

Follow us on: @TheDailyPioneer facebook.com/dailypioneer

HYDERABAD, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹4 Established 1864

RNI No. TELENG/2018/76469

Established 1864

Published From

HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW

BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH

BHUBANESWAR RANCHI

DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA

*LATE CITY VOL. 5 ISSUE 172

*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



స్వతంత్ర

24/7 సాటిలైట్ న్యూస్ ఛానల్

3 crore views in 6 months!

30M

**Sensational satellite news channel Swatantra
crosses another milestone in YouTube**



YouTube swatantralive, swatantranews

Goods exports touched US\$ 447 bn
 8

UNDERSTANDING WHAT **WHITE-COLLAR COACHING IS**
 9

'I'd ask everyone to lose once, and so you'll learn from your **MISTAKES**'
 11

QUOTE OF THE DAY
 The Congress will not align with the BRS as long as I am TPCC president. The Congress will win 80 seats; the BRS, less than 25 seats; and the BJP will be confined to a single digit in the next elections.
 - Revanth Reddy P:2

DON'T MISS...
Gang involved in counterfeit...

The Hyderabad police arrested a gang of four, who were indulging in procuring counterfeit general store items from a manufacturer at Kachiguda and selling them in Karnataka and seized duplicate general store items in large quantities. The accused are Ajay Kumar Bhure, Syed Imran, Premraj Purohith, and Pukhraj Purohith. Two other accused, Kamal Bhati and Mahender Singh Rathod, are currently absconding. The police seized 857.5 liters of duplicate Parachute oil...

-PAGE: 3

Green India Challenge enters...

Green India Challenge founder Joginipalli Santosh Kumar has been named in the Limca Book of Records, which registers the immense talent displayed by Indians worldwide. The Limca Book of Records recognises and acknowledges the achievements of Indians in the fields of education, literature, cinema, science and technology, defence, social services etc and place them in the record. Limca book Records Editor Vatsala Kaul Banerjee said that Santosh Kumar has been...

-PAGE: 5

Credit Suisse chief admits failure...

The chairman of Credit Suisse apologised Tuesday to shareholders for failures of the once-venerable bank and acknowledged the shock and anger felt as the troubled Swiss lender is set to be swallowed up by rival UBS in a government-arranged takeover. Axel Lehmann, who took the top board job only last year after joining Credit Suisse from UBS in 2021, decried "massive outflows" of customer funds in October and a "downward spiral" that...

-PAGE: 8

RR ready for Punjab Kings challenge

Rajasthan Royals would be banking on their near-perfect combinations in almost all departments of the game to put up another commanding performance when they take on a strong Punjab Kings side in an IPL match here on Wednesday. The Royals would be buoyed by the massive 72-run victory against Sunrisers Hyderabad, who were outsmarted by last year's runners-up in every aspect of the game on Sunday. With Yashasvi Jaiswal...

-SPORTS

BRS plans public meet in AP to expose Modi-Adani link

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS is making arrangements to hold a public meeting in Visakhapatnam with the Visakha Steel Plant (VSP) on its agenda. The party is looking at exposing how this deal if not stopped will allow the Adani Group to take over VSP. KCR may even announce that they will take part in the Vishaka Steel Plant's disinvestment plan by providing raw material supply and working capital.

Arrangements for the public meeting have been reportedly given to AP BRS Chief Thota Chandrasekhar and others. Instead of looking at poaching MLAs, the BRS is moving forward by trying to bring VSP employees into its fold.

Already the Gangavaram and Krishnapatnam ports have been taken over by the Adani group. Now the BRS is likely to launch a strong attack against the Modi Government using the Vishakapatnam Steel Plant which they say will be eventually given to Adani.

TS Industries Minister KT Rama Rao re-tweeted on how the VSP is going to go to Adani.

"As Modi's is interested in handing over VSP to Posco, the Bailadila Mines which were crucial for Bayyaram was given to Adani as Posco and Adani are setting up a steel plant in Gujarat," says the tweet by Krishank Manne.

2

10th students on tenterhooks

DEEPIKA PASHAM ■ HYDERABAD

Reflecting unaddressed systemic flaws in the conduct of SSC Public Examination, a bundle containing answer sheets was reportedly lost in transit and another question paper was leaked after the examination commenced on Tuesday.

The two untoward incidents have resulted in mounting tension for SSC students, despite heightened vigil following the leak of a question paper on Monday.

Although Educational Department officialshad forewarned the District Educational Officers, a bundle containing the answer sheets of Telugu language paper of Class X examination was lost while it was being shifted from a post office to the bus stand in Uttoor mandal centre on Tuesday. In the other incident, the Hindi language question paper was leaked widely in Warangal. Although there were no leads in the former

MOUNTING TENSION OVER A LEAK A DAY

■ Exam answer paper bundle missing during transit in Uttoor

■ Hindi question paper circulated in WhatsApp groups of Warangal.



■ Kamalapur Police arrest three accused

■ Minister Sabitha warns that errant employees would be dismissed

Bharat Rashtira Samithi leaders alleged that one of the accused arrested by the Warangal Police is a close follower of Bharatiya Janata Party president Bandi Sanjay.

case, in the latter case, the Kamalapur Police arrested three of the accused. In Uttoor, 30 answer sheets of Telugu language were missing in the bundle. The police registered a case based on a complaint but found that

CCTV cameras installed on the route between the post office and bus station were dysfunctional. Additional Collector Shaik Rizwan Basha told The Pioneer: "I visited the Uttoor mandal centre

and inquiry report has been submitted to the Minister. We have filed case on the postal department and found lead... We will probe the issue and find the culprit." A total of 1,011 students appeared

2

KTR trains guns at 2 Telangana MPs over fake degrees

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

How many Munna Bhaïs are there in legislatures across the country? This has become the latest topic for discussion among political observers and the general public. BRS Working President IT Minister KT Rama Rao said on

Tuesday that there are two Munna Bhaïs among Telangana MPs. KTR had earlier made fun of Prime Minister Modi regarding his degree certificate. KTR's comments are definitely about BJP MPs. The BJP has four MPs from Telangana. Among these four MPs who are the Munna Bhaïs and about whom did KTR comment?

In the context of the controversy about Prime Minister Modi's degree certificate KTR tweeted, "I have a Post Graduate degree in Biotechnology from the Pune University. I also have a PG degree in Business Administration from the City University of New York. I am ready to share both certificates publicly."

Without naming Prime Minister Modi, KTR indirectly challenged him to show his degree certificate publicly. Now KTR has shifted his attack on education qualifications to Telangana BJP MPs. In Andhra Pradesh, Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram is also facing allegations about fake degree

certificates. The main opposition party, TDP, has filed a complaint with the President against Tammineni Sitaram alleging that he secured admission for a three-year law degree course by submitting a fake degree certificate.

2



KCR plans grand unveiling of Ambedkar statue

HYDERABAD: Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao said that the unveiling of Dr BR Ambedkar's statue on April 14 should be celebrated as a grand, historic event and must be a feast for the eyes. "Flowers should be showered by a special helicopter to pay tributes to this Gem of India, the architect of India's Constitution. Make a huge garland of roses, white chrysanthemums and betel leaves. A crane will be used to remove the huge curtain on the 125 feet statue of Dr BR Ambedkar and decorate the vertical garland," KCR said.

-PAGE: 2

Hyderabad sizzles at 40°C

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad sizzled at 40°C on Tuesday. Borabanda recorded the highest temperature of 40.2°C while Khairatabad recorded 40.1°C. Gachibowli recorded 39.9°C. Shaikpet, Tirumalgiri, Saroornagar, Kapra, Nampally, Asifnagar, Golkonda, Rajendranagar, Secunderabad, Bandlaguda, Uppal and Rajendranagar recorded temperatures above 37°C.

Weather expert T. Balaji pointed that out after April 9, it will get hot with a daily 40°C temperature. Wanparthy recorded 42.9 degrees followed by Adilabad at 41°C.

He said, "In the next three days, more thunderstorms are expected in Telangana. Hyderabad too has a good chance in the next three days for scattered rain. In the next three days, some rains are expected. Some areas which already had rains will get a respite. Heat will get worse in the entire Telangana from April 9."



Celebrating Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram's 116th Birth Anniversary April 5, 2023

The Government of Telangana pays rich tribute to the former Deputy Prime Minister of India Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram, a freedom fighter and a social reformer who worked tirelessly for the welfare of the downtrodden. He led an exemplary life. His contribution towards Dalit empowerment is unmatched. He firmly believed that liberty, equality and social justice contribute towards a happy and inspiring society. Today, on his 116th birth anniversary, let's pay him glorious tributes. Let's take a pledge to follow his ideals in our day to day lives and work for the betterment of the society.

Venue

Floral Tributes to Dr. Babu Jagjivan Ram Statue
 Opp. Nizam College, Hyderabad on Wednesday 5th April, 2023 at 9.00 am. and Public Meeting

Special Cultural Programmes at Ravindra Bharathi
 from 6.00 pm onwards

Scheduled Castes Development Department Government of Telangana

All are Invited

Issued By: Commissioner, I & PR Department, Government of Telangana

TS stands third in justice delivery

NAVEENA GHANATE ■ HYDERABAD

The 2022 India Justice Report (IJR), India's only ranking of states on the delivery of justice in the country, published on Tuesday, ranked Karnataka at the top of the 18 large and mid-sized states (with populations of over one crore each), followed by Tamil Nadu (2020: 2nd), Telangana (2020: 3rd) Gujarat (2020: 6th) and Andhra Pradesh (2020: 12th). The list of seven small states (population less than one crore each) was topped by Sikkim (2020: 2nd), followed by Arunachal Pradesh (2020: 5th) and Tripura (2020: 1st).

Improving its performance across all pillars Telangana retained its third rank this year. Jumping nine spots, the state ranked first in

the policing pillar. It is among the top five performing states in all pillars. Among 61 comparable indicators between 2020 and 2022, Tamil Nadu improved in 34 indicators across all pillars. In the third edition of the India Justice Report, Telangana retained its third rank due to the following key reasons:

Improving share of women across all pillars: Woman judges in both the High Court and district courts account for 27% and 53% respectively, the highest among large and mid-sized states. Vacancies among correctional staff in prisons remains nil since 2019. The per capita spend on the judiciary increased from Rs 140 in 2017-18 to Rs 157 in 2020-21. Telangana allocated 2.6% of its police budget, the highest among

large states, towards the training of police personnel. Vacancies among judges in the High Court were halved from 46% in 2018-19 to 21% in 2022. The state nearly halved vacancies at both the officer and constabulary levels in the police. The case clearance rate at the High Court increased from 61% in 2018-19 to 103% in 2022. All police stations in the state have at least one CCTV. The state met its ST and OBC quotas among judges, police officers as well as the constabulary.

The India Justice Report (IJR) was initiated by Tata Trusts in 2019, and this is the third edition. Partners include the Centre for Social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, DAKSH, TISS-Prayas, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy and How India Lives, IJR's data partner.

Through a rigorous 24-month quantitative research, the IJR 2022, like the previous two, tracked the progress of states in capacitating their justice delivery structures to effectively deliver mandated services.

Based on the latest official statistics, from authoritative government sources, it brings together otherwise hidden data on the four pillars of justice delivery, the Police, the Judiciary, Prisons and Legal Aid.

Each pillar was analysed through the prism of budgets, human resources, workload, diversity, infrastructure and trends (intention to improve over a five-year period), against the state's own declared standards and benchmarks. The third IJR also assessed the capacity of the 25 State Human Rights Commissions (see SHRC brief for more).

www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

Good signs

The economy is resilient though there are issues that need to be resolved urgently

The World Bank's assessment that India's economy would remain resilient despite some signs of moderation in growth in the second half of the last fiscal comes as a morale booster for the country's economic policy and decision makers. Even though the bank has downwardly revised its GDP forecast for the current fiscal to 6.3 per cent from 6.6 per cent (made in December 2022), "India is still going to be one of the fastest-growing economies in the world." The moderation is on account of sluggish consumption growth and tough external conditions. Evidently, former Reserve Bank of India governor Raghuram Rajan's fears about the slowing growth rate were exaggerated. He said last month that the third quarter FY2023 growth was "dangerously close to our old Hindu rate of growth." While it is true that the economy has slowed down in the recent past, it is also undeniable that things are not as bad as one would have expected them to be. The Covid pandemic and ensuing lockdowns had crippled the supply chains, resulting in enormous disruptions and losses; and while the economy was getting back on track, Russia's war in Ukraine brought more trouble. But the recovery seems to be happening. Auguste Tano Kouame, World Bank's Country Director in India, told a news channel that India needs to grow at 8 per cent if it wants to become an upper middle-income country by 2030 and a developed economy by 2047. Deep reforms are needed to achieve that, he added.



The good news is that a number of reforms have already been undertaken: the fiscal situation, though not ideal, is under control; GST implementation has found its groove; direct tax collection is also buoyant, the mop-up for the last fiscal exceeding even the revised estimates; infrastructure development is going on at an unprecedented pace; welfare programmes are being streamlined, with emphasis on technology adoption and elimination of non-eligible beneficiaries; and the Government is no longer afraid of the most daring of all liberalisation measures—privatisation. The World Bank has rightly underlined the weaknesses like the one in manufacturing, but there are some good signs. For instance, S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index showed a three-month high in March, the index rising to 56.4 from February's 55.3. Capital goods, indicating capacity addition in the economy, also grew at 13.6 per cent in April 2022-January 2023, against a high base of 21.3 in the corresponding period in 2021-22. It would be premature to state that an industrial revolution is on the horizon, but there is a real possibility of uptick in manufacturing. There are also some real concerns; these are mainly from politics. Populism continues to lure politicians to its meretricious charms, which invariably strains the public exchequer. Then there is the issue of not enough investment pouring in. On the whole, however, the situation is not bad.

PICTALK



Tourists ride boats at the Dal Lake after rainfall, in Srinagar

Triumph of India's foreign policy



ASHOK K MEHTA

What looked like near impossibility in not too distant past is now a reality. Sri Lanka has repulsed the allure of China and is back in India's fold

Who could have dreamt that Sri Lanka where anti-India sentiment was sky-high and China (and Pakistan) ruled the roost, would come into India's fold? Who could have thought that Sri Lanka, a country that was once touted to become the Singapore of South Asia, would default on its sovereign debt? Who could have imagined that the Rajapaksa clan which handled 70 per cent of the country's wealth, were hailed as the victors of the 30-year-long war and were darlings of the south would be hounded out? Who could have conceived that six times Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe whose United National Party (UNP) won one (that too on PR) seat, would become President? In 2022 many unthinkable happened in Sri Lanka.

Twice President, Mahinda Rajapaksa, younger brother and last President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, and party strategist and former finance minister Basil Rajapaksa, were all forced into hiding even as Gota fled the country while Basil was prevented from doing so. On 9 May 2022, Mahinda resigned following countrywide violence in which 9 persons died and 30 were wounded. Gota resigned on 15 July and Wickremesinghe was sworn in as acting President. On 20 March 2023, IMF approved USD 3 bn bailout and released USD330 mn as immediate disbursement. All three Rajapaksas along with former Governor Central Bank, Ajit Cabraal and former Finance Minister SR Attygalle have been charged by Transparency International Sri Lanka for being directly responsible for the economic crisis. Former President Chandrika Kumaratunga said the Rajapaksas and friends thought they owned the country and its assets. But Mahinda blamed foreign forces and the former government for the economic collapse.

The Rajapaksas were ousted from power by a popular people's revolution. Aragalaya, for their role in the economic meltdown. The economy slumped minus 11 per cent in 2022 and will decline minus 4 per cent in 2023. The



shortage of foreign currency was made up mainly by India (USD4bn) in three months in 2022. As inflation rose to 99 per cent, and then fell to 59 per cent, nearly 30 per cent of the population is facing food insecurity and acute shortage of cooking gas, fuel and 10 to 12 hours power outages. Things have improved after creditors, especially India, helped. Wickremesinghe, who is also Finance Minister, presented the interim and full budgets last August and November.

He is still unpopular because contrary to Aragalaya's demand, he has refused to dissolve Parliament whose term ends after two and a half years. He is backed by the Rajapaksas SLPP breakaway faction which has a majority in Parliament.

Wickremesinghe has postponed elections to 340 local bodies, due 9 March, indefinitely, SLPP fearing it will lose them and undermine their image. Rs 10 bn allotted for elections was ordered instead to be utilised to distribute free rice but the Supreme Court blocked the populist scheme. Provincial elections have not been held for four years. 12 members of SLPP including the mercurial GL Peiris, have joined the opposition SJB party as a breakaway faction of UNP. Another Aragalaya has been threatened but Wickremesinghe has vowed to use

the Army.

Meanwhile, Colombo suffered its worst defeat since 2009 at UNHRC Geneva during the 51/1 Resolution last October. Most of the demands were carryovers from previous resolutions. For the first time, India included issues of reconciliation and devolution calling actions taken on them by Sri Lanka inadequate and abstained from voting for the resolution. This prompted Wickremesinghe to resume dialogue with the Tamil National Alliance and pledged to implement fully, the 13th Amendment enacted in 1987.

The India-China rivalry took a distinct pro-China trajectory in 2005 as India refused to provide lethal arms while China (and Pakistan) were obliging. Further, the Rajapaksas are so deeply indebted to China for the massive and superfluous infrastructure projects in the south, especially the airport and Hambantota sea port which is on a 99-year lease to Beijing. Similarly, Colombo Port City is expected to become another white elephant. With the elimination of the Rajapaksas China, the third biggest creditor after Japan and ADB has changed its tune, dragging its feet over debt restructuring.

The Chinese naval surveillance ship Yuan Wang 5 was first prevented from docking at Hambantota port after India

raised strong objections but later, it managed to force its entry.

Besides the cancellation of income tax concessions, IMF imposed conditions for the 17th bailout including the reduction of the once worshipped Army from its strength of 200,000 to 135,000 by 2024 and 100,000 by 2030. This could never have happened during Colonel Gotabaya's presidency. Several officers including three Generals including present CDS, Lt Gen Shivindra Silva, have been sanctioned by the UN and separately by the US with travel bans. Sri Lankans have recognised India's timely USD 4bn assistance and first responder in debt restructuring. Foreign Minister S Jaishankar said on his recent visit to Colombo that India will stand by the people of Sri Lanka at all times. India's primacy in Sri Lanka is likely to continue as Wickremesinghe has cancelled Chinese energy projects in Jaffna and finally allotted oil tanks in Trincomalee for refurbishment. Sri Lanka is becoming India's foreign policy triumph.

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



THE INDIA-CHINA RIVALRY TOOK A DISTINCT PRO-CHINA TRAJECTORY IN 2005 AS INDIA REFUSED TO PROVIDE LETHAL ARMS WHILE CHINA (AND PAKISTAN) WERE OBLIGING

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NOT EVERYTHING ABOUT AI IS GOOD

Sir — In the recent past, thousands of tech experts, including Elon Musk, have called for the suspension of this type of AI system, i.e. Artificial Intelligence, because the race to develop them was feared to be out of control. Italy's data protection authority has become the first western country to block the advanced chatbot ChatGPT, seemingly acknowledging this apprehension to some extent.

There have been concerns over the potential risks of artificial intelligence, including a huge threat to jobs and a huge increase in cybercrime if it falls into the wrong hands. There are growing serious concerns about how ChatGPT and similar chatbots can deceive and manipulate people. These AI systems need greater public scrutiny, and public officials should reintroduce control over them. That's why Italy should not be the last country that has announced to curb this advanced technology, but other countries of the world should also come forward and take similar steps.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

RELIEF FOR RAHUL GANDHI

Sir — A Surat sessions court on Monday granted bail, till disposal of his appeal, in the defamation case over his remark "why all thieves share the Modi surname" and also issued notice to the complainant on Gandhi's plea for a stay on his conviction. According to legal experts, a stay on Gandhi's conviction in the case would be sufficient to restore his Lok Sabha membership. According to the Supreme Court judgement in the Lily Thomas case, a stay on the conviction is sufficient and if the sessions court stays Rahul's conviction, then the Lok Sabha secretariat could restore Gandhi's membership. The sessions court will hear Gandhi's appeal against conviction in the case on April 13.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

SUPARI TO DEFAEME THE PM

Sir — PM Narendra Modi in recent election rallies claimed that some people had given out a 'Supari' (contract) to defame

Race for Karnataka elections hots up



Karnataka, going to polls on May 10, has become abuzz with political activity. Congress high command released a list of 124 candidates on Saturday. It has been criticised by ticket seekers and there has been protests from the workers demanding tickets for their respective leaders in the second list. Both the ruling BJP and the opposition Congress have a lot at stake and what is to be watched out for, in particular, is how the Adani issue and Congress' former president Rahul Gandhi's conviction by a Surat court for the 'Modi-surname' remarks leading to his disqualification from the Lower House play out in the

upcoming elections. Meanwhile Rahul Gandhi has moved to the Surat court. A verbal duel between the leaders of the BJP and the grand old party is on as the former says that the latter is trying to exert undue pressure on the court while the Congress president Mallikarjun rejected it saying that it was a symbol of support and not a show of strength.

Now that the court will take decision on Rahul Gandhi's conviction, there is considerable relief in the grand old party which feels that the case is frivolous and would not hold. One thing is for sure, that congress would take up this issue in its election rallies in Karnataka to gain sympathy and win over the voters.

Notably, a couple of stalwart Congress leaders including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Bhupesh Baghel and others accompanied Mr Gandhi to the court. However, Congress leader Rajeev Shukla cleared the air that the leaders went to the court of their volition. Let one wait and watch the way this political cookie crumbles!

Azhar A Khan | Rampur

and degrees. One of the netizens has tweeted that "Is this the language a leader of a country speaks given a 'Supari'. It sounds so juvenile whining now and then that somebody or the other is out to malign him, seems to be a serious case of persecution complex. Our PM talks about how the opposition showers filthy abuses on him but the same PM is silent on the Adani issue when the opposition criticizes the PM on Adani row.

For this Mallikarjun khadke has rightly said that the PM has taken Supari (in PM's language) to "pickpocket" the people. Our PM should stop playing by saying repeatedly that the opposition has taken "Supari" and the opposition is digging graves, the person who is in power cannot play the victim card frequently.

Zeeshaan | Kazipet

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Narendra Modi: The architect of new BJP



MUKESH KUMAR SRIVASTAVA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has remoulded the BJP with his efficient leadership and dexterity, writes Ajay Singh in his latest book

For some time now, the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its unwavering performance across India, particularly making inroads to the once considered 'impregnable' terrain of southern and North-eastern states, has been a subject of as much attention and deliberations among academic and scholarly community, policy-makers as common masses. In this context, Ajay Singh's book 'The Architect of the New BJP: How Narendra Modi Transformed the Party provides an insider's account of how Prime Minister Narendra Modi transposed his highly organized and efficient leadership acumen into the broader context of Indian Politics, thereby, transforming the party's performance and its support base. The author, while tracing the historical foundations of the party, examines both past and contemporary visions and contributions of many veterans, including Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee, Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani, as well as the myri-



ad challenges the party faced in consolidating its position in Indian politics. Through a blended research methodology consisting of extensive interviews with party workers, leaders and observers, and the author traces his life journey. The author observes that since his very childhood, the predisposition of Modi to adapt and apply the learnings of his life—discipline and organisational skills—at every phase of his journey, starting from his association with RSS as a Pracharak, followed by the BJP as a General Secretary (organisation) of the Gujarat unit as well as National Level, as a Chief Minister of Gujarat to Prime Minister of India, has brought about transformational changes in the party.

In a detailed explication, the author reflects on the early experiments of Modi in building an alternate political force in the early 1990s in the states of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. In the hindsight, a couple of reasons can be considered for the continued dominance of BJP in Indian Politics: first, values of discipline and organisational skills instilled among the party workers as well as the masses under Modi's leadership have already developed deep roots, which will continue to facilitate the party's strong hold even in the future. Second, many myths about the party, which constrained the party's performance in the past, have already been dismantled with the successive victories in the 2014 and 2019 general elections, as well as states' elections, which will further enable BJP to consolidate its position in the Indian political landscape. Undoubtedly, Modi's vision has elevated the party's image transcending caste, urban and minority rhetoric. The success and future of the BJP will depend on the sus-

tained commitment to what PM Modi calls the Mantra of Triveni, i.e. the convergence of three elements: the government's actions, work ethics, and the service of the BJP workers. The book is an interesting read for anyone with deep curiosity to understand the role of leadership in bringing tremendous transformations in BJP, which in turn changed the discourse of politics in India. The ingenuity of PM Modi's leadership quality can be aptly described, in the words of Joseph Nye, as 'contextual intelligence' - the ability of a leader to understand changing environments, discern and capitalise on trends, adapt and apply the flow of events to implement different strategies in different circumstances/ contexts. PM Modi's ability to lead, organise, mobilise and capitalise have paved the way for greater transformations at both national and global level to build a 'New Bharat' capable of shaping world politics. (The writer is Senior Consultant Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) New Delhi. The views expressed are personal)

**FIRST COLUMN**
AND THE AWARD
GOES TO... YOU

Understanding consciousness is critical for a purposeful life, writes Hingori

I have recognised that living outside the concept of Maya daily is beyond general human endeavour. I wondered how we could achieve that. I received a response in the form of the following statement: 'LIVE THE LIE, BUT BE AWARE OF THE TRUTH'.

Understanding consciousness is critical because it defines who we are and everything around us. Therefore, we need to explore consciousness deeply and try to shift our conscious awareness to other forms of life to see things from their perspective. In recognising that consciousness exists in every lifeform, one will slowly be able to accept the oneness in all living entities further realising that we are all one. It is the concept of the drop of water makes the ocean and the ocean is the drop of water. So making yourself aware of and empathetic to the perspective of all other living beings, not just other humans is the first step towards recognising the divinity in yourself. So, celebrate your growth and development, both in the physical world and your spiritual self. Go ahead and give yourself an award, because you deserve it! And who doesn't love a good awards show? Here are a few more to ponder over:

THE BEST EDITOR AWARD: This award goes to someone who can delete what is not of value, see the big picture, and make tough decisions. The best editor award recognises individuals who go above and beyond themselves. The editor is like the Marie Kondo of your life, helping you declutter and get rid of things that don't add value.



The concept of getting rid of attachments and desires that are not necessary can be found in the practice of detachment or vairagya. One must have the ability to let go of one's ego and put the greater good of the cause first. One must possess the ability to detach from one's emotions and circumvent negative self-opinion.

Limiting sensory pleasures is another concept that requires to be worked upon. The practice of Pratyahara involves withdrawing the senses from external stimuli. It helps cultivate inner peace and clarity of mind. One must be able to separate themselves from distractions and external stimuli to make objective decisions that serve their life story.

THE BEST MUSIC DIRECTOR AWARD: This award recognizes individuals who understand that the background music of one's life is one's destiny. It's like having your personal DJ or creating the perfect soundtrack for your life. Accepting life's circumstances that do not align with one's expectations can only be possible with a clear understanding of destiny. So, turn up the volume and let your destiny jam out with you.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad states, "You are what your deep, driving desire is. As your desire is, so is your will. As your will is, so is your deed. As your deed is, so is your destiny." This quote emphasizes the importance of understanding one's desires and will in shaping one's actions and ultimately, one's destiny.

THE BEST PRODUCER AWARD: This award goes to someone who acts as a mentor and helps their mentee climb the ladder of life, producing a more enlightened person. Guru Vasishtha is a prime example of the best producer, having evolved Ram's consciousness to the extent that he became recognised as a God. (Paradoxically so, considering Ram knew that there is no God). To qualify for the best producer award, one must be able to unveil the limitations of ignorance.

Be persistent in training, testing, correcting and re-correcting. A mentor must have the patience and perseverance to help the mentee overcome limitations and achieve full potential. This involves providing constructive feedback, challenging their mentees to push themselves beyond their limits, and helping them develop the skills and knowledge necessary for success. One must have the ability to sacrifice and put others before oneself. You are like the Yoda of their life, guiding them towards the light side of the force. And who wouldn't want a Yoda in their life?

BEST SCREENPLAY AWARD: A good screenplay for the Best Screenplay Award should have the following elements: knowledge, shedding negative samskaras, and a scriptwriter who possesses an ethereal sense of humour and knows how to laugh at himself. It's like having your own personal JK Rowling, creating a magical world that educates and enlightens you. And finally, **THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** — goes to the exemplary volunteer. This award honours individuals who have made a selfless commitment to serve their community to make a positive impact in the lives of others.

Concluded

A long-winded road to disqualification

The process of disqualification of a lawmaker is a bit complicated but not ambiguous. The Constitution and conventions are a fair guide on the matter



DEVENDER SINGH ASWAL



A question has arisen whether a Member of Parliament convicted by a court of law and awarded imprisonment of two years or more warrants to be disqualified again by the President in terms of Article 102 read with Article 103 of the Constitution. With respect to disqualification of a Member of a State legislature, similar provisions are enshrined in Article 191 and 192. A constricted, or rather erroneous, view is gaining currency that the words used in the Constitution are 'a person shall be disqualified for being chosen as, and for being, a member of either House of Parliament, if he incurs any of the disqualifications mentioned under Article 102(1). Further, it is being said that a matter of disqualification must be referred to the President who shall give his decision, which will be final, after obtaining the opinion of the Election Commission (EC) and in accordance with such opinion.

Such an argument is utterly flawed as it is against the spirit of the Constitution, the law, the judicial dicta and the well-established parliamentary practice. The words 'shall be disqualified' are being given a very parochial rather than a harmonious construction. It is being said that after incurring any of these disqualifications, the MP has to be disqualified again with the decision of the President. If a question arises whether a member has incurred any of the disqualifications under Article 102(1), the question shall be referred to the President who shall give his decision which shall be final in accordance with the opinion of the EC. Now, it must be noted that the words used in Article 103 are 'if any question arises' whereas Article 102(1) mentions the disqualifications.

The grounds mentioned under Article 102(1) come under three categories. First, disqualifications on the ground of 'unsoundness of mind', 'undischarged insolvency' and loss of Indian citizenship. On these grounds, there is no recorded case so far of any member having been disqualified. But, nevertheless, it's clear from the Article that the concerned House can dis-



THE WORDS 'SHALL BE DISQUALIFIED' ARE BEING GIVEN A VERY PAROCHIAL RATHER THAN A HARMONIOUS CONSTRUCTION

(The author is a retired Additional Secretary, Lok Sabha, and a member of Delhi Bar Council. Views expressed are personal)

qualify a member once he incurs these disqualifications. Second, in case a representation is received by the President about the alleged assumption of an office of profit by a member, the representation is referred to the EC by the President for opinion. Jaya Bachchan was disqualified by the President with effect from July 14, 2004, on receipt of a petition that she was occupying an office of profit under the UP Government. Following her disqualification, there was a spate of representations including a representation against Sonia Gandhi who was chairperson of the National Advisory Council.

To avoid the possible political upheaval, the Parliament (Prevention of Disqualification) Act, 1959, was amended in 2006 retrospectively w.e.f. April 4, 1959. The result was the membership of Jaya and Sonia Gandhi was saved and similar petitions became infructuous. On the contrary, where a member is disqualified by a court of law, he stands disqualified from the date of the judgment. Shibu Soren was disqualified by the apex court in 2001 on the grounds of holding an office of profit. He was a member of Rajya Sabha and following the verdict of the court, he stood disqualified and the Rajya Sabha Secretariat issued a notification to that effect.

Once disqualified by a court, there is no question or propriety to refer the matter to the EC as the question of disqualification stands settled by judicial dicta. Thirdly, the Speaker can disqualify a member under the Tenth Schedule on grounds of defection. The decision of the Speaker is final under the Tenth Schedule subject of course to judicial review. An allegation of defection is not referred to the President or the EC.

There is yet another category when a member can be expelled by the House without reference to any outside body or authority. Article 101 in respect of Parliament and Article 190 in respect of State Legislature provide that in case a member remains absent from the House continuously for a period of 60 days without the approval of the House, his seat may be declared vacant. The motion for such removal is usually moved by the Minister for Parliamentary Affairs which once approved by the House, the seat is declared vacant.

Three members of Provisional Parliament in April 1950, a member of Lok Sabha (SN Mahapatra) in 1956, and a member of Rajya Sabha (Baljinder Singh Hamdard) in December 2000 were expelled under Article 101(4).

A member can also be expelled by the House for unbecoming conduct. HG Mudgal in 1951 and 10 members of Lok Sabha and one member of Rajya Sabha in 2005 were expelled by the respective Houses for 'cash for query', that was deemed unbecoming conduct of a legislator.

The expulsions were upheld by the apex court in Raja Ram Pal vs Speaker Lok Sabha (2007). None of these cases were referred to the President for approving the expulsions since the legislature itself is competent to do so. Under section 10A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, an elected member can be disqualified by the EC for failure to lodge an account of election expenses. A member of Rajya Sabha was disqualified by the EC in July 1991 and the Rajya Sabha Secretariat issued the notification of disqualification. The matter was not referred to the President.

In terms of Article 102(1)(e), apart from the anti-defection law

which is adjudicated by the Speaker/Presiding Officer, a member can be disqualified by or under any law by a court of law. The legal position after the judgment of the apex court in the Lily Thomas case (2013) is that a conviction which carries a sentence of two years or more will automatically result in disqualification since the apex court also struck down section 8(4) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, being unconstitutional. The earliest case is of Rasheed Masood who lost his membership of Rajya Sabha due to conviction in a corruption case in 2013. Lalu Prasad and Jagdish Sharma too were unseated from the Lok Sabha following their conviction and sentence of imprisonment which were for more than two years.

There was no reference by either House to the President or the EC since they had been disqualified by the Court. The Lok Sabha Secretariat issued a notification informing the stakeholders including the EC about the vacancy caused due to such disqualification. So, the House cannot defer the date of disqualification of a member disqualified by the Court. Once the question of disqualification is judicially settled, a legislature cannot delay or stall the same, except by enacting a new law or by amending the extant act.

The secretariat only issues notification about the vacancy so that the EC takes recourse to fill the vacancy thus caused. However, disqualification of a member would be untenable if the conviction is stayed as reiterated by the Appellate Court in the Lok Prahari case, 2018. It is therefore incumbent upon the legislature Secretariat to reinstate the membership with equal speed and alacrity once the decision of conviction is stayed by an Appellate Court.

In Karnataka parties are offering freebies to voters

All eyes are on the Karnataka Assembly elections, for which polling will be held on May 10 and the results will be announced on May 13

The outcome will determine the prospects of the two leading contenders, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and the Congress, ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and other stakeholders like the JD(S). In a neck-and-neck fight, most opinion polls indicate that the Congress has the edge over the BJP. Intelligence sources have also projected 80 to 90 for BJP, 90 to 100 for the Congress, and 30 to 40 for the JDS. Karnataka faces a three-cornered contest between the Congress, BJP and the Janata Dal (S).

Stakes are high but more so for the BJP and the Congress. The new entrant Aam Aadmi Party is also contesting all the seats. Winning Karnataka would indicate the crucial Congress revival. It will give a



KALYANI SHANKAR

(The writer is a senior journalist. Views expressed are personal)

moral boost to the party, which currently rules in only three states—Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, and Chattisgarh.

A defeat would be a setback to the ruling BJP which has been on a winning spree, even in the three Northeastern states polls last month. Karnataka is the only BJP-ruled State in the south.

Former prime minister Deve Gowda and his son, former CM Kumaraswamy, are battling to retain their JD(S) supremacy in the old Mysuru region and their kingmaker role. It will not be a walkover for either national party as they face intense factionalism and indiscipline. The BJP is solely dependent on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's magic. The Prime Minister has visited the

State several times, inaugurating various schemes and addressing Poll rallies.

The BJP is looking to the support of octogenarian former chief minister Yeddyurappa. The Lingayat strongman can sabotage the BJP's chances in the highly caste-ridden politics. The BJP got its first chief minister in the south when Yeddyurappa won the state in 2008. Unable to sideline him, the BJP has made him a Parliamentary board member after he was asked to pave for Basavaraj Bommai last year.

The BJP faces three challenges—anti-incumbency, corruption and lack of a chief ministerial face. The BJP is defensive on anti-incumbency. Karnataka has never elected the same party consecutively in



Assembly elections for more than two decades. Secondly, it has never given a majority to the same party in consecutive Assembly and Lok Sabha elections.

In the caste arithmetic, Vokkaligas constitute 15 per cent, OBCs 35 per cent, SC/STs 18 per cent, Muslims 12.92 per cent, and Brahmins about 3 per cent. Vokkaliga votes will be divided between JDS, Congress, BJP, and others.

Lingayats (15 per cent) dominate as many as 100 of 224 constituencies. Until 1989, they supported the Congress.

However, they moved away after the sacking of the then chief minister Veerendra Patil by Rajiv Gandhi. The Congress's strategy is to woo specific interest groups like women. It mobilizes support from Kuruba, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, Muslim, and OBC communities.

Secondly, Congress's vote share has never been below 26 per cent votes in the State. Even in 2018, the Congress's vote share stood at 38.04 per cent. Thirdly, Congress has made an aggressive and defiant move with Rahul Gandhi planning to launch his Karnataka campaign with the April 5 rally in Kolar. His Bharat Jodo Yatra and the recent court verdict resulting in dismissal from Parliament

have increased his acceptance. As for the BJP, the Bommai Government has increased quotas for SC and ST by 4 and 2 per cent. The Lingayats and Vokkaligas also got a 2 per cent hike each. The Bommai Government has announced up to Rs 3,000 per month for families below the poverty line. It has offered Rs 1,000 per month for female farm workers, free bus passes to 30 lakh women in the organised sector, and 8 lakh girl students.

On the negative side, the BJP is defensive on the poll issues like inflation, farmer problems, and unemployment. Real estate, sand, and mining mafias also need to be fixed. The Bommai Government is allegedly known as a 40 per cent commission sarkar. Parties are showering free-

bies on the voter. As per the recent trend, money is not a consideration, as all the parties are willing to spend vast amounts. The Congress has already guaranteed 4 things. They are—10 kg foodgrains, 200 units of power, Rs 2,000 for every woman family head, and Rs 3,000 for graduates.

The new entrant AAP has announced free electricity, free water, agricultural loan waiver, unemployment insurance @ Rs 3,000, and free bus pass for women in urban areas. With the parties desperately trying to woo voters with political promises, new schemes, and gifts, the big question is how much the voter would get swayed by them. The voter has a mind and could still prefer the BJP to prove the pundits wrong.

MONEY MATTERS

Gram Power to ramp up smart meter manufacturing capacity

Homegrown smart metering firm Gram Power is eyeing a multi-fold growth in topline in the current fiscal as it is set to ramp up the manufacturing capacity to 10 million units per annum, according to a top company official. "We have set up a manufacturing unit with a capacity of up to 3 million smart meters per year, and we aim to ramp up production to 10 million meters in the next 12-15 months to meet the growing demand for smart metering systems in the country," Yashraj Khatian, Founder and CEO of Gram Power, said.



Wipro Consumer Care and Lighting FY23 sales cross Rs 10,000 cr

Wipro Consumer Care and Lighting on Tuesday said it has crossed the milestone of Rs 10,000 crore in overall sales in FY23, helped by 'significant growth' across geographies, brands, and categories. The domestic FMCG business grew 17 per cent for the financial year ended March 31, 2023, the company, part of Azim Premji-led Wipro Enterprises, said in a statement. Its sandalwood soap brand Santoor has now become the second largest player in the segment in India with sales of over Rs 2,650 crore.



PhonePe forays into local commerce with Pincode app on ONDC network

Walmart-backed PhonePe on Tuesday announced its foray into local commerce with the launch of its consumer app Pincode, built on the government's Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform. PhonePe Founder and CEO Sameer Nigam that the Pincode app will be available initially in Bangalore and it will expand to other cities after the app achieves transactions of around 10,000 per day.



Goods exports touched US\$ 447 bln: Goyal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The country's goods exports touched USD 447 billion till the last count for 2022-23 fiscal year as against USD 422 billion in 2021-22, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday.



The final export and import data for 2022-23 would be released by the mid of April. At present, the ministry is in the process of collating the data. The trade data for goods comes with a lag of about 15 days and in the case of services data, it is 45 days. Goyal said that services exports are estimated to cross USD 320 billion in 2022-23.

Restrictions in raw material prices, in exports of certain products like wheat and Russia-Ukraine war. "The final numbers (exports of goods and services will be closer to USD 765 billion... I would not be surprised if we actually go up to USD 772 billion which we figured while drawing the road map for USD 2 trillion of exports by 2030," the minister said.

also said that express delivery services sector has huge potential for growth in India. "To bridge the cost in logistics, we need to look at scale, efficiency and the building blocks through technology," he added.

MP, Odisha doubled GSDP in six years to FY22: Report

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Madhya Pradesh and Odisha more than doubled their gross state domestic product (GSDP) on a nominal basis in six years to FY22 despite the pandemic, a report said on Tuesday.

Madhya Pradesh has shown a "remarkable journey" on economic growth by doubling in size in FY22, as compared with what it was in FY16, India Ratings and Research said in a note. It added that Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan's state also entered into the top 10 states by GSDP because of this performance, and was the only new entrant in the list. Kerala has dropped off the list, it said.

ONGC's US\$ 7 billion drive to boost output

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is stepping up a USD 7 billion investment over the next three-four years to reverse years of decline in oil and gas production, company's director for production Pankaj Kumar said.



Up to 24 field development, enhanced oil recovery (EOR) and improved oil recovery (IOR) projects are currently in progress that will further help reverse the declining trend in oil and gas production.

ing in technology to raise recovery as well as tap isolated reservoirs," he said. ONGC is investing USD 5 billion-plus in development of the Cluster-II region of its flagship KG-DWN-98/2 asset in the Krishna Godavari basin offshore India's eastern coast.

It also has multiple field developments in the west coast region, including a planned fifth phase of redevelopment of Mumbai High along with the development of neighbouring fields like Daman, he said, adding these ongoing projects involve an investment of Rs

60,000 crore (more than USD 7 billion) over the next three-four years. "We are investing in multiple enhanced oil recovery (EOR) and improved oil recovery (IOR) projects," he said. "In the fiscal year ending March 31, we managed to arrest the decline in output after five years and from the current fiscal we will see production rising."

Amitabh Kant-headed panel to help push to examine stalled real estate projects

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry has set up a 14-member committee headed by former NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant to examine issues related to stalled real estate projects and recommend various ways for their completion.



According to an order issued by the ministry on March 31, the committee will submit its report within six months from the date of its first meeting. The 14-member panel will deliberate on the issues of legacy stalled projects and suggest ways to complete and hand over these projects to homebuyers in a time-bound manner, the order states.

The Central Advisory Council chaired by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri had decided on forming such a committee about a year ago. The committee comprises top central and state government officials, including the secretary in the department of financial services in the Union Ministry of Finance, the principal secretary of the housing and urban planning,

Comviva appoints new senior executives to drive growth

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IT company Comviva on Monday announced the appointment of three new senior executives to drive its growth in the US and Europe. The company has roped in former Syniverse Americas sales head Paul Barowsky as Chief Growth Officer with the primary responsibility for driving expansion in North America and European markets, Comviva said in a statement. Paul has experience in scaling up businesses in North America.

ADB says China, India will power strong growth in '23

PNS ■ BANGKOK

China's recovery from the pandemic and strong demand in India will drive strong economic growth in Asia this year, the Asian Development Bank said in a report issued Tuesday.



The Manila, Philippines-based ADB's latest update forecasts an expansion of 4.8% in this year and the next, up from 4.2% in 2022. It said inflation would likely cool slightly this year and fall further in 2024.

challenges for the region. The report's analysis was based on the assumption that Brent crude oil, the pricing basis for international trading, would average USD 88 a barrel this year and USD 90 a barrel next year.

83 on Monday. But they soared about 5% after Saudi Arabia and other major oil producers said they will cut production by 1.15 million barrels per day from May until the end of the year, on top of a reduction announced last October that infuriated the Biden administration.

"It's certainly plausible that oil prices could go even higher and introduce another challenge for the region," ADB Chief Economist Albert Park said in a conference call. However, growing imports of Russian crude oil, especially by China and India, will likely cushion the impact of rising prices - such exports to China, India and Turkey more than doubled last year. As of February, a third of Russia's crude exports were going to India and more than a fifth to China.

Automobile retail sales see double-digit growth

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Automobile retail sales grew in double-digits in the country last fiscal, driven by a record offtake of 36 lakh passenger vehicles, the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) said on Tuesday.



Total retail sales rose to 2,21,50,222 units last fiscal, up 21 per cent from 1,83,27,326 units in FY22. The passenger vehicle registrations rose by 23 per cent to 36,20,039 units, against 29,42,273 units in 2021-22. Two-wheelers retail sales rose by 19 per cent to 1,59,95,968 units in FY23 compared to 1,34,94,214 units in 2021-22. Commercial vehicle registrations rose by 19 per cent to 1,59,95,968 units in FY23 compared to 1,34,94,214 units in 2021-22.

retail sales rose 33 per cent while three-wheeler registrations witnessed an 84 per cent increase as compared with 2021-22. Tractor retail sales grew by 8 per cent last fiscal as compared with FY22. "FY23 was the first full year without any impact of Covid after a gap of two years. Consequently, overall retail sales during the year experienced double-digit growth of 21 per cent," FADA President Manish Raj Singhania said.

Rupee likely to strengthen towards 79 by end-FY24: UBS Securities

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Narrowing current account deficit will help the rupee strengthen against the dollar and appreciate to around 79 by the second half of the current fiscal, says a foreign brokerage report.

be volatile in the near-term, as global financial stability risks remain elevated, she expects the local unit to gain towards 79 against the greenback by year-end FY24, on a narrowing current account deficit (CAD) and weaker dollar volatility index. CAD narrowed to 2.2 per cent of GDP or USD 18.2 billion in the third quarter and the Swiss brokerage UBS Securities sees it further improving to 1.2 per cent of GDP in the current fiscal from an estimated 2 per cent in the just concluded fiscal.

New foreign trade policy to promote exports

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The new Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023, announced recently, will help in promoting exports of sectors from e-commerce, batteries for electric vehicles and farm equipment, experts said on Tuesday.



India on March 31 came out with the new policy which aimed at pushing rupee trade, increasing outward shipments to USD 2 trillion by 2030, and promoting e-commerce exports, amid global uncertainties. Rumki Majumdar, Economist at Deloitte India, said that the

cent of trade being done in the USD, encouraging trade in Indian rupee will be a relief. "It will also add to its resilience to external shocks and improve negotiating capabilities in international trade," Majumdar said. Shashi Mathews, Partner at IndusLaw, said that through the policy, the government's focus is to digitise and re-engineer the processes to make it more business-friendly and less time-consuming. "Some key focus areas which will reap the benefits are e-commerce, merchandising trade,

green technology products like EV, farming equipment, etc," Mathews said. The new policy would rekindle business sentiment to achieve India's aspirational target of being a global leader in exports, Sanjay Budhia, Chairman of CII National Committee on Exports and Imports, said. "Reduction of export performance threshold in the new FTP is a welcome step as this will enable more exporters to achieve higher status and reduce transaction cost for exports.

ICRIER for level playing field on cargo

NEW DELHI: Economic think tank ICRIER on Tuesday suggested that the government should fast-track trade facilitation-related reforms, in a bid to give express delivery a level-playing field with general cargo. ICRIER in a report titled 'Express

Delivery Services Supporting the Journey towards India@2047' said the government should remove all value limits on exports through express delivery services (EDS) to help small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in global value chains.

Credit Suisse chief admits failure, apologises to shareholders

PNS ■ ZURICH

The chairman of Credit Suisse apologised Tuesday to shareholders for failures of the once-venerable bank and acknowledged the shock and anger felt as the troubled Swiss lender is set to be swallowed up by rival UBS in a government-arranged takeover.



Axel Lehmann, who took the top board job only last year after joining Credit Suisse from UBS in 2021, decried "massive outflows" of customer funds in October and a "downward spiral" that culminated last month as turmoil over a US banking crisis spilled overseas. "The bank could not be saved," he said, and only two

options awaited a deal or bankruptcy. "The bitterness, anger and shock of those who are disappointed, overwhelmed and affect-

ed by the developments of the past few weeks is palpable," Lehmann told what is likely the last Credit Suisse shareholder meeting in its 167-year history.

"I apologise that we were no longer able to stem the loss of trust that had accumulated over the years and for disappointing you," he said. Protesters, including some hoisting a boat labelled "Crisis Suisse," gathered outside the Zurich hockey arena hosting the meeting and some shareholders voiced their anger as they got their last crack at managers following a collapse of the bank's stock price over the last decade and an impending merger engineered to sidestep investor approval.

As the stock skid worsened and jittery depositors pulled their money, Swiss government officials hastily orchestrated a USD 3.25 billion takeover by UBS two weekends ago. Political leaders, financial regulators and the central bank feared a teetering Credit Suisse could further roil global financial markets following the collapse of two US banks. Crosstown competitor UBS has been known for a more conservative culture after surviving the 2008 financial crisis, thanks in part to a government bailout. Executives hope that the deal will close in coming months but acknowledged a complex transaction.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION NOTICE INVITING QUOTATIONS NIQ No.01/EE/Circle-17/KZ/GHMC/2023-24 Date: 03.04.2023

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION TENDER NOTICE NIT No.01/ZCTO/EE/Divn.15/Sec'bad Zone/GHMC/2023-24 Dated: 04.04.2023

OFFICE OF THE NIRMAL MUNICIPALITY, NIRMAL DISTRICT NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST R.No. E1/01/EOI/2023-24 Dated: 03-04-2023

To help you manage stress levels and lead a healthy working environment, *The Pioneer* connects to Laxman Sridhar, founder of Lucid Minds Coaching, who speaks to us about the power of coaching to achieve clarity, and bring out the best in yourself and others.

Understanding what white-collar coaching is

SHIKHA DUGGAL

A healthy working environment is so important these days, unbearable affairs of state are to be seen in many office premises. So, to help manage stress levels these days — like we have come up with so many coaches, here we are with a top executive coach now.

Laxman Sridhar helps maintain the relationship of employees with their co-workers, because sometimes what happens is the decision that they make can impact their own wellbeing. The number of hours we work, the stress of increment and especially workplace safety, all of this causes stress. So what does this coach do is take some responsibility and support their mental health!

Because, after all, if the employee is stressing around housing or family issues — they stop feeling valued. We know your bewilderment is running, on how does an executive coach actually do that?

Well, when we enunciated our conversation with him, he uttered, "I believe that learning is a superpower, and everyone has the power to unleash it. There are two dimensions to learning; the formal method follows the path of acquiring knowledge in a structured and academic manner, thus creating an understanding of the topic."

The second is through consistent practice that helps deepen and enhance the knowledge and skills. Over the years, I have invested in numerous learning programs. These learning programs have brought me immense insights, perspectives and competencies, helping me sharpen my coaching skills to offer the employees best coaching methodologies while maintaining high standards of ethics and integrity."

The founder of Lucid Minds Coaching, certified coach by the International Coach Federation has over eleven years of executive coaching experience. He has worked with top companies like Abbott, Accenture, Amazon, Honeywell, HP, MasterCard, McKinsey, Mercedes-Benz, Meesho, Microsoft, Mynta and so many others.

"The coaching journey is about the employee and the coach, and only he can facilitate the learning and growth. When the above tenets are ignored, ego can mislead the coach! Some manifestations of that could be that the coach thinks they are an expert and considers themselves an authority to dictate what the employee should or should not do; the coaching sessions then become about the coach and not the employee. The coach is then also likely to focus on their needs over that of the employee. And those things, in turn, are likely to take the focus off the employee and limit the ability of the coach to listen actively, reduce objectivity, allow judgement to creep in and thereby contaminate the coaching session."

Yes, it happens! Then how will they feel supported at work? He continued, who has also supported some big shots in foreign, "Self-talk can be supportive or critical. The latter can add to the stress, increase self-doubt, create self-judgement and labelling, reduce confidence, lead to overthinking, impact choices, delay decision-making, and appear as procrastination. All of the above sadly may also rob the employees of their natural creativity, higher-order thinking, visioning and problem-solving abilities, thereby limiting them to play safe, avoid challenges that could help them grow, give in to fear and eventually settle for medi-

ocrity. The challenge here is fear and lack of trust in self. With the support of a coach, the employee can learn to reframe the challenges, look at them from different perspectives, and shift energies from limitations to possibilities. The employee can also use the coach as a non-judgemental, sounding board to express their thoughts without hesitation, process their emotions, develop a vision, and set clear goals and an action plan to achieve them. By doing so, the employee can move from a place of self-doubt and fear to one of clarity, courage and confidence. This shift can help replace the critical, self-sabotaging internal voice with one that appreciates and acknowledges efforts made, a voice that encourages, supports and inspires the employee to continue on the path of self-awareness, clarity and intentional action."

In these eleven years, he has coached employees on areas spanning empowering leadership, executive presence, emotional intelligence, mindfulness, strategic thinking, people management, influencing stakeholders, effective decision making, impactful communication, and stress management you see!

Moreover, "Happiness is a state of being. When things go well, be mindful to celebrate, and when they don't, it's okay and healthy to emotе not-so-great feelings. These can be feelings of frustration, annoyance or even anger. Emotions, feelings and tears exist for a reason and blocking, shutting, or avoiding them does not serve anyone. Building self-awareness, and clarity, identifying character strengths, developing empowering habits and broader perspectives, and appreciating and acknowledging everyday wins can help shift a person to experience a state of happiness. Expressing gratitude, dropping judgements, practising compassion, and kindness towards self and others, staying engaged in meaningful work and living a life based on values and a sense of purpose are other ways of experience at your workplace."

Sridhar has also helped big shots address disempowering behaviours, limiting beliefs, fears, and unhealthy stress, thereby freeing them to give their best to the world and they are as we all can see.

"Work separation, layoffs, and restructuring are complex events but are also increasingly

unavoidable. There is continued disruption, volatility, and uncertainty in the environment and organisations trying to adapt, save costs and survive in those conditions resort to letting go of people. Career professionals can actually better prepare for these likely exigencies by being proactive much before they even face a layoff! Successful and well-functioning corporates understand the importance of learning and development in enhancing the overall effectiveness of the individual, teams and the larger organisation. As a result, they proactively plan numerous interventions to support their employees as they transition from one role to another, from managing small teams to multi-country, cross-functional teams. A combination of interventions ensures the employees are well-rounded, consistently learning, growing and helping the organisation scale. Executive Coaching is one such powerful intervention. In the words of the International Coach Federation, coaching is partnering with employees in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.

Companies that invest in executive coaching benefit by having highly self-aware and empa-

thetic leaders with enhanced listening skills. They manage people better, keep their teams engaged and build a sense of belonging, enjoy higher retention, encourage open and honest conversations, demonstrate impactful communication, plan better and execute faster, thereby creating higher levels of productivity, sales and growth."

This was much needed, because let us tell you the employees who are undergoing layoffs these days are not just affected financially, but also mentally and we urge you to approach such coaches to not let your productivity get affected!

SOME SIGNS OF HEALTHY EGO:

- Coach and employee trust each other and the coaching process.
- The coach is confident in their abilities to support the employee.
- Coach is confident in the abilities of their employee to learn and grow.
- Coach and employee are open to acknowledging that they do not know everything and will use the coaching process to discover more about the employee's needs, wants, aspirations, and desires as they work together.



The 'Mane' behind making the characters alive

K. RAMYA SREE

Almost all of the B-Town celebrities want Darshan Yewalekar to do their hair. One of the newest and busiest hairdressers in B-Town is the one who dared to shave Ranveer Singh's head in order to transform him into the Maratha warrior in *Bajirao Mastani*, gave him a distinct, grungy look in *Gunday*, transformed him into a terrifying Khilji in *Padmaavat*, and into none other than Kabil Dev in 83.

The celebrity stylist, in an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, said that working on the sets of Sanjay Leela Bhansali is his most memorable experience so far in his career.

He elaborated, "I have been lucky enough to style many celebrities and every experience is different. One of my most memorable experiences was working on the sets of Sanjay Leela Bhansali sir, who is a cinematic institution in his own right. Designing Ranveer's hair for *Goliyon Ki Raasleela Ram-Leela*, *Bajirao Mastani* and *Padmaavat* was an experience of a lifetime because I learnt so much about the detailing that goes into characterisation but also about cinema in general. Right now, I am enjoying working with Karan Johar on *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani* who is very fashion forward and offers great suggestions."

Everybody has commented on Ranveer's look in *Padmaavat* where he played Allauddin Khilji and the wild, untamed hair added to the sense of dread he evoked on screen. As a Maratha warrior in *Bajirao Mastani*, Ranveer shaved off his hair and exuded great self-possession and authority while in *Ram-Leela*, he played a dashing lover with hair that added to his free-spirited character. And darshan considers that look and the look he gave to him in 83 as his most viral looks so far.

Furthermore, sharing about his most proudest professional accomplishment, he said, "I think my proudest achievement has been to build a success story from scratch and make my parents proud. Over 20 years ago, I arrived in Mumbai from Pune and did not know what the future held in store for me. All I had was a passion for cinema and for barbering, and fate brought me to a film set where I could combine both. I worked hard, imbibed every lesson and soon more doors opened and the biggest breakthrough came on the sets of *Ram-Leela*. I never looked back and today I am designing the

Darshan Yewalekar's passion for cinema and barbering has today made him one of the busiest hairdressers in B-Town. The hairstylist, who has been closely associated with actor Ranveer Singh for over a decade now, gets candid with *The Pioneer* about his memorable experiences, his most proudest professional accomplishment, what goes behind getting a style approved, and more.



complete look for Karan Johar's *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani* and also helping superstars like Ranveer nail their style for

red carpets, magazine shoots and advertisements. I am on the verge of opening a next-generation barber shop in Mumbai and the boy who sometimes went hungry in his initial days of struggle has finally come full circle."

He is someone who prefers creating new looks with a reference to science fiction or hark back to a certain period from the past and timeline that could be as far back as 17th or 18th Century BC or the 1930's, 40's or 50's. But, being a celebrity hairstylist is not an easy task. There are high chances of your experiments backfiring. The greatest lesson that he learnt in his life is to keep working and improving your skills. "You cannot let failure or success affect you too much. You must stay humble and never let a sad story or people's opinions define you. No matter how hard the struggle may be, you're the only one who can pick yourself up. My low phases in fact gave me the courage to push my boundaries and fall in love with the process rather than the outcome. You should love what you do every day and that will make it easy for you to go on even when things are not going your way."

Spilling some beans on what generally goes behind getting a style approved and designed for a celebrity and the whole process, he shared, "You have to know a celebrity well enough to understand what they would like or not be comfortable with. You listen intently to their brief whether it is for a film shoot, a magazine cover, an ad or a red carpet and collaborate with their team to ensure that your styling gels with the costume design, the makeup, the occasion and the energy they want to exude and then after many discussions, the final look is crystalised. Right now, I am enjoying working on Karan Johar's *Rocky Aur Rani Ki Prem Kahani*. It is fresh, nostalgic, current and has many shades of love rolled into one film. After I went through the script, I created my mood board for each and every character and their story graph. I also kept in mind the actors who were playing these characters and created looks that were cohesive and true to the story. I tried to ensure that no actor looks like any other character they may have played in the past. For Ranveer, with whom I have worked extensively for over a decade, it was challenging to create a very distinct look that has never been seen before but we managed to surprise ourselves."

Ending the chat by sharing the trending hairstyles we will witness in 2023, he con-

PNS | HYDERABAD

Remember Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde? The antagonistic representations of the nature of the same person is NOT a fiction. It may happen in reality as well when mood states fluctuate between extremes.

Bipolar disorder dramatically affects the mood and may result in episodes of depression and elation, which can affect one's health, productivity, and relationships. World Bipolar Day educates and promotes the spread of information on bipolar disorder through international collaborative efforts.

Bipolar disorder, previously known as manic depression, is a severe mental disorder characterised by periods of depression and periods of abnormally elevated mood that last from days to weeks. If the elevated mood is severe or associated with psychosis, it is called mania; if it is less severe, it is called hypomania. During mania, an individual behaves or feels abnormally energetic, happy or irritable, and they often make impulsive decisions with little regard for the consequences. There is usually also a reduced need for sleep during manic phases. During periods of depression, the individual may experience crying and have a negative outlook on life and poor eye contact with others.

Commonly starting between 20-25 years, bipolar disorder affects nearly 1% of the global population. When it starts early, it can have a significant impact on life and work. I see retro cuts coming back with a modern twist, less products, more natural textures and defiant colors on both girls and boys. Right now, everybody is doing their own thing and enhancing their best attributes with flattering cuts rather than following what Instagram influencers are doing and that is a great shift, I would say."

How to treat Bipolar Disorder effectively?

liar in life, it's associated with worse outcomes. Presence of this disorder in multiple family members, disrupted sleep patterns, alcohol/cannabis addiction, extreme stress and impaired daily schedule — can all lead to Bipolar disorder, though the exact cause is not yet known. Imbalance in neurotransmitter levels in the brain areas responsible for mood, energy, sleep and functioning as well as impaired nerve-to-nerve signaling in these areas can all lead to Bipolar Disorder.

Dr. Debanjan Banerjee, consultant neuropsychiatrist, Apollo Multispecialty Hospitals said, "Bipolar Disorder can be quite severe and disabling. The frequent swings between a 'manic' and 'depressive' phase are often undetected and considered to be a normal part of mood fluctuations. If untreated, this illness takes a heavy toll on social life, relationships and professional domains. With time, the mood episodes tend to be more frequent and severe. Irritability and restlessness can increase. During the 'high' phase (mania), an individual often does not admit or understand that he/she is ill and refuses treatment. The family needs to identify the signs and initiate treatment. Often, hospitalization may also be necessary to deal with the acute episode. The risk of suicide is high; over a period of 20 years, 6% of those with bipolar disorder died by suicide, while 30-40% engaged in self-harm behaviors."

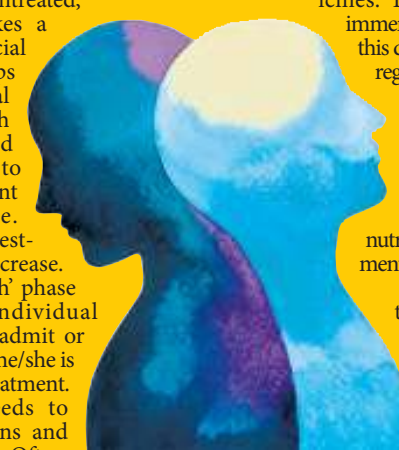
Several medicines are used to treat bipolar disorder successfully and the treatment depends on the 'phase' of illness (high or low). Certain medicines called mood-stabilizers help the mood to remain stable and prevent the extreme fluctuations that happen in this illness (just like an inverter reduces voltage fluctuations). If there is more than one

episode, medicines may need to be continued for a long time, at times throughout life. Stopping medications without discussion with your doctor and simply for the fear of side-effects or stigma, is extremely harmful and carries a huge risk of recurrence of this disorder. Please discuss your concerns, the expected effects/side-effects and duration of treatment with your treating psychiatrist well in advance.

Besides, various approaches to psychotherapy (Cognitive Behavior Therapy / Interpersonal Therapy / Social Rhythm Therapy, etc.) are helpful to prevent relapses in Bipolar and maintain mood stability. They are best done by a qualified clinical psychologist in addition to the prescribed medications. Lifestyle changes are immensely important to keep this disorder at bay, especially regulating your sleep cycle, maintaining proper sleep hygiene and ensuring adequate night-time sleep. Daily exercises, yoga, avoiding alcohol and other addictions, proper nutrition and stress management also help.

Perhaps most important is to identify the early signs of this disorder and seek professional help as early as possible. There is no stigma or shame in seeking help. The 'mania' or 'depression' episodes do not start in a day. Initially, the signs may be easy irritation, disturbed sleep, increased talking, overspending, change in behavior patterns, reduced social interaction, problems in focusing, feeling or perceiving 'weird' sensation, etc. Family members should be on the watch for such symptoms in an individual with Bipolar Disorder and seek prompt help in case these appear. This prevents a mood episode from escalating further.

Let's understand the illness and spread awareness. Bipolar Disorder can be treated well and disability prevented in a lot of individuals. Only if we act timely!



what's brewing?



● Neha Gupta



● Amrita Kabra



● Jassi Chhabra



● Neha Gandhi

Neha Gandhi and Neha Gupta, organised the introductory event of the second season of Glow Ladies club, at Terra cafe n bistro, Jubilee Hills in Hyderabad.



● Rashmit



● Ritu Agarwal



● Parichi Goel



● Shreya Giani



● Sonia Sobti



● Kirti Gupta

PARTY



● Fathe Affan



● Pradeep Roy and monmoon

BRS Party Youth President Fathe Affan hosted a grand Iftar party at Meraj's Palm Arabiana, which was graced by several renowned personalities from the city.



● Badrinath, Mithun Reddy, kabeer Khan, Nawab Shaikh Ibrahim and Mohib Baig

Photos by- SV Chary



● Simran



● Jaber Patel and Ateeq Siddiqui



● Kayanat Arora

A robust charging infrastructure is imperative for EV adoption in India: Ather Energy

From a meager 3 to 4 percent market share in FY22, electric scooters have risen to 16 percent in FY23, which is a significant jump for any new category. The government has been seeking active participation from the private sector to set-up charging infrastructure to accelerate EV adoption in the country. While several startups and energy companies have shown interest and have started to install EV charging stations, a lot still remains to be done by the OEMs. One such 2-wheeler brand - Ather Energy,

well known for the 450X electric scooter, is also leading the charge in India in terms of establishing a comprehensive network of charging stations. The company's charging infrastructure network, called Ather Grid, is designed to provide electric scooter owners with a convenient and hassle-free charging experience. The charging stations are strategically located in popular public places such as malls, restaurants, and cafes, making it easy for electric scooter owners to charge

their vehicles while they go about their daily activities. The company also offers a mobile app that allows users to locate and reserve charging stations in advance, ensuring that they are always able to find a charging point when they need one.



FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



REALITY CHECK



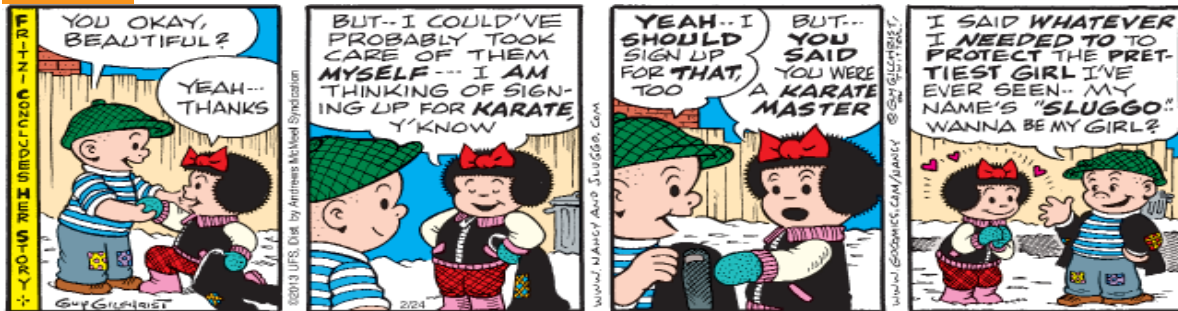
SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

ACROSS

- Intentional; on purpose
- Wary
- Frequently
- Scary
- Go in
- A baking ingredient
- Turned from liquid into vapour

DOWN

- Close by
- Discover
- Someone who has done something very brave
- Sprinkle this on food
- People aged 13 to 19
- Went right

SOLUTION

W	I	N	T	S	P	I	N	
O	D	D	B	E				
R	D	D	D	R	A	G	O	N
M	E	S	S	B	E			
H	O	D	S	T	I	T		
I	M	P	E	R	O	R		
S	P	A	S	I				
S	E	A	R	C	H	E	N	E
D	A	M	P		M	I	D	D

GINGER MEGGS



'I'd ask everyone to lose once, and so you'll learn from your mistakes'

AMARTYA SMARAN

Venu Yeldandi's *Balagam* was released on March 3 to extremely positive reviews. *Balagam* brings to the fore the hidden but obvious familial conflicts when a human being passes away. Someone's demise can bring out the best and worst for good or bad. Venu Yeldandi's remarkable debut is a fine take on the Telangana culture.

Balagam starring Priyadarshi Pulikonda, Kavya Kalyanram, Racha Ravi, Venu Yeldandi, Sudhakar, Vijayalakshmi, and Muralidhar Goud in prominent roles is out on Amazon Prime and is being screened in several villages across Telangana. What made the film successful in the first place is its deeply rooted story. It's just authentic and comes straight out of Venu's heart.

The film recently bagged the Best Drama Feature Film award at Onkyo Film Awards in Ukraine. The film added four more awards (Washington DC International Cinema Festival) to its feather: Best Feature Director (Venu Yeldandi), Best Actor in a Feature (Priyadarshi), Best Actress in a Feature (Kavya Kalyanram), and Best Narrative Feature (Venu Yeldandi).

Amidst all this hype and appreciation, director Venu Yeldandi took some time off and spoke to *The Pioneer* about his influences, association with fellow technicians, and a lot more.

If you'd have watched the film, you will agree that in no way, shape or form does it look like a debutant directed the film. We asked Venu to share in what way some of the legendary directors have influenced him.

"There are many directors who've influenced me," stated Venu. "The purity in Mani Ratnam's films— It doesn't feel like the actors are acting. It's like his actors are simply behaving. Anurag Kashyap's guerrilla style

of filmmaking. And I learnt how to make newcomers act and compose the scene from my guru director Teja garu. Krishna Vamsi Garu's film helped me understand how to influence and get the best out of an actor. Then there is Sukumar garu. He is a perfectionist when it comes to shot selection and detailing. I figured a lot could be said with fewer lines from Trivikram Srinivas garu. Now that I worked with all these people, I observed and learned from them."

In our conversation with the cinematographer of the film, Acharya Venu, who won the award for Best Feature Film Cinematography at the Los Angeles Cinematography Awards, he told us that Venu was never stubborn about what he wanted.

Speaking of his experience working with the young cinematographer, the *Balagam* director said: "It was a wonderful experience. He could understand my vision and put it out there the way I wanted it. He'd say, 'You narrated it so well. That's not the point. You need people

who can bring your vision to life and Acharya Venu did that wonderfully. We would fight during discussions but we'd settle with whatever benefitted the film at large. End of the day, we wanted to do what was right for the film. Most of us were debutantes and all of us had one motto. We just wanted to hit it out of the park with this film."

Veteran comedian Ali quipped in a recent event that Venu would constantly give his advice on how a particular shot should be framed. He also said, Venu would keep making suggestions from behind the camera. When asked about it, he shared, "We'd simply discuss and I'd give my suggestions and tell them it would be great if they could shoot it in this particular way (haha). I was always into writing. So all these things would inevitably come out sometimes (haha) out of excitement."

"It took me 20 years to achieve this level of appreciation," said Venu, who began his career in 2003 as an actor. Later, he slowly cemented place in Tollywood by taking part in various skits in audio launch events. His claim to fame apart from the film roles was *Jabardasth*, a weekly comedy show.

and experience for Venu to make something so spectacular that the entire state can't keep calm but appreciate the film. Youngsters might get totally disappointed if something doesn't go their way, but hold on, the successful comedian turned director has some advice.

"I'd say wait for some time. Don't lose your confidence. Just hang in there. In today's generation, one needs more experience. You know what? I'd ask everyone to lose once. Only then you'll learn from your mistakes. I lost a lot like that, but today that has become my strength," explained the director.

The scene where Priyadarshi realises that his grandfather actually passed away is one of the best scenes from the film. The director was quick to say, "That's my favourite scene." Venu apparently waited for 5 years to see that scene come to life.

"I'd keep talking about that scene with Darshi (Priyadarshi)," enthused the filmmaker. "I showed him this reference video (Masana) so that he'd get an idea about the intensity of the scene. I wanted him to understand up to what level he could burst out."

He further continued: "I'd do that constantly to prepare him. When we were going to shoot that scene, I told Darshi clearly, 'Do it only if you're in the mood to do it. Forget about the production.' I assured him that I'd take care of any problem related to the production. I wanted him to understand that there was no pressure from my end. On the day of the shoot, we lit up the set, fixed the shots and told him, 'Do it for as long as you want. All we want is these three or four dialogues. You could still improvise!'

That's how we prepared and there was pin drop silence on the sets. I even asked him not to say, 'Ready'. I asked him to give me a heads up before he was ready so that we could start rolling. I didn't want him to be distracted in any way. That's how we shot the scene."

Venu Yeldandi wants to take some time off before he could direct any other film. "This kind of success adds up a lot of responsibilities on you. I've got to weigh various factors, relax for a while and then get started. I'm basically in a dilemma. I want to take some time first and arrive at a decision," signed off Venu.



VD's ride to work in Alleppey for *Kushi*

Vijay Deverakonda will be seen next co-starring Samantha Ruth Prabhu in *Kushi*. The actor has now shared a few pics of himself from the sets as he filmed major scenes in Kochi. He posted a video and pic as he enjoyed the boat ride in the backwaters of Alleppey.

Vijay Deverakonda looks super dapper and handsome as always in a yellow shirt as he posed while sitting in a boat. He also added black sunglasses to beat the heat. The actor captioned the pics, "Ride to work - In Kerala." Nobody looked so cool heading to work, what a sight. The *Liger* actor never misses to make women go weak in their knees.

Kushi is one of the most anticipated and awaited films in Telugu. Jayaram, Sachin Khedekar, Murali Sharma, Lakshmi, Ali, Rohini, Vennela Kishore, Rahul Ramakrishna, Srikanth Iyengar, and Saranya are part of the film in significant roles. Hesham Abdul Wahab is on board as the music composer and Prawn Pudi is looking after the editing. *Kushi* will be released in theatres on September 1.

Venu Yeldandi, who recently made his directorial debut with *Balagam*, speaks to *The Pioneer* over an exclusive chat about his influences, association with fellow technicians, and more.



Yentamma: Ram Charan, Salman & Venkatesh recreate the *Naatu Naatu* hookstep

Superstars Salman Khan and Venkatesh have tightened their 'lunge' as they did a revamped version of the *Naatu Naatu* hookstep with Ram Charan for the song *Yentamma* from *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan*. *Yentamma* features Salman, Venkatesh and Ram in bright yellow shirts, white with gold bordered mundu and black boots. The song features Salman and Venkatesh with full swag dancing on the high powered song on stage. Actress Pooja Hegde joins while Ram comes in a different frame. The song also features Shehnaaz Gill, Palak Tiwari, Raghav Juyal and Siddharth Nigam. Directed by Farhad Samji, the film marks the Bollywood debut of Shehnaaz Gill and Palak Tiwari and will also star Jagapathi Babu, Bhumika Chawla and also have glimpses of Abdu Rozik, Bhagyashree and others. The film will be released in theatres on April 21.



Sam denies commenting on Chay-Sobhitha dating rumours

Samantha Ruth Prabhu has been the talk of the town for the past several months due to her professional and personal developments. The actress, who has had a great run professionally, has been experiencing a tough time on the personal front, which began with the end of the actress' marriage of four years to actor Naga Chaitanya. The couple separated in 2021, and later being diagnosed with Myositis. Now, with rumours of Naga Chaitanya dating actress Sobhitha Dhulipala gaining momentum, Samantha Ruth Prabhu appears to be caught in the whirlwind, once again. A report had earlier stated that the actress has finally reacted to the rumours and even attributed a quote to her. However,

Samantha has clarified that she did not make any such comments. Sharing a quote attributed to her, Samantha tweeted: "I never said this."

The news report stated Samantha Ruth Prabhu as saying: "I am not bothered as to who is in a relationship with whom. Those who do not know the value of love will be left in tears irrespective of the number of people they date. At least that girl should be happy. If he changes his behaviour and looks after the girl without hurting her, it will be good for everyone."

Rumours of Naga Chaitanya and Sobhitha Dhulipala dating gathered steam over the last few days after images of the two stars at a restaurant in London went viral. Naga Chaitanya was captured in a photo with chef Surender Mohan at a restaurant, and it was Sobhitha Dhulipala sitting at a table in the background that caught everyone's attention. The picture was taken in London, as indicated by the geotag of the hotel in the chef's Instagram post. As soon as the post was shared, followers were quick to spot Sobhitha in the background and one user even asked, "Is that @sobhitha behind you?"



A double treat on Allu Arjun's b'day by *Pushpa 2* makers

Icon star Allu Arjun's pan India movie *Pushpa The Rise* created a sensation at the box office. The makers are currently busy with the filming *Part 2 - Pushpa The Rule*.

Everyone is well aware that makers are planning to release a special concept teaser for Allu Arjun's birthday. This glimpse will set the tone for the much awaited part 2 and it's going to increase the hype and craze on this Pan-India biggie. The glimpse showcases the world of Pushpa and his Rule along with the Sukumar Masterclass taking and making. The concept teaser confirmed for April 7th to kickstart the celebration for Icon star birthday.

Meanwhile, the makers are also planning to release the first look of *Pushpa Raj* on April 8. This is going to be double treat for the fans who are eagerly waiting for the film.

And the team need more 200 days needed to complete production and post production. The makers of *Mythri* are ready to release the film in a big way, with no compromises in terms of production.

There is a possibility that the movie business will be huge as the release date approaches. Sunil, Ajay, Anasuya Bharadwaj, Fahad Faasil, Dhananjaya and others are playing key roles in this film, with Rashmika Mandanna as the heroine. Devi Sri Prasad is composing the music for this film.



Regina Cassandra joins hands with Democratic Sangha as its co-founder

Regina Cassandra is an actor with a big heart. The Tollywood diva, who impressed everyone with her acting skills, is now leaving no opportunity to bring a smile on someone's face.

The *Evaru* actress recently joined Democratic Sangha as a Co-Founder and took part in the Rural Women's Leadership Program. Regina interacted with women in the rural areas and became a part of a noble initiative. The pictures of the star meeting people and actively speaking on behalf of Democratic Sangha went viral and several appreciated her for joining the cause.

On the work front, Regina Cassandra will next be seen in multiple Tamil films namely, *Borrder*, *Flashback*, *Karungaapiyam* and *Soorpanagai*.



GT RESTRICT DC TO 162/8



PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Delhi Capitals top-order struggles against genuine quick bowling worsened as the home team managed a below-par 162 for eight against Gujarat Titans on a spicy Feroz Shah Kotla track in the IPL here on Tuesday.
Had Axar Patel (36 off 22 balls) not used his long handle to good effect, even 150 would have looked a distant reality for DC. Mohammed Shami (3/41 in 4 overs) and Alzarri Joseph (2/29 in 4 overs) intimidated the top-order in the first 10 while Rashid Khan (3/31 in 4 overs) hardly faced any trouble

while keeping the batters under check for the better part of the innings.
Just a month after Kotla produced a turner for the Test against Australia, the change in nature of the track was palpable as the balls literally flew off the surface. At times, it felt that it wasn't David Warner (37 off 32 balls) or a Sarfaraz Khan's (30 off 33 balls) bat that hit the ball but the other way round.
Shami literally beat Warner's bat for fun in his first two overs, often cutting him into half while Alzarri twice forced umpires to call for concussion checks as Sarfaraz and Abhishek Porel (20 off 11 balls) were hit on the

head by well-directed bouncers. To be fair, both looked dazed.
Even an international like Rilee Rossouw (0) got a Test match like bouncer first up and was snapped brilliantly at backward point by a diving Rahul Tewatia.
Not being able to avoid the short ball was more due to lack of technique and not regularly facing bowlers of Shami or Alzarri's quality became their undoing.
Sarfaraz, a heavy-duty scorer in domestic cricket, couldn't improvise as he found the pace too quick to manoeuvre or improvise his shot selection.
The first two games in IPL

RR ready for Punjab Kings challenge

PTI ■ GUWAHATI
Rajasthan Royals would be banking on their near-perfect combinations in almost all departments of the game to put up another commanding performance when they take on a strong Punjab Kings side in an IPL match here on Wednesday.
The Royals would be buoyed by the massive 72-run victory against Sunrisers Hyderabad, who were outsmarted by last year's runners-up in every aspect of the game on Sunday.
With Yashasvi Jaiswal, red-hot England white-ball skipper Jos Buttler and captain Sanju Samson smashing half-centuries against SRH, the Royals' dominance with the bat was there for all to see, while their bowlers, led by Yuzvendra Chahal (4/17) and New Zealand quick Trent Boult (2/21), were more than a handful for SRH.
But with Punjab Kings also giving an indication of their immense firepower with both the bat and the ball in their seven-run DLS win against Kolkata Knight Riders at Mohali, the match on Wednesday promises to give the spectators in Guwahati good value for money.
With RR playing two of their 'home' matches in the

against international bowlers is a proof that why former chairman Chetan Sharma's committee or even the current quartet of selectors are wary of picking him for international assignments. A good domestic player, who is out-of-depth against top-grade bowlers.
And it's not Sarfaraz alone. Even Prithvi Shaw isn't inspiring confidence while facing a bowler of Shami's calibre.
Shaw's (7) inept technique against fast rising deliveries was once again exposed by the seasoned Shami, who pitched one back of length at a fair pace. The delivery kept climbing on Shaw as he top-edged a pull-shot that was gleefully accepted by Alzarri at mid-on.
Mitchell Marsh was bowled for the second time, this time played on off Shami's bowling as skipper Hardik Pandya very wisely gave him a third over within the Powerplay and the job was done.
Skipper Warner, who literally played and missed during the first few overs, still used experience to ride on the pace ad bounce before Alzarri got rid of him.



Northeastern city, a winning performance from Samson's side will not only build their brand value in Guwahati, it will also expand their fan base in the region, which has seen precious little IPL action over the years.
The depth in Royals' batting is such that it can withstand any bowling attack. If young Yashasvi's 37-ball 54 at the top showed how quickly he has matured as an opener, Buttler seemed to be carrying on from where he had left off in the previous season, smashing a 22-ball 54.
The only weak link, if any, seemed to be their middle where Devdutt Padikkal and Riyan Parag were both dismissed cheaply, before West Indian Shimron Hetmyer took the team beyond the 200-run mark.
With a bowling lineup boasting of one of the premier pacers in the world in Boult along with two Indian stalwarts in Chahal and R Ashwin, the Royals can soften up the most resolute batting sides. And PBKS know they have an uphill task when the two teams clash at the Barsapara Cricket Stadium.
While the experience of top-order India batter Shikhar Dhawan will come in handy along with the bowling prowess of young left-arm India pacer Arshdeep Singh, the team would be eagerly awaiting the return of England power-hitter Liam Livingstone, who missed the opener against KKR after not getting the fitness clearance from the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). The batter had suffered a knee injury in December last.
The English pair of Livingstone and pace bowling all-rounder Sam Curran — the most expensive buy ever in IPL history at Rs 18.50 crore — could be PBKS' trump card this season along with the lanky left-arm quick Arshdeep.

Iyer to undergo surgery abroad, to miss entire IPL and WTC final

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
India batter Shreyas Iyer will miss the entire IPL as well as the World Test Championship final in June against Australia as he is set to undergo a back surgery abroad, according to BCCI sources.
Iyer, who is the captain of IPL side Kolkata Knight Riders, is expected to be out of action for at least five months. That

would mean that his participation in the 50-over World Cup in India in October-November could be touch and go.
"Yes, he will have his back surgery abroad. He is likely to be out of action for at least five months with full rehabilitation," a BCCI source PTI on conditions of anonymity. The WTC final will be played between India and Australia in London from June 7.

The recurring lower-back injury had forced Iyer out of the final Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy last month, before ruling him out of the ODI series against Australia that followed. His injury surfaced in December last year, following India's tour of Bangladesh.
In Iyer's absence, Nitish Rana was named interim KKR captain ahead of this IPL season.

Starc, Zampa will be Australia's go-to bowlers during ODI WC: Ponting

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting expects his country's pace-bowling stalwart Mitchell Starc and leg-spinner Adam Zampa to do the star turn when the ODI World Cup is held in India later this year. Starc, 33, was in sublime form during the three-match ODI series against India recently picking up eight wickets, including a five-for in the third game at Visakhapatnam, as the visitors won the series 2-1. The tall quick made India's T20 specialist middle-order batter Suryakumar Yadav look like a sitting duck, dismissing him for nought in the first two fixtures.
Zampa, after being ignored for the four-Test Border-Gavaskar series, also packed a punch in ODIs, grabbing four wickets in the third game at Chennai as Australia won the decider by 21 runs.
"It's the overall package of Mitchell Starc. He's six-foot-five, bowls in the high 140-km per hour, he's a left-arm

and he swings the new ball back in as Suryakumar found out (during the ODI series)," Ponting said on the ICC Review on Tuesday.
The tall quick had claimed the most scalps at the 2019 World Cup, after sharing the honour with New Zealand's Trent Boult in the 2015 edition.
"When he's on song, he's as good as anyone in the world and has been for a long time. For lots of strange reasons, there has always been people willing to sit back and take potshots at Mitchell Starc for some of his performances. But if you have a cold hard look at the facts, particularly in white-ball cricket, his numbers are absolutely outstanding," added Ponting. "He's shown in that series (against India) just how dangerous he can be with the new ball, regardless of the conditions."
Zampa was visibly disappointed after being given a cold shoulder by selectors for the Border-Gavaskar series, but on his return for the ODIs, the 31-

year-old showed how big a threat he can be in Indian conditions, taking four wickets in the ODIs and restricting India to only 4.88 runs an over.
The tweaker has surged to the top of the wicket-takers list in the World Cup Super League, with 41 scalps in 18 matches at an average of 19.73. "He's probably been Australia's key bowler in all white-ball cricket for a long time, along with Mitchell Starc," Ponting said.
"Starc has been great but Adam Zampa for four or five years now has been a real revelation. He's been the backbone of the Australian bowling attack which probably led to him being a little bit disappointed not to be picked on a Test tour to India.
"But he's an outstanding performer. For a leg-spinner to become a very, very consistent performer, it's very rare that teams get on top of him and get hold of him. He's going to be one of Australia's trump cards (for ODI World Cup) for sure," added Ponting.



Angry Dhoni warns bowlers to bowl fewer no-balls, wides
PTI ■ CHENNAI
Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni has issued a stern warning to his bowlers to drastically cut down on no-balls and wides in their upcoming IPL matches, saying if they continue to give away free runs to the opposition, they will have to play under a new captain.
Dhoni's warning came even as the four-time IPL champions defeated Lucknow Super Giants by 12 runs at the MA Chidambaram stadium on Monday.
The wicketkeeper-batter was not amused with the way his bowlers sprayed the ball all over the place, sending down three no-balls and 13 wides, though LSG were still restrict-

ed to 205 for 7 while chasing 218.
CSK had conceded four wides and two no-balls in the opener against defending champions Gujarat Titans in a close match, which Dhoni's side lost by five wickets.
Young CSK pacer Rajvardhan Hangargekar bowled three wides and a no-ball in that match, while on Monday, against LSG, he bowled three more wides.
Another CSK quick Tushar Deshpande, while taking two wickets on Monday, was guilty of bowling four wides and three no-balls.
Veteran CSK bowler Deepak Chahar too was wayward on Monday, giving away five extra runs through wides.

RCB's Patidar ruled out for entire season

PTI ■ BANGALURU
Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) top-order batter Rajat Patidar was on Tuesday ruled out of the entire IPL season due to an Achilles heel injury, dealing a big blow to the team.
The 29-year-old was RCB's third-highest scorer last year with 333 runs in eight matches at 55.50, including two fifties. He hit the fastest century by an Indian in IPL in the Qualifier 1.
"Unfortunately, Rajat Patidar has been ruled out of IPL2023 due to an Achilles Heel injury," said RCB in a statement.
"We wish Rajat a speedy recovery and will continue to support him during the process. The coaches and management

have decided not to name a replacement player for Rajat just yet," it added.
Initially, it was thought that Patidar, who had picked up the injury prior to joining the RCB camp, would at least be available for the second half of the IPL season, but the announcement on Tuesday has added to the team's problems.
The news came at a time when Australian Josh Hazlewood, the team's second-most successful bowler with 20 wickets in 12 matches last season, has indicated that he will not be match-fit till the fourth week of April.
On Monday, RCB's England pacer Reece Topley dislocated his right shoulder while fielding during the team's eight-wicket win over Mumbai Indians here.

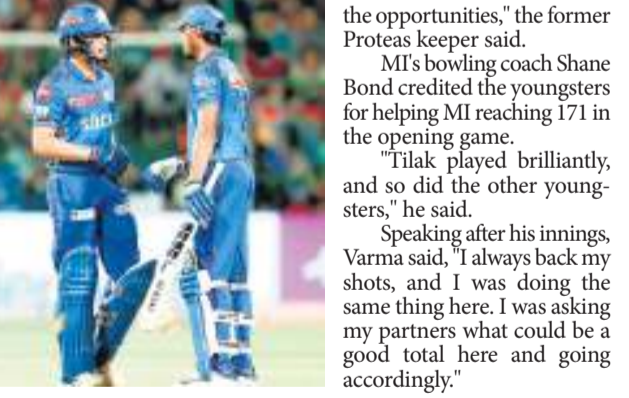


MI has invested in youngsters and time for them to show up: Boucher

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Mumbai Indians head coach Mark Boucher is confident that the youngsters on whom the franchise has been investing for the past few years will stand up and be counted in this edition of the Indian Premier League.
While RCB thrashed MI by eight wickets on Monday, the find of last season, Tilak Varma, once again showed a lot of promise along with Punjab youngster Nehal Wadhwa.

Varma cracked an unbeaten 46-ball 84, while Wadhwa scored 21 off 13 deliveries.
"The IPL is a massive event and it's going to be a great opportunity for some of our young boys to really show up," Boucher said in a media release issued by MI.
"The way Mumbai Indians have selected their squads over the last few years has been, how you invest in youngsters for the future. It's now time for those youngsters to show up and basically get

the opportunities," the former Proteas keeper said.
MI's bowling coach Shane Bond credited the youngsters for helping MI reaching 171 in the opening game.
"Tilak played brilliantly, and so did the other youngsters," he said.
Speaking after his innings, Varma said, "I always back my shots, and I was doing the same thing here. I was asking my partners what could be a good total here and going accordingly."



Plan to introduce home and away format in WPL from season 2: Dhumal

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Buoyed by the success of the inaugural Women's Premier League, IPL chairman Arun Dhumal on Tuesday said that they plan to introduce the home and away format from season two but the number of teams will remain five for the next three years.
The first ever WPL turned out to be a hit among fans and players but as the tournament was staged within tough timelines and right after the Women's T20 World Cup, the BCCI decided to organise all the games across two venues in Mumbai.
Termining hosting of WPL the biggest challenge of his tenure, Dhumal said having home and away games immensely help teams in building a fan base and the board wants to take that route as early as next season.
"Well begun is half done. It has been a great beginning for WPL and

going forward it is going to be much better than what we have seen so far. We have started with five teams but going forward there is scope for additional team given the pool of the players that is going to come in the years to follow.
"We are hoping increase in the number of teams but for the coming three seasons will remain five. We are surely looking at home and away format, we will see which time slot is available considering India's international commitment and take a call.
"From a fan engagement point of view it is very important that we go for home and away format," Dhumal said.
Fans turned up in sizeable numbers to watch the games at Brabourne and DY Patil Stadium. The event had garnered massive attention even before the first ball was bowled with the teams rights fetching BCCI close to ₹4700



crore and media rights ₹951 crore.
"It has been a phenomenal ride so far and quite a challenging one given the time slot we had to start the WPL. We are satisfied with the way things have progressed, we did not have much of a window as the World Cup was there and the girls had just about a week to come back and start.
"Everything (media rights, team rights, player auction) happened one after the other but the way tournament was received, it was phenomenal," Dhumal said.
One reason for not introducing a sixth team right away could be the lack of quality local talent. The world's best displayed their exemplary skills in the competition but leaving aside Saika Ishaque, Kanika Ahuja and Shreyanka Patil, not many uncapped Indian players were able to turn heads on.
"Our national team has done very well over the last couple of years. U-

19 girls won the World Cup. Given how the WPL was received, we are very hopeful that we will have a bigger pool of players and their fitness and fielding standard will improve immensely going forward."
Three out of five teams are owned by legacy IPL franchisees, who have seen the value of the men's league reach astronomical proportions.
INTRODUCTION OF IMPACT PLAYER
Dhumal added that the introduction of Impact player in the IPL and teams being picked after toss was done to mitigate the toss advantage.
"We have seen dew play a major role. Winning the toss is seen as an advantage and to mitigate that we thought to introduce 'Impact Player' and give the teams chance to pick teams post toss so they can pick the right eleven," he added.