their homes. This initiative aims to simplify the process while ensuring compliance with regulatory stan-

Rajaratnam emphasised the importance of adhering to the new regulations, citing enhanced security and streamlined vehicle identification as primary objectives. He urged all vehicle owners, both old and new, to promptly comply with the directive to avoid potential penalties and legal consequences. The implementation of high-security number plates is expected to bolster road safety measures and facilitate efficient law enforcement practices Visakhapatnam.



Collector visits modernised Visakha Museum

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a bid to enhance the cultural and tourist appeal of Visakhapatnam, District Collector Dr A. Mallikarjuna, accompanied by GVMC Commissioner CM Saikanth Verma and Joint Collector Mayur Ashok, paid a visit to the recently modernised Visakha Museum. The visit followed the inauguration of the floating bridge on Beach Road

morning. The Collector and his team explored the inauguration of various sections the floating bridge of the museum, marvelling at the on Beach craftsmanship displayed by local

earlier on Sunday

Expressing satisfaction, Collector Mallikarjuna highlighted the significance of the art forms that beautifully depicted Visakha's cultural traditions, paintings capturing scenic beauty, and ancient sculptural skills reflected in the idols of deities. The officials also delved into historical books and records during their tour. The GVMC Commissioner briefed the Collector and Joint Collectors about the ongoing modernisation projects within the museum, including the arrangement of new pho-

tographs and art forms. During the programme, Intak member V. Edward Paul provided insights into the historical aspects of Visakha.

The Collector recommended to museum curator Venkataramana to strategically display information related to the objects throughout the Heritage and archaeology museum. Ensuring the safety and security of the museum, the **GVMC** Commissioner instructed the curator

to implement reguvisit followed lar cleaning measures, while also directing the installation of CCTV cameras and fire extinguishers, supervised by Deputy Executive

Officer Satyanarayana Raju. The Collector, GVMC Commissioner, and the Joint Collector honoured members of the Vizag Sketchers team for their outstanding photographic contributions to the documentation of the Visakha Museum premises. Preeti Sangeeta and PV Hanuman team members received special recognition during the felicitation. The event witnessed the presence of Assistant Director of Archaeology Museum Falguna Rao and other digni-

Thousands of devotees throng ongoing 'Veeramma Thalli' fete

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Thousands of devotees flocked to the Vuyyuru Veeramma Talli temple in the Krishna district on Sunday to fulfil their religious vows. The Vuyyuru Veeramma Talli Tirunálĺu, a 15-day festival, commenced on February 19 and has drawn devotees in large numbers.

Traditionally observed during the Magha Masam month, this festival spans 15 days from Shukla Paksha Ekadasi to Krushna Paksha Ekadasi. Given that Sunday coincided with a holiday, devotees seized the opportunity the opportunity to visit the temple with their families and fulfil their religious obliga-

During the festival, devotees



engaged in various religious activities, including the sacrificial offerings of goats, sheep, and cocks. Special pujas were conducted in honour of the goddess Veeramma Talli, while

women prepared 'Pongallu'—a traditional dish made from rice, milk, and jaggery—as offerings to the deity. The Veeramma Talli

not only for the locals of Vuyyuru and its vicinity but also for residents of neighbouring regions.

Many individuals travel Tirunallu holds significance from distant areas to their



hometowns to participate in the festivities.

The fair attracts visitors from across the globe, as well as those from nearby villages, who come to pay their respects

to the deity. The Sidibandi festival, scheduled for the 11th day, will be held at Vuyyuru, with the concluding ceremonies taking place on the



NTPC set to develop India's largest green hydrogen hub

Project, estimated to require an investment of Rs 1.10 lakh crore in two phases, will come up at Pudimadaka

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a step towards bolstering the decarbonised economy, Maharatna company National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has embarked on the development of India's largest integrated green hydrogen hub at Pudimadaka in Atchutapuram mandal, near

Visakhapatnam. The initiative is being spearheaded by NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL), a fully owned subsidiary of NTPC.

Nearly a year after signing a Memorandum Understanding (MoU) with the Andhra Pradesh government during the Global Investors' Summit, the project, estimated to require an investment of Rs 1.10 lakh crore in two phases, is set to become a cornerstone of India's energy transition. The comprehensive project, aimed at fostering a world-class ecosystem for green energy technologies, is expected to have a staggering produc-



tion capacity of 1,200 tonnes of

green hydrogen per day.
The foundation stone for the project was laid in 2015 but was officially shelved in 2018 due to the government's emphasis on domestic coal production, rendering the proposed coal-fired ultra mega power plant obsolete. However, with the recent signing of a land lease agreement covering 1,200 acres with the AP Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC), the hurdles related to the site have been overcome. The land, situated near NTPC Simhadri and the Asian Paints plant, was originally allotted to NTPC for

a coal-fired power plant. According to the agreement, NGEL will establish an 'integrated green hydrogen hub' at Pudimadaka. This hub aims to create a world-class ecosystem, encompassing technologies like electrolyser and fuel cell manufacturing, ancillary industries, and startup incuba-

The hub will facilitate testing facilities, as well as the production and export of green hydrogen and its derivatives such as green ammonia and green methanol. Anticipated to be India's largest hydrogen

production hub, the project aligns with NTPC's corporate vision, emphasising green energy and green hydrocar-bons to contribute significantly to India's energy transition.

The pivotal step towards the realisation of the project occurred with the exchange of the land lease deed between the Chief General Manager of NGEL, Sivakumar VV, and Vice-Chairman & Managing Director of APIIC, Pravin Kumar. The ceremony, held at Velagapudi, witnessed the presence of Chief Secretary, of Andhra Pradesh KS Jawahar Reddy, Executive Director of NTPC R Sarangapani, and other senior officials.

NTPC Group has set an ambitious target of achieving 60 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2032. Presently boasting 3.4 GW of installed renewable energy and several projects in the pipeline, NTPC remains steadfast in its commitment to advancing India's



DFO Ramachandra Rao briefing the

20 antelope horns, spotted deer skin seized

media about the seizure of antelope

horns and spotted deer skin.

PNS NARASARAOPET

Forest officials seized 20 horns of antelope and skin of spotted deer and arrested six persons in Vinukonda.

Divisional Forest Officer Ramachandra Rao told the media on Sunday that on a tip off a team of forest officials conducted a raid at Bollapalli village and seized 20 horns of antelopes and skin of spotted deer. The poachers were exporting the horns and skins of animals to Bangalore.

Renowned NRI and Chairman of the Golagani Charitable Trust, Golagani Ravi Krishna, formally joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) during a ceremony held at the party's office in Vijayawada on Sunday. Daggubati Purandeswari, the party president, warmly welcomed Ravi Krishna into the fold, adorning him with the party scarf in a symbolic gesture.

Addressing the media following the induction, Purandeswari highlighted Ravi Krishna's commendable initiatives in serviceoriented programs across the state, emphasising his commitment to the welfare of the people of Vijayawada. She expressed confidence that his involvement would bolster the BJP's presence in the Vijayawada West

Purandeswari also underscored the party's intention to leverage Ravi Krishna's expertise, particularly in communicating the developmental efforts and financial allocations made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration to the public.

Responding to queries about potential alliances with other political entities such as the TDP and JSP, Purandeswari indicated that discussions were ongoing within the party lead-



Golagani Ravi Krishna, Chairman of the Golagani Charitable Trust, presenting a bouquet to BJP State president Daggubati Purandeswari during his induction into the party in

ership. While both the TDP and JSP had announced candidates for 99 assembly seats, she noted that negotiations for the remaining 76 seats were still underway.

In the broader context of electoral preparation, Purandeswari emphasized the BIP's comprehensive engagement across all 175 Assembly Constituencies and 25 Lok Sabha segments in the state. She assured that the party was actively working towards finalising alliance structures and seat allocations shortly.





PM Modi inaugurates microbiology food testing laboratory in Vizag

The lab, located at Regional Public Health Laboratory, is part of Viksit Bharat programme

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

In a virtual ceremony from Rajkot, Gujarat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated the microbiology food testing laboratory, located at the Regional Public Health Laboratory in Visakhapatnam, to the nation on Sunday. The laboratory, inaugurated as part of the Vikasit Bharat programme, is equipped with advanced facilities including a microbiology lab, aimed at enhancing food safety and public health measures in the region.

During the virtual inauguration, Prime Minister Modi emphasised the ongoing initiatives under the Viksit Bharat programme. He highlighted recent developments, including the establishment of IIM in Visakhapatnam, AIIMS in Kadapa and Mangalagiri, and the Andhra Pradesh microbiology food testing laboratory. The ceremony was attended by District Collector Dr. A. Mallikharjuna, who initiated the proceedings by lighting the ceremonial lamp and activating the facility remotely.

The microbiology food testing laboratory, costing Rs 4.77 crore, boasts a state-of-the-art microbiology lab at the Regional Public Health Laboratory in Visakha. The Prime Minister commended the lab, likening it to the 'heart of the State', emphasising its pivotal role in conducting a multitude of tests for food and water samples, especially in cases of diarrhea and related health issues. The lab's quick establishment was attributed to the collaborative efforts of the State and Central govern-

The District Collector thanked the Prime Minister

and the Chief Minister for Andhra Pradesh State Food their support in establishing the microbiology lab in Visakhapatnam. He announced plans to recruit 80 staff members soon to further enhance the lab's capabilities.

The establishment of the

Laboratory reflects the government's commitment to ensuring the health and well-being of the citizens.

The virtual inauguration ceremony saw the participation of several dignitaries, including Director of IPM Purnachandra Rao, N. H. MD Ganapathy Rao, APMSIDC EE D. Achchennaidu, Food Control Officer Nanda, DMHO Dr. P. Jagadeswara Rao, along with other officials, staff and stu-

100-bed ESI hospital opened

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 100bed ESI hospital virtually on Sunday. The ESI hospital was constructed at a cost of Rs 114

Speaking on the occasion, MP Vanga Geeta said that the workers in the Kakinada region, which is expanding rapidly in the industrial and service sectors, used to have to go to ESI Hospital in Rajahmundry for medical services. With the opening of a 100-bed hospital in Kakinada with state-of-the-art facilities, around 60,000 workers and 2.50 lakh of their families would get better medical facilities in the ESI hospital here.

She expressed happiness that better medical services have become available here. The MP thanked the Union Labour Minister for sanctioning funds for the construction of the hospital. The MP congratulated the regional labour commissionerate, engineers and contractors for completing the construction of the hospital within four years despite many obstacles including the coronavirus pandemic. MP Vanga Geeta said that

along with the ESI hospital, the construction of an integrated Ayush hospital in the Kakinada rural area would be completed soon. The MP stated that with the financial support of RMC Alumni in Kakinada GGH, a super speciality department for mother and

soon at a cost of Rs 30 crore. She said that a trauma care centre was set up in the GGH here at a cost of Rs 7.5 crore and a cath lab was also set up by spending another Rs 7.5 crore, adding that the construction of a Rs 25 crore Kendriya Vidyalaya building is underway. The construction works of the south campus of the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade will begin soon on the SEZ here.

child would be constructed

Dwarampudi MLA Chandrasekhar Reddy appreciated MP Vanga Geeta stating that she made persistent efforts for the construction of ESI hospital here. MLA Kurasala Kanna Babu said that the workers in the coastal area would get better medical services through the newly established ESI hospital.

MLC Nallamilli Sesha Reddy also spoke. MLC Karri Padma Sri, KUDA chairperson Ragireddy Chandrakala Deepthi, JC CV Pravin Aditya BJP state secretary K Kashi Viswanatha Raju and district president Chilukuri Ram . Kumar, Labour Union presi-Dwarampudi dent Veerabhadra Reddy, South zone insurance commissioner Rajesh Kumar Jain and ESI superintendent Dr.M Radhika were among those who were

present.

Floating bridge inaugurated at Vizag

In a bid to enhance tourism and attract more visitors, the Andhra Pradesh government has unveiled a new attraction in Visakhapatnam -- a floating bridge at RK Beach. The bridge, constructed through a public-private partnership at a cost of approximately Rs 1.5 crore, was inaugurated on Sunday by YSRCP Regional Coordinator Y.V. Subbareddy and State Industries Minister Gudivada Amarnath.

Addressing the gathering, Y.V. Subbareddy emphasised the government's commitment to bolstering tourism. He mentioned that Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy emphasised the city's expansive coastline spanning approximately 25 kilometers Visakhapatnam boundaries,

of two beaches within highlighting endeavors to grant it distinctive recognition.



initiatives for the development Visakhapatnam, crediting the increase in tourist visits over the past two-and-a-half years to the area's growing attractions. He stressed the importance of enhancing amenities at Kailasagiri, poised to become the premier attraction

of the administrative capital. Minister Amarnath echoed Subbareddy's sentiments, elaborating on the govern-ment's multifaceted initiatives to attract international tourists. He touted Visakha Beach as a pivotal asset in the tourism sector, emphasising the efforts to showcase its allure to global audiences.

Amarnath outlined notable achievements, including Visakhapatnam's ranking as the 10th richest city in the nation, the recognition of Rushikonda Beach as a blue flag beach of international standards, and the ascent of science museum developments on Kailasagiri, slated to enrich the visitor experience.

'Minority welfare neglected in YSRCP rule'

PNS ONGOLE

Former chairman of Legislative Council MA Shariff decried that the minority welfare was neglected during the Jagan Mohan Reddy-

The TDP here on Sunday organized the 'Ghar Ghar Ka Nara' programme in Addanki. Addressing the gathering Shariff said that the minority welfare was put in the lurch by the YSRCP regime. Harassment and atrocities increased against the Minorities in the YSRCP rule, he alleged.

"The YSRCP leaders are trying to use the Muslim minorities as vote banks, and at the same time, they ignored their welfare. A raw deal was meted to the minorities in the budget allocation for their welfare," he flaved.

He reiterated that the TDP is committed to the welfare of Muslim minorities. He recalled that many welfare programmes were implemented for the Muslims during the TDP rule, stating that loans on 50% subsidy were extended to them.

A Noorbasha federation was set up with a corpus fund of Rs 50, he claimed. Gurukula schools were established in Urdu and English medium and scholarships were



also provided to the poor Muslim students during the TDP rule, he stated.

Shariff reminded that financial assistance of Rs 10 lakh had been provided to the poor Muslim students for foreign education, adding that through the Dulhan scheme, financial support of Rs 50,000 was provided to 38,000 people without any conditions. During the TDP regime over 300 shadhikana were constructed with modern facilities, observed.

He assured of renovation of mosques construction of Haj houses, providing employment to the Muslim youths and making Urdu an official language, if the TDP was voted to power. MLA Yeluri Sambashiva Rao, national official spokesperson Nasir Ahmad and minority cell state president Moulana Mastan Ahmad also spoke. TDP organizing secretary Abdul Rajak, TDP Bapatla Parliamentary executive secretary Jamaluddin, Sheik Shamshuddin.

JEO inspects arrangements for Brahmotsavavams

PNS TIRUPATI

JEO Veerabrahmam on Saturday inspected the arrangements for the annual Brahmotsavam of Kalyana Venkateswara temple at Srinivasa Mangapuram scheduled from 29 February to March 8.

JEO directed garden, engineering and other departments to make coordinated efforts to ensure the success of the annual Brahmotsavam.

Among others, the Deployment of an adequate number of Srivari Sevakulu, live telecast by SVBC, all Dharmic projects to undertake cultural programs in front of Vahana Sevas, publicity through Prachara Ratham to neighbourhood villages, mobile toilets, additional sanitary workers, parking lots, vigilance and police coordination, deployment of vehicles.

He advised Temple Spl Gr.DyEO Varalakshmi and CPRO Dr T Ravi to coordinate with all departments and ensure the success of the annual event.

SE(Electrical) Venkateswarlu, Transport GM Sesha Reddy, EEs Manoharam, Prasad, Goshala Director Dr Harnath Reddy, Garden Deputy Director Srinivasulu, Additional Health officer Dr Sunil Kumar, AEO Gopinath, AVSO Satish were also pre-

IF REVANTH WERE CM FACE

'Congress would not have won even 30 seats'

PNS HYDERABAD

The Congress would not have won even 30 seats if it had revealed that Revanth Reddy would be their Chief Minister, BRS Working President KT Rama Rao said

He said that no one thought that the Congress would come to power even in Konda Reddy Palli, the hometown of Revanth Reddy and that Revanth is not speaking like a Chief Minister but like a dacoit of treasury pots.

Thieves roam around at midnight for treasury pots but politicians don't roam around the Secretariat for them. The old habits of Revanth Reddy, who searches for treasury pots, are coming out, KTR said. Addressing a Parliament elec-

Achampet on Sunday, KTR that farmers are looking at

tory meeting

each other for Rythu Bandhu funds after Revanth came to

"Change means power cuts and drinking water scarcity. The Congress government canmaintain Mission Bhagiratha. Congress leaders themselves did not think that they would come to power and hence they gave assurances as they liked. Congress leaders had assured before elections that they would provide schemes for everyone but now they are saying that their schemes are for only a few. The Congress assured that it will implement the Rs 2 lakh farm loan waiver scheme for farmers, give Rs 2,500 per month to every woman and pay Rs 4,000 per month as Asara pension to old people. As per Election Commission details, there are 1.67 crore women in the state. They are waiting for the Rs 2500. There are 1.24 crore LPG connections in the state and they are waiting for the Rs 500 scheme.

The Congress said that it will

give 200 units of free electrici-

ty to everyone but now the Congress is saying that the

scheme is only for some," he

KTR said that the BRS had decided to wait for the Congress

government to complete 100 days but the Congress levelled allegations as they liked in the first session of the Assembly. He said that there is no need

to think about Modi who failed to give national project status to the Palamuru-Rangareddy pro-

He said that Revanth handed over irrigation projects on the Krishna River to the KRMB and the Centre. However, the CM introduced a resolution stating that there is no question of handing over irrigation projects to the KRMB in the Assembly after the BRS's Nalgonda public meeting

He said that both the national parties, the BJP and the Congress, are 'harming' the interests of Telangana

Victims of 'Margadarsi' form association

PNS VIJAYAWADA

A large number of victims of the Margadarsi Chit Funds scam have come together to take on the Margadarsi Chit Funds Private Limited (MCFPL). The people who were cheated by the MCFPL formed a 'Margadarsi Chit Funds Victims Association'

here on Sunday. The association aims to provide legal assistance and related help to the victims. Advocate Srinivas, the newly elected President of the association said that they have scheduled a press meeting at Vijayawada Press Club at 11 am on February 28, Wednesday where they will explain the problems of the Margadarsi victims.

Currently, AP-CID is probing the irregularities in Margadarsi Chit Funds Private Limited (MCFPL). According to officials, MCFPL was found to be running 40 per cent chit groups of MCFPL without subscribers. The firm takes its chits in the name of ghost subscribers.

has also conducted raids on the premises of MCFPL in Visakhapatnam, Rajamahendravaram, Eluru, Vijayawada, Guntur, Narasaraopeta and Anantapur. It has also registered cases against its chairman Ch Ramji Rao and his daughter-in-law and managing director of the firm Sailaja

The investigation agency

Government official booked for rape in J-K's Ramban

government official was booked for rape following a complaint by his domestic help in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, police on Sunday said. The accused Yawar Amin, an employee of the Public Works Department presently posted as an assistant engineer in Samagra Shiksha Ramban, is on the run and efforts are on to arrest him, they said. The 18-year-old victim, in her complaint to the Banihal Police Station, alleged that

Amin raped her when she was alone at his house after his wife left for Jammu recently, a police official said. The victim alleged that the accused gave her some medicine after she fell sick in the evening and later raped her, the official said. A case under relevant sections of the law, including rape, was registered against the accused and the medical examination of the victim was conducted as part of the ongoing investigation, the official added. The victim also claimed that she was thrown out of the house after she informed Amin's wife about the incident on her return from Jammu,



Kurmi community holds rally in Ranchi for ST status

embers of the Kurmi community took out a rally here on Sunday to press for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status and inclusion of Kurmali language in the eighth schedule of the Constitution. Organised under the banner of Totemic Kurmi Vikas Morcha' (TKVM), hundreds of people from different districts of the state including Ranchi, Ramgarh, Bokaro, Dhanbad, Giridih, Hazaribagh and Jamtara participated in the

march. Chief convener of the rally. Sheetal Ohdar, said Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the community and the addition of Kurmali language in the eighth schedule are among their major demands. "Under a conspiracy, Kurmi was removed from the ST list on September 6, 1950," Ohdar claimed, She also asserted that if the demands were not met, members of the community will vote against the ruling party at the Centre in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. "We will visit villages and



Foreign currencies Rs 1.57 cr seized at Chennai airport

aw enforcement officials at the Chennai airport have recovered Rs 1.57 crore worth of foreign currencies from a passenger bound for Mumbai. Acting on specific inputs, a Central Industrial Security Force personnel intercepted the air passenger while he was undergoing a security check at the airport on Saturday. Investigation of the baggage

1,30,000 US Dollars and 2,24,500 Saudi Rials concealed in the luggages were recovered which were totally valued at Rs 1.57 crore. "This is a very big haul of foreign currency at the Chennai Airport. CISF appreciated the diligent and alert performance of screeners and intelligence staff." an official release said on Sunday. After informing the Customs department at the airport, the passenger was later handed over to the Air intelligence wing of Income Tax investigation department,



Entire strength of Cong used to take one family forward: PM Modi

PNS DEVBHUMI DWARKA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday attacked the opposition Congress, saying its entire strength was used to ensure the progress of just one family.

All kinds of scams used to take place under the Congress regime, Modi said, adding that his government stopped all those things in the last 10 years.

The Congress lacked the will and intention to provide amenities to people, he said.

The PM was speaking after inaugurating and laying the foundation stones for various projects in Dwarka, including India's longest cable-stayed bridge between Okha and Beyt Dwarka here in Gujarat.

Those who ruled the country for a long time did not have the will power, intention and dedication to provide amenities to the common people," Modi said.

The entire strength of the Congress has been used to take one family forward. If everything was to be done only for one family then how would one remember to build the country? Its (Congress) entire energy was focused on how to run the government for five years and how to hide scams," Modi said.

The Congress could make



No 'Mann ki Baat' broadcast for 3 months in view of polls

PNS NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' broadcast will not be aired for the next three months in line with political ethics in view of the upcoming Lok Sabha polls. În the 110th episode of the programme, he said there is a possibili-ty that the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) will be enforced in March as it was done during the last polls as well, a reference to the expected announcement of the election schedule some-

time next month. The MCC guidelines of the Election Commission asks governments to not use official events or public-funded platforms for something that may be seen to give the ruling party publicity or political advantage.

The prime minister asserted that it is a big success of the programme that it has been kept away even from the shadow of the government during its 110 episodes, asserting that the broadcast has been dedicated to the country's collective strength and achievements.

Resolve to give Modi govt third term with more than 400 LS seats

Shah to BIP workers PNS KHAJURAHO "the Congress means corrup-

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday asked BJP workers to resolve to give the Narendra Modi government a third term at the Centre with more than 400 seats, asserting that the upcoming Lok Sabha polls was about making India a

third largest economy. Addressing booth level workers of the party at Khajuraho, the Union minister also claimed

superpower and the world's

India's economy only the 11th Okha, the PM pointed out. largest because the party did not "Sudarshan Setu" boasts of a have the capacity to fulfil big unique design, featuring a footdreams of the people of a vast path adorned with verses from nation, Modi said. Srimad Bhagavad Gita and images

His government's commitment to put an end to all scams has resulted in the country's progress and the creation of grand infrastructure like the longest cable-staved bridge connecting Beyt Okha and mainland

of Lord Krishna on both sides. On the 'Sudarshan Setu', the

tion and corruption means Congress". Shah said the

Congress during its 10-year tenure (between 2004 and 2014)

had indulged in scams worth Rs

12 lakh crore. "Resolve to form

Modi-led government at Centre

again by winning more than

400 seats. The upcoming Lok

Sabha polls is for making Bharat

a superpower and the world's

third largest economy under

Modi's leadership," he told his

party workers.

PM said he laid the foundation stone for this bridge six years ago and inaugurated it today. "This is Modi's guarantee," he

NGT asks 53 cities to submit complete report

Polluting sources and steps to contain pollution

PNS NEW DELHI

The National Green Tribunal has directed 53 cities which witnessed deterioration in air quality to submit a complete report on the contribution of each polluting source and measures taken to reduce pollution.

The tribunal was hearing the issue of air quality deteri-oration in different cities across India as reflected in the Air Quality Index (AQI) maintained by the Central Pollution Control Board.

On December 5, the tribunal, after considering the reports submitted by various states, said they did not fully utilise the funds received under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) and the 15th Finance Commission.

It had also asked the states concerned to submit a further action-taken report.

A bench led by NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava noted that further reports were filed by the Union Ministry Environment Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), Delhi, Meghalaya, Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar

राष्ट्रीय हरित अधिकरण NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL In an order passed on February

19, the bench also noted that as per the reports, the major contributor to air pollution was road dust. It said efforts should be made to undertake road dust mitigating activities.

Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana.

"Out of 53 cities identified in the present matter, 19 cities fall in non-attainment city and Rs 1644.4025 crore has been allocated for air quality improvement. MoEF&CĆ needs to ensure that assets created by expanding such amount are properly utilised," the bench, also comprising judicial member Justice Sudhir Agarwal and expert member A Senthil Vel, said.

In an order passed on February 19, the bench also noted that as per the reports, the major contributor to air pollution was road dust. It said efforts should be made to undertake road dust mitigating activities.

All the cities (53) should disclose the contribution by each polluting source in terms of identified pollutant as per source apportionment and progressive reduction on account of measures taken," the tribunal said, adding that a complete report" has to be submitted at least one week before the next date of hear-

The matter has been posted on May 3 for further pro-

India, Japan kick start 2-week military exercise

PNS NEW DELHI

India and Japan on Sunday kicked-off a two-week military exercise in Rajasthan's Mahajan field firing range to foster deeper cooperation in confronting common security challenges.

The exercise 'Dharma Guardian' between the Indian Army and the Japan Ground Self Defence Force is being conducted under the broad framework of India-Japan strategic

by Delhi Police

cooperation, officials said. It is an annual exercise and

and Japan. The contingent of both sides comprises 40 personnel each. The Japanese contingent is being represented by troops from the 34th Infantry Regiment and the Indian Army contingent is being represented by a battalion from the Rajputana Rifles, the officials said.

"The aim of the exercise is to foster military cooperation and



enhance combined capabilities to execute joint operations," the Indian Ármy said. It said the exercise would focus on "high

degree of physical fitness, joint planning, joint tactical drills and "Tactical drills to be practiced

during the exercise will include establishing of temporary operating base, creating an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance grid, setting up mobile vehicle check post, executing cordon and search operations in a hostile village and heliborne operations," the Army said in a

WINNING HORSES FOR LS ELECTIONS

Karnataka: BJP, Congress grappling with challenges

PNS BENGALURU

The BJP and the ruling Congress -- the key contenders in the Lok Sabha elections in Karnataka -- are grappling with the challenges of finding winning candidates in several constituencies with stakes high for the two national parties. The BJP had swept the 2019 general elections, bagging 25 of the total 28 seats in the state, while an independent backed by the party had also emerged victorious.

The Congress and the JD(S) headed by former Prime Minister H D Deve Gowda, which were running a coalition government back then and fought the election together, had come a cropper winning just one seat each.

But the political scene has changed significantly: The Congress scored a thumping victory in the Assembly elections in May last year and now appears battle-ready, determined to put up a strong show in the Lok Sabha polls.

It is also a role reversal of sorts for JD(S) which joined the BJP-led NDA in September last year and wants to prove that it's still a force to reckon



with, particularly in South Karnataka.

The coming poll is also seen as a "litmus test" for state BJP President B Y Vijayendra, who has the onerous task of leading the party to retain its supremacy in the Lok Sabha elections.

Both the BJP and the Congress have their share of challenges, with finding winning horses on top of this list.

The BJP is facing resistance against fielding sitting members of Lok Sabha once again in some constituencies while also facing alliance compulsions to accommodate its new partner JD(S), according to party sources.

The Congress, which won

135 out of a total 224 seats in the Assembly elections, is keen to field some Ministers but they are shying away, admitted

a senior ruling party leader. The BJP, banking on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's charisma, is aiming to win all 28 seats, while a resurgent Congress is targeting to bag 20 by highlighting that it has walked the talk by implement-

ing five guarantee schemes. The Congress had initially tasked ministers with identifying potential candidates but the party's state President and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar had said recently that reports received were not

3 Naxalites killed in encounter with **security torces**

PNS ■ KANKER

Three Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district on Sunday morning, a senior police official said. The face-off took place around 8 am on a hill between Bhomra-Hurtarai villages under the Koyalibeda police station area, where a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxalite operation, Kanker Superintendent of Police Indira Kalyan Elesela

The security forces had received inputs about the presence of cadres belonging to company no. 5 of Maoists in Bhomra, Hurtarai and Michchebeda villages, he said.

A joint squad of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) and 30th battalion of the Border Security Force (BSF) was dispatched to the area on Saturday night, the official said.

A gunfight broke out, and Naxalites fled the scene after a brief exchange of fire, he said.

Bodies of three Naxalites were recovered from the site along with some muzzle-load-

ing guns, he said. A few items of daily use and Maoist-related materials were also seized, the official said.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI A 47-year-old member of

ABSCONDING FOR 22 YEARS

SIMI operative arrested

Students' Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) who also allegedly edited a magazine of the banned organisation besides indoctrinating many gullible youths has been arrested by the Delhi Police, officials said on Sunday.

According to the police, Hanif Sheikh was declared a proclaimed offender in 2002 and has been absconding for the last 22 years. He was nabbed on February 22 from Bhusawal in Jalgaon district in Maharashtra where he was a teacher in an Urdu school under a different identity, they

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Alok Kumar claimed that Hanif was the most notorious and wanted SIMI terrorist who had played pivotal roles in various activities of the proscribed organisation across the coun-

try.
Police said the SIMI magazine that Hanif Sheikh edited had his name printed as Haneef Hudai. This was the only lead available with the police, making it difficult to trace him, they

A case of sedition and under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) was



registered against him in 2001 at New Friends Colony police station in the national capital. "A local court declared him proclaimed offender in 2002," Kumar said.

"A team from the Special Cell was tasked with collecting data, information and other digital footprints about the absconding SIMI cadre, sympathisers and sleeper cells across states. The team extensively visited and collected information from various parts of the country," he said.

The information collected by the team helped the Delhi police's special cell to zero in on Hanif. Following this, a raiding party was formed which laid a

trap, the officer said.
"Around 2.50 pm on February 22, a person travelling from Mohmadin Nagar to Khadka Road was identified as Hanif. As members of the team began to corner him, Hanif attempted to escape but was arrested after a scuffle," the DCP said.

BJP to win big but there is no **Modi magic: Subramanian Swamy** thrust upon them during

PNS PATNA

Senior BJP leader Subramanian Swamy on Sunday claimed "a surge in Hindu pride" was likely to boost the party's prospects in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, but discounted the role of 'Modi magic".

The maverick leader, who was here to take part in a 'law conclave', asserted that in the BJP, and its ideological parent RSS, greater value was attached to sangathan' (organisation) and 'siddhant' (principles) than to individuals.

"I too believe that the BJP will surpass its previous electoral performances because, for the first time, Hindus are feeling proud of their identity. They no longer feel the diffidence that was

India will add 18 more nuclear

power reactors with a cumula-

tive capacity to generate 13,800 MWe of electricity, taking the

total share of atomic power in the energy mix to 22,480 MWe by 2031-32.

Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) after

Prime Minister Narendra Modi

dedicated two home-built 700

MW nuclear power reactors at

Kakrapar in Gujarat last week.

Presently, the NPCIL oper-

This was announced by the

PNS NEW DELHI

Nehru's time," Swamy told reporters, responding to queries about PM Modi's claim of the party winning more than 370 seats and the NDA crossing the 400-mark.

The former Union minister, however, added, "Some people may think that this change has taken place because of them. We need not attach importance to such things... I do not think there is anything like Modi magic. Individuals are not put on a pedestal in BJP-RSS. That has

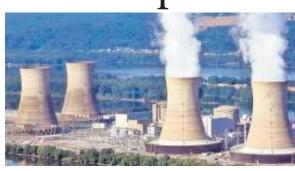
been Congress culture." Swamy also welcomed the return to the NDA of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and said it would be in the JD(U)president's own interests to refrain from more flip-flops.

India to add 18 more N-power reactors ates 24 reactors with a total

capacity of 8,180 MWe. The prime minister dedicated units 3 & 4 of Kakrapar Atomic Power Station (KAPS & 4) to the nation on February 22.

KAPS-4 was connected to the western power grid on February 20, two days ahead of PM Modi's visit to Kakrapar. KAPS 3 & 4 (2 X 700 MW)

are the largest indigenous Pressurised Heavy Water Reactors (PHWR) with advanced safety features comparable to the best in the world,



the NPCIL said. missioned, and operated by These reactors have been NPCIL, with the supply of designed, constructed, comequipment and execution of

companies, reflecting the true spirit of Atmanirbhar Bharat," tĥe NPCIL said.

The prime minister said the role of nuclear power in electricity generation is going to increase in the 21st century and it was a matter of pride that India is Atmanirbhar in this

advanced technology.

Modi also visited the

Kakrapar Atomic Power Station and took a tour of the Control Room on the occasion. Four nuclear power plants of 1,000 MWe each are being

built at Kudankulam in Tamil Nadu with Russian assistance. Four 700 MWe home-built PHWRs are coming up at Rawatbhata (RAPS 7 & 8) in Rajasthan and Gorakhpur (GHAVP 1 & 2) in Haryana.

Ten 700 MWe PHWRs have been sanctioned to be built at GHAVP 3 & 4 at Gorakhpur in Haryana, Kaiga Generating Station 5 & 6 near Karwar in Karnataka, Chutka in Madhya Pradesh (CMPAPP 1 & 2) and four power units at Mahi Banswara in Rajasthan (MBRAPP 1, 2, 3 & 4).

www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Shades of grey

Do political parties really mean to fulfil poll promises, or is it mere rhetoric to befool voters?

very election season, political parties can be seen letting loose a long litany of promises — some really genuine, but mostly mere pleasing-to-the-ears rhetoric. These campaign pledges, called poll manifestos or electoral promises or even 'jumlas', are tailormade to meet local voters' aspirations that season. However, a critical question looms: Is it really feasible for the parties to fulfil these promises? This discourse has gained fresh attention following the Chief Election Commissioner's (CEC) statement emphasising the voters' right to know if these promises can be delivered. The CEC's stance underscores the need for transparency and accountability in the electoral process, with the hope that it will prompt political actors to make promises more responsibly. At the heart of this debate lies a complex interplay of political dynamics, economic constraints, administrative capabilities and societal expectations. While political parties often design their agenda with the intention of securing electoral victory, the practicality of



implementing poll promises after getting elected is subject to numerous challenges; mainly the inherent uncertainty and volatility of governance. The political discourse is ever-evolving and parties have to adjust to it, often going back on what they themselves might have vociferously advocated. Besides unforeseen events, economic fluctuations and global dynamics also make it difficult to fulfil poll promises.

What may seem feasible during an election campaign could swiftly become untenable in the face of emerging challenges. The way out? At best, the parties can just declare: "It is our intention; conditions apply." Such an honest declaration does not at least sound as if it

were a done deal. Interestingly, even voters know that certain promises are undeliverable but then they do not have much choice, especially since the rival party is also tomtomming schemes that cannot be fulfilled. Of course there are unforeseen, serious challenges to genuinely-made pledges but the problem arises when misleading or false promises are deliberately made to capture votes. Worse, the parties know they can get away with it as there are no punitive damages yet for this practice. It is imperative for political parties to adopt a more responsible approach. Instead of succumbing to populist rhetoric, they should prioritise honesty, realism and evidence-based policymaking. Transparency also plays a crucial role in fostering accountability. Voters have the right to be informed not only about the promises made but also about the rationale behind them and the strategy for implementation. Also, robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation should be established to track progress and hold Governments accountable for their party's commitments. Then there is a need for greater public awareness to ensure that electoral promises are scrutinised rigorously. Citizens must actively participate in the democratic process, holding elected representatives accountable for their actions. Those deliberately making false promises must be punished through the ballot box.



Nomen devotees offer prayers during the Attukal Pongala festival, in Thiruvananthapuran

The aftermath of a controversial election



Amid concerns over rising debt and geopolitical tensions, the resilience of Pakistan's political fabric faces its sternest test yet



fractured mandate, on paper, it may seem fractured however the call people have taken is clear. It goes without saying that if 100 independent candidates win, it's no mean achievement for a party that is backing them. The story of what happened in 1968 in Pakistan is often forgotten, in that year, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto brought down the military presidency of Gen Ayub Khan. Pakistan has seen big upheavals in the past and as things stand today another one is brewing for sure. This time against a China-Pak Army selected candidate who will be nominated at the top post, against the will of the people.Most analysts believed Nawaz Sharif was sure to become the PM however why he did not make it to the top slot has to do with how he reacted to situations post-Kargil.

Sharif was thrown out in 1999 by General Musharraf, who then led Pakistan's army because he publicly ridiculed the army for apparently keeping him in the dark oncerning the Kargil War. Now as they say once bitten twice shy, the Pakistani army always wanted a third person apart from Nawaz Sharif and Imran Khan to be the notional head of Pakistan, and they are gunning for one. The Pakistani army used the clout of

Nawaz Sharif (whatever he had) to try and get to power someone they wanted and somehow get rid of Imran Khan. China has had a friendly relationship with the Sharif family so they are fine with someone coming up with Sharif's backing. Now the question is, will the people of Pakistan accept the humiliation of subversion of their mandate?

Has the Pakistani army become so weak that it does not hold any sway over the people of Pakistan? Does the US still have control over the Pakistani Army and what they do to influence elections in Pakistan? Would a coalition Government that lacks popular support be able to sustain itself? Will there be even more civil unrest in Pakistan in the months to come? Answers to these questions hold the key to what is going to unfold in Pakistan shortly.

Things in Pakistan have never been quiet from within, and this election has exposed the hollow belly of the Pakistani electoral system. In most of the constituencies, the election was rigged. Some of the election commission officers have since resigned after admitting to mass-scale rigging. It's almost incomprehensible how

THE US STILL HAS A LOT OF INTEREST IN PAKISTAN, MAYBE BECAUSE OF OLD TIES OR BECAUSE IT'S AN ISLAMIC NATION WITH A DECLARED NUCLEAR WEAPON SYSTEM. WHATEVER IT MAY BE, BUT IT DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE ANY **OVERRIDING** CONTROL OVER

THINGS IN PAKISTAN

ANYMORE

then has called the election reliable. The so-called results that have been thrown up show that PMLN has 79 seats, and PPP has 54 seats in a 264seat parliament giving both of them combined a comfortable majority. I'll looks like a coalition Government would come up in Pakistan would be devoid of a popular mandate which is likely to fuel unrest in the public even more in the days to come.

The mandate of the people seems to be with PTI and with Imran Khan. In this coalition too the two parties joining hands have a little in common and would provide a weak Government ridden by inter-Under these circumstances, the people of Pakistan are going to feel cheated. In a country that has not a single

nal friction and lobbying. respected institution in place and has a supreme court that is by and large influenced by vested interests, civil unrest looks around the corner. If this kind of circumstance persists. the balkanisation of Pakistan is not far away, no matter how hard China tries to keep it together. The US still has a lot of interest in Pakistan, maybe because of old ties or because it's an Islamic nation with a

declared nuclear weapon system, whatever it may be but it does not seem to have any overriding control over things in Pakistan anymore. The US does have some control over the Pakistani Army however Pakistani Army seems to have lost all respect in the eyes of the general public in Pakistan. It looks like people are not fearful of the Pakistani Army anymore. It looks like the people of Pakistan would find it hard to digest that their mandate has been subverted.

It's a writing on the wall that this new coalition that has taken a good fortnight to form may just fall under its pressure in due course of time. How this new coalition Government would tackle the rising debt crisis would also be interesting to see. In the past Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has made lowbrow and irresponsible comments against India, hopefully, he will have matured now and will refrain from jingoism. Sharif brothers are mature politicians, however, they would be under tremendous pressure from China, the US, the Pakistani Army and the people of Pakistan.

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

Rs 1 crore should chip in five per cent.

Proponents argue that the fund's proceeds will

be directed towards the welfare of temple priests

and the development of lesser-known C-grade

temples. Despite passing through the assembly,

the bill faced a decisive rejection in the council

Revamping India's intelligence network



There is a pressing need for reforms within India's intelligence framework, addressing coordination deficits and accountability lapses

he imperative for a comprehensive over-haul of India's intelligence framework becomes apparent when considering the existence of 14 intelligence agencies, each with varying and occasionally overlapping responsibilities. These agencies have come into being in response to strategic shifts and past shortcomings. In the aftermath of the 1962 conflict with China, the Directorate General of Security (DGS) was established within the Intelligence Bureau (IB). Subsequently, following the 1965 war with Pakistan, external intelligence was segregated into a distinct entity, the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW), which also birthed the Special Bureau aimed at enhancing organisational effectiveness. After the 1999 Kargil conflict, the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO) were instituted.

However, persistent issues stem from the lack of coordination among these agencies. The absence of a Director of National Intelligence or a Coordinating Minister exacerbates this problem.



concern. The intelligence apparatus, entrenched in the colonial-era police structure, grapples with adapting to contemporary challenges. The Intelligence Bureau (IB), primarily oriented towards domestic and political affairs, encounters limitations in counterintelligence endeavours. Despite initiatives like the Multi-Agency Centre (MAC), cooperation deficiencies persist. In 2001, a Group of Ministers proposed elevating the IB to the status of the premier Counter-Terrorism agency, culminating in the establishment of MAC and Subsidiary MACs for intelligence amalgamation. Externally, the R&AW, responsible for external intelligence gathering, confronts challenges such as excessive reliance on TECHINT and insufficient development of human intel-

ligence (HUMINT).

While the establishment of sis. Personnel issues. the National Technical Human Research Organisation (NTRO) and the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) aimed to address technological aspects, issues like overlapping mandates and coordination gaps have arisen. Reform is imperative, commencing with the delineation of contemporary challenges, specialisations, and oversight

mechanisms. Concerning oversight, India lacks effective mechanisms for its intelligence agencies. Suggestions include appointing individuals well-versed in operational modalities at a macro level or establishing a National Intelligence Board for monitoring. Apex-level management necessitates enhancement, possibly through the appointment of a full-time intelligence adviser or a Director of National Intelligence under the NSA or

Coordination and tasking, particularly between the Centre and states, remain deficient, necessitating legislative attention. The Intelligence Cycle requires refinement, with a clear demarcation between collection and analy-

intelligence (HUMINT) and technical intelligence (TECHINT) pose distinct challenges. While big data analysis is nascent, considerations regarding privacy and legislative authorization for extensive data scrutiny are paramount. The dearth of skilled manpower for HUMINT is a significant concern, and bolstering military expertise within intelligence agencies is imperative. Although inspired by the ideology of the 5 Eyes, I4C, under the Ministry of Home Affairs, has not been effectively operationalized in the realm of digital warfare. Effectiveness in counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency remains a pressing concern. Failures to establish the National Counter-terrorism Centre (NCTC) and inter-agency conflicts underscore the need for a robust system. Ensuring successful prosecutions following counter-terrorism arrests is

(The writer is an eminent expert-Counter Terrorism (in West Asia & Middle Eastern countries, views are personal)

WHO REPORT ON AIR POLLUTION

Sir — The World Health Organisation's report on air pollution has been released recently. According to this year 2020, 32 lakh people will have died due to air pollution. What is even more alarming is that five lakh deaths are of children under the age of five. This news was recently read that there are many causes of pollution in the world. Many people cook on kerosene and charcoal. The number of such is about 2.3 billion. Apart from this, leaves are burnt in many fields, which also causes pollution. The huge number of vehicles and the pollution caused by it is a matter known to all. Even today, many countries in South Asia depend on wood and coal.

It is necessary to increase the use of clean fuel to reduce air pollution in the country. It is necessary to increase the use of solar, stove, biogas, LPG natural gas and alcohol fuel. Apart from this, it is necessary to reduce the use of petrol and diesel vehicles and replace them with electric vehicles. The central government is alert about electric vehicles and is thinking and taking action on how their use will increase in the country. Domestic gas is also being used on a large scale in the country, so it seems that all these measures can save you from air pollution.

Shantaram Wagh | Pune

PAROLE REGULATIONS Sir — Handing and controlling parole to convicts in Indian jails is very contentious, and often misused. Parole is a "promise" or "word of honour" given by the convicts that they will return after a specific period. In special circumstances, it can be a "corrective rehabilitation". In India, the Prison Acts of 1894 and 1900 govern parole rules though they differ slightly across states. The parole, which can be custodial lasting six hours to regular, lasting one month, is monitored by prison officers and applies after the prisoner completes at least one year in prison unless specified by the court.

Karnataka temple tax move draws ire

EDITO



he Karnataka Government's contentious proposal to impose taxes on Hindu temples has ignited a firestorm of debate, drawing sharp criticism from opposition parties and various religious groups. The bill stipulates that temples with annual incomes exceeding Rs 1 crore must contribute 10% to a Common Pool Fund. while those generating between Rs 10 lakh and

where the opposition commands a majority. Meanwhile, a recent survey sheds light on public sentiment regarding the tax measure. It reveals that 52% of Hindus in Karnataka perceive the tax as discriminatory, while 48% deem it necessary. Furthermore, a significant majority of 62% believe that small temples should be exempt from this taxation. Although the Karnataka Government has refrained from disclosing anticipated revenue figures, experts speculate that the tax could generate up to Rs 1,000 crore annually, underscoring the financial implications and societal divisions surrounding this contentious issue. Amarjeet Kumar | Hazaribagh

a "convenient" route of escape for convicts. Following a Delhi High Court verdict that had severely castigated the police for its inability to regulate the whole parole process adequately, serious offenders involved in rape-cum-murder, and those posing a threat to the country's security and those who are not Indian citizens are "strictly" barred from being granted parole by the Government. But a lot more needs to be done and there is a need to impose a foolproof method to prevent prisoners from taking advantage of certain lax provisions still existing in

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

SPORTS CONNECT PEOPLE

Sir — In this rapidly changing time, only a few things keep people close and give them a medium to be connected. One such medium is sports. Sports give the fans a feeling of attachment and affinity. It builds communities that feel the adrenaline rush every time their team moves up on the leaderboard and that shed tears A CAG report had said that parole was when they are on the losing side. Be it the

nations, franchises, or clubs, they all have a legacy—a legacy that has triumphant victories and tragic defeats that keep the fans close and make them support the team even through the tough times. The Tifosi, for instance, have an undying love for Ferrari, given the glorious legacy the red machine has from the early days of Formula One. Even if the team is struggling on the leaderboard, the passion is still the same as it was during the era of sheer dominance when the likes of Michael Schumacher or Sebastian Vettel raced for "The Prancing Horse."

The reason behind this unwavering support and loyalty is the bond that fans develop with the sport, their heroes, and their triumphs. For those who don't watch sports, all this might just be a waste of time, but for lovers of the game, it is an escape from a tedious and mundane life. It connects people and can be a meaningful way of finding purpose in one's life.

Pratyush Tiwari | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

BALANCING WORK AND WELL-BEING

It's time to shift from the disciplinary mantra 'act your age' to 'act your wage'



SHAINY SHARMA

n today's cutthroat and challenging work landscape, finding the right balance between professional devotion and personal well-being can be challenging. The modern work culture often encourages its employees to go beyond their potential, leading to exploitation, anxiety and burnout. The internet, social media, Gen Z and millennials with time have gone crazy about the term quiet quitting all over and now a new trend which is considered to be a 'loud quiet quitting' is buzzing everywhere- the notion of Acting Your Wage. It has emerged as a call from the fed-up workers and employees who believe it's a solution to establish boundaries and ensure that employees are neither overworked nor under-utilized. Since the beginning of the digital era (use of cell phones), Gen Z was expected to be available 24x7 in their workplace whereas the older generation worked according to their job timings. Millennials are tech-savvy and cannot stay away from their gadgets.

Acting your wage is a philosophy that revolves around performing only those tasks and duties for which an employee is contracted and compensated and not for taking additional responsibilities without proper recognition or compensation. In layman's language, it means dedicating yourself to the responsibilities explicitly tied to your compensation while avoiding the trap of overextending beyond your job description.

Today, younger workers have an egalitarian mindset- a penchant for social activism and expectations of two-way feedback. They work on a simple theory - what is a job worth? It is not about being complacent or neglecting work responsibilities instead, the generation believes in recognising the importance of self-care, setting boundaries and preserving energy for long-term productivity and well-being.



It is about recognising an individual's worth and ensuring that the time and effort they devote to their job align with the compensation they receive. Moreover, studies reveal that employees who practice this approach achieve a healthier work-life balance, preserve their energy levels, protect themselves from potential exploitation and most importantly, prevent burnout. Today many employees are taking the initiative to clarify their job roles with their seniors so that a clear understanding of what is expected is ensured and ambiguity is prevented. Also, employees are now practising the art of politely saying 'no' to additional tasks that fall outside their job description and instead actively seeking opportunities for advancement or higher roles that align with their skill set and career. Employers on the other hand, who tend to implement this notion will benefit as, it will enhance employee well-being, increase job satisfaction, improve productivity and most importantly strengthen the work culture. There will be a culture of transparency, fairness and respect within the organization. Organisations who are already provide clear and comprehensive job descriptions to employees, outline their roles and responsibilities, acknowledge and reward them for their contributions, and invest in training and development programmes that will offer them opportunities to grow and advance within the organisation are already away from

There is no denying the fact that success in any field grows out of learning how to build skills, how to ask for help and how to build capacity in ways that don't even exist. The act of wage is a way to take care of yourself to be stress-free. Remember, one needs to normalise doing the bare minimum at work. An individual signs up for a job. If the employers are not paying extra to do extra tasks, strictly don't do them. It's time to throw the disciplinary line 'act your age' and turn it to 'act your wage'.

(The author is a senior educator, views are personal)

Indian education system: The quest for perfection



The Indian education system stands at a crossroads, poised between recognition and realisation of its inherent potential



ooking back from the transition point to the third millennium, it could indeed be interesting—and revealing—as to what was the most encouraging achievement in the pivotal sector of education! The most mentioned of the responses to the query from seasoned academics and scholars, as well as the policymakers who had contributed to policy formulation and implementation for three-four decades, referred to the change in social responses from various strata of society.

The most serious impediment was ignorance of the value of education in the lives of the individual and the family. One wonders whether anything more could be expected from a society seriously emaciated for centuries, and subjected to live their lives in abject misery! Social structures that practised exclusion, seriously flawed assumptions on the role of women and its relationship to female literacy, and the excruciating hold of the clergy in deprecating the education of girls were indeed serious handicaps before all those who were assigned to implement the constitutional directive of providing free and compulsory education to all children till they achieve fourteen years of age!

The widely prevalent practice of early marriage, child labour, compulsions to earn daily bread, and the need for extra hands in farms and fields, were also prominent factors that severely impeded the process of enrolment in schools. It may be tough for the millennials to visualise a situation that for decades together, girls' education in India suffered for want of toilets for girls in schools. This is one area that remained neglected all along.

After the Prime Minister of India spoke from the ramparts of the Red Fort about sanitation practices, and the need for immediate reforms, things have

changed, and this deserves appreciation. However, considerable alertness and appreciation of the need are still necessary. Why do I say this? What one learns from personal interactions just cannot always be extricated from data! In 2016, one visited several institutions as a member of the TSR Subramaniam Committee on Education policy. In one of the colleges with an enrollment of around two thousand, a mention was made of the neglect of sanitation, the Director had this to say: Oh, it is too dirty and unhygienic for me to inspect! I menattention to such a significant OUR EDUCATION attention to such a significant impediment. Second; even after the universally acknowledged and appreciated movement for sanitation, and its great success, there is much more to be

IT MUST BE achieved on this front! We are much better off at this juncture in educational achieve-DRIFTED ments, particularly in the context of girls' participation in education MORE TOWARDS and subsequently in every sector of knowledge, skills, services, defence and the like. What was OF EDUCATION the most ignored aspect of Indian education during the second half FOR MATERIAL of the 20th century? Some academics and scholars—adherents of negativity included—would like to criticise all that has been done and achieved during this period. Those who are, ideologically unconstrained and capable of taking an objective analytical view express concern about certain aspects that are essential ingredients total the personality development of any individual.

every policy and programme, hand and heart. Sri Aurobindo; but current education practices get ignored in schools and even certain well-reputed institutions. Moral and ethical aspects of education, education in human values, and similar expressions are regular parts of every education initiative.

We also have the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, who could say "My life is my message"! How many of our present-day leaders—political leaders—could say that with inner conviction and confidence? There are still the old guards and young ones tion this for two reasons; first; the who took Gandhi, Rajendra aim is perfection. systems of education paid little Prasad, Rajagopalachari, Karpuri Remember you are on the hold of Thakur, LK Advani, Narendra Modi, and the like as their role

A committed work culture, a sound value system, and a pursuit of higher and larger goals in life could only be inculcated in educational institutions and that remains a big challenge before the Indian education system. Our advantage is that we are familiar with how it could be achieved. Indian education has achieved sufficient recognition and success; within and outside the country. India and its ancient education systems aimed at comprehensive personality development, the comprehension of 'Ekam Sat Viprah Baudha Vadanti, 'Sarv bhut Hite Ratah, 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhina", and much more on similar lines. We were privileged that MK Gandhi gave us a practical model of education that focused on enhancing the economic aspect but did not neglect this totality, and wanted the best This is usually articulated in to be drawn out of out of head,

and the mother; dwelled in higher echelons of human advancement, apart from what is usually aimed at imparting educa-

Our education initiatives and efforts, it must be acknowledged; drifted more towards the acquisition of education for material and physical gains. Education, said the Mother; is not to prepare learners to succeed in life and society but 'to increase his per-fectibility'! Addressing the students of the Ashram Schools she said: "Do not aim for success. Our

a new world, participating in its worth and instrumental in its creation. There is nothing more important than the transformation. There is no interest more worthwhile." The Mother goes on to delineate it further for our comprehension: "To learn for the sake of knowledge, to study to know the secrets of Nature and life, to educate oneself to grow in consciousness, to discipline oneself to become master of oneself, to overcome one's weaknesses, incapacities, and ignorance, to prepare oneself to advance in life towards a goal that is nobler and vaster, more generous and

Could anything more need be said on how our schools and institutions could move ahead in pursuit of excellence once they absorb the golden words and the strength of the philosophy behind

them?

(The author works in education, social cohesion and religious amity, views are personal)

The impact of amendments to criminal codes on national policing

INITIATIVES

AND EFFORTS,

ACKNOWLEDGED.

THE ACQUISITION

AND PHYSICAL

The implications of amendments to three criminal codes on civil liberties and the integrity of the legal process remain subject to ongoing debate and scrutiny

Darliament has passed three criminal codes, among which the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) seeks to amend the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (CrPC). There is one provision in BNSS that seeks to increase the number of days within which police custody (PC) can be sought. When someone is in police custody, it means they are held by the police in a lockup at the station. On the other hand, judicial custody means they are held in a central jail. The investigating agency gets 24 hours to investigate if they are not able to complete the investigation within that bracket, they must get permis-



depending on the seriousness of the crime.

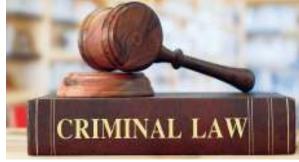
However, within this timeframe of 60/90 days, the magistrate is restricted to granting PC for the initial 15 days from the date of arrest, beyond which only judicial custody can be granted. This 15-day limit was extensively discussed sion from the magistrate, who in the Anupam Kulkarni v. can grant custody of the CBI case, where the Supreme accused for up to 60/90 days, Court ruled that an accused

cannot be held in PC beyond 15 days from the date of arrest and PC in total can be for a maximum of 15 days, which means that PC could be granted by the magistrate in parts for the first 15 days or as a

Understanding the new law According to Section 187 of the BNSS, the PC can be granted within the first 40 days (for less serious offences) or 60 days (for more serious offences) after the accused is arrested. The change implies that the prescribed 15-day period of custody can now be split into shorter periods of custody sought over 40 days for offences punishable up to 10 years or 60 days for other offences. This represents a departure from the current practice under Section 167 of

the CrPC, where PC can only be obtained within the initial 15 days. Consequently, concerns have been raised regarding the Government's rationale behind this change, particularly considering the act's aim to prioritise a people-centric criminal justice system. However, further arguments necessitate the examination of two significant cases. Judgements that led to a para-

dox: First, in the case of Vikas Mishra v. CBI, where the CBI wanted more time to question Vikas Mishra, who was accused of corruption and conspiracy. Despite being in custody for seven days, he was hospitalised and later released on bail. The CBI argued that they couldn't interrogate him properly during this time. However, Vikas's lawyers cited



the court's ruling that said PC beyond 15 days from the arrest Nonetheless, the court granted custody to the police and noted that every accused person must respect the investigation and court proceedings and went on to mention that these ways of hindering the pursuit of justice would not be tolerated.

Second, in the case of Senthil Balaji v. The State, the Supreme Court decided that the maximum 15 days PC period can be split into shorter periods over the entire investigation, which can last either 60 or 90 days as against the general rule of granting PC in first 15 days, it also questioned its

judgement of Anupam

Kulkarni and further, said that

this interpretation needs to reviewed by a larger bench. By analysing the two judgements passed last year we can conclude that there is a growing inclination towards favouring the investigating agency. Despite the accused attempting to avoid initial PC in the first case due to medical reasons, it's essential to recognise that the accused might exploit the 15-day bar by taking the excuse of loopholes on grounds of a medical emer-

However, the second case sets a precedent keeping the investigation process at the heart of the criminal justice system which poses a potential series of inconsistencies. Therefore, Section 187 of the BNSS aims to definitively resolve the existing confusion and prevent

future inconsistencies regarding the timeline within which PC can be sought and sets the limit of 40/60 days.

It seeks to find a middle path where the civil liberties of the accused are not exploited as the maximum number of days for which the PC can be granted is still 15 days which now can be granted in parts in 40/60 days and also favours investigating agencies by granting a reasonable time for custodial interrogation, which is crucial for uncovering the truth as denying the investigating agency the opportunity for further interrogation gives an advantage to the accused to disrupted the legal

(The writer is a law student; views expressed are

'India's steel exports at 18-month high

ndia's monthly steel exports hit a 18-month high to 1.1 million tonne in January 2024 on increased demand from the European Union and supportive global prices, SteelMint said. Besides, competitive domestic prices of steel contributed to rise in export, the research firm said in its latest report. The outbound shipment of steel in January 2023 was

0.67 million tonne, as per SteelMint data. On reasons behind the surge in exports, SteelMint said, "good restocking demand from the European Union (EU) contributed 67 per cent of the 1.11 MT (export) in January. It was highest in last 18 months. While the price of hot rolled coil (HRC) in India's trade segment was at Rs 54,300/a tonne, the global rate was USD 710 per tonne (about Rs 58,000). This factor also contributed to the demand for Indian steel in the global markets. Overall, Indian steel exports may remain largely range-bound or fall slightly in the near term.



CEO Clubs India to host flagship summit from March 1-3

participation of chief executives of more than 150 companies. The summit 'Go Beyond Retreat 2024' to be held in the city will have Star Hospitals MD Gopichand Mannam, Nangia Andersen India Chairman Rakesh Nangia and Medplus Health Services Founder & Ceo Madhukar Gangadi

The summit will discuss the everchanging needs of today's visionary leaders and include interactive workshops and gain insights into navigating the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. CEO Clubs India National President, Kishore Kothapalli said, "We are excited to continue the tradition of bringing together bright minds from across the country to explore new ideas, forge meaningful connections and shape the



LIC Housing Finance hopes to earn Rs 5,000 cr profit

IC Housing Finance, the mortgage arm of insurance behemoth LIC, is expecting a net profit of Rs 5,000 crore in the current financial year on the back of robust loan demand and expansion in non-core business. The non-core business includes Loan Against Property (LAP) and affordable housing finance, LIC Housing Finance managing

director and CEO Tribhuwan Adhikari told PTI in an interaction. During 2022-23, the biggest housing finance company earned a net profit of Rs 2,891 crore. "Affordable housing segment remained strong in tier-2 and tier-3 markets. We remained focused on this segment, as it gives an opportunity to millions of aspiring Indians to own their home with a moderate budget," he said. In addition to business growth, he said, "our endeavour has been to improve service standards through ongoing digita.



WTO MINISTERIAL MEETING

India seeks permanent solution to food security

Will strongly oppose a China-led proposal for an investment facilitation pact

PNS NEW DELHI

India will strongly oppose a China-led proposal for an investment facilitation pact besides pressing for finding a permanent solution to public stock holding of grains for food security and protection of the interests of fishermen at the WTO ministerial meeting beginning Tuesday.

The Indian delegation is led by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. The four-day 13th ministerial conference (MC13) will start on February 26 in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Trade ministers of 164 member countries of the World



Trade Organisation (WTO) are meeting against the backdrop of the uncertain global economic situation due to the Red Sea crisis, the Ukraine-Russia war and the Israel-Hamas conflict.

The key issue of India's interests at the meeting relates to finding a permanent solution for its minimum support price (MSP) issue for food security, agricultural reforms,

fisheries subsidies, e-commerce moratorium on import duties, dispute settlement, and WTO reforms.

Food security issues

The public stock-holding (PSH) programme is a policy tool under which the govern-ment procures crops like rice and wheat from farmers at MSP, and stores and distributes foodgrains to the poor.

India stresses the need for PSH for its large, vulnerable population and wants a permanent solution from the MC13. Food procurement, stockholding, and distribution are crucial to India's food security strategy.



431 infra projects hit by cost overrun of Rs 4.80 lakh cr

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 431 infrastructure projects, each entailing an investment of Rs 150 crore or above, were hit by cost overrun of more than Rs 4.80 lakh crore in January 2024, an official report stated.

According to Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), which monitors infrastructure projects worth Rs 150 crore and above, out of 1,821 projects, 431 reported cost overrun and 780 projects were delayed.

Total original cost of implementation of the 1,821 projects was Rs 26,09,679.38 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be Rs 30,90,135.99 crore.



PNS NEW DELHI

The GST Council is likely to soon clarify that Real Estate Regulatory Authority (RERA) will not be required to pay Goods and Services Tax (GST), an official said.

According to the official, RERA, which functions as a regulator as well as facilitator for the realty sector, is covered under Article 243G of the Constitution dealing with powers, authority and responsibilities of panchayats.

RERA was set up in different states to ensure trans-parency in real estate projects, protect the interest of consumers and to establish an adjudicating mechanism for speedy dispute redressal.

The official said that after discussions with RERA functionaries about the nature of their function it was decided that GST is not applicable on

The official further said that RERAs are funded by respec-



tive state governments and hence levying GST would mean taxing state governments.

A meeting of GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister and comprising state ministers, is likely to be held before the imposition of Model Code of Conduct for the general election due in April-May. The last meeting of GST Council was held on October

Moore Singhi Executive Director Rajat Mohan said before July 18, 2022, certain services offered by key regulatory bodies in India, including

7, 2023.

the Reserve Bank, Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) network, were not subject to GST.

This exemption was lifted on July 18, 2022, leading to discussions about the tax implications for RERA bodies as well.

"Furthermore, in the residential real estate sector, Input Tax Credit (ITC) is not permissible, which means excluding RERA authorities from GST consider-

Billionaires, cricketers, film stars invited to Ambani scion's pre-wedding festivities



PNS NEW DELHI

India's top billionaires, including Gautam Adani and Sunil Bharti Mittal, mega stars from film industry such as Amitabh Bachchan and Shahrukh Khan and cricketing icons from Sachin Tendulkar to M S Dhoni are among those invited for pre-wedding celebrations of Mukesh Ambani's youngest son,

Anant early next month. Ahead of the wedding ceremony in July, guests from around the world have been invited to three-day pre-wedding festivities beginning March 1, at Gujarat's Jamnagar, which houses Ambani's mega oil refineries.

Anant Ambani, the youngest of the three children Mukesh Ambani and Nita Ambani have, is set to marry Radhika Merchant the younger daughter of

Viren Merchant, CEO of Encore Healthcare, and entrepreneur Merchant.

With Jamnagar not having five-star hotels, ultra-luxury tents housing best of facilities, including tiled bathrooms are being erected for the guests.

The guest list includes international business leaders like Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Microsoft founder Bill Gates, Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, Adobe CEO Shantanu Narayen, Walt Disney CEO Bob Iger, BlackRock CEO Larry Fink, Adnoc CEO Sultan Ahmed Al Jaber, and EL Rothschild chair Lynn Forester de Rothschild, sources said.

Indian business magnates invited include Gautam Adani and family, Tata Sons Natarajan chairman Chandrasekaran , Aditya Birla Group Chairperson Kumar Mangalam Birla.

MARKETS TO FOCUS ON GLOBAL TRENDS

May face volatility amid derivatives expiry: Analysts

PNS NEW DELHI

With no major domestic market-moving event scheduled this week, stock market investors would largely focus on global trends and foreign fund movement, and may face volatility amid monthly deriv-

"We expect volatility to remain high due to the scheduled expiry of February month derivatives contracts. Besides, participants should keep a close watch on the performance of the global indices, especially the US for cues," Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research at Religare Broking

Last week, BSE Sensex rose 716.16 points or 1 per cent to

The growth in currency in circulation deceler-

ated to 3.7 per cent for the week ended

February 9 from 8.2 per cent a year ago, reflect-

ing the impact of the decision of the Reserve

Bank of India (RBI) to withdraw Rs 2,000 ban-

Currency-in-circulation (CiC) refers to notes

and coins in circulation, while currency with

According to the RBI, commercial banks have

reported double-digit growth in deposits in

the public comprises notes and coins in circu-



close at 73,142.8 points and inched closer to its record high level of 73,427.5.

Markets remained volatile in the passing week but managed to end with a gain of nearly a per cent. After the initial rise, mixed global cues combined with profit taking in

IMPACT OF RS 2,000 NOTES WITHDRAWAL

Currency-in-circulation growth dips to 3.7%

select heavyweights capped the momentum.

"Consequently, the benchmark indices, Nifty and Sensex, continued to oscillate in a narrow range till the end and finally settled at 22,212.70 and 73,142.80 respectively,"

January, which too can be attributed to with-

The growth of Reserve Money (RM), as per

the RBI data, decelerated to 5.8 per cent as on

February 9, 2024 from 11.2 per cent a year ago

(8.8 per cent adjusted for the first-round impact of change in Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR).
Components of RM include CiC, banks'

deposits in RBI and other deposits with the cen-

The growth in CiC , the largest component

of RM, decelerated to 3.7 per cent from 8.2 per

cent a year ago, reflecting the withdrawal of Rs

2,000 banknotes, according to the RBI.

drawal of Rs 2,000 currency notes.

Number of M&A deals in India falls 10% to 793 in 2023: PwC

PNS NEW DELHI

acquisition (M&A) deals during 2023 dropped by 10 per cent on an annual basis to 793, said a PwC India report on Sunday.

However, the total disclosed deal value for M&A declined much steeper at 38 'Deals at a glance'.

Equity) investments totalled USD 36 billion, marking a substantial 36 per cent drop from 2022.

While early-stage investments were 53 per cent less compared to that in 2022, the report said, these along with growth-stage investments continued to make up the major share, constituting around 73 per cent of fundings in 2023.



The number of merger and

per cent during the year, according to the report titled The report further observed that PE (Private

Despite this decline, the

average investment size per deal increased to USD 46 million from USD 42 million in 2022, reflecting a potential shift towards larger opportu-

IOC, GAIL, ONGC fined for third quarter

PNS NEW DELHI

State-owned oil and gas giants including IndianOil, ONGC and GAIL (India) have been slapped fines for the third straight quarter for failing to meet listing norm requirements of having the requisite number of directors on their board.

oil refining and fuel marketing giant Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), explorers Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL), gas utility GAIL, and refiners Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd (MRPL) a cumulative Rs 32.5 lakh, stock exchange filings showed.

In separate filings, the companies detailed the fines imposed by the BSE and NSE for either not having the requisite number of independent directors or the mandated women director in the third

quarter ended December 31 2023, but were quick to point out that appointment of directors was done by the government and they had no role in

The companies had faced fines for the same reason in the previous two quarters as well. The six PSUs in separate fil-

ings said they have been 5,42,800 each for the third quarter. While ONGC and its subsidiaries HPCL and MRPL, GAIL and OIL faced fines for not having the required number of independent directors on their board, IOC for not having a woman independent director on its board.

Listing norms require companies to have independent directors in the same proportion as executive or functional directors. They are also required to have at least one woman director on the board. For the second quarter, IOC,

ONGC, OIL, GAIL, Bharat Petroleum Corporation.



Exports now into Africa, Central Asia & Europe

lation minus cash with banks.

PNS NEW DELHI

At a time when global trade is facing geo-political uncertainties, India's exports of goods like automobiles and gold jewellery have ventured into uncharted territories of Central Asia, Africa and Latin America, according to an analysis by the commerce min-

The analysis has shown that India has penetrated into what are termed as "absolutely new markets" in regions such as Africa, Central Asia, Latin America and North America during April-December 2023. The "absolutely new mar-

kets" refer to areas where India did see any export during April-December 2022, but healthy growth of certain prin-



cipal commodities like motor vehicles, two- and three-wheelers, petroleum products, sugar, gold and other precious jewellery were recorded in April-December 2023.

Exports of these commodities to the absolutely new markets during April-December 2023 stood at USD 234 million as against nil shipments during the same period of 2022.

It added that these commodities captured a greater number of markets in the Central Asia, Africa, and European regions.

'A comprehensive examination of country-wise exports underscores a notable diversification of markets for India's merchandise exports, characnew export destinations, in spite of strong global head-winds with subdued performance globally," an official

The official added that after evaluating the market diversification of the country's merchandise exports across major sectors at the principal commodity level, comparing the periods from April-December 2022-23 to April-December 2023-24, significant advance-ments in market diversification emerged in the current fiscal.

These diversified markets are termed as "absolutely new", "new", and "promising" "Together, exports to these markets capture 5 per cent of

India's total exports of 42 prin-

cipal commodities to the

terised by the exploration of world. These commodities span across 16 important sectors of India's export basket," the official added.

In the new markets, where India's exports share of goods like ceramics and allied products, aluminium, products of aluminium, two- and threewheelers, products of iron and steel, electric machinery and equipments was meagre or nil has jumped to USD 2.17 billion during April-December 2023.

These items have captured a greater number of markets in the America, Central Asian,

and African regions.
The analysis showed that the export of two- and threewheelers has been headed to 31 new markets/countries with a total exported value of USD 110 million in the April.

Monthly household consumer spending more than doubled during 2012-2023

PNS NEW DELHI

The per capita monthly household expenditure more than doubled in 2022-23 as compared to 2011-12, according to the latest study of National Sample Survey

Office (NSSO). NSSO, under Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, conducted Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) during August 2022 to July 2023, an official statement said on Saturday.

The survey aims at generating estimates of household Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (MPCE) and its distribution



separately for the rural and urban sectors of the country, for states and Union Territories, and for different

socio-economic groups. As per the survey, the average MPCE at current prices

(without imputation) more than doubled to Rs 6,459 in urban areas in 2022-23 from Rs 2,630 in 2011-12.

Similarly in rural areas, it jumped to Rs 3,773 from Rs 1,430 at current prices.



Vijayawada | Monday February 26, 2024

what's brewing?

'I feel I cannot bear the guilt,' says

Kareena as she missed Jeh's 1st concert

professional lives. However, Kareena acknowledged that sometimes this requires making compromises, either at work or at home. Kareena recently talked about her "mom guilt" and revealed that she had to miss her younger son Jeh's debut concert.

"I missed my younger one Jeh's firstever concert today since I was filming a promo beforehand. Saif was rehearsing for his film, which he will begin releasing on Netflix the next week. He attended Taimur's school funfair before heading to Jeh's show. I recently gave the kids a call to see how they were doing; they had been really busy. Though it's a never-ending struggle, I adore it."

Additionally, Kareena revealed that

Taimur, her older son, has begun to comprehend that both of his parents work, and she feels that Taimur's exposure to a working mother will instill in him a greater sense of respect for

areena Kapoor is an actor who has succeeded in striking a balance between her personal and women. "I know I will be there when he performs next year," she said, admitting that she felt a great deal of guilt for ting that she felt a great deal of guilt for missing Jeh's debut performance. At this age, it is more for me. That's my fault; he's only three. It's as if I have to be present to see his delight since I can never be sure if he will remember it. You must therefore speak to yourself and persuade yourself that there is a place where I feel I cannot bear the guilt of not going to be there for a full day, either at specific periods or all the time."

She continued by saying that she and Saif Ali Khan attempt to find a balance between their time spent at home with the children and their need for work. "I cannot function without my job or my role as a working mother. Taimur is aware of that. I believe that he is growing up in a good environment, where both his father and mother work and alternate who will likely be at home. It will provide him with a well-rounded upbringing and teach him to appreciate women much more."



Ally McBeal.

on 2001, the actor received a Sag award for his role on

Lily Gladstone defeated Emma Stone and Margot Robbie

to win the award for female performer in a leading role in Killers of the Flower Moon. She began, "This has been a hard year for all of us," before bringing up the actors'

strike of 2023. She continued, "We bring empathy to a world that sorely needs it." Star of The Holdovers

Da'Vine Joy Randolph, who took home multiple accolades this season, including a Golden Globe

and a Bafta, was voted best female actor in a

supporting role. "Your life can change

in a day and it is not a question of

if but of when, keep going," she said performers who are still

waiting for their big break. She also referred

dream.

to the film's director,

Alexander Payne, as

"truly every actor's

The popular biopic *Oppenheimer* by Christopher Nolan has dominated the Screen Actors Guild awards this

Barbie and Killers of the Flower Moon were beaten by the cast of the biographical epic for best ensemble. Male actor in a leading part went to Cillian Murphy; Paul Giamatti and Jeffrey Wright were also in contention. "This is very, very special to me because it comes from you guys," he declared to the Shrine Auditorium crowd in Los Angeles. For his portrayal of Lewis Strauss

in the movie, Robert

Downey Jr. won the award for male Priyanka actor in a supporting role. Chopra 'proud to join' the team of

KILL A TIGER

while also captivating audiences around the world with her artistic abilities. According to Deadline, Priyanka has now become an executive producer on the Oscar-nominated documentary To Kill A Tiger. The Nisha Pahuja movie centres on a father's quest for justice following the sexual abuse of his 13-year-old daughter by three of their family members.

Additionally, the source said that Netflix will release the movie. Executive producers Dev Patel and Mindy Kaling have also joined.

Sharing this on social media, Priyanka mentioned that she was moved by this film when she first saw it in Toronto in 2022. She shared, "I'm so proud to join the incredible team of the Academy Award-nominated documentary *To Kill A Tiger*, and to announce that Netflix has acquired the global distribution rights to this powerful feature directed by Nisha Pahuja. When I first watched this film in 2022, I was immediately captivated by its poignant narrative, depicting a father's valiant struggle within the judicial system to secure justice for his daughter. This project serves as a testament to the boundless love and unyielding determination of a devoted father for his cherished daughter.

A nomination for Best Documentary Feature at the Academy Awards has been extended to To Kill A Tiger. The movie has won 24 prizes at different film festivals



Then Wonka was released at the box office last year, Timothee Chalamet starred in it scenticism and fared well. It went on to become one of Timothee's highest-grossing films ever. Paul King, who provided some insight for Wonka 2 fol-

lowing the popularity of the original movie, directed the picture. The idea of Chalamet playing Willy Wonka, a charac-Willy ter made



Christmas may have provided it an advantage since families watch this fantasy movie together and spend quality

time with their loved ones. Paul King, the filmmaker of Wonka, discussed the prospect of a Wonka 2 film. That's definitely something we're thinking about," he stated. Additionally, the director made hints about brainstorming concepts related to oompa loompas.

In addition, Paul King said, "We can wait for a beat. If we don't think of a story, this is a movie that works on its own.

If we conceive of anything that we believe can be exciting, Oompa Loompas feel like there can be more than one oompa loompas. Naturally, some ideas are circulating, but because we don't yet have a tale, we'll have to wait and see.



ARCHIE



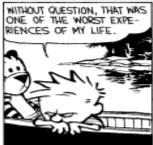




CALVIN AND HOBBES



REALITY CHECK







GARFIELD

VANCY

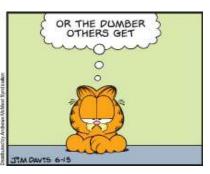
THIS PROBLEM





OBVIOUS

WHAT A SIMPLE ASSIGNMENT



EVERYONE WASTES THE NEXT FEW

MINUTES FEELING

ISCOURAGED, I THIN WE CAN CATCH UP

HE WAS ALWAYS PAINFULLY SAY.

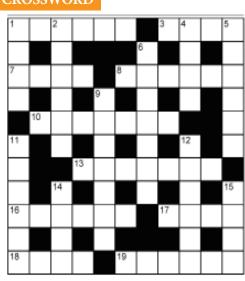


SUDOKU

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

		1				_		resterday 8 solution										
		4				J		2	5	3	7	1	9	6	4	8		
				8	1			7	8	1	3	6	4	2	9	5		
	\sim	_		ž	ı.			9	6	4	8	5	2	7	1	3		
	6	5		/				8	2	6	4	7	3	9	5	1		
	5	4				7		1	3	9	5	2	8	4	7	6		
	Э	ш				1		4	7	5	1	9	6	8	3	2		
	9	2	6					6	1	2	9	3	7	5	8	4		
-	_	=	-					3	4	7	6	8	5	1	2	9		
		1	4					5	9	8	2	4	1	3	6	7		
1		6	2		2			Rules										
		O	J		_			 Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9) exactly once. 										
3																		
		8			7	9		 The sum of all numbers in any row or column must 										

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- An archer fires these
- 3 Seize
- 7 The body's covering
- 8 Wanting food
- 13 Not straight 16 Best
- 15 A blood vessel 17 The world's most eaten
- SOLUTION grain 18 Utters



14 Jealousy

6 A soft thing to sit on or

11 High, steep rock-faces 12 Needlework

put on a couch

9 A type of shop that sells flowers

GINGER MEGGS







98241367 ıles Each row and column can contain each number (1 to 9)

exactly once. The sum of all numbers in any row or column must equal 45.

DOWN 1 Too

- 2 Spoiled
- 4 Scraps of cloth 5 Purchasing



the pioneer ayawada

Follow us on

@TheDailyPioneer

facebook.com/ dailypioneer

Monday February 26, 2024



been receiving, gets candid with The Pioneer.

he joy of being an actor is inhabiting different characters and learning new things with each project, believes actor Mukul Chadda. There's always something in us, that wishes to inhabit different souls in one lifetime and learn new things all the time. And so, the entire journey of being an actor, he says, has been one of self-discovery and constant learning. He is not someone who plans his life ahead; he always hopes to take it on,

one exciting step at a time.

After receiving much acclaim, appreciation, and recognition on the international front at several film festivals, his upcoming film Fairy Folk is all set to hit theaters on March 1.

The Ek Main Aur Ekk Tu actor feels fortunate to travel with the feels fortunate to travel with the crew to the Sydney Film Festival

and the Chicago International Film Festival. Well, "Watching it in a darkened hall collectively with strangers from a different culture and country was wonderful. With every

> l've learned a lot from Rasika over the years. Just watching her prepare for her projects has been a learning experience in itself.

the feedback after the film was over was overwhelming. The best part for me was that so many people had so many varied reactions to the film—everyone liked a different aspect of it because it spoke to so many different kinds of people. I can't wait for audiences in India to aca't." in India to see it."

Fairy Folk is the story of a couple living in Mumbai. When a magical creature enters their world, it upturns their lives and relationships in different ways. This film is a juxtaposition of magical realism with a relationship drama, a film that is both funny and tragic at the same time. His character is a poker player who sees things as a puzzle to be solved and is very obsessive about everything he gets involved with. And make others also follow through on his plans in the manner he has thought out best!

And something that was more than interesting to know was that the film also stars his darling wife, Rasika Dugal, in the lead role, for the first time on the big screen. Mukul was no less than ecstatic about sharing the screen with his wife.

"She is a wonderful actor and someone whom I trust and respect a lot," gleefully shares the star. That degree of trust and respect is very important while working with someone, and he feels lucky the couple got to do
this rather difficult project together.

"I've learned a lot from Rasika over the years.
Just watching her prepare for her projects has

been a learning experience in itself. Or from the discussions we tend to have with each other about our respective projects. This project was different because, by the very nature of the improvisational shooting style, we couldn't discuss what our characters were going through or what we were planning for the next day. Karan would often give each of us notes on how to surprise the other actor on set the next day, and obviously, we couldn't share that with each other. So surprisingly, I had fewer discussions with her on this project that we worked on together than on projects in which we weren't working together."

The project highlights a major thing that has been of much concern these days-bonds and

ically impact it. "What I love about Karan's storytelling style is that he never makes the film about any one issue; it's a simple, sometimes funny, sometimes dramatic story about the lives of a couple. But along the way, it sheds light on relationships, on love, on desire, on gender—on so many issues, without sermonising on anything."

Attention, love, and kindness are things that relationships lack these days. And this, he says, has been well demonstrated in the film, as to how a little catalyst can dramatically change the way a relationship goes forward. And how fragile things can be, with just a little nudge. Likewise, those external events can also bring two people so much closer than they were earlier.

This film was shot in an improvised way; there were no written dialogues whatsoever, even though the basic structure of the storyline was known in advance. So, for example, "We knew roughly what has to happen in a scene, but not how it was going to come about. When arything and simply go with the flow. Even if another actor says or does something unexpected in a scene, your job is to accept it, and react as the character. And they, in turn, react to what you just did. In fact, some magical and beautiful moments came out of this process. Since we didn't discuss or pre-plan things, it was not really possible in this process to have a disagreement with another actor. And like I said, if something unexpected came your way in the take, you accepted it fully and went with

Here comes an interesting and exclusive revelation: "Most of the film is shot in an apartment. Rasika and I took a lot of things from our own house to populate that apartment to give it a lived-in feel, and also make it feel like our own home, which really helped us."

Meanwhile, on the work front, his upcoming film,

Sunflower 2, is releasing very soon! Then there is also an action comedy film called *Dhoom Dhaam* with Yami Gautam and Pratik Gandhi; a romantic comedy called Isha Jhamela with Arjun Rampal; and an Amazon series called Big Girls Don't Cry with Pooja Bhatt and Raima Sen that should all release this year. So, of course, there is an interesting year ahead for Mukul, and we too look

Harmonious melange of Rasika Shekar's love for folk music

SHIKHA DUGGAL

asika Shekar, a singer, flutist, and music composer was praised by Ustad Ghulam Ali Khan recently. She first appeared as a playback singer in movies like *Kill Dil* and 2 *States*, as well as singing with Shankar Mahadevan in the Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy composition Dekh Indian Circus. However, her performance as a featured flutist on Ehsaan and Loy's produced hit Man Patang at MTV Coke Studio season 2 marked a turning point for her. Now she has recently collaborated on a record with American jazz players who have won awards!

The folk performer elaborates in an exclusive chat with us, saying, "It's been more than a dream. This journey has been filled with amazing encounters that have influenced both my musical style and me. As I explore and compose my own music, the varied experiences and training have cultivated a viewpoint and taste in music that are all coming together. I still enjoy practicing and listening to Carnatic music the best since it has such a strong foundation. Being a classically trained flutist and vocalist who has experimented with different genres has given me a distinct yet well-rounded perspective and exposed me to a wide variety of sounds."

She recently appeared in the first-ever Indian folk music documentary series on JioCinema called Equals, which showcases episodes of a folk musician and a young, urbane producer working together. Rasika worked with the most experienced and renowned folk musician Prahlad Tipanya on the series! She was one of the series featured solo female music producers. She performed as a multi-instrumentalist, producer, composer, and bandleader. "I was more aware of my love for music in my final year of chemical engineering school than ever before. I so found myself debating whether to give it a go and acquire more knowledge before deciding to pursue a career in engineering. I continued to become more and more in love with the various aspects that music has to offer as I made the leap. I wanted to investigate it further since I was so engrossed. Nonetheless, I am incredibly appreciative of my engineering degree. It has equipped me with particular abilities like problem-solving, arithmetic, and analytical thinking, which are useful in the music industry in a special way," the singer added.

Ustad Ghulam Ali has taught her a great deal about phrasing and improvisation in music. In addition to his musical expertise, she was greatly inspired by his self-control, modesty, and commitment to music! Conversely, "In cinematic projects, you're filling in to realise someone else's vision for that song. It is a combination of the music

director's and director's requirements for that specific track. I believe the strategy ll thought out since you have to strike a balance between adding your own flair and what the song and concept call for. The excitement of playback singing lies in the ability to transform your voice into many personas."

For her, each and every live performance with Shankar Mahadevan has been a blessing and an education in and of itself for Rasika. From musicality to ways of thinking, creativity to discipline, perseverance to on-stage presence, humility, and so much more, she has seen and learned so much. Being on stage alongside renowned performers offered her a glimpse into some small moments and how to respond to various situations. She has performed and made music in a variety of settings, which has given her the opportunity to try out new techniques.

She promised herself early on in her musical journey that she would experience every aspect of it and immerse herself in each new musical realm that drew her in. There's a more focused approach now. Although the term "genre" is broad, there are a few sounds and techniques that really appeal to and delight her. Most importantly, she hangs on to the idea that if something emotionally impacts her, it doesn't matter what genre it is. She thinks it's critical to be aware of and

sensitive to the context. There is a shared vision when there is teamwork. When it's music she wrote, the meaning changes! As a result, the balance can move freely. "I learned a lot from one specific performance experience that I will never forget: performing in Spain. An audience that had never heard Indian music before attended the concert. I had no idea what to anticipate. Throughout the performance, I was continually taken aback, and it taught me a lot about the nature of live performances. Each audience is unique, with a pulse and taste that originate from a deeper place that is influenced by its own social dynamics, history, and culture. One of the wonderful things about performing live is that audiences may surprise you in the most exquisite ways." But there is one thing that she discovered that unites audiences all around the world: sincere

Rasika Shekar, known for her fusion of folk music and passion, gets candid with *The Pioneer* about her journey, collaborating with renowned musicians including Prahlad Tipanya, Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy, and more.

music and expressive lyrics have a profound effect on listeners that is difficult to put into r the language or genre, that's what makes music so beautiful! "Even now, I find the instrument's simplic-

ity to be fascinating. It seems to be the closest to the voice. Playing it makes me feel a very rewarding kind of connection. Every flute has its own personality, which is another fascinating aspect. It's kind of like making friends. Gaining an understanding of its subtleties and relationship takes time. It's just myself and a particular hamboo flutaryham particular bamboo flute when Î am playing alone. I can lose myself in simply examining the hues and tones of that particular flute and using that particular character to convey my musical ideas. It's an instrument that, on the outside, appeals to a great deal of people on a very basic level. Despite being pri-

marily an Indian instrument, it can be used in any genre," the composer leaves us with a thought-provoking statement.

ontoura vision, a revolutionary advancement in vision correction surgery, has Itransformed the lives of millions worldwide, offering unparalleled precision and accuracy in treating refractive errors. However, like any surgical procedure, proper recovery is crucial to achieving optimal results and ensuring long-term eye health.

Here are some invaluable tips and insights to navigate the recovery process after contoura surgery.

1. Follow post-operative instructions dili**gently:** Your doctor will provide detailed postoperative instructions tailored to your specific needs. It's imperative to adhere to these instructions meticulously. They may include using prescribed eye drops, avoiding strenuous activities, wearing eye protection at night, and attending follow-up appointments. Compliance with these guidelines is vital for a smooth recovery and optimal visual outcomes.

2. Rest and relaxation: In the initial days following contoura surgery, prioritize rest and relaxation to facilitate healing. Avoid activities that strain the eyes, such as reading, watching screens for extended periods, or engaging in vigorous exercise. Adequate sleep is essential for the healing process, so aim for at least 7-8 hours of quality sleep each night.

3. Protect your eyes: Shield your eyes from potential irritants and contaminants, especially in the first few weeks post-surgery. Wear protective eyewear, such as sunglasses, to safeguard against bright sunlight, dust, wind, and other environmental factors. Avoid rubbing or touching your eyes, as this can increase the risk of infection and interfere with the

healing process.

4. Stay hydrated and maintain a healthy diet: Proper hydration and nutrition are crucial for overall well-being and optimal healing post-surgery. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated, as it promotes tissue regeneration

and aids in flushing out toxins from the body. Additionally, consume a balanced diet rich in vitamins, minerals, and



Navigating the healing

5. Avoid smoking and alcohol: Smoking and excessive alcohol consumption can impair the body's ability to heal effectively and increase the risk of complications after surgery. If you're a smoker, consider quitting or at least abstaining from smoking during the recovery period. Similarly, limit alcohol intake to promote faster healing and minimize the risk of postoperative complications.

6. Be patient and manage expectations: While contoura surgery offers remarkable results, it's essential to understand that the full benefits may take time to manifest. Vision improvement may vary from person to person, with some individuals experiencing immediate clarity, while others may require several weeks for optimal outcomes. Be patient, and trust the healing process, but also communicate any concerns or unusual symptoms promptly to your ophthalmologist.

7. Engage in light activities: As you progress through the recovery process, gradually reintroduce light activities into your daily routine. However, continue to avoid activities that exert excessive strain on the eves or increase the risk of injury. Consult with your ophthalmologist before resuming activities such as driving or exercising to ensure it's

8. Attend follow-up appointments: Regular follow-up appointments with your ophthalmologist are essential for monitoring your progress and addressing any concerns or complications promptly. These appointments allow your surgeon to assess your healing, adjust medications if necessary, and ensure that your vision is progressing as expected. Do not skip or delay follow-up visits, as they are crucial for the success of your surgery.

In conclusion, navigating the recovery process after surgery requires patience, diligence, and proactive care. By following these tips and insights, you can optimize your healing, minimize the risk of complications, and enjoy the life-changing benefits of improved vision. Remember, your doctor is your partner in this journey, so don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or concerns along the way. With proper care and attention, you'll soon experience the full potential of your contoura vision.

(The author, Dr. Ch Annapoorna, is a Senior Refractive Surgeon, at the Maxivision Group of Eye Hospitals.)

ASHWIN, JUREL, KULDEEP SHINE

PTI RANCHI

hruv Jurel's defensive chef-d'oeuvre found a perfect match in the destructive symphony of spin by fifer-man Ravichandran Ashwin and Kuldeep Yadav as India seized decisive control of the fourth Test against England at the end of a dramatic third day here on

Sunday. India walked off at the stumps, having chiselled off 40 runs from the 192-run target without losing a wicket.

Rohit Sharma (24 batting) and Yashasvi Jaiswal (16 batting) would be confident of the team mustering the remaining 152 runs without much theatre.

However, it was Jurel who started India's resistive movement with a defiant 90 that came in 149 balls and 211 minutes. It carried the hosts to 307 in their first innings from the overnight 219 for seven.

In their second essay, England just did not have any answers to the questions posed by Ashwin (5/51), his 35th five-wicket haul in Tests, and Kuldeep Yadav (4/22), getting bowled out for

a meagre 145.
Opener Zak Crawley (60) was the lone post of fight. It would have been worse for



England without that Crawley fifty before his innings was halted by Kuldeep.

Ravindra Jadeja bagged a solitary wicket but it was the key wicket of Jonny Bairstow.

In fact, Crawley was the only English batter to go past 30 as they lost their last seven wickets for just 35 runs with Ashwin and Jadeja weaving

Introduced late, the left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep struck in his third over when he cleaned up Crawley with a gem of a delivery that skidded through, unsettling

the middle-stump. Crawley was looking in an ominous mood and tore into the Indian attack against the run of play to stretch their overall lead past 150 as Rohit

persisted with Ashwin and Jadeja in the second session. But Kuldeep breathed fire into the attack as he got drift and was at his deceptive best. Having survived through an umpire's call, England skipper Ben Stokes was castled by Kuldeep with the

ball staying low.
Bairstow looked in firm control in his 42-ball 30 (3x4) but fell in the first ball after tea when Jadeja exploited the cracks on the pitch to turn it away and the batter drove it straight to short cover.

Kuldeep then dismissed Tom Hartley and Ollie Robinson in four balls, before Ashwin raced to his fifth wicket as stumper Dhruv Jurel took a brilliant reflex catch to oust James Anderson.

In the process, Ashwin also became the highest wickettaker at home for India. He now has 354 wickets from 59 Tests at home, overtaking Anil Kumble's tally of 350 from 63 matches.

'Jurel' in the crown But Jurel's innings might just have ended India's search for a wicketkeeper batter in Tests in the absence of

recuperating Rishabh Pant.
The 23-year-old from Agra was not only terrific with his glovesmanship but exhibited oodles of maturity during that determined fifty as India mounted an incredible trimming fightback, England's first-innings lead

to a mere 46 runs. After reaching his maiden fifty in 96 balls, the Rajasthan

wicketkeeper-Rovals'

Royals' wicketkeeper-batsman shifted gears, taking on English spinners Shoaib Bashir and Tom Hartley. Jurel hurried for a single off Hartley to bring up his fifty in an entertaining 40-run stand off just 75 balls for the ninth wicket with Akash

Deep (9).
But Hartley denied him a hundred with a quicker delivery that stayed low.

Young England off-spinner Bashir completed his maiden Test five-wicket haul, trapping Akash to finish with figures of 5 for 119 in only his second Test.

Jurel and Kuldeep's 76-run partnership for the eighth wicket also rescued India from a precarious position when they were reduced to 177 for seven on the second

day. Under overcast conditions in the morning session, the overnight duo of Jurel and Kuldeep faced a 134-run deficit.

Kuldeep showcased superb application on a pitch with variable bounce, playing 131 balls with immaculate defence and effective strike rotation.

Kuldeep's determined innings ended when an Anderson delivery that stayed low took a bottom edge and disturbed the



Irfan lauds Akash for a memorable debut

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $F^{
m ormer\ India\ all-rounder}_{
m Irfan\ Pathan\ on\ Sunday}$ praised Akash Deep for making an immediate impact on his Test debut, with the right-arm seamer producing a three-wicket burst on the first day morning of the ongoing fourth Test against England in Ranchi.

Pathan said that for a fast bowler to make his debut in India is very difficult, but the way Akash bowled and picked up his three wickets, he showed promise of a bright future ahead of him. "As a batter you want your debut to happen in India debut to happen in India but as a fast bowler you dream to have your debut in England, Australia, South Africa or New Zealand," Pathan told PTI on the sidelines of the New Marathon on Delhi Sunday.

"The way he bowled in the first session of the match and to pick up three

wickets is commendable. We can only hope to see Akash's career graph to go up from here," he added.

The former India player also praised opening batter Yashasvi Jaiswal for becoming only the fifth from the country to have scored 600 or more runs in

a Test series. "Yashasvi Jaiswal is a very special cricketer, he has very bright future and he will make it big", the former cricketer said.

Pathan, who was at the marathon as chief guest, said India had the potential of becoming a sporting

nation.
"To participate in such events is really special. I have always believed that India can become a sporting nation. Twenty thousand people participated here today and everyone was smiling. The people want to be fit and want to participate in such activities, it is always good

to see this," he expressed.

Australia beats New Zealand

AP AUCKLAND

ustralia beat New A Zealand by 27 runs under the Duckworth-Lewis system in the heavily rain-affected third T20 international Sunday to complete a 3-0 sweep the series and to harden its favoritism for the World Cup later this year.

New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner won the toss in his 100th T20 international and sent Australia in, mindful the rain might dictate terms later in the match. It did.

Australia's was interupted three times by rain breaks and finally terminated after 10.4 overs when it was 118-4. New Zealand was set 126 to win in under the overs Duckworth-Lewis system, which seemed a relatively

charitable target.
But New Zealand botched the run chase for the second time in three days at Eden Park, unable to conquer Australia's world class attack.

Under the revised rules for the 10-over innings, Australia was allowed five bowlers who could bowl two overs each with a three-over power play. The young left-armer Spencer Johnson took 1-10 from his two overs, showing why he made \$1.4 million in the IPL auction earlier this year. Nathan Ellis conceded only 11 from his two overs, Mitchell Starc only 15 and Adam Zampa took 1-20.

Ellis bowled four dot balls to New Zealand's biggest hitter, Glenn Philips, in the fifth over and at the midpoint of its innings New Zealand was 51-2, needing 75 from the last 30

Australia's bowlers continued to bowl a tight line and length to frustrate the Black Caps for six but the next three balls



batters and after Ellis bowled were singles, the fifth ball the ninth over for the cost of only 8 runs, New Zealand for a boundary as New needed 43 off the last over to Zealand fell hopelessly short.

went for two and the last ball

needed 43 off the last over to win.

The honor, or duty, of bowling the last over went to Matt Short who already had contributed for Australia, making 27 off 11 ball, batting at No. 3.

To a boundary as New Zealand fell hopelessly short. "I think I feel most comfortable when I'm playing shots," Short said. "It was a bit of a strange game because of the rain and being off and on. "The aggressive way is the way we want to play our T20" making 27 off 11 ball, batting at No. 3.

The first ball of the over went for six but the next three balls

The first ball of the over went for six but the next three balls

The first and being off and off.

The aggressive way is the way we want to play our T20.

Credit also goes to wicketkeeper Matthew Wade

who took over the captaincy from Mitch Marsh and led Australia with great tactical insight in tricky conditions. "Our bowlers were unbelievable today the way

they came out and executed," Wade said. "It's as clinical a bowling performance as I've seen from an Australian unit and for Matt Short to come out and bat the way he did is

exciting for the future.

"We've got depth in our squad and everyone's enjoying their cricket."

Australia should have been massively disadvantaged by the fact its innings was abruptly ended after only 10 overs when it had been playing for 20. But it already was in a powerful position. Thanks to Short and to Travis

Head, who made 33 from 30 balls, and Glenn Maxwell who made 20 off 9 after being dropped first ball, Australia already was 67-2 after its sixover power play.
New Zealand couldn't match

the clinical aggression of the Australian batters. Glenn Phillips and Mark Chapman faced most of the last five overs and simply couldn't find a way to score consistent boundaries against the outstanding Australian attack.

Australia has demonstrated the ability to win in all circumstances in this series, including its thrilling final ball victory in the first match, before an emphatic 72-run win in the second game.

"They're obviously a quality side," Santner said. "Their big three quicks and obviously the power they possess, I guess they showed us (how to play) throughout the series. The first one was a close one and I guess we got outplayed



England spinner Leach to undergo knee surgery

PTI ■ LONDON

Left-arm spinner Jack Leach is set to undergo a knee surgery on Tuesday after being ruled out of the England's ongoing five-Test tour of India.

Leach, who came into the India series as England's most experienced spinner, took part in only the opening Test at Hyderabad which his side won by 28 runs.

The 32-year-old spinner suffered an injury on the field which caused severe swelling, forcing him to leave the tour after missing the second Test and subsequently returning home.

"I'm going to have an operation to get the rest of the swelling out because it's not budging," Leach was quoted as saying by the BBC. The report added that the knee injury trouble is the latest for Leach who suffers

from Crohn's disease, having also missed last year's Ashes in England due to a stress fracture in his back. On the tour of New Zealand five years ago in 2019, Leach had also contracted sepsis.

"It was quite an unfortunate one. It was the second ball of the first innings in the field so that whole game I was playing with this knee problem. I obviously knocked it a few times throughout that game and it has just created a long period

of recovery," he said.
"I need to get the operation done and then hopefully I can get back to playing cricket. I'd love to have a run of playing cricket and getting into a bit of a rhythm again and hopefully that can happen again once I've got this sorted."

After the conclusion of the India tour, England's next assignment will be the first home Test at Lord's from July

ICC suspends Hasaranga for two matches, Gurbaz fined match fees

PTI DUBAI

The ICC has suspended Sri Lanka captain Wanindu Hasaranga for two matches and Hasaranga for two matches and docked a fine of 15 per cent on the match fee of Afghanistan wicketkeeper-batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz for breaching its Code of Conduct during the third T20I in Dambulla.

The global governing body said in a release that Hasaranga has been banned after the spin bowling all-rounder accumulated a total of five demerit points within a 24-month period, which includes his latest breach of the ICC Code of Conduct.

"Sri Lanka's T20I skipper and second-ranked T20I bowler on the ICC Men's Player Rankings, Wanindu Hasaranga, has been presented with a two-match suspension after his total demerit

points reached five within a 24month period following his latest breach of the ICC Code of Conduct, for which he received a 50 per cent fine and three demerit points," the ICC said in a statement.

The incident involving Hasaranga took place towards the end of the third and final T20I on Wednesday when he approached the on-field umpire Lyndon Hanibal to criticise a decision regarding a full toss delivery not being adjudged a no-ball. Hasaranga was thus found guilty of breaching the article 2.13 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel. The article relates to "personnel. The article relates to "personal abuse of a Player, Player Support Personnel, Umpire or Match Referee during an International Match".

With Hasaranga accumulating five demerit points, it converts to



two suspension points, the ICC month period and the player said. "This means he will either accumulating two demerit points. get a ban for one Test match or two ODIs or T20Is, whichever Rahmanullah for altering the grip comes first, for the player or of his bat on the field despite player support personnel. Consequently, Hasaranga will be suspended from participating in Constant Track Contact T Sri Lanka's first two T20Is against Bangladesh next month," the ICC

Gurbaz penalised

Afghanistan batter Gurbaz too was penalised for breaching Level
1 of the ICC Code of Conduct in the same match for having violated the article 2.4 of the code, which concerns code, which disobeying an United during Umpire's International Match".

This has resulted in one demerit point being added to Gurbaz's disciplinary record, which marks his second such offence in a 24-

'The sanction was imposed on

players have admitted to the offences and have accepted the sanction proposed by Chris Broad from the elite panel of match referees.

"The charges were brought forth by on-field umpires Lyndon Hannibal and Raveendra Wimalasiri, third umpire Ruchira Palliyaguruge, and fourth umpire Ranmore Martinez," the ICC said.

Sri Lanka won the series 2-1 with Afghanistan sealing a narrow three-run win in the final T20I. Hasaranga was named the Player of the Series for his all-round Vijayawada | Monday February 26, 2024

'There are plans to create a sequel for Chaari 111'

ilmmaker TG Keerthi Kumar, made his film debut with Malli Modalaindi, directed by Sumanth Yarlagadda. Currently, he is directing Vennela Kishore's *Chaari 111*, set for release on March 1st. The filmmaker got down for a quick conversation as the movie's release date drew near and shared some intriguing details about the movie with the media.

SHIKHA DUGGAL

that prior to beginning his profession, he had never had a directorial idea. "I took a course in visual communication before beginning my job as an editor, and I edited corporate films and TV ads for almost ten years. After that, Í worked on Modalaindi, my

The director claimed

first film." He first presented the concept for *Chaari 111* to Vennela Kishore, who played a comic in the movie. "Later, I shared the script with him," the director states. "Despite not having the script narration, he reviewed the script and gave the project his OK.

Filmmaker TG Keerthi Kumar, who is all set with the release of his upcoming film Chaari 111, speaks of his formative days, inspiration behind the film, and more.

He had faith in me right away." Pink Panther and Johnny English's core themes served as inspiration for this movie. I was really fond of those espionage comedies, which inspired me to write this script. Casting is crucial for a movie like Chaari 111, and I was fortunate to have Vennela Kishore and Murali Sharma ign on." He highlights, This is a characterdriven movie; the

conflict and villain will emerge later." It's an action comedy spy movie. "As an example, Johnny English is a spy comedy, whereas James Bond is an action spy. My movie fits into the second group. I had Vennela Kishore in mind when I created this script. If Kishore hadn't given the script his approval, I wouldn't have made this movie.

"In our film, Kishore's character irritates his boss to no end," the director says. "And, I chose Murali Sharma for the role because I needed an actor with a serious appearance. The antagonist in our movie dons a mask for a reason. Although there wasn't a deliberate attempt to conceal the antagonist, the plot does have an intriguing element. For commercial reasons, we therefore chose to maintain the suspense."

He hopes to collaborate with a famous hero in the future. He feels that he needs to establish himself before he can work with a famous hero on an action movie. That he made Chaari 111 makes him pleased! "There is potential to include more heroes in the film. I have to say that there are plans to create a sequel for Chaari 111. This universe has a lot of possibilities for spy comedies."



'I am shooting for some of the biggest, most intense films in my career'

> ctress Rashmika Mandanna, who portrayed Geetanjali in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's Animal, was the target of internet trolling despite receiving appreciation for her performance in the movie. She recently discussed why, after the movie;s release, she chose not to take "ownership" of her part in the film.

The actress, who is currently filming her next movie, wrote a long letter expressing her gratitude for the enormous success of the Ranbir Kapoorstarring movie.

Rashmika, who is widely referred to as the "national crush," revealed that although she was back on the set of her next movie and could not take any time off, she wanted to appreciate the extraordinary success of *Animal*.

Rashmika posted a monochromatic mirror selfie in which she posed with her face hidden behind the lens. She wrote: "Hi guys! Can't show my full face as it is a new film look, and I can't reveal it before my film team does, as always. But the shoots are going really well -- just wanted to let you all know."

The actress said she wanted to just talk about how people were talking about her not taking own-ership of her success and all that.

Reflecting on the chatter, Rashmika wrote: "Ok, here's the thing. 1: I know it comes from a place of love, concern, and worry.
We have delivered a massive film, and people loved it and appreciated it.

I too wanted to take some time out to enjoy it, as every one of us wants to, but I was back on set the next day of my film release (being the amazing workaholic that I am), and hence I was and am unable to do a

lot of interviews or

the look before my film teams do, and hence I am unable to take photos or post some posts or go live as per your or my wishes. And I know you'll are missing me and so am I, but l know for sure that when the films DO release, I know you'll all be super duper happy, and it's all gonna be worth it!! (I personally can't wait for those moments).

Rashmika continued her heartfelt post by urging her fans: "Please be patient with me because you should know that I am doing my best, and I am happy doing so for all of you, myself, and my teams."

Opening up on 'owning' the success, Rashmika expressed happiness over the love and messages of her huge fandom. "Guys, your love, the messages to me

are what make me happy and keep me going, honestly, and I saw them in abundance; and again, thank you so much for all the love... always."

She further revealed how her PR team

had told her to be more active. "But like I already said the next day of the film release, I was back on set for my next film, so couldn't find the time, but next time we will work on it... I promise; and I just believed that good work will speak for itself and it did ... and I cannot be more grateful... I am yet to thank you all for the love... and I know I am late... but I only wanted to do it when I come live, and I am still going to hold on to that for that day," Rashmika said.

She concluded: "I was surrounded by the most supportive cast and crew and the best tans, so I didn't or don't have anything to worry about... I just love them... they are the best!"

Rashmika next has Pushpa 2: The Rule, Rainbow, The Girlfriend and Chaava in the pipeline.

VN Aditya receives honorary doctorate from George Washington University of Peace

Renowned filmmaker VN
Aditya has made a name for
himself in Tollywood with his family-friendly comedies and endearing love tales like Nenunnanu and Manasantha Nuvve. VN Aditya, who has worked in the film industry for almost ten vears, was awarded at honorary doctorate by the George Washington University of Peace in America. He received this esteemed award during the International Peace Conference in Bangalore, where the George Washington University of Peace honoured notable figures for their accomplishments across a range of disciplines. VN Aditya received recognition in the film industry.

Notable attendees at the event were National SC & ST Commission Member Dinesh

Guruji, Secretary-General Dr. Srinivas Eluri, Director of the George Washington University of Peace Neelamani, and NITI Aayog IES Advisor Shivappa. Director VN Aditya dedicated this honour to his mother, who had always hoped he would succeed in school rather than movies, as a gesture of tha ing her for this opportunity. He expressed his gratitude and delight at earning a doctorate in cinema, a subject he loves dearly, adding that it was both a personal accomplishment and a realisation of his mother's dreams.

He expressed gratitude to George Washington University of Peace in the United States for awarding him an honorary doctorate. The film industry has responded with congratulatory messages for his achievement.



EYES ON ANJALI'S MILEST

The upcoming horror entertainer Geethanjali Malli Vachindhi, starring Anjali in the titular role, marks the sequel to the 2014 low-budget blockbuster

The film is being produced by Kona Venkat under the banners of Kona Film Corporation and MVV Cinemas, with Siva Turlapati directing. The film is slated for release on March 22. In anticipation, the movie's teaser was recently released, with Director Buchi Babu, Bobby, Gopichand Malineni, and hero Sree Vishnu gracing the teaser launch event as chief guests.

Hero Sree Vishnu speaking at the event said, "I have been collaborating with Kona Venkat since last year. I am very xcited about our upcoming film. He places a strong emphasis on the story, without rushing. I hope this movie achieves great success. I extend my best wishes to the entire film team and hope the director earns a good reputation. I eagerly await making the audience laugh and scaring them in theaters on March 22, ensuring a successful box office run. Anjali's accomplishment of act-

ing in fifty films is no small feat. It's a matter of pride for a Telugu girl to have achieved such success. I wish her continued success, with another hundred or 150 films. I also have high hopes for Nandu and Bhanu to become top writers. With *Om* Bheem Bush also releasing on March 22, I wish all films great box office success."

For all the obvious reasons, the film has

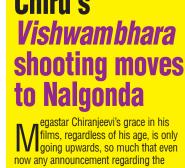
been very special for actress Anjali. Geethanjali was her first lead role, and Geethanjali Malli Vachindhi marks her 50th film, a significant milestone in her

This sequel, she says, promises even more laughs and scares double this time., making for a delightful theater experience. "I am thrilled to reach the 50-movie milestone. I foresee a bright future for Director Siva and am grateful to everyone involved in the film, including Srinivasa Reddy, Rajesh, Ali, Shakalaka Shankar, Avinash, and Rahul. The entire team has put in tremendous effort. Sidhu's visuals are stunning, and Praveen Lakkaraju's music complements the film beautifully. Nandu and Bhanu's writing stands out.

Kona Garu played a crucial role in bringing this project to life, even a decade later. Although it took time to perfect the story, we managed to complete the shooting swiftly. I appreciate Directors Bobby and Gopichand, as well as Sree Vishnu, for their support, especially with his film also releasing. I hope both our films achieve great success." Recently, the makers had shared that the teaser would be unveiled at a graveyard, but was later changed.

Buchi Babu Sana speaking at the event said, "Kona Venkat was talking about this event and mentioned that the venue is a graveyard. I got scared. After that, he didn't pick up the phone. Then, he left a voice message saying the venue had been changed. If Kona Venkat's name is associated with a film, it elevates the project to another level. The dialogues he writes are something we take home with us. They are very logical. Ten years ago, we laughed and were frightened by *Geethanjali*. Now, they are coming back.

All the best to the film team."



megastar's film will create a lot of enthusiasm among movie lovers. He is now being starred in a fantasy drama. directed by Bimbisara director Vassishta Produced under the banner of UV Creations, the film, which was launched in November 2023, began its shooting in Telangana. Starring actress Trisha, latest update on the film is that the shooting of Vishwambhara has commenced in the picturesque locales of Haliya, nestled in the heart of Nalgonda district, Telangana. The film is said to deal with some myths and reality and it has music by MM Keeravani.

Vishwambhara also stars Vennela Kishore, Chammak Chandra, Praveen, Raja Roshan, Akul, and others in the important

I'm likely to canvass for Janasena, says Varun Tei

Niharika Konidela debuts on Aha with CHEF MANTRA SEASON 3

he much-awaited grand launch of *Chef Mantra Season* 3 is set to premiere on March 3 on aha, promising viewers a night filled with laughter, fun, and captivating conversations.

After two immensely successful seasons, Niharika Konidela takes the center stage this time, introducing a fresh new format filled with more fun, games, and engaging tasks. With Niharika at the helm, audiences can expect a whirlwind of entertainment as she brings her trademark charm and wit to the screen.

Prepare to be star-struck as Chef Mantra season 3 features an electrifying lineup of celebrities from various spheres of the entertainment



industry. Each episode promises to be a star-studded affair, with special guests adding their own unique flair to the show, ensuring a delightful viewing experience for all.

With a total of 8 episodes lined up, fans are in for a treat as Niharika Konidela and her guests take them on a rollercoaster ride of emotions, laughter, and unforgettable moments. From heartwarming stories to hilarious anecdotes, Chef Mantra Season 3 promises to be a journey like no other.

Chef Mantra Season 3 is sponsored by Hatsun Curd, Freedom Oil, Value Zone HyperMarket and Easy Kitchen. With their unwavering support, this season promises to reach new heights of culinary excellence and entertainment.



Actor Varun Tej and Manushi Chillar starrer Operation Valentine is all set to hit big screens on March 1. The movie is being promoted widely and this is the actor's first film in which he plays a fighter pilot.

Recently married Varun Tej, while promoting this Telugu-Hindi bilingual film, shared that he went through a simulator training to get this role correct in the project. He even has interacted with many Indian Air Force officials, who indeed helped him perfect his character in

the movie. Interestingly, he also internet users, particularly with the AP elections quickly approaching. "I'm likely to canvass for Janasena because I believe in his (Pawan Kalyan's) ideology and he could bring the real change in the political grammar," he said, adding, "I am not saying this because Pawan Kalyan garu is my Baabai, but because I solely like his ideoloy."

In addition, he gave an update on his next movie, Matka. He explained that the film is still going forward and that a new producer had joined the project in response to rumours that it had been shelved. He added that 35 percent of the movie had already been filmed.