

**ANALYSIS 7**  
DEBT BURDEN IS RISING;  
INDUSTRY MUST SHARE IT

**MONEY 8**  
DISCOMS' OUTSTANDING DUES TO GENCOS  
NEARLY HALVED TO RS 62,681 CRORE

**SPORTS 12**  
DELAYED DEBUT, STRUGGLES  
MADE ME HUNGRIER: SURYA

HYDERABAD DELHI LUCKNOW  
BHOPAL RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
DEHRADUN VIJAYAWADA

\*LATE CITY VOL. 5 ISSUE 90  
\*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

HYDERABAD, MONDAY, JANUARY 9, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



# the pioneer



AVIKA GOR: NONE  
OF THE 'GOOD'  
TELUGU SCRIPTS WILL  
DANGLE, I AM THE  
INVESTOR NOW

Page 11

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## ATS ARRESTS MAN FOR THREATENING 1993-LIKE BOMB BLASTS IN MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) arrested a history-sheeter on Sunday, a day after he allegedly called up the Mumbai Police and threatened 1993-like serial bomb blasts in the city, an official said. The Mumbai Police's control room received a call from an unidentified person on Saturday evening wherein the caller said serial bomb blasts will occur in Mahim, Bhandi Bazar, Nagpada, Madanpura, and other areas after two months. The caller also said people from different states have been called to Mumbai for carrying out communal riots, the ATS official said. The official said the ATS formed two special teams to trace the caller. He was tracked down to suburban Malad and arrested.

## GOVERNMENT SCHOOL TEACHER SACKED IN UP OVER FAKE DOCUMENTS

A teacher who had been working in a government-run school for the past 18 years in a village here for using forged documents to secure his appointment, officials said on Sunday. Basic Education Officer of Deoria Harishchandra Nath said Jitendra Kumar Mishra, posted as an assistant teacher at a school in Akathiya village, has been sacked. During the investigation, the accused teacher had used the documents of a person with the same name, who was posted at a primary school in Siddharthnagar district, he said. Nath said a police complaint has been lodged against the accused teacher at Gauri Bazar police station by the block education officer and the salary paid to Mishra will be recovered from him.

## CEILING FANS GET COSTLIER AS BEE'S REVISED NORMS MANDATE STAR LABELLING

Ceiling fans would get costlier by 8 to 20 per cent as the category comes under the ambit of mandatory star labelling from January 1, as per the revised Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) norms. Star labelling denotes energy savings of minimum 30 per cent for 1-star rated fans to over 50 per cent for 5-star rated fans. Though leading manufacturers such as Havells, Orient Electric and Usha International have welcomed the move, they also believe it would lead to cost increase of 5 to 20 per cent as high energy efficient 5-star rated fans will require new imported motors and electronic components.

## TWO TERRORISTS KILLED AS ARMY FOILS INFILTRATION BID ALONG LOC IN POONCH

Two heavily armed terrorists were killed as the Army foiled a second major infiltration attempt along the Line of Control in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir in over a week, an official spokesperson said on Sunday. The infiltration bid was scuttled in Balakote sector late on Saturday evening and a massive search operation was underway when the last reports were received, the Army spokesperson said. Earlier on December 29, the Army had foiled an infiltration bid in Krishna Ghati sector. "At around 7 pm (on Saturday), the alert troops observed suspicious movement of two infiltrators who were trying to sneak across the LoC in Balakote sector".

# COLD WAVE IN MANY STATES

Blinding fog affects train and flight services visibility drops to zero

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A blinding layer of fog over north India and eastern parts of the country affected the schedule of over 480 trains and over 25 flights on Sunday even as an intense cold wave walloped the plains, including Delhi, where the minimum temperature plunged to a numbing 1.9 degrees Celsius.

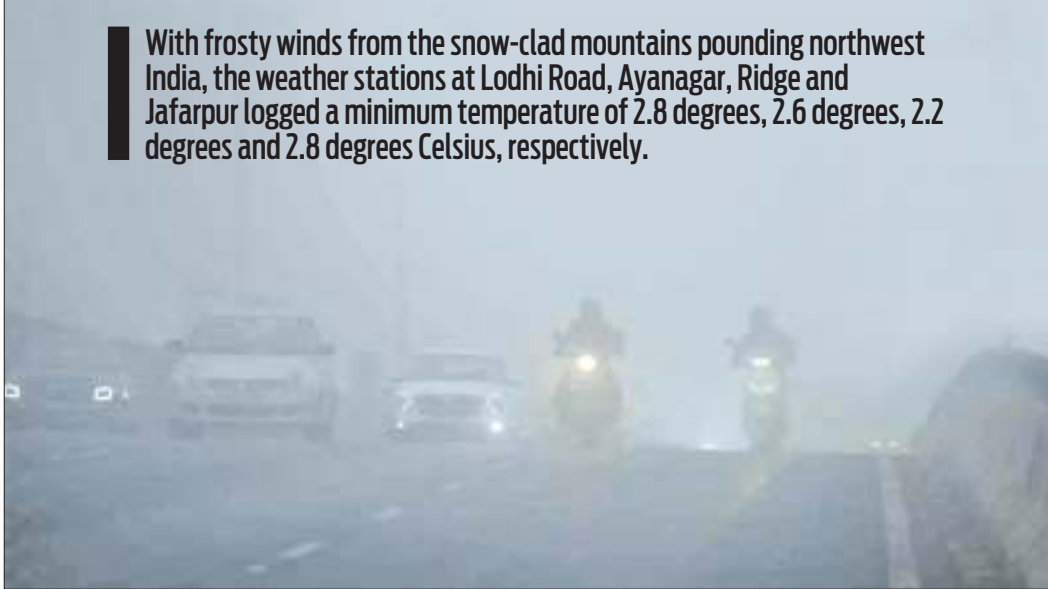
Delhi's minimum temperature was lower than most places in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand -- both north of the national capital-- for the fourth consecutive day.

The cold snap, which is straining power grids and posing challenges to the homeless and animals, prompted the Delhi government to extend winter vacation in schools till January 15.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an "orange" alert for certain parts of north India, including Delhi, for Monday, warning that dense fog, cold day and cold wave conditions would persist.

A senior IMD meteorologist said short-term relief is likely after a couple of days under the influence of back-to-back western disturbances.

When a Western disturbance -- a weather system characterised by warm moist winds from the Middle East -- approaches a region, the wind direction changes. Hence, the chilly northwesterly winds from the mountains will stop blowing for a few days leading to an increase in temperatures, he said.



With frosty winds from the snow-clad mountains pounding northwest India, the weather stations at Lodhi Road, Ayanagar, Ridge and Jafarpur logged a minimum temperature of 2.8 degrees, 2.6 degrees, 2.2 degrees and 2.8 degrees Celsius, respectively.

## Orange alert in TS

HYDERABAD: The India Meteorological Department has issued an orange alert on Monday in some districts of Telangana. Isolated cold waves are very likely in Adilabad, Asifabad, Mancheril, Nirmal, Karimnagar, Peddapally, Jagtial, Rajanna Sircilla, Medak, Kamareddy and Nizamabad districts. Minimum temperatures are likely to be below normal by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius in some isolated pockets of Telangana on Monday. In Hyderabad, in the next 48 hours, the sky will be mostly clear. Mist is likely during the morning hours.

## Lambasingi shivering

PADERU: The temperature has dipped to the lowest 1 degree Celsius in the agency area Lambasingi in the Alluri Sitarama Raju district. The Agency area is shivering in severe cold wave conditions as 1 degree Celsius recorded in Lambasingi on Saturday. In Chintapalli the day temperature fell to 1.5 degree Celsius. According to the Chintapalli Regional Agriculture Research Centre.



# Help TS urban development projects

KTR demands sufficient allocation of Central funds

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister KT Rama Rao urged the Centre to allot sufficient funds in the 2023-24 Central budget for Telangana's urban sector initiatives.

Reeling out the trailblazing initiatives implemented by the BRS government from 2014 under the leadership of Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to improve urban infrastructure, KTR said that many projects were either held up or are proceeding slowly although problems were informed to the Centre.

With 46.8 per cent of its population living in cities, KTR said that Telangana is an urban State where the number of Urban Local Bodies



(ULBs) increased from 68 to 142. He said that a new Act, the Telangana Municipalities Act, 2019,

was introduced which included a mandatory provision of 10 per cent of the ULB Budget as 'Green Budget', and a self-certification based single window online approval system for building approvals (TSbPASS Act).

He listed the various urban infrastructure projects launched by the TS government on its own like the Strategic Road Development Project (SRDP), the Strategic Nala Development Project (SNDP), the Comprehensive Road Maintenance Project (CRMP), the Hyderabad Road Development Corporation (HRDC), the Musi River Development Corporation (MRDC) and the Telangana Urban Infrastructure Development Corporation (TUFIDC).

## KCR to inaugurate 3 new collectorates

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao will inaugurate three more new integrated Collectorate complexes in January.

KCR will inaugurate the new Collectorate of Mahabubabad district on January 12. On the same day (January 12) in the afternoon, the Chief Minister will inaugurate the new Collectorate of Bhadradi Kothagudem district.

After Sankranti, the CM will inaugurate the new integrated collectorate of Khammam district on January 18.

## AMID COVID SURGE

# Demand for Indian generic drugs skyrockets in China

PNS ■ BEIJING

The demand for Indian generic drugs has shot up in China amid the massive COVID surge in the country, with Chinese experts cautioning that fake versions of these drugs are flooding the market.

China's National Health Security Administration said on Sunday that Pfizer's Paxlovid oral medication, which is used to treat Covid-19, could not be included in the "register of drugs in the basic medical insurance", because the company's quotation was too high, media reports here said.

Due to the massive short supply of Paxlovid, demand for Indian generic versions has gone up through Chinese e-commerce plat-



forms. "On the Chinese e-commerce platforms... At least four generic COVID drugs produced in India - Primovir,

## BRS govt must help poor get houses: Kishan Reddy

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

The BRS government should stop giving fraudulent promises and help the poor realise their dream of having a house of their own, Union Tourism Minister G. Kishan Reddy said.

He said that house construction works undertaken by the State government are not in accordance with reports and actual calculations.

Kishan said that many poor people across Telangana are still waiting for a house. The reason for the delay is that the State government has been troubling the poor in the name of double-bedroom houses.

# Centre's ecosystem to benefit each of 140 cr Indians: NCGG

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre is creating an ecosystem where each of 140 crore Indians can take benefit of government policies, chief of National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) Bharat Lal said on Sunday.

He said any public policy in the absence of the right kind of governance is not going to achieve its objective and in today's era if it is not mixed with innovation, it is next to impossible to meet the intended goal.

Lal said, in public policy, one has to be very clear about the goal, objective, and collaterals and "we have to see that everybody is benefited".

"And today, the Government of India under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is creating this kind of ecosystem and opportunities, where each of 140 crore Indians can take benefit," he said.

Delivering the keynote address on 'Public Policy, Governance & Innovation' at the Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad, Lal said

in the last eight and half years, attempts for universalisation of various services like drinking water, electricity, cooking gas, internet connection at village and panchayat level is nothing but an example of good and enabling governance. The Director General of NCGG said the government is working in mission mode to achieve 100 per cent saturation of all central schemes having a huge socio-economic bearing on the common man.

## TODAY

**ALMANAC**  
Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha  
Tithi: Dwitya: Jan 08 07:07 AM to Jan 09 09:39 AM  
Tritya: Jan 09 09:39 AM to Jan 10 12:09 PM  
Nakshatram: Ashlesha: Jan 09 06:05 AM to Jan 10 09:01 AM  
Rahukalam: 8:14 AM to 9:37 AM  
Yamagandam: 11:00 AM to 12:23 PM  
Varyyam: 08:27 PM to 10:15 PM  
Gulika: 1:45 PM to 3:08 PM  
Amritakalam: None  
Abhijit Muhurtham: 12:00 PM to 12:45 PM

**HYDERABAD WEATHER**  
Forecast: Sunny  
Temp: 28°C  
Humidity: 37%  
Sunrise: 6:48 AM  
Sunset: 5:58 PM  
Updated: JANUARY 9, 2023 5:00 PM

# BRS leaders 'chalo AP' to witness cockfights?

SNCN ACHARYULU ■ HYDERABAD

BRS leaders are likely to launch a 'chalo Andhra' programme. But they are not going for party programmes in Andhra Pradesh but to witness Sankranti celebrations and 'cock-fights'.

Both Telugu states are gradually getting into the Sankranti mood. Every year during the Sankranti lakhs of people from Hyderabad go to their hometowns in Andhra Pradesh.

During Sankranti, Andhra Pradesh is famous for hosting cockfights. Krishna, Guntur and the twin Godavari districts are famous for this.

Every year many political leaders from Telangana attend these cock-fights. The friends of Telangana political leaders in Andhra Pradesh make arrangements for them. Many Telangana politicians have friends



and relatives in Andhra Pradesh. Cockfights also lead to betting running into crores of Rupees. Cockfight fever is confined not only to Andhra Pradesh but it exists in Telangana too. All these years TRS leaders and ministers used to attend cockfights as "guests," but this time

they are going to attend as leaders of the national party BRS. The BRS leadership has already appointed a president for its AP unit.

While political leaders attend cock-fights to witness the event thousands of people take part in gambling on this occasion.

# People's safety priority

PMO reviews Joshimath situation

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Central government agencies and experts are assisting Uttarakhand to prepare plans to deal with the Joshimath situation and the immediate priority is the safety of the people, the Prime Minister's Office said on Sunday after holding a high-level review meeting.

Affected families are being shifted to safe locations, a PMO statement said, noting that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is concerned and has taken stock of the situation with Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami. One team of the National Disaster Response Force and four teams of the State Disaster Response Force have already reached Joshimath, where people are in alarm due to land subsidence and cracks developing in hundreds of houses. P K Mishra, the prime minister's



Joshimath declared landslide-subsidence zone Page:5

principal secretary who held the meeting, stressed that the immediate priority should be the safety of people living in the affected area and said the state government should establish a clear and continuous communication channel with the residents.



# Monday Mirchi

## GAG ORDER GONE, SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVE AGAIN

For officials, if it is a choice between learning theories of cooperative federalism and displaying nerve in their day-to-day functioning, they will be glad to pick the latter. One statement from IT Minister K T Rama Rao virtually reversed an unofficial gag order that has been in vogue for over two years in TS bureaucratic circles. KTR merely called upon young IAS officers, Collectors and senior babus to "become active on social media". At the end of the day, it sounded as if he had pulled up officers for not posting. A day after his statement, many IAS officers' accounts began buzzing again with hyper activity, not unlike in 2019. Since early 2020, when changes happened in the top ranks of the Telangana administration, the social media presence of bureaucrats thinned out or came down to practically nothing. Shrewd bureaucratic circles have noticed the timing of KTR's statement removing the gag; it comes hardly hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi had chaired a meeting of Chief Secretaries at Dharmashala with focus on 'cooperative federalism'.

## PRYING VIA GOOGLE

Googling can take the form of prying when people start searching for somewhat personal information. The New Year triggered questions impinging on the outlook for the year with people becoming inquisitive about babus. The most searched question on Google about Telangana Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar was about his retirement date. For starters, Somesh Kumar will be retiring on December 31, 2023. Likewise, in respect of CM Secretary Smita Sabarwal, the most searched questions were about her husband and age. Even inaccessibility of GHMC Commissioner Lokesh Kumar was searched with the prompt being: 'How to contact Lokesh?' As for Irrigation Secretary Rajat Kumar, people were interested to know about his daughter's wedding!

## ANDHRA CADRE BIHAR OFFICERS CALL THE SHOTS

Nine years into formation of Telangana, a state that had come into being on the crest of regionalism, those calling the shots at top levels in the administration are not locals. Not many have forgotten the Mulki movement pertaining to the erstwhile state of Hyderabad either. Yet, today two of the topmost posts are held by Andhra cadre officers and both are noticeably natives of Bihar. Chief Secretary Somesh Kumar and DGP Anjani Kumar have been assigned to the Andhra Pradesh cadre. For newbies, the Union government had re-allotted IAS and IPS officers on the basis of recommendations made by the Pratyush Sinha Committee. In the process, Somesh Kumar and Anjani Kumar were allotted to the AP cadre. Somesh had moved CAT and got

allotted to the cadre. Last year, during Abhishek Mohanty's stand-off, the Central government had made a pitch to send Somesh Kumar back to Andhra. The matter is pending with the judiciary. Bureaucratic circles are abuzz that there is chance for the Central government to take a tough stance considering the elections ahead.

## PRAISE FOR CDMA

By choice some babus hide their light under a bushel and let their work speak volumes about themselves. The other day, for a change Minister KT Rama Rao picked, not Jayesh Ranjan or Arvind Kumar, but another IAS officer, Commissioner and Director of Municipal Administration Dr N Satyanarayana, for lavishing praise, and described him as a 'great asset'. "Satyanarayana garu is a great asset and a knowledgeable officer I know. He is aware of what is happening across the country. He has a great sense of responsibility". KTR went a step ahead and asked the young IAS officer to reach out to him directly on WhatsApp or knock on his door anytime. The Minister rued that Satyanarayana is not active on social media and not talking enough about his work. A little bird told us that Satyanarayana is giving serious thought to what KTR had suggested.

## BIG TWO IN TTD DO NOT SEE EYE TO EYE

Executive Officer of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams A V Dharma Reddy has resumed work soon after his son Chandramouli's demise, taking just 12-day leave to recover from the shock and perform rites. Meanwhile, a little bird told us that everything is not okay between Dharma Reddy and TTD Chairman Y V Subba Reddy. The two have differences mainly because of their working styles. While Dharma Reddy is sticking to rule book, Subba Reddy is seeking relaxations at work.

## PROMOTIONS AS NEW YEAR GIFTS

Some get promotion as New Year gift for their loyalty, going by what has happened to certain 1993 IPS officers. Three 1993 batch IPS officers in Andhra Pradesh have been promoted to the rank of Director General of Police (DGP). Bureaucratic circles are discussing on how P V Sunil Kumar in particular got his DGP rank for exemplary loyalty. Mahesh Dixit and Amit Garg, serving in New Delhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy in Hyderabad respectively on Central deputation, have also been promoted. A little bird told us that the order was intended to promote Sunil, a loyal lieutenant of Chief Minister Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy. As CID chief, he had stomachached several allegations from the opposition party that he always brazenly took the side of the ruling party.

-Yours truly

# 'Give Group-I officer post to boxer Zareen'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC President Revanth Reddy has demanded that the Telangana government should give a Group-I officer post to world boxing champion Nikhat Zareen before January 26.

He also demanded that the government should allot a place for Nikhat Zareen to establish a Sports Academy. Revanth said that sportsmanship is essential in politics too.

The Congress felicitated Nikhat Zareen at the Nizam Club on Sunday. TPCC President Revanth Reddy, TPCC Working Presidents Mohd. Azharuddin, B. Mahesh Kumar Goud, TPCC Treasurer P. Sudarshan Reddy, TPCC Campaign Committee Chairman Madhu Yashki



Goud, TPCC PAC Member Shabbir Ali, Telangana Mahila Congress President Sunitha Rao and leaders Amer Javed, Anil Kumar Yadav, Rohin Reddy and others attended the programme. On the occasion, Revanth announced a gift of Rs 5 lakh for

Nikhat Zareen. He said that they had announced the Rs 5 lakh to signal that the Congress is with her. He said the Congress organised the programme in Nizam Club to encourage sports.

Revanth praised the parents of Zareen for encouraging her although there is a general impression that boxing is a male sport. He suggested that Congress should organise another programme to facilitate Zareen in a grand manner and to inspire students to engage in sports.

Nikhat Zareen thanked Congress leaders and said that she is happy that Revanth had announced a gift of Rs 5 lakh to her. "We will use our talent to make the nation proud and to support all sportspersons," Zareen said.

# 'KCR must explain why he inducted 12 Cong MLAs'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Asking Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao to explain why he inducted 12 Congress MLAs into his party, BJP National Executive Committee Member Huzurabad MLA Eatala Rajender said that the BJP is the only alternative to the BRS.

He said that the BJP is moving at rocket speed in Telangana and made it clear that the BJP is the party that people want.

Addressing the Golconda district BJYM training class on Sunday, Eatala said that self-respect is more important to him than anything.

He said that the people of Huzurabad sent him to the Assembly, but the CM silenced his voice in the Assembly by suspending him from the House.

"KCR should not remain in the Assembly. My aim is to see that KCR goes as he has been deceiving people," he said.

Stating that he has no greed for posts, Eatala said that KCR, who announced that the first CM of Telangana would be a Dalit, showed his true colours after the formation of Telangana.

KCR put an iron leg on GHMC employees, who supported the Telangana movement. He did not show mercy to RTC workers even though many died, Eatala said, and added that KCR behaved inhumanly as he has a feudal mentality.

Many committed suicide as the government was not filling up vacancies in government service. KCR earned billions through the Dharani Portal, he said.

## TO SAVE DEMOCRACY IN AP

# Naidu, Pawan talk tieup?

PNS ■ AMARAVATI

Jana Sena chief K Pawan Kalyan called on Telugu Desam Party (TDP) president N Chandrababu Naidu on Sunday, giving clear indications that the two parties were moving closer to a re-alliance to bring in 'accountable governance' in Andhra Pradesh by ridding the State of the Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy regime.

Both leaders, however, maintained that 'saving democracy in AP' was their main objective and the issue of a possible alliance (between TDP and Jana Sena) could come up later. "Situation in AP right now is worse than Emergency. We will work with all (opposition) forces to save democracy in AP. We will take the issue to the Centre's notice as it has every right to intervene in such situations," the two leaders told reporters at the end of their two-hour-long meeting. They discussed a "broad range

of issues", including the controversial GO No. 1, cutting down of social security pension beneficiaries, non-payment of remunerative price to paddy farmers, stifling of opposition, etc., the leaders said.

Replying to a specific question on the possible alliance between Jana Sena and his party, the TDP supreme remarked that the issue could be discussed when "democracy is functioning normally".

"There will be many combinations. In the past, we had an alliance with (erstwhile) Telangana Rashttra Samiti in 2009. There could be differences (later). But alliances could be discussed only when democracy and the political parties are allowed to function normally," the former chief minister noted.

Kalyan said they "discussed in detail" what needed to be done for the future of the State.

Bringing in accountable governance with responsibility was their prime task, he added.

Kalyan said he would take up the issue with his ally BJP as well.

The Jana Sena chief vowed to ensure the opposition vote in the 2024 elections, implying a political realignment, to defeat Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy.

With both leaders camping in Hyderabad for the weekend, Kalyan drove to Naidu's Jubilee Hills residence for the meeting, the first formal interaction between the two after several years. The Jana Sena is currently in alliance with the BJP in the state while the TDP was once the lead partner of the tri-partite combination.

Since 2018, the TDP has been sailing alone, having snapped ties with the other two.

## Modi must allot funds for journalists' welfare: Kavitha

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

MLC Kalvakuntla Kavitha demanded that Prime Minister Modi should grant funds for the welfare of journalists on par with the measures being taken by the Telangana government.

She was speaking at the second State-level meeting of the Telangana Union of Working Journalists (TUJW) and the Indian Journalist Union (IJU) on Sunday.

She said that Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has implemented many welfare programmes for journalists who had helped him in every step during the Telangana Movement but Modi avoids interaction with the press.

"The Telangana government has given utmost priority to issues concerning journalists and has granted Rs 100 crore for TS journalists' welfare, but the Centre had never bothered about journalists," MLC Kavitha said.

Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao has addressed press conferences attended by almost 300 journalists, Kavitha said and added that the Prime Minister has so far avoided any direct interaction with journalists.

## CHICKEN RATES ₹/KG

Dressed/With Skin	₹225
Without Skin	₹235
Broiler at Farm	₹200

## EGG RATES ₹/100

VIJAYAWADA	477
HYDERABAD	484
VISAKHAPATNAM	477
RETAIL PRICE	₹4.84

# Cold wave in many states

Continued from page 1

"Cold wave and cold day conditions over northwest India (are) likely to abate after 48 hours. Dense to very dense fog conditions over many parts of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (are likely) during the next 48 hours and decrease in intensity and distribution thereafter," the IMD said in a statement.

A dense layer of fog persisted over north, east and north-east India, affecting road, rail and air traffic movement. "Around 335 trains have been delayed, 88 cancelled, 31 diverted and 33 short terminated due to foggy weather," a railway official said.

Around 25 flights were delayed and two diverted Sunday morning, officials at the Indira Gandhi International Airport said. Visibility levels dropped to zero metres at Bhatinda and Agra; 25 metres at Patiala, Chandigarh, Hissar, Alwar, Pilani, Ganganagar,

## Lambasingi shivering

Continued from page 1

This has been the lowest temperature recorded during the last two years in Lambasingi and Chintapalli areas. The temperature fell to 5 degree Celsius at Minumuluru and 8 degrees in the district headquarters Paderu. The agency is located 3,600 m above sea level. Most of the residents are tribal people and they were struggling to bear the unprecedented cold wave conditions. People were seen gathering around bonfires at various places to warm themselves from the unbearable cold wave. According to the official sources, sunlight exists for only three hours during the day time and the rest of the day dense fog engulfs the region. The elderly persons and the boys and girls who go to school in the morning bear the brunt of severe chill. Meanwhile, a large number of people go to Lambasingi, Chintapalli, and other agency areas to enjoy the beauty of nature. The Lambasingi and Chintapalli in the Paderu region have earned fame as 'Andhra Kashmir'. A large number of tourists go from Visakhapatnam and Anakapalli to enjoy the chilly weather.

Lucknow and Cooch Behar; 50 metres at Amritsar and Ludhiana, Ambala, Bhiwani, Palam (Delhi), Fursatganj, Varanasi, Meerut, Gaya and Dhubri.

According to the weather

office, 'very dense fog' is when visibility is between 0 and 50 metres, between 51 and 200 metres is 'dense', between 201 and 500 metres 'moderate', and between 501 and 1,000 metres 'shallow'.

A severe cold wave hit

## Orange alert...

Continued from page 1

Surface winds are likely to be north easterlies with a speed of around 3 to 6 kmph. Maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to be around 27 and 12 degrees Celsius. On Sunday, minimum temperatures were below normal by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius at many places in Telangana.

Delhi, with the minimum temperature at the Safdarjung observatory, the city's primary weather station, plunging to 1.9 degrees Celsius, the lowest in January in two years.

With frosty winds from the snow-clad mountains pounding northwest India, the weather stations at Lodhi Road, Ayanagar, Ridge and Jafarpur logged a minimum temperature of 2.8 degrees, 2.6 degrees, 2.2 degrees and 2.8 degrees Celsius, respectively.

## People's safety...

Continued from page 1

The Border Management secretary and members of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) will visit Uttarakhand on Monday and assess the situation.

A team of experts from NDMA, National Institute of Disaster Management, Geological Survey of India, IIT Roorkee, Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, National Institute of Hydrology and Central Building Research Institute will study the situations and give recommendations, the PMO said.

The Uttarakhand chief secretary briefed the PMO about the ground situation during the meeting, they added.

Central government agencies and experts are assisting Uttarakhand to prepare short, medium and long term plans to deal with the Joshimath situation, the officials said.

# BRS govt must help poor...

Continued from page 1

The state government which had promised to build double-bedroom houses failed to take action. The state government failed to use Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana funds properly which has led to the dreams of the poor remaining just dreams.

Kishan said that for those who want to build their own

house, earlier the state government had assured that it will give Rs 5 lakh, but now it is saying that it will give only Rs 3 lakh. Moreover, the State government is troubling the poor with many conditions to get that Rs 3 lakh.

Kishan said that Prime Minister Modi launched the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban Scheme to help the poor realise their dream to

have their own house. As part of the scheme, the Centre sanctioned Rs 4,465.81 crore to Telangana and released Rs 3,128.14 crore. The Centre sanctioned 2,49,465 houses for Telangana as per this scheme. But the State government's reports indicate that works on 2,39,422 houses have started and 2,15,443 houses have been completed, Kishan said.

# Demand for Indian generic drugs skyrockets in China

Continued from page 1

Paxista, Molnurat, and Molnatris have been listed for sale in recent weeks. Primovir and Paxista are both generic versions of Paxlovid, while the other two are generic versions of Molnupiravir," Chinese media outlet Sixth Tone

reported.

All four drugs appear to have been approved for emergency use by the Indian authorities, but are not legal for use in China, it said. He Xiaobing, the head of Beijing Memorial Pharmaceutical, told Sixth Tone that India was "the only country

where we can source reliable and affordable COVID drugs with guaranteed therapeutic effects".

"But the strong demand was used by illegal groups who produce counterfeit drugs. This will badly affect patients' treatment," he said. China's health system catering to 1.4 billion people is under

strain especially due to the heavy costs of drug supply which were controlled by multinational pharmaceutical giants.

India has been persuading China to permit its pharma products to reduce costs for its citizens and to decrease the massive trade deficit between the two countries.

At one time, Indian cancer drugs have become very famous for their efficacy and affordability. Considering their popularity, a Chinese film by the name 'Dying to Survive' showing the survival of cancer patients on the banned imported Indian drugs had a successful run in China.

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# Teachers on a mission to check classroom behaviour

**DEEPIKA PASHAM**  
■ HYDERABAD

Students kept on insisting to have long breaks amid classes in 2022. The counselling department complaint boxes in schools were filled with teachers complaining for retaining the classroom behavior among children and parents seeking methods to withdraw the kids from smart-phone usage.

"There is a lot of change in the behavioral attitudes of children. They are not bothered to be monitored by a teacher easily. The major reason could be that children were being pampered for more than one year at home. The continuous habits of wishing a teacher, discipline and manners are being taught by mentors and psychologists," say Kalamutha, psychologist.

For instance, Class III children have come to Class V now. They don't remember the classroom and school rules. Obeying is absent. Instead they argue and question the teachers. As part of behavioral problems they request for long



breaks and opine that continuous class is boring to them. During virtual classes, children had no restrictions on eating intervals and they took their own time to eat. In a similar pattern the students seek breaks in the educational institutions.

One of the school teachers explains that the most common responses from students remain: "We are tired; we are fed up; we are stressed and visit the psychologist in a school. The students of Classes VI to

VIII complain about the academic syllabus being a burden to finish in a stipulated period.

The parents also said that their children have issues in regard to completing notes and assignment submissions because they have to submit within the deadline.

Some of the parents are also struggling to bring the difference in academics and withdrawing the students from the social media. "This behavior will repeat for a couple of

**There is a lot of change in the behavioral attitudes of children. They are not bothered to be monitored by a teacher easily. The major reason could be that children were being pampered for more than one year at home**

months as they are influenced by negative behavior on creating accounts, sending friend requests and following up with the latest trends. Involving the students in creative workshops, interactions and outdoor games will change their behavior because all the psychologists in the city have requests from parents and we are pushing our limits to bring a change in the behavior of the students addicted to social media," says Dr Harini Atturu.

## Trauma care centres attend to 1,098 cases

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Telangana Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister KT Rama Rao on Sunday said that the Trauma Care Centres in Hyderabad have attended 1,098 emergency cases.

It is to be noted that the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA) set up 16 such centres across the Outer Ring Road (ORR) in August last year. These centres cater to emergency cases in the ORR and Hyderabad Growth Corridor region.

One can reach the trauma centres through a toll-free number 14449. KTR took to twitter regarding it and said, "Glad to share that the 16 Trauma care centres established by @HMDA\_Gov have been of a great help to citizens using ORR accessible through toll-free number 14449. They have attended over 1,098 cases since the launch. Many lives saved. My compliments to the Trauma-care teams."

## 356TH BIRTHDAY OF GURU GOBIND SINGH

# 1,500 Sikh devotees take part in Prakash Utsav in city

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Prakash Utsav, a mass congregation celebrating the 356th birthday of Guru Gobind Singh was held on Sunday with over 1,500 Sikh devotees participating in the Vishal Deewan (mass congregation). This was organised by the Prabandhak Committee of Gurdwara Sahib by offering prayers to Guru Granth Sahib (holy scripture of the Sikhs) at Classic Garden, Balamrai, Secunderabad.

The congregation took place with recitation of Gurbani Shabad kirtans (Holy Gurbani hymns), delivering of Gurbani Vichar (sermons), celebrating the 356th Prakash Purab of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last Sikh guru and founder of Khalsa Panth, who spread the message of peace and communal harmony and who protected the weak and meek.

Reputed Ragi Jathas, Bhai Kamaljeet Singh Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple, Amritsar), Bhai Jagdev Singh Bahi of Delhi, Bhai Jagdev Singh and Bhai Charanjeet Singh and other reputed Ragi



The congregation took place with recitation of Gurbani Shabad kirtans (Holy Gurbani hymns), delivering of Gurbani Vichar (sermons), celebrating the 356th Prakash Purab of Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and last Sikh guru and founder of Khalsa Panth, who spread the message of peace and communal harmony

Jathas who were invited from various parts of the country to recite Shabad Kirtans that stressed on imbibing the higher values of life and communal harmony for which Guru Gobind Singh strived. They urged devotees to follow the teachings of Guru Gobind Singh which are very relevant

these days. After the culmination of the congregation, the traditional Guru-Ka-Langar (free community kitchen) was served to all the devotees where devotees sit in the same row to promote the feelings of togetherness, fraternity and concern for fellow human beings.

## FESTIVAL MOOD



People throng to Shilparamam inHITEC City to witness the National Handicrafts fair and Sankranti Sambharalu

# Constructing Metro in India is a big deal unlike in the West: NVS Reddy

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Constructing Metro in India is a big deal unlike in the West, Hyderabad Metro Rail Managing Director NVS Reddy said on Sunday.

Delivering a lecture on Leadership qualities-Achieving goals, NVS Reddy said, "The first thing I would like to tell the youth is that they should never back away from difficulties."

"I have been working in the bureaucracy for over 35 years now and have faced many challenges while working on the Metro Rail project," Reddy added. Explaining one his challenges, he said, "When I first came up with the idea of Metro Rail during YS Rajsekhar Reddy's government, he told



me to think about it and come up with a cost-effective plan. Don't have the money to support the project right now," he remarked. He further said, "We spent Rs 20,000 crore on the Hyderabad Metro and we did it on the Public-Private partnership. However, there were protests at various places in the city. People burnt my effigies saying I would harm the beau-

ty of Hyderabad."

Reddy spoke at the AV College where the World Telugu Samkha organised Sankranti Sambharalu. Presiding over the programme, WTS President Dr VL Indira Dattu said, "It is our pleasure to conduct Sankranti Sambharalu at AV College today."

Dattu further said, "When it's time for Sankranti, we begin the celebration a week in

advance. We decorate the house with different kinds of colours and Rangoli. Among all Telugu festivals, Sankranti is a major festival. It is also called the big festival."

"In the two Telugu states, Sankranti is very significant for the people. Coming in the pre-winter season, it is a three-day festival. On the first day, we observe Bhogi, Sankranti on the second day and Kanuma on the third day," she added.

"On the day of kanuma, people make Rangolis in front of their houses, on Bhogi they wear new clothes. Priests sing songs and pay door-to-door visits, and melas are organized," Dattu added. She further described other rituals that are conducted during Sankranti.

## Construction of Warangal hospital going on at brisk pace: KTR

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Telangana Municipal Administration and Urban Development minister, KT Rama Rao (KTR) on Sunday announced that the government super-specialty hospital will come up in Warangal.

The new hospital will have capacity of 2,000 beds. KTR shared the news on Twitter, and further said that the 24-floor facility is the brain child of Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao.

Taking a jibe at the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Minister said, "Before some dumb BJP trolls start making silly claims, let me assure you that the contribution of Govt of India to this hospital is zero."

## HMDA to conduct free bid meet on Rajiv Swagruha towers

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Free bid meeting for the sale of Rajiv Swagruha towers in Pocharam and Gajularamam townships of Medchal Malkajgiri would be held on January 9, set to be hosted by Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority (HMDA). Officials said that the free bid meeting will be held at Himayat Nagar, Urdu Galli at 11 am on Monday.

Telangana government has entrusted the HMDA to sell Rajiv Swagruha residential towers, which are not completely constructed in

Pocharam and Gajularamam near the Outer Ring Road (ORR). HMDA has already announced notification regarding these to builders, developers, societies and individuals.

There are four towers of 9 floors in Pocharam, 72 to 198 plots can be constructed in each tower. Similarly, in Gajularamam, there are five towers of 14 floors, 112 plots can be constructed in each tower.

Interested buyers must pay Rs 10 lakh in the form of a demand draft by January 30. Towers will be allocated through a transparent lottery system of selection of fee-paying applicants.

# PM Modi must grant funds for welfare of scribes: Kavitha

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

MLC Kalvankuntla Kavitha demanded Prime Minister Narendra Modi to grant funds for the welfare of journalists on par with the measures being initiated by the Telangana government, at the second State-level meeting of the Telangana Union of Working Journalists (TUWJ) and Indian Journalists Union (IJU) on Sunday. She said that Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao has implemented many welfare programmes for the journalists who helped him in every step in the way of Telangana movement but Modi was avoiding press interaction altogether.

MLC Kavitha said, "Telangana government has given utmost priority to issues of journalists and has granted funds worth Rs100 crore for the welfare of journalists in the State, but the Centre had never even worried about journalists." She further said, "While the Chief Minister would



MLC Kavitha inaugurating the second State-level meeting of the Telangana Union of Working Journalists in Hyderabad on Sunday

address a press conference with over 300 journalists, the Prime Minister has so far avoided any direct interaction with journalists. The Chief Minister respects the profession of journalism by answering the questions raised by reporters, she said. However, she expressed concern over the disappearance of investigative journalism. "On the other

hand, some media organisations, which had no recognition, were in the forefront of spreading misleading news against the Telangana government," she added.

Minister V Srinivas Goud, MIA Kranti Kiran, Media Academy Chairman Allam Narayana and several delegates from various states attended the conference.



## Traffic cops seize 30 vehicles with no number plates

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

As part of a special drive after observing series of chain-snatchings in Rachakonda Police Commissionerate, it was conducted on two, three-wheelers.

On Sunday, Malkajgiri Traffic Circle Inspector Sudheer said that 30 vehicles were seized as they had with no number plates. Several others were also stopped and asked to pay the pending challans.

"We are conducting these special drives in different places and today we seized 30 vehicles for not having number plates and irregular number plates.

## TSRTC's water bottle Ziva to be launched today

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

The Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC) has decided to provide better services to passengers and increase revenue through alternative modes. It is coming forward with innovative ideas.

While already successfully operating petrol stations and logistics services, the management of TSRTC has decided to enter the drinking water business, which has a high demand. It intends to sell packaged drinking water bottles under its own brand name Ziva.

The management, which has been working on it for some time, has finalised the name Ziva for the water bottles.

These water bottles are coming into the market with the tagline 'Spring of Life'. First, the TSRTC is making litre water bottles available. Soon it will produce 250 ml bottles for use in offices and half litre bottles to give to the passengers of their AC buses.

Telangana State Transport Minister Ajay Kumar will launch the TSRTC Ziva water bottles at MGBS premises in Hyderabad on Monday.



## TS HOPS ON THE GREEN BUILDING MOVEMENT OF INDIA

# Telangana State registers 1 billion sqft green footprint

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

Indian Green building Council Hyderabad (IGBC) Chairman C Shekar Reddy announced that Telangana has registered one billion sq ft of green building footprint so far with the growing demand for IGBC rating and resources at the event organised by Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) and IGBC.

He said, "Industry developers, IT companies, railway stations and Metro stations in the state are actively adapting to green

buildings to accelerate the wave of sustainability in the country. Public and employees seek to work and live in green homes and workplaces." Indian Green Building Council is the first rating programme developed in India for the residential and industrial sector. It is based on accepted energy and environmental principles and strikes a balance between known established practices and emerging concepts. IGBC manufactures over 5,000 different green products used in green buildings. Shekar Reddy said, "We have recently registered one billion

sqft in Telangana. Industrial sector is coming in large numbers to get their green building ratings. We have recently rated the Police Command Control Centre of Hyderabad, Yadadri temple and we soon plan to rate our Secretariat. Municipal corporations of Khammam, Karimnagar and Warangal, along with the GHMC have also sought IGBC city ratings. Everyone is slowly realising the importance of the IGBC rating and the advantages of green buildings. Companies looking for properties only consider buildings with IGBC rating.

# Call to bring back Indian cuisine to table

**PNS ■ HYDERABAD**

There is a need to market our food cuisines after Covid-19. Bring back Indian cuisine to the table. We are looking to resolve the issues of investors because they are the right ones to make government understand where to intervene, said Rajesh Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Government of India, while inaugurating a three-day F&B trade show, the biggest edition of Indus Food.

"The government has tried to promote skilling for chefs to travel to the global market. We have received 1,800 visas for yoga master and chefs to international markets. Right knowledge in the area is always mandatory and challenging in

the food sector," added Rajesh Agrawal. Telangana state has a separate pavilion where over 11 MSMEs are showcasing their products.

Rajesh Agrawal and Dr Srikr Reddy inaugurated the Telangana pavilion in the presence of Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary, Government of Telangana. The first-ever edition in Telangana is hosting 1,300-plus world class buyers from 80-plus countries interfacing with 600-plus Indian exhibitors.

The three-day event is expected to negotiate aggregate business deals worth US\$ 1 billion. Nearly 50-lus global food retail chain brands and their representatives are taking part in the exhibition.



Further, Rajesh Agrawal said Indus Show made tremendous progress in the past six years because of the entrepreneurial zeal of Trade Promotion Council of India (TPCI), which conceived the show. "It is a unique show and a strong platform. We must make it big and the best in the world in the years

to come," he said.

"Though we are doing well on the agri exports front, we are still far behind our true potential. Our agri exports today stand at \$50 bn. However, our share of processed food is less than 1 per cent share in exports of processed food category. We must aspire to take up our

share in the global market to 10 per cent."

He said, "We are unable to create global brands in the food industry. Ideally, we need to create 50 brands and then we will be able to do our job well. We must think globally and build brands. We must pay serious attention to how to promote Indian cuisine abroad."

Dr Srikr Reddy highlighted various initiatives of the government in helping the industry. The year 2022 was significant in terms of exports. The year 2020-2021 saw US \$400 bn worth exports and it rose to \$422 billion subsequently. The two bilateral agreements entered in the recent past with Australia and UAE augur well for the industry.



# Modi cannot win from TS: Niranjan

The Minister for Agriculture reacts to a report that PM may contest from TS

PNS ■ YADADRI-BHONGIR

Minister for G Jagadish Reddy and Minister for Agriculture S Niranjan Reddy on Sunday asserted that the people in Telangana would never accept either BJP or Narendra Modi. Niranjan Reddy said that the Telangana people would defeat Modi if he dared to contest from anywhere in the State. Speaking at a function, shortly after inaugurating a warehouse at Chowlaramaram under Addgudu mandal, Niranjan Reddy referred to a new report that Modi may contest from Telangana. The people in the State were angry at the BJP and the Prime Minister as the Centre and Modi have been showing discrimination against Telangana. The BJP-led Centre failed to allocate funds and projects to the State. Continuing his tirade against the Centre, the Minister said the BJP has been conspiring to hinder progress in the State. The



Minister for Agriculture S Niranjan Reddy speaking at a meeting at Yadadri on Sunday

Centre had reneged on the promise to link the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) with agriculture. Jagadish Reddy accused the BJP-led Centre of conspiring to push Telangana into dark-

ness. The BJP leadership was rattled by the growing popularity of Bharat Rashttra Samithi (BRS) across the country. Telangana was the only State where there was no power cut. The government was able to provide quality power round the clock to the

agriculture sector and industry. In sharp contrast to the belief that the people would not accept Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao, several leaders from Andhra Pradesh expressed a desire to join the BRS. Several leaders in

Andhra Pradesh have been inviting BRS leaders to visit the State. Telangana State has become a role model for other States in welfare schemes and developmental activities. "The State government under the leadership of KCR is making Telangana a model State," he said. The State has provided employment to 25 lakh migrant workers from other States, he pointed out.

The Prime Minister, Jagadish Reddy said, had misled the people by promising to credit Rs 15 lakh into the accounts of people after bringing back black money from foreign countries. But, the promise remained unfulfilled.

Rajya Sabha member Badugula Lingaiah Yadav, Telangana State Cooperative Oilseeds Growers Federation chairman K Ramakrishna Reddy, Telangana Warehouse Corporation chairman Saichand, Zilla Parishad chairman Alimineti Sandeep Reddy and Thungathurthy MLA GAdari Kishore were present.

# Three killed as fire breaks out in Mylan industry

PNS ■ SANGAREDDY

Three workers were burnt alive in an accident at Mylan Chemical industry in the industrial area of Gaddapotharam under Jinnaram mandal in Sangareddy district on Sunday.

According to police, two workers and an Assistant Manager were in the solvent dispensing room inside the warehouse of the factory when there was a flash fire. The accident happened at around 11.45 am. Bollaram Circle Inspector K Surender Reddy confirmed the death of three persons in the industry.

The dead were identified as Paritosh Mehta (40), of West Bengal, Ranjith Kumar (27) of Bihar and Lokeshwara Rao (29) of Srikulam in Andhra Pradesh. Lokesh Kumar was the Assistant Manager in the industry.

The police registered a case and the investigation is on. A pall of gloom descended on the industrial area fol-



lowing the tragic death of three employees in the Mylan Chemical Industry. It is suspected that the explosion could have taken place due to the failure in taking safety measures. The managements of some industries are allegedly hiring unskilled workers at low salaries instead of employing skilled workers. This could be one of the causes of frequent accidents and loss of life, it is sus-

pected. Failure in taking safety measures is said to have been responsible for frequent fire accidents in the industrial area. There is no fire station in the area. The arrival of fire engines is always delayed as they have to come from either Jeedimetla or Narasapur. It is also alleged that the lack of proper supervision officials concerned is also responsible for frequent accidents in the area.

# BRS Karimnagar city committee constituted

PNS ■ KARIMNAGAR

Challa Harish Sankar was on Sunday appointed as Bharat Rashttra Samithi Karimnagar city unit president. Apart from him, the BRS city unit was constituted with Gaddam Prashant Reddy as general secretary. The BRS leadership also announced the appointment of Dekonda Kuldeep as party city president and Bonakurthi Saikrishna as general secretary. The leaders said that the BRS city committee was constituted as per the directions of the Minister for Civil Supplies Gangula

Kamalakar. BRS Karimnagar district unit president and SUDA chairman G V Ramakrishna Rao handed over the appointment letters to the party's new office-bearers. The BRS city committee was constituted to strengthen the party. The remaining party committees, too, would be constituted after the Sankranti. BRS general secretary Naradasu Lakshmana Rao, city Mayor Yadagiri Sunil Rao, Zilla Grandalya chairman Ponnani Anil Goud, corporator Bandari Venu, BRS leaders Naradasu Vasanth Rao, and others were present.



BRS Karimnagar district unit president G V Ramakrishna Rao with newly constituted party city committee office-bearers in Karimnagar on Sunday

# 'BRS govt is committed to welfare of poor'

PNS ■ SIDDIPET

Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubark are boon for the poor to marry of their daughters, said Minister for Finance T Harish Rao on Sunday. Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao has been extending the financial assistance to the poor families like an elder brother in a family, he observed. The Bharat Rashttra Samithi government is committed to the welfare of the poor, he asserted.

Speaking at a function, shortly after distributing Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak cheques to beneficiaries, the Minister said the State government has always been supporting the people in distress and coming to their rescue. Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak are the schemes which help the poor families to marry off their daughters or sisters. He distributed Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak cheques to 379 beneficiaries at his camp office in Siddipet.



Minister for Finance T Harish Rao distributing Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak cheques to beneficiaries in Siddipet on Sunday

Speaking on the occasion, Harish Rao said that the Congress and Telugu Desam Party government in the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh had never introduced the welfare scheme like Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak. Telangana is the only State that has been extending Rs 1,00,116 to help poor for the marriage of girls. The State government has so far extended Rs 10,000 crore to 10.80 lakh poor fam-

ilies under Kalyana Lakshmi and Shaadi Mubarak. In Siddipet constituency, the State government dispersed a little over Rs 85.38 crore to 9,227 beneficiaries so far. The Dawakhana in Siddipet have been extending quality healthcare to the people. He appealed to the people to make use of the Dawakhana instead of opting to private hospitals where the poor are forced to spend more

money. The caesarean section could pose problems to mother and baby, he said. Later, speaking at the BRS meeting, Harish Rao promised to ensure protection of party workers. He distributed cheques to the family of the TRS activists in 13th ward. The party extended Rs 82 lakh financial help through insurance to the family of the party activists who died in accidents.

# BRS is the B team of BJP, says Mallu Ravi

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

TPCC Senior Vice-President Mallu Ravi said that the BRS has been working as the B-Team of the BJP and is following the BJP's policies since the last eight years.

The Congress is the only party which has been continuously fighting the BJP's policies, Ravi said here on Sunday. He said that LB Nagar MLA D. Sudheer Reddy who had sold himself out for money deceiving the Congress is now criticising TPCC President Revanth Reddy. He said that Revanth has been fighting the anti-people policies of the BJP and the BRS and that it has been proven many times that the BJP and the BRS are one.

The BRS worked as the B-Team of the BJP by supporting policies like demonetisation to

the scrapping of Article 370, he said. He warned Sudheer that Congress activists will not keep quiet if he made offensive comments against Revanth.

Condemning the attack by BRS activists on Congress activists in Nagarkurnool on Saturday when former Minis-

ter Nagam Janardhan Reddy visited the Markandeya Project, Ravi asked whether it is democracy or dictatorship in TS. "Can they attack someone for visiting a project?" Ravi asked. He said that BRS activists had hatched a conspiracy to kill Congress workers. The scene of a BRS activist trying to kill a Congress worker by squeezing his neck with his leg is proof enough of the BRS' atrocious rule in Telangana, Ravi said.

He said that BRS activists attacked Congress workers due to the arrogance of power.

# Three killed as vehicle overturns on national highway

PNS ■ NALGONDA

Three persons died on the spot and three others were injured when a multi-purpose vehicle in which they were travelling turned turtle on Vijayawada-Hyderabad national highway at Errasani under katanagur mandal in Nalgonda district on Sunday. The injured were identified as Md Iddad (21) SK Sameer

(21) and Sk Yasin (18). They hailed from Khammam. The injured were ferried to the Kamineni Institute of Medical Sciences at Narkatpally.

According to the police, the vehicle overturned after it hit the road divider. The driver lost control overspeed of the vehicle and crashed into the road divider. There were nine persons in the vehicle when it met with an accident.



Girl students staging a protest in front of Ekalavya Gurukul School at Yellareddy in Rajanna Sircilla district on Sunday

# Gurukul students demand suspension of principal, watchman

PNS ■ RAJANNA SIRICILLA

Students of Ekalavya Gurukul School at Yellareddy braved the winter chill to stage a sit-in outside the school in the early hours of Sunday to highlight the alleged harassment by the principal and watchman. The students staged a protest on Sircilla-Kamareddy main road between 4 am and 6 am to make their voices heard. The students were able to attract the attention of not only the politicians but also

the local people. The local people also participated in the protest in support of the agitating students. Several student unions and Backward Classes Associations extended their support to students.

The girl students accused the watchman, identified as Ramaswamy, of misbehaving with the students in the night. He was allowed to stay in the hostel at the night. The principal, the students alleged, turned a deaf ear to their complaints. They were forced to

stage a protest on the highway as the school officials failed to redress their grievances. They said that the principal, Jyothi Lakshmi, failed to listen to them and take action against the watchman.

The students raised slogans demanding the suspension of the principal and watchman. They also demanded that the District Collector inspect the school and take action against the guilty. Complaints are made against the Gurukul School officials in several districts.

# Mahabubnagar will witness rapid development: Goud

PNS ■ MAHABUBNAGAR

Minister for Prohibition and Excise Minister V Srinivas Goud has said that with the formation of Mahabubnagar Urban Development Authority (MUDA), Mahabubnagar will be transformed into a major city.

He observed that many felt that Mahabubnagar district was a small district after the bifurcation. That is why he issued the clarification.

He was participating in a programme at the Mahabubnagar Real Estate

Association swearing-in-ceremony function.

He predicted that the town would witness rapid development with the formation of MUDA. As a result, unprecedented development would become feasible, he added.

He asked the realtors to be wary of illegal layouts and cooperate with the government for systematically developing the town.

After the bifurcation, the city emerged as a small district in terms of development upsetting all calculations, he said. The critics felt that the

government would fail. But their calculations went wrong.

Municipal Chairman KC Narsimhulu, MUDA chairman Ganji Venkanna, vice-councillor Katta Ravi Kishan Reddy, Real

Estate Association president Chandu Yadav, general secretary Surender Goud, vice-president Venkateswarachary, honorary president Burugupalli Purushottam Goud, leaders Cherukupalli Rajeshwar, Ramesh Naik, Chityala Sudhakar and others took part in the programme.

# Telangana records 48,040 EV sales in 2022

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Telangana witnessed an increase in electric vehicles sales.

In 2019 the sales were 900, in 2020 the sales were 1,295, in 2021 they were 9,632 and 2022 marks with 48,040 electric vehicle sales.

The Telangana State Renewable Energy Development Corporation is committed to further strengthen the infra and increase the usage, said Y Sathish Reddy, Chairman, TSREDC.

To promote electric vehicle usage, the Telangana govern-

ment has rolled out a 10-year EV policy where it plans to attract investments of more than 4 billion. The EV policy says that the State will be offering 100 per cent exemption of road tax and registration fee on electric vehicles purchased and registered in the state. Telangana became the third state to adopt a comprehensive EV policy after Gujarat and Delhi. Under this policy, the government has proposed specific demand-side incentives to incentivise usage of EVs in the state, including electric two-wheelers, three-wheelers, commercial passenger vehicles,



CVs, private cars and tractors.

According to the State Electric Vehicle and Energy Storage Policy, all the electric vehicles will be applicable for this offer only if they are purchased and registered within the State. The policy was launched by Telangana Ministers KT Rama Rao and

Ajay Kumar, which will be effective from 2020 to 2030.

First two lakh e-2-wheelers were exempted from road tax and registration fee.

The state will be exempting 100 per cent road tax and registration fees on first two-lakh electric two-wheelers, 20,000 electric three-wheelers, 20,000 electric commercial vehicles and 500 electric buses purchased and registered in the state as per the existing guidelines applicable for tractors by the Transport Department. The government will also be providing 100 per cent incentives on 5,000 electric cars, out

of which half will be reserved for commercial purposes, such as taxi and tourist cabs. The policy also gives 100 per cent exemption on road tax and registration fee for electric tractors.

As far as the charging infrastructure is concerned, the state government said that the availability and accessibility of the EV charging setup will be a pre-requisite for penetration of electric vehicles. Thus, the government will be focusing on setting up initial batch of fast-charging stations in Hyderabad and other towns in a phased manner.

# NEWS FROM ANDHRA PRADESH

## Sacking of BJP dist presidents played

PNS ■ NARASARAOPET

BJP Palnadu district former president Karna Saida Rao vehemently objected to the sacking of district presidents irrationally by BJP state president Somu Veerraju.

Saida Rao told the media that the BJP leaders held a meeting here on Sunday to discuss the removal of the district president without discussing it in the core committee meeting. He alleged that Somu Veerraju had taken a decision unilaterally to remove district BJP presidents. He said that those who were removed were branded as the 'Kanna Lakshminarayana' group. He said that they were not informed officially about the removal of the district president.

Saida Rao questioned Somu Veerraju about why a resolution was not adopted and not passed on the removal of district presidents in the BJP Core committee meeting.



**Rao questioned Somu Veerraju about why a resolution was not adopted and not passed on the removal of district presidents in the BJP Core committee meeting.**

He demanded the BJP state president tell them what mistakes they committed as BJP district presidents. "We were removed from the district president posts in a disgraceful

manner. We worked for several years to strengthen the BJP. But were removed citing the reason that we belong to the Kanna Lakshminarayana group," he lashed out.



INDIA CORNER

Family of four sleeps with gas heater on, dies due to suffocation

Four members of a family died in their sleep here apparently due to suffocation after they left a gas heater on inside their room overnight, police said on Sunday.



Teaching is an art, says M S Dhoni, hailing the profession

Teaching is not only a profession but an art where you discipline students and groom them, former Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has said and released the autobiography of noted techno-educationalist, Professor K K Abdul Gaffar.



Students, parents fall ill after eating food at school event in Kerala

In an incident of suspected food poisoning, some students and parents took ill and were hospitalised after eating meals served at an event in a school in Pathanamthitta district of Kerala, police said on Sunday.



Initiate your ideas in India

Union Minister Thakur asks the young diaspora to innovate, invest

PNS ■ INDORE

Union minister Anurag Thakur on Sunday appealed to the young Indian diaspora to innovate, invest and initiate their ideas in India which he said has emerged as the third largest start-up nation.



'When the world was fighting against COVID-19, Indian youths were working to give the status of the unicorn to their start-ups,' he said.

Bharatiya Divas on Sunday. Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar were also present.

'The youths made India the third largest start-up nation. More than 80,000 start-ups exist in India. When the world was fighting against COVID-19, Indian youths were working to give the status of the unicorn to their start-ups,' he said.

He said that some of the brightest minds of Indian origin have played a strategic role, especially in the success of tech powerhouses across the globe with their unparalleled innovations and infinite talents.

India provides 75 buses to Sri Lanka

PNS ■ COLOMBO

India has handed 75 passenger buses to Sri Lanka as part of its assistance towards strengthening public transport infrastructure in the cash-strapped country.

As part of its Neighbourhood First policy, India has extended multi-pronged assistance to Sri Lanka to help the country tide over its worst economic and humanitarian crisis since its independence from Great Britain in 1948.

'Supporting mobility and accessibility in Sri Lanka, High Commissioner handed over 75 buses for use by Transport Board. 500 buses are being supplied to Sri Lanka through Indian assistance towards strengthening public transport infrastructure,' the Indian High Commission here said in a statement.

In a similar move, India handed 125 SUVs to the Sri Lanka Police under a line of credit in December to support the island nation and help it address the serious mobility restriction issues faced by the police, due to the non-availability of vehicles.

The Sri Lankan government in May last year declared a debt default on over USD 51 billion in the foreign loan a first in the country's history.

Joshimath declared landslide-subsidence zone

Over 60 families evacuated: Official

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Joshimath has been declared a landslide-subsidence zone and over 60 families living in damaged houses in the sinking town have been evacuated to temporary relief centres, a senior official said on Sunday.

At least 90 more families have to be evacuated. The local administration has set up relief centres at four-five places in the Himalayan town, Garhwal Commissioner Sushil Kumar said.

Meanwhile, Chamoli District Magistrate (DM) Himanshu Khurana went from door to door in the affected area to assess the extent of damage and appealed to people living in houses that have developed cracks to move to the relief centres.

Joshimath has been declared a landslide-subsidence zone. More than 60 families living in uninhabitable houses have been evacuated to temporary relief centres, Kumar told PTI.



ing in Joshimath since Thursday, heads a committee tasked with monitoring the situation on the ground level.

There are a total of 4,500 buildings in Joshimath and 610 of these have developed huge cracks, making them unfit for habitation, he said.

A survey is underway and the number of affected buildings could go up, he added.

Kumar said the affected area, including houses that developed cracks earlier and the ones damaged recently, forms a big arch which could be spread over 1.5 km.

Temporary relief centres have been set up at four-five safe places within Joshimath. Some more buildings, including a few hotels, a gurdwara and two inter-colleges, have

been acquired to serve as makeshift shelters that can accommodate around 1,500 people, he said.

'Land subsidence has been going on slowly in Joshimath for quite some time but it has increased over the past week with huge cracks appearing in houses, fields and roads,' the Garhwal commissioner said.

'The situation worsened apparently after a water channel beneath the town erupted last week,' he said.

The priority at present is evacuating the affected people to safety, he said. Kumar said long-term measures being explored to deal with the situation range from reconstruction to retrofitting. Chamoli DM Khurana surveyed the affected area.

BJP like Ganga, take a dip to get rid of sins

Tripura CM to oppn leaders

PNS ■ AGARTALA

Appealing Left leaders to join the BJP, Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha on Sunday said his party is like river Ganga and 'taking a dip' in it will help them get rid of all sins.



where we are supposed to be," he added. Targeting the opposition CPI(M), Saha alleged the Communists suppressed the people's democratic rights and ruled Tripura for years.

'WHAT IF IT'S POISONED?'

Akhilesh while refusing police station tea

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Sunday refused to have tea offered to him at the UP Police Headquarters apparently joking it may be 'poisoned.'

Angry over Agarwal's arrest, scores of SP workers gathered outside the Uttar Pradesh Police headquarters demanding his immediate release.

'I will not drink the tea of this place. I will have tea from outside. What if it's poisoned?' Yadav went on to ask a worker to see if any tea shop was open in the neighbourhood. He also said there was no senior at the police station when he went there.

Headquarters, then imagine what would be the state of the rest of UP,' Yadav told reporters. Additional DG Law and order Prashant Kumar, later in his response, said 'Since it was Sunday, officials were present as per requirement, and he spoke with them.'

After a long wait, Himachal CM expands Cabinet

Seven ministers take oath; Six chief parliamentary secys appointed

PNS ■ SHIMLA

After a four-week wait, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu expanded his cabinet on Sunday with the induction of seven ministers, including Vikramaditya Singh - the son of former chief minister Virbhadra Singh and state Congress president Pratibha Singh.

ister, cannot exceed 12. Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar administered the oath of office to the newly inducted ministers at the Raj Bhawan. The party apparently tried to placate Sukhu's rival camp led by Pratibha Singh, who lost out in the chief ministerial race, with the induction of her son. Vikramaditya Singh, two-time MLA from Shimla (Rural). Among the new ministers, Harshwardhan Chauhan, a six-time MLA elected from Shillai, three-time MLA elected from Kasumpti Anirudh Singh and four-time MLA Rohit Thakur from Jubbalkotkhai are considered close to the chief minister.

Shiv Sena led by Uddhav is real : Sanjay Raut

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut on Sunday said there is only one Shiv Sena which is led by Uddhav Thackeray, and hoped the party will get justice from the Election Commission which is hearing contentions of the two Shiv Sena factions, each of them seeking recognition as the 'real' Shiv Sena.



bol have left (the party). 'They will lose,' he said. 'We trust the Election Commission which is an autonomous and independent body. We have had an example of T N Seshan (former Chief Election Commissioner). So far, independence and autonomy are not been seen in these institutions. People in these institutions are appointed by the government. We hope we will get justice and Shiv Sena led by Uddhav Thackeray will get justice,' he added.

'When Indian flowers bloomed in Europe'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Book throws light on masterworks of Indian trade textiles

A new book tells the story of how Indian handcrafted textiles, including dye-painted chintzes and embroidered palampores, made their way to Europe and inspired European textile manufacturing.

the city of Surat and an acronym for 'Textiles and Art of the People of India', is a testament to the rich and colourful tapestry of India's textile and art heritage. Founded by Praful and Shilpa Shah, it is named after the River Tapti of Surat as a tribute to the city -- its home.



exchanged emails very regularly. The book is a result of our shared interest in Indian trade textiles,' the author said in a statement. The book sheds light on how the merchant companies of Europe, established with the aim of sourcing exotic eastern spices, stumbled upon Indian handmade textiles and found these a highly profitable product for their home markets.

text also features examples of intricately hand-drawn dye-painted cotton chintzes made in the Coromandel Coast, and embroidered palampores and garment pieces made in Gujarat and the Deccan. 'These brightly patterned, washable, colourfast and inexpensive cottons so captivated European society that they posed a threat to their local textile producers. This catalogue is aimed as a proud salute to those nameless, skilled artisans of the past who remained unaware of the enormous legacy they were to leave behind,' said Shilpa Shah, co-founder of the TAPI Collection.

A-I urination: Drunk man not in senses but buck stops with pilot, says co-passenger

PNS ■ NEW YORK

A drunk person may not be in his senses but the flight crew showed no compassion and failed in their responsibility, said a US-based doctor seated next to the man who urinated on a woman in an inebriated state on an Air India flight from New York to Delhi.



Bhattacharjee, who is based in New Hampshire state, wrote an elaborate complaint to Air India immediately after the flight landed, detailing his experience with his co-passen-

ger Shankar Mishra and his interactions with the cabin crew. He told PTI he is speaking out now to elaborate on the complaint because of claims by Mishra's father that his son is innocent and may have been a victim of extortion. 'It was a moral call for me, it was morality and I thought it was my moral obligation to stand and make a complaint and I did,' he said. The buck stops with the pilot, Bhattacharjee said, recounting that Mishra had four stiff drinks through lunch.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## That sinking feeling

Politicians & people ignored geological facts of Joshimath, and now it is fire-fighting mode

In a way, the crisis of 'sinking town' of Joshimath in Uttarakhand is quintessentially Indian: a grey rhino event about which a great deal was known for years, decades actually, but nobody did anything about it. And now that the problem has acquired catastrophic proportions, everyone is talking about it. It is good that at all levels efforts are being made to salvage the situation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has promised all possible help to save Joshimath, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said on Sunday. The latter had a tele-conversation with the Prime Minister. Dhami tweeted, "The situation in Joshimath is being analysed. We'll also see if other mountainous towns have achieved their toleration limit." At the Central level, the Prime Minister's Office is actively monitoring the ground situation. Officials of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the State Government are part of deliberations. All this is comforting, but the disconcerting questions are: Why do we have to wait for the situation to become alarming to take action? Why are the powers that be reactive rather than proactive? It was almost half a century ago that the Mishra Committee Report had warned (in 1976) against such an eventuality. One of the recommendations of the report was: "For road repairs and other construction, it would be advisable not to remove boulders by digging or blasting the hill side... The trees are to be nurtured like children."



In fact, it was not just the authorities and politicians who ignored the committee's report but even the local people living there. Some of them even reportedly abused committee members, but now they are repenting their own carelessness. Headed by MC Mishra, the then Garhwal commissioner in the erstwhile State of Uttar Pradesh (Uttarakhand was part of UP at that time), it comprised 18 members, including from the Army, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the Border Road Organisation, the Shri Kedarnath-Badrinath Temple Committee, and the local administration. It said, "Joshimath lies on an ancient landslide." The root cause of the problem and the report's recommendations were ignored, but the facts of geology and geography are stubborn; we may ignore them but they have ways of making their presence felt; and that's happening now. Cracks are appearing in houses, roads and on the ground; the administration has declared Joshimath a landslide-subsidence zone; more than 60 families living in damaged houses have been evacuated to temporary relief centres; 90 more families may have to be moved out. The Chamoli District Magistrate reportedly went door-to-door, assessing the damage caused and urging people to evacuate. In short, the authorities are in fire-fighting mode. Again, this is very typical of India: politicians and officials ignore problems till these hit us hard, and then start acting like fire-fighters. A nation that wants to emerge as an economic power and a political force on the world stage ought to have a more responsive and imaginative administration.

### PICTALK



People feed pigeons at Marina beach, in Chennai

# Yaks: The lifeline of Monpas in NE



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

For the people of Arunachal Pradesh, Yak is indispensable. Human life here depends on it but its population is dwindling, which needs to be corrected

Arunachal Pradesh is the largest among North Eastern states of India having an area of 83,743 km and is divided into 20 administrative districts of which highlanders (3000-4000 meters above MSL) are Tawang and West Kameng districts. It borders the states of Assam and Nagaland to the South and shares International borders with Bhutan in the East and Tibet (China) in the North. The state is the home tract of Arunachali Yak. Usually found at elevations 3,000-6,000 meters above MSL, Arunachali Yak sustains themselves up to a temperature of -40 to 10 degrees centigrade. Arunachali Yak is one of the purest Yak populations in the world. It is considered a remarkable domestic animal as it thrives in conditions of extreme cold and hypoxic conditions of hardness and deprivation while providing livelihood to people living in the remote high altitude hilly terrain of Tawang and West Kameng districts of Arunachal Pradesh. These two districts are rich in agro-biodiversity having the origin of several plants. The socio-diversity of these districts adds more colour to this field of biodiversity. The average density is about 11-13 people per km, but the concentration of population is more at lower elevations and plains rather than at high altitude regions where Yaks are available.



Although no written literature and breed synonyms exist about Yak, the oral history indicates that this animal belongs to the Bisontine group under the subfamily Bovidae which was first tamed by the ancient Qiang people of the Tibetan-Qiang plateau in China. Given its grass-eating nature and having specific anatomical and morphological differences from other Bovids, the nomenclature (Poephagus) was given after a thorough investigation and discussion. According to the evolutionary consequences, it is presumed that the domestic Yak (Poephagus grannies L.) of Arunachal Pradesh probably originated from its wild counterpart (Poephagus mutus). The Arunachali Yak is living in a transhumance pastoral structure and

exists in semi-migratory systems. Few animals are also found in the organized farm.

Monpa community, which is the majority population in West Kameng and Tawang districts, is responsible for developing the Arunachali Yak breed. Yak has been closely associated with the culture, religion, and social life of the Monpa people who can trace their history of Yak with great care since time immemorial. It is treated as an asset of the rural economy. The Yak rearers, also called the Brokpa, make their herds migrate during the summer season, along the mountain ridges for grazing. One full-time attendant stay at the pasture land all along, attending the herds, milking and preparing butter, ghee, and churpi (fermented butter) for home consumption as well as for commercial purposes. The entire herd is brought back to the nearby homestead during the winter season when there is heavy snowfall. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Yak farmers and about 80 percent population depend on it. Shifting (Jhum) cultivation is practiced by Monpa Community settled in the Yak rearing region. Due to the availability of varied agro-climatic and topographic conditions, diverse varieties of crops

are found. Other crops like chili, soybean, potato, cabbage, pumpkin and ginger are also grown. Major fruit production is kiwi, apple and orange as well as some citrus fruits. The houses of Yak rearers, the Monpas, are the traditional style of dwellings made from locally available materials. The house size and area depends on the family patterns. The average family members household consist of six members and 50 percent of them are literate and 50 percent are involved in Yak husbandry. In Arunachal Pradesh, landholding is community-based: the average agriculture landholding is 4500 acres and the annual income of Yak farmers is ₹55,000.

It is a matter of concern that over the years, the population of Arunachali Yak has been declining. The main reasons are increased emphasis on crossbreeding, a shift in profession from agriculture to other sectors, threats from predators and diseases, reduction in the availability of fodder, and a reduced enthusiasm among young herders although it is still believed that rearing Yak is the social status of Brokpa. This decline can be curbed through the introduction of selection and mating programmes that could encourage both productivity

and the maintenance of biodiversity as well as distribution of unique germplasm through AI-semen, high altitude pasture management, adopting new technology in villages near border areas where Yak is only animal providing livelihood and economic sustainability. Regular training on the latest technology for Yak husbandry for a veterinarian, veterinary field assistants, as well as Yak farmers, boosts the Yak husbandry in the region.

Another area of concern is that there is no proper documentation of the Yak population because no serious efforts have been done to survey population of Yak. In this context, systematic documentation is needed for the interpretation of earlier sources and where possible be cross-checked against pastoralists' accounts. Efforts for the conservation of the Arunachali Yak as well as to increase their productivity within the given environment need urgent attention. Heterotic effects are evident in the crosses, but these need to be further classified and exploited for the conservation and multiplication of Arunachali Yak.

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal. This is the second part of the three-part series on the northeast; to be concluded.)

IT IS A MATTER OF CONCERN THAT OVER THE YEARS, THE POPULATION OF ARUNACHALI YAK HAS BEEN STEADILY DECLINING

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### MADHYA PRADESH READY FOR THE SHOW

Sir — Madhya Pradesh is fully prepared. The arrival of guests for the Pravasi Bharatiya Sammelan in Indore continues. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is himself monitoring everything. It can be understood that this is a very proud moment for Madhya Pradesh. This is an unforgettable occasion when the State can showcase its achievements and plans to the NRIs. It is also an opportunity to enrich the State Government's image and boost its confidence. This is an opportunity to showcase Madhya Pradesh to people of the outside world.

It should also be remembered that the overseas guests are connected to our land, that is why they have come here and are participating in this conference. In the changing times, be it the country or the region, he has to leave his mark in every field. This investment, employment and business all are necessary for everything. Opportunities are also hidden in the event, especially for the youth, and there should be no hesitation in capitalising on it. The reputation that Indore has made in the field of cleanliness in India and abroad is the result of the leaders going to the trenches and observing the cleanliness system.

Divyansha Sharma | Ujjain

#### THE MENACE OF DEFECTION

Sir — It has been reported that the Congress has lodged a police complaint on the defection of its 12 MLAs into TRS. K Chandrashekar Rao had accused BJP of attempting to poach four of its MLAs with bribes to topple his government. Now he has not been mincing words about defections into his party. But what can the police do? The anti-defection law is not so effective in preventing defections. If two-thirds of MLAs cross over to other parties, it will be treated as merger. Single-member defection or mass defection, both should be treated alike if the defection menace has to be curbed.

The Speaker must be vested with the powers to disqualify such errant MLAs

#### Why turn a blind eye?



Former 103 civil servants want Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to Act Against Pragya (accused in the 2008 blast that killed six people in Malegaon, Maharashtra) Singh Thakur for 'fomenting hate'. Though a senior and law-abiding citizen, I strongly feel that the Speaker will not take any action against her because in the Modi era it's not possible. He made Anurag Singh Thakur, who addressed a gathering in support of a BJP candidate in Delhi and led the crowd

to chant "Desh ke qadron ko, Goli maro salon ko", the Union Minister for Information & Broadcasting. Was any action taken against him? Instead, he became a Minister.

If such is the level of politics in the BJP, how can the retired civil servants expect any action on their open letter. "By her incendiary hate speech and repeated acts of propagating hate, she has forfeited the ethical right to be a Member of Parliament?" Surprised to hear that just like Union Minister Anurag Singh Thakur, Pragya Singh Thakur had delivered her speech at a gathering of the Hindu Jagarana Vedike, urging members of the majority community to keep their vegetable knives sharpened to protect themselves and "their women". But under these circumstances, how do these learned civil servants believe in Pragya's disqualification as an MP? They feel that inciting hatred "should be ground enough to take action" against her.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

and MPs. No party is willing to do away with defection because at one time or the other, defection is useful to every party. If Chandrashekar Rao is really serious against defections, he should admit no turnout to his party. In doing so, he will set a good precedent. Defection anyway amounts to betraying the trust of the voters. These days, politics is more to subvert the political interests of parties.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

#### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE NOT ONLY EVIL

Sir — Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to think like humans and mimic their actions. The term may also be applied to any machine that exhibits traits associated with a human mind such as learning and problem-solving. The ideal characteristic of artificial intelligence is its ability to rationalise and take actions that have the best chance of achieving a specific goal. The digital revolution has already

changed how people live, work and communicate. And it's only just getting started.

But the same technologies that have the potential to help billions of people live happier, healthier and more productive lives are also creating new challenges for citizens and Governments. The term may also be applied to any machine that exhibits traits associated with a human mind such as learning and problem-solving. The common fear is that AI will replace human jobs, leading to mass unemployment and economic depression. That paints a very dystopian and frightening future, but extensive evidence suggests a more hopeful and utopian future. AI focuses on saving human time and energy, thus leading humans to focus their efforts on passion projects or making the world better for all beings.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

### SOUND BITE

My being in T-shirt is not a real question, the real question is why are the farmers, poor labourers of the country and their children in torn clothes, T-shirts, and without sweaters.

Congress leader — Rahul Gandhi

Russia plans to 'exhaust' Ukraine with prolonged attacks.

Ukraine President — Volodymyr Zelensky

I want to talk about this hashtag that's going on — 'Boycott Bollywood'. It can stop if you (Yogi Adityanath) say something about it. We are doing good work.

Actor — Suniel Shetty

The signing of a player the size of Cristiano Ronaldo is extraordinary and contributes to the development of

Saudi football AI Nassr coach — Rudi Garcia

India has emerged as a stable economy even amid the global slowdown. You must be glad to know that India has surpassed the UK to become the 5th largest economy in the world. It is a great feat as people who ruled us for 200 years are now falling behind.

BJP president — JP Nadra

## Pilgrim's progress?

The Jain community is appalled by the move to take over their pilgrimages for commercial exploitation

An avoidable controversy has erupted over the commercialisation of a Jain pilgrimage site in Jharkhand. The appalled community is protesting against the move centred around Sammed Shikharji. They are also concerned about such moves being on the anvil in Gujarat. The protesters want the notification issued by the Centre for acquiring the sacred mountain of Sammed Shikharji taken back. The move was initiated by the previous Raghubar Das-led BJP Government. It is not just Sammed Shikharji but several other sites could be open for commercialisation to fill the State coffers like Sammed Shikharji, Palitana's Shatrunjaya hills and Mount Girnar (in Gujarat). The previous BJP Government of Jharkhand and the Modi Government jointly declared Giridih, the "Nirvana Bhoomi" (salvation site) of 20 Jain Tirthankaras and the most important pilgrimage centers of Jainism — Sammed Shikharji and 'Parasnath hill' — as eco-sensitive zone. The Jain community feels that the move is a "malicious attempt to pollute the sanctity of two pilgrimage sites"; a concerted effort to strip the community from its hold over the sites. The apprehensions are not ill-founded, though. In the Palitana's Shatrunjaya hills near Bhavnagar, RSS-VHP members have been persistently demanding a change of management of 900-year-old 865 Jain temples and pilgrimage centres. This site is considered the most sacred pilgrimage center of the Svetambara Jain community, and any attempt to disrupt their prayers in any way is bound to recoil.



The mining mafia is also eyeing these sites. Incidents of vandalism and threatening the clerics have also come to light. This is happening under the

patronage of the BJP leaders who are supporting illegal mining in the Shatrunjaya hills. Recently, some anti-social elements also vandalised the ancient Charan Paduka in the ancient 3 Gauki holy pilgrimage route in Rohishala, Shatrunjaya. This has indeed hurt the Jain community which is now on the streets. The Constitution guarantees religious rights to minorities and therefore it is the utmost duty of the government to restore their faith and protect them from any threat to their way of life. The government would do well to assuage the fears and apprehensions of the Jain community sooner than later before the issue becomes a full-blown crisis. The start could be made by withdrawing the notification declaring Parasnath Hills and holy Shikharji as eco-sensitive zone and converting it into a tourist destinations to restore their faith in the Government.



**FIRST COLUMN**  
**DIVERSITY IN CLINICAL TRIALS IS ESSENTIAL**

Clinical studies must draw subjects from a diverse cross-section

KRUTIKESH AGE

The results of clinical research should be generalised for the population, because of the ethical reasons and providing treatment that appeal to people all over the world. The importance of including diversity is that the results obtained from the study benefit the entire population.

Before trying to understand the importance of diversity in clinical research, one should know the meaning of "diversity" in the context of clinical research. Diversity in clinical research means including people from various backgrounds and experiences in a study.

Factors like age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, and economic conditions are included for classifying a group of people for the research. The reason for introducing diversity in the research is to provide results that are beneficial for the population as a whole, and are not biased toward a particular section of society.

Diversity plays an important role in making sure that the results of clinical research are universal. The study should include people from all race and ethnic groups. This maintains the generalization and the findings from this study benefits everyone.



However, if a single category of population based on age or race is considered, then this will not benefit the other sections of the population. Besides the universal benefits of diversity in clinical research, it is also necessary for ethical reasons. The advantage and dangers of the study should be equitably divided among the population.

For example, a study done on a particular gender will benefit only them and will restrict the benefits of other genders. Diversity is important because it helps in analyzing how treatment influences people of different groups. A medicine suitable for children might not effectively work on adults.

Another issue is that the clinical researchers might belong to a similar background and do not have any idea about other groups of people and their experiences. This situation can affect the outcome of the study and it might incline the group of the people that designed it. For example, if the group of researchers is a group of men, the result will be inclined towards men and vice versa.

Various ways can help deal with the challenges and will encourage diversity in clinical research. Initially, the depreciated group of people should be enlisted in the study, and efforts for their benefit should be conducted. Next, an awareness programme should be launched for the clinical researchers — where they should learn about the diversity, needs, and experiences of people from different groups and perform their studies accordingly.

At last, the diversity in clinical research should be monitored and evaluated regularly and deal with any challenges that might occur.

In community-based participatory research (CBPR), all the members of the community are involved in the research. It develops understanding and trust among researchers and people from different communities. This creates a relationship and increases the engagement of people in clinical research and their understanding.

Finally, diversity is necessary for clinical research, because it secures the results that constitute all the groups of people in the world. The generalisation of the result is important, and ethical, and should be able to find the different ways in which treatment might affect the people of all groups. A lot of challenges might make diversity a difficult task to include in clinical trials, but there are many ways through which diversity can be promoted and provide benefits to all sections of society.

*(The author is Co-founder, DPHS Pvt. Ltd)***Debt burden is rising; industry must share it**

SHIVAJI SARKAR

The industry, with the motive of cashing in on its profits the maximum, wants the Government to bear the expenses that it should ideally have done itself

The year 2023 ushers in the most eventful year with one-third of the country seeking to form new governments in states. The Union Budget to be unveiled on February 1 would be virtually the last full annual budget of the Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance government in its second term, which may get many colourful touches ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

In February 2024, it would be only a partial Budget in line with the convention since the general elections would be held in March-April next year. A massive public spending programme was announced last year with a spending of Rs 5.5 lakh crore and by the close of the year it has taken additional sanctions to spend Rs 7.5 lakh crore — an increase of 35.4 per cent.

Over Rs 2 lakh crore goes into the free-food dole that has emerged as a new bartering system for cash, keeping a large number of the under-privileged smiling as it changes their lives. The inflation index is stabilising but the prices are zooming. It is politically and economically tightrope walking through international uncertainties fueled by the Russia-Ukraine War, globally, particularly European, energy crisis and projected slowdown.

Budget making is not easy as the nation moves on to the election mode with the Tripura polls in February, while the people across the country are facing a difficult job scenario, and not so comfortable consumer demand is hitting manufacturing and core sector growth. The industry bodies like the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) are demanding raising the income-tax threshold to Rs 5 lakh, cut in the GST for most items to less than 28 per cent and thrust on rural infrastructure for facilitating employment generation and sales with an opposition sharpening its teeth.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to agree to some of these demands. Industry is not worried about the government finances. Each of the above suggestions has bearing on revenue collections. The deficit is about 6+ per cent, says the government, but the International Monetary Fund (IMF) finds it at 10 per cent.

Market borrowings are projected at Rs 11.6 lakh crore, about one-third of the budgetary expenses, which are likely to shoot up as till September itself as it reached Rs 8.45 lakh crore. The burgeoning public debt rises to 89.1 per cent. The IMF is concerned that 84.16 per cent of Indian GDP comprises borrowings.

Life for a Finance Minister is not a bed of roses as current account deficit and external borrowings are increasing with an unstable dollar. These acute problems are apparently not the priority of the industry.

That the industry has not moved out

**THE BURGEONING PUBLIC DEBT RISES TO 89.1 PER CENT OF THE GDP. THIS CANNOT BE THE NORMAL PRESCRIPTION. INDUSTRY HAS TO SHARE THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER EXPENSES AND CAN'T ALLOW THE COUNTRY TO SLIDE ON HEAVY REPAYMENTS***(The author is a senior journalist)*

of the 1950s mindset is evident with their suggestions to cut employer contribution to the National Pension Scheme to 10 per cent from 14 per cent, a move that hits the workers hard. And from an unhappy worker they want higher productivity and a better market!

The CII, Ficci, the PHDCCI, and ASSOCHAM should have given more constructive suggestions to the Finance Minister. Wonder why they did not draw the attention of the government to the expensive, highly polluting fruitless exercise of scrapping cars. Similarly, they should have told the FM that after Rs 2.6 lakh crore petrol-road-building cess a year, abolition of highway toll is beneficial for bringing down prices drastically, making budgeting process easier and help the Reserve Bank of India keep interest rates low.

Infra spending adds to glittering activities of project expenses. It is often forgotten that infrastructure is also a drain and most developed countries have done it not with gusto in a short period but over long spans of time. That is prudent. Despite that today the US needs \$58 billion for repairing 220,000 bridges and immediate reconstruction of 79,500 bridges.

The Indian industry with its profit motive wants the government to bear the expenses that it should have done itself. Infrastructure needs investment and also provisioning at a high level for refurbishing and replacement. Industry bodies, professing

infrastructure investment, want that the concessions should bolster companies through government efforts, which may not be sustainable for long.

Inappropriate priorities can land the country, fewest in the world that still is on a growth trajectory, to an undesirable tract. The world is looking at how the existing infrastructure could be maintained for a longer time. Somehow, many economists want a review of the spree of demolitions of office buildings in Delhi and elsewhere. The western world capitals pride in refurbishing these heritage structures to continue with it for centuries.

High-speed trains should not be a fad. Better management with less investment can speed up many trains. Abandoning of stations and creating new ones can be avoided. It would give more leeway to the FM. The country needs to rethink building massive rail stations with fences and security. The richest countries try to keep the rail stations simple, with adequate facilities but keep their expenses low.

Industry even did not suggest replacing loss-making Metros in smaller towns like Jaipur or Lucknow with simple but efficient trams. They would not as many of them are beneficiaries of ill-placed priorities.

The burgeoning public debt rises to 89.1 per cent of GDP. This cannot be the normal prescription. Industry has to share the infrastructure and other expenses and can't allow the country to slide on

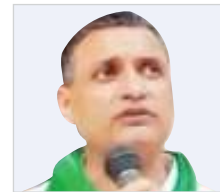
heavy repayments. Total debt is estimated at Rs 152 lakh crore in March 2023, while accounting for Rs 17 lakh crore rise in a year.

About 20 per cent or one-fifth of the budgetary allocation, Rs 7.88 lakh crore of a budget of Rs 39.44 lakh crore, go in the repayment of interest payments.

Industry should have suggested to the government how to keep the debt low. Instead, it wants the government to borrow more to bolster their profits. It has to take a call to resist pressure on increasing capital expenditure. Let the private sector mull how it should help in keeping the fiscal deficit low to match a low revenue growth.

The government is not in a position to raise tax rates. For fiscal prudence, it has to give up a bit. It is a tough year and such innovation away from extravaganza would help the nation. The industry cannot expect the government to burden the people particularly in a year when world growth as per IMF, UNCTAD and World Bank would be slower. The IT majors are under pressure from global economic troubles and would be squeezing more.

The IMF sees India growing at 6.1 per cent in 2023-24, a little less than 6.8 per cent estimates of RBI. It's indeed challenging for the government to give more jobs, manage finances, and be the world engine of growth. The RBI finds India capable but prudence, sagacity and tough steps needed to sail through in a stormier world in 2023-24.

**POINT COUNTERPOINT****MAKING SUCH COMMENTS AGAINST THE PERSON WHO IS LEADING THE GRAND ALLIANCE GOVERNMENT IN BIHAR IS SIMPLY SUPPORTING THE BJP AND ITS POLICIES.**— BIHAR DEPUTY CM  
**TEJSHWI YADAV****NITISH KUMAR'S NAME WILL NOT BE THERE IN HISTORY. HE WILL NOT BE REMEMBERED AT ALL. HE IS LIKE 'SHIKHANDI', WHO HAS NO STANDING OF HIS OWN.**— RJD LEADER  
**SUDHAKAR SINGH****'Commonality' mindset hinders Greek studies**

Should India study, if at all, solely those aspects of Greece that have a clear Indian connection?

Two decades ago, the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), with an endowment from the Government of Greece and additional financial support from the AG Leventis Foundation, instituted a Greek Chair. The Chair is named after Dimitrios Galanos (1760-1833), a Varanasi-based Greek Indologist and translator of Sanskrit texts into Greek.

Its mission pertains to the teaching of the Greek language and civilisation vis-à-vis Indic expositions on politics and ethics in the form of certificate courses. Prof Vasileios Syros, a Greek historian of political thought, has lately been appointed to the Chair. Since 1998, on the lines of Hebrew and Turkish, Greek has been offered at JNU's School of



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA

*(The author is an independent researcher based in New Delhi)*

Language, Literature & Culture Studies as an optional language at BA, MA and PhD levels.

However, there is no full-fledged centre or programme dedicated to it on the lines of Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Russian, Spanish, etc.

Despite the fact that two Greek poets, viz. Giorgos Seferis and Odysseas Elytis, were awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1963 and 1979 respectively, and many other Greek writers, including Kostis Palamas, Angelos Sikelianos, Nikos Kazantzakis and Yiannis Ritsos, were unsuccessfully nominated for the same, the appeal of Greek as a modern language has been limited.

Indians came to know about Greece in the 19th century through their exposure to

English language and literature. Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-1831), the radical Eurasian teacher at Hindu College (later Presidency College) in Kolkata, composed heroic poems like *The Greeks at Marathon* (1825), *Address to the Greeks* (1826), and *Greece* (1827) cheering the Greeks in their war of independence against the Ottoman Turks.

In 1833, Khetramohan Mookerjee, wrote the first textbook on Greek history in any Indian language. Written in Bengali as *Greek Desher Itihas*, it was an abridgement of Oliver Goldsmith's *History of Greece* (1809). Phiroze Vasunia, a rare Indian classicist, who teaches at University College London, describes this phenomenon as Athens in Calcutta in his book *The*

*Classics and Colonial India* (2013). Apart from Derozio, Vasunia mentions Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824-1873), the poet of the Bengal Renaissance, who wrote the *Hector-badh* (Slaying of Hector) based on the *Iliad*.

Britain is a recognisable leader in Hellenic/Greek studies. One of the reasons is that they have cultivated that language since the 16th century. It was being taught, alongside Latin, in their grammar schools and universities.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, India created her own classical background. It comprised the Vedic era, 16 Mahajanapadas, the Maurya, Sunga, Gupta, Chola and Vijayanagara empires. It was the age of Indian nationalism, and the historical work com-

plemented this political venture. Porus, who fought against Alexander, and Chandragupta Maurya, who defeated Seleucus I Nicator and founded the first pan-Indian Empire, became inspiring figures.

Thankfully, however, a common ground came to light. It was the lineage of Indo-Greek kings, i.e., the Greeks who had accompanied Alexander to India and subsequently established kingdoms in Bactria (Afghanistan), Punjab and Sindh. The Indo-Greek period (326 BC and 400 AD) witnessed confluence of Indic and Hellenic thoughts in the form of the Greco-Buddhist Gandhara school of art that produced the first series of Buddha statues.

The Palī text *Milindapanha* records spiritual conver-

sations between Bactrian king Menander (c 158-138 BC) and Buddhist monk Nagasena. The Garuda Column raised by Heliodorus, who was an ambassador of Antialkidas, the Indo-Greek king of Taxila, and styled himself as a devotee of Krishna in Besnagar, near Vidisha, MP, is a good example of how certain Greeks adopted Hinduism.

More than a century ago, Gauranga Nath Banerjee registered a number of Hellenic influences on India in his book *Hellenism in Ancient India* (1920). However, this "commonality" mindset also became a hindrance. Serious work on Hellenism in India gets hampered by an obsession with affinities and physical encounters. In the *Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*

(2009), for which Phiroze Vasunia served as co-editor, there was not a single contributor from South Asia. Should India study, if at all, solely those aspects of Greece that have a clear Indian connection?

The Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University in Bareilly might not be counted as one of India's premier institutions. However, during the 1990s, under historian Prof Udai Prakash Arora, it launched a new initiative in historical research on Greece. Prof Arora was subsequently invited to occupy JNU's Greek Chair, a post he has now retired from. While the Dimitrios Galanos Chair is a laudable and promising project, India should prepare for a more independent scholarship on Greek civilisation.



MONEY MATTERS

Paytm Payments Bank appoints MD and CEO post RBI nod

Paytm Payments Bank has received banking regulator RBI's nod to appoint Surinder Chawla as its Managing Director and CEO...



Indo-US Trade Policy Forum to meet on Jan 11 in Washington

The India-US Trade Policy Forum (TPF), a forum to resolve trade and investment issues between the two countries, will hold a meeting in Washington on January 11...



Auto Expo returns after 3 years; some prominent firms to skip event

India's flagship motor show Auto Expo returns this week after three years having been hit by the pandemic, albeit some of the major manufacturers staying away from the event.



Discoms' outstanding dues to Gencos nearly halved to Rs 62,681 crore

PNS NEW DELHI

Total outstanding dues owed by electricity distribution companies (discoms) to power producers almost halved to Rs 62,681.68 crore in January...



of generators), the total outstanding dues of discoms stood at Rs 62,681.68 crore in January, 2023...

days to discoms to pay bills for electricity supply. After that, outstanding dues become overdue and generators charge penal interest on that in most cases.

Gadkari to decarbonise transport sector

PNS NAGPUR

India needs to "decarbonise" its transport sector quickly as the country has the potential to be a global torch-bearer in bio-fuels, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Sunday.



immediate need to decarbonise the transport sector. The Union government is pursuing bio-fuels and compressed bio gas on mission mode to replace these imports in a cost effective, pollution free way," he said.

ethanol as fuel, especially its production from surplus and damaged food grains like rice, corn and sugarcane. We can be a torch bearer in bio fuels globally," he said.

Agri-startup Varshney Hydrofarms looks to expand presence

PNS NEW DELHI

After quitting a high-flying job in the private sector, an engineer from Uttar Pradesh has entered into the business of growing chemical-free vegetables in water in the NCR region...

ponos, meaning water and labour, respectively, hydroponics is defined as a method of growing plants in water, rather than in soil.

Allow deductions, hike threshold for levying peak 30% tax: Experts

PNS NEW DELHI

Investments in PPF and other tax savings schemes should be allowed as deductions, and the threshold for 30 per cent tax should be raised to Rs 20 lakh under the concessional income tax regime in Budget 2023-24 to make it attractive for middle-income taxpayers, experts said.



al cases it resulted in a higher tax burden. Experts believe that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman should look at including certain popular tax deductions claimed by individuals, in addition to increasing the basic exemption limit and hiking the threshold for peak tax rate...

taxpayers, tax rates provided under the optional tax regime struggle to compete with the normal tax regime, if the available deductions and exemptions are pressed into service.

FPIs begin New Year in sell-off mode Withdraw Rs 5,900 cr from equities in a week

PNS NEW DELHI

Foreign investors offloaded nearly Rs 5,900 crore from the Indian equity markets in the first week of January on growing concerns over the re-emergence of Covid in some parts of the world and recession worries in the US.

11,119 crore in December and Rs 36,239 crore in November. Overall, FPIs have made a net withdrawal of Rs 1.21 lakh crore from the Indian equity markets in 2022 on an aggressive rate hike by the central banks globally...

"Increasing concerns over re-emergence of Covid in some parts of the world and recession worries in the US have been keeping FPIs away from emerging markets like India," Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research at Morningstar India, said.

Infosys, HDFC Bank, TCS biggest laggards Eight of top 10 firms lose Rs 1 lakh cr in mcap

PNS NEW DELHI

Eight of the top 10 most valued firms faced a combined erosion of Rs 1,06,991.42 crore in market valuation last week, with IT majors Infosys and Tata Consultancy Services along with HDFC Bank taking the biggest hit.



eight firms suffered erosion from their market capitalisation (mcap).

the most among the top 10 firms. The mcap of HDFC Bank tanked Rs 18,375.41 crore to Rs 8,89,130 crore.

Punjab and Sind Bank to cross Rs 2 lakh cr business soon

PNS NEW DELHI

Punjab and Sind Bank is expected to cross Rs 2 lakh crore business milestone soon on the back of robust growth in loans, its managing director Swarup Kumar Saha has said.

ity and slippages are also under control," he said. The bank's current account and savings accounts increased by 11.33 per cent to Rs 36,460 crore at the end of the third quarter.

Sitharaman asks women to form FPOs, avail credit

PNS KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman along with Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla distributed loans worth Rs 2,500 crore to street vendors, small-scale entrepreneurs, and cattle rearers at a credit outreach program here on Sunday.



does not need to produce any document for guarantee. Loans of at least Rs 68 crore are going to be distributed among cattle rearers (Pashupalaks), she added.

urged women to form Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) in their respective areas and avail bank loans to develop storage and processing units in their villages.

Adani regrets not completing college education

PNS NEW DELHI

He dropped out of formal education at the age of 16 in 1978 to take a train to Mumbai to try his luck and three years later made his first killing -- a Rs 10,000 commission doing a diamond trade with a Japanese buyer.

wise but formal education rapidly expands one's knowledge. Speaking at the 75th year celebrations of Vidya Mandir Trust Palanpur in Gujarat, Adani recounted his phenomenal journey that has made his group the world's largest solar power company, largest airport and sea port operator in India, nation's largest integrated energy player, country's second largest cement manufacturer and a conglomerate with market capitalisation of over USD 225 billion -- all in a span of four-and-a-half decades.



While the dry and tough living conditions of Gujarat's Banaskantha shaped his social behaviour, his father's involvement in what is now known as 'forward trades' gave him the initial learning.

- I wanted to do something different - and do it on my own." He bought a train ticket and boarded the Gujarat Mail to Mumbai with not much in his pocket.

my first trade with a Japanese buyer. I made a commission of Rs 10,000." This, he said, was the start of his journey as an entrepreneur.

India's agri exports are growing at a healthy pace and there is a need to focus on the processed food sector as it holds huge potential to boost the country's outbound shipments.

Huge potential to boost exports of processed food: TPCI

PNS NEW DELHI

commerce ministry Rajesh Agrawal and Joint Secretary in the ministry Srikanth Reddy. Speaking on the occasion, Agrawal said there is a need to create global brands in the food and beverages industry.

"Ideally, we need to create 50 brands, then we will be able to do our job well. We must think globally and build brands. We must pay serious attention on how to promote Indian cuisine abroad," TPCI said in a statement quoting Agrawal.



## A fearless storyteller creating her own niche

SHIKHA DUGGAL

The popular filmmaker Ashwini Iyer Tiwari is known for her clutter-breaking content — stories that are from vastly different environments. That's how the filmmaker rolls! Her recent series that hooked all of us titled *Faadu*, described the two opposing perspectives. And, when in an exclusive conversation with the in-movie maker, we learned how she astutely captured the class divides through the story, her auteuring style, and much more.

"With a new pair of Saiyami Kher and Pavaal Gulati: my audiences were in for a surprise. The task was to hunt for the right poetess. A woman who is creative, curious yet contemporary in the way she looks. So, Saiyami is a loved face and a young woman rousing others to succeed and that's when I saw my poetess in her."

She called herself a fearless storyteller, why is that so? She clarifies, "I am the only child of my parents, born at the end of Mumbai city. My mom has been a school principal forever and my father is a PhD scholar in plant pathology. He grew potatoes in the desert of Saudi Arabia! All this while, I have grown up amongst microscopes. Moving ahead, I learned Bharatnatyam and classical music. It was my mother who wanted to see me pursue a career in creative

arts! Belonging to a middle-class family, I funded my own college expenses. Frankly, I was supposed to be a CA but here I am, my experiences turned me into a bold filmmaker on my own."

For her making movies is for the archives. She continues, "As a storyteller, the relationship we form with our audience lasts for a lifetime. For example, *Faadu* was a story I wanted to tell, and the audience's love and rave reviews have been enriching and gratifying. My actors, writer, editor, cinematographer, music director are being celebrated. With immense gratitude, I look forward to tell more stories with the passion and commitment now."

She recalled a funny statement given by her mother that said, "You want to be an actress, be one but an actress who is able to earn money" (Ashwini laughs her heart out). She goes on to mention, "I just didn't become a filmmaker, I even wrote a book which I always had it in my mind. Being a director called for a lot of adrenaline rush inside me while penning my first book made me feel calm on the inside. That's the difference, you see. Only me and the book knew what was happening between us. At the beginning of my career, my first two preferences were either to join a publishing house or to be a part of an advertising agency. My journey actually began by doing massive print campaigns for some renowned brands. My hands were also a part of writing scripts for the radio medium. Been there, done that are my feelings today."

On an emotional note, she says, "Most of my life decisions have been impulsive. My husband

can vouch for it. Started working when I was 18 and got married at 25. Travelled on my own whenever I felt like it! Learned new forms of art all the time. Currently obsessing over contemporary art appreciation. Had children when I was 31. Left my high-paying job at 34 and restarted from scratch to follow my passion for storytelling without knowing anyone in the industry. Became an entrepreneur and founded by the company at 40 to give hope for many like me who dream."

Ashwini Iyer Tiwari is one of the renowned filmmakers of the industry, who is known for her vastly different, yet real-life concepts. In an exclusive conversation with the *Faadu* director, we learned about how she captures the class divides through the story, her auteuring style, and much more.



## 'I don't consider SRK my idol but competition in the next two years'

The ongoing season of *Splitsvilla* has got much more twists, intense fights, and heartbreaks. Recently, the show saw an intense dumping of actor-model Joshua Chhabra. To know the other side of the coin, we connected with Joshua, who opens up about being in the show, being backstabbed by his best friend in the show, and much more

AMARTYA SMARAN

From being a kid who was mocked at school for being overweight, to the youngest winner at Gladrags 2016 Mr. India contest, Joshua Chhabra has seen it all. His recent stint at *Splitsvilla season 14* led him to recognition, as a result of his dominating yet endearing performance, along with his camaraderie with fellow contestant Kashish Ratnani.

Joshua Chhabra's career took off like a rocket, when he won the Bombay Times Fresh Face Award at the age of 17. The handsome hunk turned into a sensation in 2016, after bagging the Gladrags Mr. India title.

This sportsman turned model/actor began his career in the fashion industry at the tender age of 17 when he was offered to take part in several fashion shows at college. The top model even represented India at the Mr. World contest in 2018 and was honored with the Indus Award for Sexiest Indian man 2019. The same year, he made his acting debut with the song—Selfie Queen and went on to feature in various songs and web series.

On the sports front, Joshua played tennis at an international level and, captained the Bombay U-16 and U-18 cricket teams for three years before taking a deep dive into the tinsel town. Are you wondering why Joshua didn't continue in the realm of sports? He says, "Despite being extremely good at sports, I was subjected to internal politics and that was disheartening. When I ultimately won Bombay Times fresh face at 17, that's when I decided I'd become a full-time model and an actor. I was in a spot where I had to either pick sports or modeling because I knew it wouldn't be possible to do both."

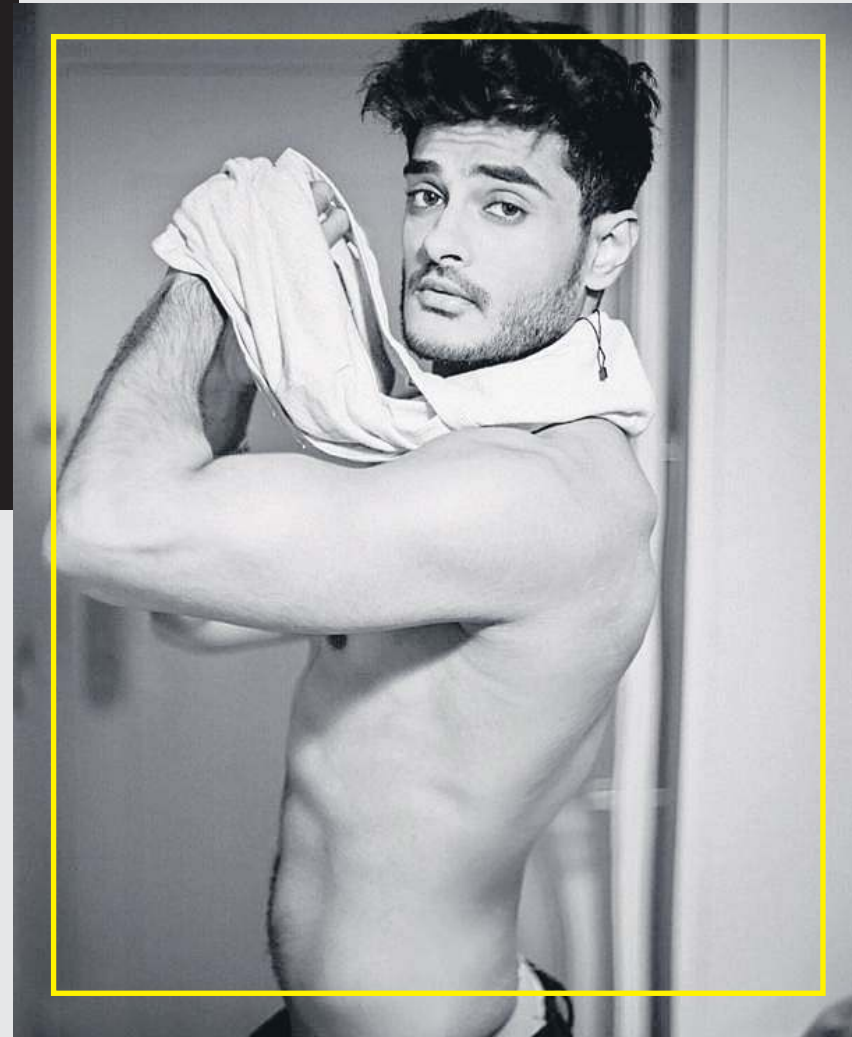
Therefore, the *Selfie Queen* actor made a firm decision to make it big in the film industry. So big, that he considers Shah Rukh Khan as his potential competition. "The desire to be the best at what I do has always been there. I don't consider Shah Rukh Khan my idol, I

see him as my competition in the next two years. I want to compete with these big people and that drive has helped me to achieve so much at a young age. I want to be around and rule this space as much as can," ambitiously shares Joshua.

Looking back at his time on the reality dating show *Splitsvilla*, the model comments, "I wouldn't say it was amazing but my experience was kind of bittersweet. I was very excited when I was offered the show because I thought it'd be a great way for people to know me for who I am. To be honest, when I look back, it wasn't all that fun. Staying in a confined space with a bunch of toxic people drains you. I am a mentally strong individual but if I'm saying this one can only understand how difficult it was."

People who have watched *Splitsvilla*, very well know that the alpha male was cornered for just being himself. "People are of two kinds, either they are dogs or lions. People over there turned into dogs and targeted me. All of them ganged up against me and treated me the wrong way. Dealing with people who were jealous and insecure was not easy. They were intimidated by my personality. So, they were looking for ways to assassinate my character and get me out of the show. Surviving in such a negative place mentally and emotionally drains you out. I kept fighting every single day and never gave up."

Shows like *Splitsvilla* often bring out adorable friendly relationships in the open. The rapport that Joshua and Kashish shared on the show has had a separate fan base, for a very long time. Speaking of it, he expresses, "Time spent with Kashish is the only nice memory that I have from the show. As long as she was with me on the show, she was my source of strength and comfort. That was enough for me to fight everyone on the show. Obviously, interacting with Sunny Leone and Arjun Bijlani felt really great. They are two wonderful people to be around with. Otherwise, I would never meet all the other people outside the show. Another beautiful



part is the kind of love that people are showering on me after the show. I never put anyone down and kept to myself. I entered the show with an image of a playboy and they all had a perception about me but I exited as someone who is loyal towards people and stands up for what he says."

The *Charmsukh Trapped* star also shared a good bond with fellow contestant Justin D'Cruz but that relationship came to an abrupt end when the latter chose to play the safe game. "Justin was my only friend in the house. I always defended and protected him. In one of the episodes, I was accused of something that was shameful. I'm grateful to my audience for seeing through the ugly plan that was devised against me. Justin could have stood up for me and said all that was inaccurate but he chose to be a part of the majority and decided to be nice to everyone in order to maintain a good relationship. He made me the scapegoat and chose his selfish reasons over me. He went ahead knowing that his decision could've affected my career if it

would have gone the wrong way. There's a saying, right? "Don't be a snake," I'd say, "Don't be Justin". He showed his true colors. He's worse than a snake. It's okay to be a snake but don't be a Justin to anybody."

The ambitious young macho man is gearing up for a Hollywood project which will most probably go on the floors in March '23. "Hollywood happening before Bollywood might be on the cards and I'm excited about that," adds the aspiring star. A leading Bollywood production house is in talks with the actor. However, nothing has been confirmed yet. Good news for Joshua fans, as he hinted at taking part in the next season of Hindi *Bigg Boss*.

"Throughout my life, I have consistently dreamt of being a Bollywood star," expressed Joshua and concluded, "*Splitsvilla* helped to get that visibility. People who didn't know me started taking notice of my personality and talent. *Bigg Boss* is also on the cards for this year, but I will only consider that offer if my movie aspirations don't materialise."

## Busting myths around Refractive Procedures



Procedures for the removal of glasses (Refractive surgery) are generally classified as cosmetic procedures. But are they truly cosmetic or curative?

Take the case of a person with high glass power, the first action on waking up in the morning is groping around for the glasses, a person with minus power can at least see the time on the alarm clock by the bedside, but persons with plus glass power can neither see the alarm clock nor the wall clock clearly. The extreme situation would be that of the person who reaches for glasses even to see dreams with clarity.

So, in a nutshell, spectacle dependency has a direct effect on functionality and hence the quality of life and freedom from spectacles is more curative than cosmetic.

The options that are available for achieving freedom from glasses are LASER-based and LENS-based surgical procedures.

Lasik has become a household term, not only in families with girls of marriageable age but also as a requirement for jobs that specify clear vision without glasses

A safe and easy procedure, invented in 1989, conventionally uses Excimer Laser. Now Femto laser is also used to make the procedure simpler and safer. The latest technology in this field is the 'smile' procedure, which has done away

with even those few rare complications possible with regular Lasik.

Then there are those people who have high powers which are not amenable to being corrected with Laser technology, the option available for them is the Phakic IOL procedure, wherein a very thin bio-compatible synthetic lens is permanently implanted inside the eyeball.

This again is a procedure with minimal complications and good reproducible outcomes.

The success of both Lasik and Phakic IOL procedures depends as much on flawless surgery in the hands of an experienced surgeon as much as on precise pre-operative assessment using cutting-edge technology to acquire the details of the patient's eyes in the most accurate way. Advanced software uses this data to design personalised treatment protocols for each eye

Words like Aspheric, wavefront, and higher order aberrometry which are routinely used in astronomical telescopes become regular in the vocabulary of Refractive Surgeons, indicative of the peak of optical technology that is utilized in providing that crystal clear spectacle-free vision.

Refractive surgery offers a safe simple and easy solution to those who dream of having a clear vision without the burden of spectacles paving their way to a better quality of life.



(The writer is Dr. Shibu Varkey, MS, DNB, DO, FRCS (UK) Regional Medical Director, TN. MaxiVision Eye Hospitals.)



# what's brewing?



Yamini



Deepthi



Kushi

Sutraa introduces a premium fashion and lifestyle exhibition, which will commence from January 11, and continue till January 13, at Hotel Taj Krishna.



Aparna Reddy



Yashaswi Shetty



Lucky Lakshmi

Shantha Kumari, Joint Commissioner of GST office, along with Dr. A.K. Roohi, Regional Manager, Heritage Health Insurance, inaugurated the 7th edition of Sankranthi Sambaraalu of Sri Avanthi Silks in Hyderabad.



PARTY  
Photos by SV Chary



KL Deemed-to-be University, inaugurated the Germany-based Celonis 'Process Mining' Centre of Excellence in Hyderabad. The university signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Munich-based global leader in Execution Management 'Celonis', to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) at the KLH Global Business School, Hyderabad.



To create more awareness on identifying hearing loss, and getting proper treatment at the earliest possible, Secunderabad KIMS hospital conducted a "Cochlear Implant Recipient Meet" on Sunday. Tollywood actor Naga Chaitanya, along with Chairman and Managing director of KIMS hospitals, Dr. B.Bhaskarrao, Head of the ENT Department Dr. Janardhan Rao, Chief Audiologist Sivaprasad, graced the occasion.

## listings

### AN ENSEMBLE EVENING TO REMEMBER AT GANDIPET LAKE PARK BY AGAM

On 7th January, all roads in Hyderabad lead to the Gandipet Lake Park, it was an evening to celebrate with progressive rock performance by AGAM, a live act in the backdrop of stunning Gandipet Lake, the music lovers couldn't have asked for more. Youth in hundreds were seen enjoying the AGAM live performance. The musical evening was presented by Parampara foundation for Gudisambaralu.

When two organizations with the same objective get together to create awareness of India's art among the youth, it is definite to create a magical moment of sheer delight, said the founders of Parampara Shashi Reddy and SriNagi. The show opened with the invocative Brahma's Dance followed by Swati Tirunal's Dhanasree Thillana set the mood for recital, with the moonlit evening, the lapping waters of Osman Sagar a perfect backdrop. The guitarist playing at interlude enhanced the melody of the performance with the tempo building up. Rangapura vihar, an all-time favourite of the

Rasikas found them in sheer bliss, a perfect offering to Sri Rama. Yet another popular item, the boat song, a Malayalam piece brought to life The Onam boat racing in the backwaters of Kerala. The resounding voice of Harish Siva Ramakrishna with the band playing took the audience into raptures of hysterical delight. Parampara's founders SriNagi and Shashi Reddy deserve special mention for bringing to the forefront such a mesmerizing evening by opening the doors of Indian Culture to thousands of viewers.

### THE PRADHAN MANTRI NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP MELA

As a part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to boost career opportunities for India's youth under Skill India Mission, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) is conducting the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela (PMNAM) on January 9, 2023, across 242 districts in 28 states and union territories of India. Several local businesses and organisations have been invited to be a part of this apprenticeship mela to provide local youth with relevant opportunities to shape their careers through apprenticeship training. The event will witness the participation from many companies representing various sectors. The participating organisations will have the chance to meet potential apprentices on a single platform and choose applicants on the spot, providing them with an opportunity to strengthen their livelihood and learn new skills. Individuals can register for the mela by visiting <https://www.apprenticeshipindia.gov.in/> and to find the mela's nearest location. The candidates who are Class 5 to Class 12 pass outs and have skill training certificates, or ITI Diploma holders or graduates can apply in this apprenticeship mela. The candidates must carry three copies of their resume, three copies of all the marksheets and certificates, photo ID (Aadhaar card/driving licence etc) and three passport size photographs to the respective venues. Those who have already enrolled have been requested to reach the venue with all the relevant documents. Through this fair, the candidates will also earn National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)-recognised certifications, improving their employability rate after the training sessions.

### DEADLINE FOR 2023 JANUARY LSAT—INDIA REGISTRATION WINDOW ANNOUNCED

LSAT—India™ designed by the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) and delivered by Pearson VUE, will be offered twice in 2023—once in January and again in June. The deadline to register for the January administration of LSAT—India 2023 is January 11, 2023. The January test will be conducted on 22 January 2023 in multiple slots. The link to register for the exam is <http://pearsonvueindia.com/lsatindia>. LSAT—India™ carries a total of 92 questions to be answered in 2 hours 20 minutes. The scorecard of LSAT—India™ reports a scaled score and a percentile rank. To provide maximum access and convenience to test takers, the examination will be delivered across India through an online mode, with remote proctoring to ensure test integrity. In order to access the test from home, candidates will need to ensure that they meet all the necessary system and environment requirements before taking the test. Candidates are urged to visit the FAQ section to check all the relevant information about the test including system requirements and test preparation.

### G SQUARE EPITOME LAUNCHES ITS 2ND PLOT PROJECT

G Square Epitome has launched yet another prestigious project "G Square Epitome Integrated City". Fully Approved by HMDA and RERA, G Square Epitome Integrated City is located on the Hyderabad-Vijayawada Highway which is also referred as the "Next Gachibowli" by several real estate analysts. This project is spread across 1242 acres with Phase 1 of the plot project covering 368 acres with 140+ world-class amenities. All the buyers of this project will have access to Hyderabad's largest Clubhouse (5.65 acres) equipped with various lifestyle and entertainment facilities. The project has various integrated infrastructure such as 100-acre Golf Course, 40-acre Luxury Resort, Wellness Center, Sports Academy, School, College and much more. Located on the busy Hyderabad-Vijayawada National Highway-65, and nestled between mountains, farmlands, and a sprawling 279-acre natural lake, G Square Epitome Integrated City is one of the largest real estate projects of Hyderabad. Over 5 IT Parks, Industrial Estates, MSMEs and several Logistical Hubs are in the pipeline to set up base in this busy highway.



### MEISTERWURST'S GOURMET MEAT NOW IN HYD

If you want to enjoy the authentic flavours of German Sausage sitting in Hyderabad, then you have got to order from MeisterWurst, who have recently expanded in Hyderabad markets. They deliver mouth-watering German-flavoured sausages, bacon, meatloaf, cold cuts, and tenderloins. But now, as a Pan India expansion, the brand is all set to deliver in Hyderabad. You don't need an occasion or festival to enjoy the very best of German treats, as there is meat on every occasion! And to enjoy the best of German-flavoured sausages, you can simply order from MeisterWurst, now open at Hyderabad and ready to deliver.



## FUN

### ARCHIE



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### GARFIELD



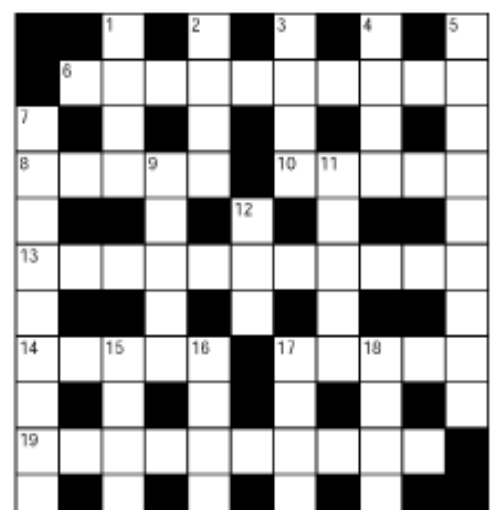
### REALITY CHECK



### SPEED BUMP



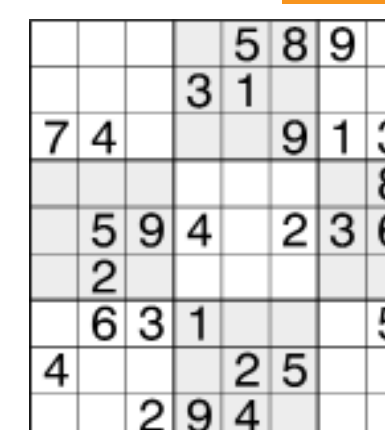
### CROSSWORD



### NANCY



### SUDOKU



**Yesterday's solution**

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

**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**

- A traffic circle where roads cross
- A pointy thing that indicates direction
- Snapshot
- A greeting (4,7)
- Salty water from the eyes
- Rubber covers on wheels
- Getting better after illness
- 9 A command
- Bees make this
- A fishing pole
- A curved support under a bridge
- Rescue
- Grow weary
- Wear this on a finger

**DOWN**

- Bitter-tasting
- Cold winter crystals
- Moist
- A song for one singer
- The most powerful
- Female children

**SOLUTION**

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

### GINGER MEGGS





# Avika Gor: None of the 'good' Telugu scripts will dangle, I am the investor now

Sai Ronak and Avika Gor are currently gearing up for their romantic entertainer *Popcorn*, which will hit theaters on February 10. The Romantic entertainer marks the debut of Avika as a producer. The actress, who is all excited for the film, shares some exclusive insights about her debut production project

SHIKHA DUGGAL

For Avika Gor, donning the cap of a leadership position now was truly moving and affecting. It was frankly visible at the launch of her first ever baby project under her own banner, where we saw the actress crying her eyes out and Nagarjuna Akkineni bringing some solace on the stage. Capture-worthy moment! And, the cherry on the cake where her boyfriend's support went beyond the doubt.

Avika really feels he made a difference in her life apart from her encouraging parents. So let's not waste any more time and bring you the sentiments of a newly turned producer.

"My curiosity led me to become a producer: always on the sets of my movies I was more interested in how the editing process was done. If I may recall, my *Balika Vadhu* co-star and I used to make short films too, which premiered at Cannes. That's where the knock began! Becoming a producer doesn't mean I'll quit acting now. The love is so enormous that I have seen people dying to live my life, and I can't let it go. My inclination is more towards Telugu cinema, I don't want any of their scripts to be hanging in the middle just so they can't find an investor. Now, I am that investor! Was a little apprehensive at the beginning, since I don't belong to a filmy background but here's my first project titled *Popcorn*."

Taking the paramount from the front, Avika explains how it goes back at her production house, "Telugu industry respects women leaders like no other. They know I am not a newcomer. My team relies only on me to take the creative calls! I am always there as a producer now, my involvement has increased ten folds. Initially, my father was in doubt about giving me a chance to debutantes because he was counting on big names. I think it's a little different. I took the help of a factual approach and made him believe in me. I was successful in convincing him, finally. I have already locked two more films under my banner even before the release of *Popcorn*. I am on a rage."

She couldn't stop herself from nar-

rating what happened at the launch, and goes on, "Before meeting him at the launch, he invited me over to know more about how have I treaded on the path of becoming a producer at such a young age. He called me "courageous" knowing the insights of the business himself. He told, it's very rare to have a producer like this in our industry yet. I chose *Popcorn* as my first production, because it's a complicated story and I love this genre way too much. It was extremely challenging for us because we are whirling inside an elevator. Nobody has ever dared to try such a concept until now. My entrepreneurial brain started to tick as soon as I heard the script: a story inside an elevator is of good productions value (she giggled)."

The *Thankyou* fame continued, "He advised me to go for the child's play, a script that moves the cine-goers. He informed let the team take care of the commercialisation, I must focus on emotions. I will never bring in characters that are dancing around the trees now, they should have substance to show. When in a meeting as a producer, even my team never blindly follows my commands and I appreciate their sensibilities. We discuss and discuss, and that worked in our favour. They neither underestimate my knowledge on films. Over the years also, I have made my image very conscious like that and would love to implement the same through my production banner too. I never went after the big banners, will advise the same to the upcoming actors too. Never do average work after becoming a star! Be patient: innumerable script narrations and meetings will only lead to fame."

Talking a little about what's happening in the film too, she shared, "The title resonates with entertainment, it has flavours. Speaking, metaphorically, 90 percent of the film is shot inside the elevator and it wasn't difficult, it was different. It wasn't claustrophobic but we didn't change our costumes at all! Our songs were choreographed inside a lift, unimaginable. Although, before starting I was under the shadow that a dance sequence inside an elevator may fail but it worked out well for us."

Avika claimed taking the call of signing Sai Ronak was one of her first cool decisions as a producer since, "He's way too charming. You can watch him for hours and hours and can't get bored! I did my first ever on-screen kiss with him, so Ronak is someone who I can never forget. I remember having my chums on the sets and he kept reassuring whether I was doing fine or not. These little moments are unforgettable for me. In fact, he used to fill me with positivity on the sets! He not just understood me as a co-actor, but also obeyed me as a producer. For example, when the shoot used to get extended for a few more

hours I never saw Sai Ronak throwing tantrums on me. He was never in a hurry to go back to his vanity van, which shows an actor's personality. So, my first ever production went really well."

# Kalyanam Kamaneeyam clears its Censor formalities with 'U' certificate

Young hero Santosh Shoban's new film is *Kalyanam Kamaneeyam*. Kollywood actress Priya Bhavani Shankar is its heroine. UV Concepts is producing the movie. An engaging and content-driven film dealing with marriage and associated issues, the film is directed by debutant Anil Kumar Aalla. The film will be released in theatres on January 14, 2023.

The Censor Board has awarded a clean 'U' certificate to the film. The project has burnished its credentials as a perfect family watch this festival season.

Sankranthi, *Kalyanam Kamaneeyam* is coming out as a pleasantly fresh small movie amid three big movies: *Veera Simha Reddy*, *Waltair Veerayya*, and *Vaarasudu*. The film's motion poster and two songs (read *O Manasa* and *Ho Egire*) have already been a hit. This is a content-oriented entertainer that is meant for the family audience. The audience are expected to receive it on a strong note. The makers have made it for the family audience.

This



# KVN Production to collaborate soon with KGF star

Yash has become a nationwide sensation, after his massive success with the *KGF* franchise.

After *KGF* films, actor Yash has not disclosed any information about his upcoming projects.

While Yash was unable to let fans know about his upcoming projects on his birthday like he promised, there seems to be a major update about his highly awaited movie *Yash 19!*

Looks like his next film will be produced by *RRR* fame KVN Productions. With a snap of the *KGF* star and the head of KVN Productions surfacing online, one can't help but speculate a possible collaboration. According to the latest buzz, Yash's next film will be produced by KVN Productions allegedly has a whopping Rs 400 crore budget in mind. Additionally, reports state that *Yash 19!* will be another pan-Indian movie and an official announcement about the highly awaited movie's director to be made later this month. If sources are to be believed, Mufti director Narthan has been roped in to direct the commercial film.



# Devara Santa to send 100 fans to a mountaineering holiday

Tollywood's young hero Vijay Deverakonda turned Santa for his fans to surprise them with an all-expenses-paid trip for 100 of his fans. On Sunday, Vijay took to his Instagram handle and shared a video in which he said Happy new year my love this is Devara Santa and said that the majority of his fans through polls opted to go for the mountains and therefore it is finalised to go on vacation to mountains. Reports suggest that the actor will send 100 members to Manali to enjoy snowcapped mountains.

He asked to fill out the form and the link is in the Instagram bio. He captioned his post as "100 of you go to the mountains Update! Happy new year, Big kisses and lots of love to all of you." Earlier Vijay asked his followers to choose one among the Mountains of India, Beaches of India, Cultural trip of India or deserts in India.



# Samantha reveals the "toughest part" of shooting for Shaakuntalam

Samantha Ruth Prabhu is all set for her upcoming release, *Shaakuntalam*. The film that also stars Dev Mohan, will release on January 9 at 12 pm. As fans eagerly wait for the trailer, Samantha has now posted about what the most difficult part about shooting the film was. And no, it does not have anything to do with her Myositis diagnosis.

Samantha took to her Instagram to reveal what the toughest part about shooting her upcoming film,

*Shaakuntalam*, was. The actress first shared a glimpse of her pet doggo, Sasha, lying lazily on the sofa. What was funny was how she was sleeping. Along with it was a picture of the actress herself, posing with the utmost grace and flaunting her washboard abs. Captioning the post, she wrote, "The toughest part of *Shaakuntalam* was maintaining grace and posture while walking, talking, running even crying! And grace is sooo not my thing. Had to take training sessions for it! Should have taken Sasha along...clearly so not her thing

either! #LikeMotherLikeDaughter (sic)" *Shaakuntalam* is a mythological drama, written and directed by Gunasekhar. The film is based on Kalidasa's play, *Shakuntala*.

While Samantha essays the role of Shakuntala, Dev Mohan will be seen as King Dushyanta. Mohan Babu, Gautami, Aditi Balan and Ananya Nagalla will be seen in supporting roles.

*Shaakuntalam* will open in theatres in multiple languages on February 17.



# Lyrical video of Mass Mogudu to be out today

Nandamuri Balakrishna has been in top form and is looking forward to continuing with his next flick, *Veera Simha Reddy*. The trailer and the songs released so far have received a fantastic reception. The movie is rocking in the US pre-sales as well.

*Mass Mogudu* song from the film should have already been out by now, but the makers decided to release the trailer first, postponing the song release. Now it is announced that the song will be coming out on 9th January at 07:35 PM.

This is a full-on dance number featuring Balakrishna and the film's leading lady Shruthi Haasan. Thaman is the music composer for the film, which is produced by Mythri Movie Makers. The movie releases on 12th January.





# DELAYED DEBUT, STRUGGLES MADE ME HUNGRIER: SURYA

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Suryakumar Yadav was well past 30 when he made his India debut, but the swash-buckling batter says his belated selection had only strengthened his resolve and made him even hungrier to succeed in top-flight. Surya produced yet another incredible knock in the shortest format — a 51-ball 112 not out — as India outplayed Sri Lanka by 91 runs in the third T20I to secure a memorable 2-1 series win here on Saturday.

"It does make me even more hungrier (sic) now," Surya told India head coach Rahul Dravid when asked if the long wait has taught him to value his success a lot more.

"I mean the amount of domestic cricket I have played, I have always enjoyed playing that for my state side Mumbai and I always try to put up a show. 'Enjoyed batting even there as well. Yes it was a little challenging in the last few years but kept telling myself this is why you play this game, enjoy it, the passion for this game kept me driving so I just kept going.'

The interaction between the two was organised by BCCI TV. "It is lovely to have someone here with me who, as a young kid growing up, did not watch me bat. And I hope you didn't, I am sure you didn't," Dravid



started the chat on a lighter note, to which Surya replied, "No, I did watch (you bat)."

Surya's batting is a stark contrast to the way Dravid played his cricket, and the former India captain was alluding to that only.

Dravid then asked if he could pick one or two knocks that he feels are his best.

"It is actually difficult for me to pick any one innings... I enjoyed batting in all the difficult situations where I went into bat. I just enjoyed myself, whatever I did in the last one year. I have been doing the same thing again.

"As I said before as well, I just try to enjoy and express myself as much as possible. In

those difficult situations, teams try to pull the game off. I try to take the game on. If it works well for me and the team, I'm happy," said Surya.

The middle-order batter's century was his third in the format in just seven months, making him the first player in the history of the game to score three T20I hundreds when not

bowler can bowl at that time and it works out."

"If I am meeting the ball really well or I mean I try and set the field for myself whenever any left-arm spinner or leg-spinner or fast bowler is bowling and just try and time the ball as much as possible."

Surya also credited his family for his immense success in recent times and Dravid, who was in charge when the batter was finding his feet at the India A level for years, lauded the role played by his folks.

"I mean the role of the family has been most important in my cricketing journey till now. When I started playing cricket, they were the ones who helped me out of the box. Because my dad is an engineer, so in my family there is no history of sports. I had to be a little different for him to see a spark in me and push me.

"They have sacrificed a lot and obviously my wife. After we got married she's been pushing me really hard in terms of nutrition and in terms of staying fit.

"We have been talking about cricket a lot when I go back home and we discuss how we can do better, how we can be one step ahead at this level and we really enjoy doing that."

Dravid concluded the interaction by saying, "Long it may continue."

## The more pressure you put, the better you can play: Surya

PTI ■ RAJKOT

India's swashbuckling batter Suryakumar Yadav says he prefers putting himself under pressure while preparing for a match.

The 32-year-old on Saturday smashed an unbeaten 51-ball 112 against Sri Lanka in the third T20I to pave the way for India's 91-run win and a 2-1 series verdict in favour of the home team.

"It is really important to put pressure on yourself when you are preparing for the game. The more pressure you put, the better you can play. There is a lot of hard work involved. Some quality practice sessions are also involved," Suryakumar said after his blazing knock.

His knock, laced with seven fours and nine sixes, powered India to an imposing 228 for five, a total that proved to be too good for the visitors.

Surya played shots in all parts of the ground and credited head coach Rahul Dravid for allowing him to play his natural game.

"The boundaries behind were 59-60m, so I tried to clear them. There are a few shots that are pre-determined but you have to be ready for other strokes as well.

"Most of the time, I try to find the gap, and use the field to my advantage. Dravid lets me enjoy, and tells me to express myself," he said.

The middle-order batter's century was his third in the international format in just seven months, making him the first player in the history of the game to score three T20I hundreds when not opening the batting.

Surya also became the fastest batter to reach the 1500-run mark in T20Is in terms of balls faced.

In 45 T20Is, the Mumbai-born cricketer has scored 1578 runs at an average of 46.41 and a strike-rate of 180.34 with three hundreds and 13 half-centuries to his name.

"I'm really happy with the way the innings went," Yadav said after his latest knock.

"A few of my shots are pre-determined, but these are the shots I've been playing over the last year and I'm not doing anything different.

"Most of the time, I try to find the gap, and use the field to my advantage.

"So nothing new. It's a fresh start in 2023 and I hope to continue doing well."

## Just ensured the youngsters they belonged at this level: Pandya



PTI ■ RAJKOT

Captaining a young side could be tricky but Hardik Pandya, who led India to a 2-1 series win over Asian champions Sri Lanka, feels it was not that difficult as he just had to ensure that they "belong at this level".

The three-match T20I series against Sri Lanka saw the Indian set-up begin a new era under the leadership of Pandya.

"It's actually not that difficult. My life becomes very easy, when the experienced players are there, I don't say much to them because they are here because they have done a lot of good things in their lives," Pandya said after leading the team to a series win in Rajkot here on Saturday.

The Indian team had none

of the three senior batters in Rohit Sharma, KL Rahul, Virat Kohli, while the likes of Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant, Ravindra Jadeja, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, R Ashwin, Mohammed Shami and Jasprit Bumrah were also not there for various reasons.

Backing his young group, the new India skipper said they would make mistakes but it's about accepting and learning from them.

"Managing is not difficult, but yes it's a young group. They will make mistakes, they will learn from it, something that we have emphasised that once you make a mistake you make sure that you learn from it. Acceptance is very important in this sport. If you don't expect it, things go very far.

"But when a young team is

there, the only thing I can help them is about giving them confidence, how to make sure they are at a level, when they are playing here, they feel that they belong here.

"That is very important in international cricket. In this group, it's a very good journey. Youngsters are willing to learn and it makes my journey very easy."

All praise for Suryakumar's explosive century, Hardik said: "Today, it felt like Sri Lanka against Surya. It makes my life very easy. I always mention that someone like Surya is so important for us in white-ball cricket.

"The way he plays some shots, the way he changes the morale of the bowler and which kind of helps the other batter as

well." Asked if he had any special word for Surya with the way he batted, Pandya said: "You don't tell him anything. Surya, the kind of form he's playing and the clarity he has you don't really need to speak to him.

"He is always very clear about his plans and that's the reason he's successful in this format. He doesn't doubt his ability. Wherever he's in double minds, he always comes and have a chat. I don't think anyone has to say anything to him."

"Special mention to Rahul Tripathi as well, the kind of intent he showed that is something which is so natural to him. It can change the momentum of the game.

"If you see the first couple of overs the ball was doing something, and people from the outside thought there's something there in the wicket.

"But because of his intent all of a sudden the ball stopped moving, they changed their length, and then it was all about as if they were chasing the game. Overall, it was terrific from Surya and Tripathi."

On Team India's aggressive approach, he said: "It's not always that we will play aggressive in terms of hitting. There might be a case where we do the same thing but we end up scoring 150.

"But what is important is the intent, you look for a boundary but when a good ball is there you respect that ball. But if you have a defensive mindset, even if a bad ball is there, you are not able to put that away."

"The wicket was suitable for the batters once it got old. But it's more about the intent and signs of aggression that we showed that was important on a tricky wicket. It just makes a difference of 10 runs which can be decisive overall," he concluded.

## Nehra made a big difference to my captaincy at GT: Pandya

PTI ■ RAJKOT

There has been no looking back for Hardik Pandya since he led Gujarat Titans to an IPL triumph in their maiden appearance last year, and the new Indian T20I skipper credits his franchise coach Ashish Nehra for making "a big difference" to his captaincy.

Coming back from a long injury layoff, the premier all-rounder was made the Gujarat skipper in a bold move by the first-timers.

But Pandya, who had led



and led by example. "What has been very important from Gujarat point of view is the kind of coach I worked with. Ashish Nehra made a big difference in my life, because of our mindsets. We might be two different personalities, but we have very similar cricketing thoughts," Pandya said after leading India to a 2-1 series win over Sri Lanka here on Saturday.

"Because I was with him, it added value to my captaincy. It helped me to get exactly what I know. It was just about getting

that assurance, once I got that... The awareness of this game I always knew. It was all about knowing and backing what I knew already. It has definitely helped me," he added.

Before the home series against Sri Lanka, the Indian selectors overhauled the side after the Rohit Sharma-led team failed to win the T20I World Cup in Australia, losing to eventual champions England in the semifinal.

Prior to this series, Pandya had led India's T20I side whenever Rohit was unavailable.

## Cummins wants all bases covered in 'big series' against India

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia skipper Pat Cummins wants everything at his "disposal" for the "big" series in India next month and besides frontline spinner Nathan Lyon, he feels Ashton Agar and Travis Head too will be vital to the team's bowling plans.

Australia are gearing up for the four-match Border-Gavaskar series, starting in Nagpur on February 9.

"I think our squad will have basically all possibilities. It's a big series, so we want everything at our disposal," Cummins said.

Agar had been called up for the final Test against South Africa keeping in mind the Indian tour. However in the 22 overs he bowled, the 29-year-old gave away 58 runs and remained wicketless in the drawn Test.

But being a left-arm spinner, he could prove effective against the Indian top order that is dominated by right handers in the absence of southpaw Rishabh Pant, who will miss the series due to injuries sustained in a car accident last month.

While Nathan Lyon will spearhead the spin department in India, Cummins feels Head will also be vital.

"Trav is a slightly different off-spin bowler to Nath (Lyon), a bit flatter which could be really helpful over there. I've been really happy with how he (Head) has bowled, and probably under-bowled him even in this game.

"So he'll be a big part of our team over there.

The skipper is also counting on the likes of part-time spinners Marnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith to pitch in the slow bowling department.

"Over there, if you're picking two spinners you think it's going to be quite a spinning wicket and Travis Head, Marnus, Smudge (Smith), they all come into it a bit more.

"Generally, if you're picking two spinners you're not expecting it to be a really long five-day game, and we've got some other resources there anyway.

All-rounder Cameron Green, who missed the Sydney Test due to a fractured finger, is expected to recover in time for the India tour.



## Mom Deepika back at training 20 days after giving birth to daughter

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Exactly a month ago, Deepika Kumari, the most decorated Indian archer, became a mother. Twenty days later, the 28-year-old was back on the field at SAI, Kolkata with her 44-pound bow and arrows, leaving the newly-born daughter with her "really supportive" in-laws.

It's a routine Deepika has been following for the past 10 days to make up for her lost time and pave the way for an India comeback through the upcoming Open Senior National trials slated here from January 10-17.

In a career spanning more than a decade, the two-time former world number one has virtually won everything save an Olympic medal.

And this being the penultimate year before Paris 2024, Deepika is well aware that it's a "now-or-never" moment for her.

"Kya karein koi aur option hi nahin hai (I've no other option left)," the three-time Olympian said.

"Of course, I will be there. If I don't appear for trials, I will be out of the team for the whole year."

So she has no other option but to hit the training ground with her husband and India number one Atanu Das who too

was axed from the Indian team after the Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

The couple failed to make the cut for the World Cup and Asian Games trials last year.

But after the Hangzhou showpiece was postponed to 2023, Deepika made a comeback at World Cup Stage 3 in Paris in June last year, winning a team silver before going into maternity break.

She's confident of making the top-16 which is the cutoff mark in the first Open selection trials.

The 16-member side will be pruned to eight players who will represent India at the World Cups, World Championships (July 31-August 6) and Asian Games (September 23-October 8).

"I'm not changing the bow. Somehow, I'm managing. I'm sure I'll make it to top 16 and then we will see how it goes from there," adds Deepika.

The seven-day selection trials will see about 176 men's and 94 women's archers fighting it out in the recurve section.

The compound section has a tentative entry list of 157 male and 89 female archers including the Indian top two -- Abhishek Verma and Jyothi Surekha Vennam.

## SA hold out for rare draw to deny Oz series sweep

AP ■ SYDNEY

South Africa were untroubled as they batted out for their first draw in almost six years on the final day of the third Test in Sydney on Sunday, denying Australia a series whitewash.

Australia went into the fifth day of the rain-ravaged Test requiring 14 wickets for an improbable victory, but the Proteas comfortably negotiated their way through to earn a first draw in their last 47 Tests going back to New Zealand in 2017.

The teams shook hands with five overs left and South Africa at 106 for two in their second innings with Sarel Erwee unbeaten on 42 and Temba Bavuma 17. Australia enforced the follow-on after Josh Hazlewood led the way with four wickets off his future as South Africa's Test skipper.

"We tried different things, kept putting balls in good areas and hoped the luck would turn," Australia skipper Pat Cummins said.

"We were up against it, we had 150 overs to take 20 wickets on a good surface." Australia could only muster two wickets in South Africa's second innings with skipper Dean Elgar yet again failing along with Heinrich Klaasen.

Elgar fell for the fourth time in the series to a leg-side catch by wicket-keeper Alex Carey for 10.

Cummins peppered him with a rising delivery and targeted Elgar's technical batting flaw off his hips for yet another cheap dismissal.

Elgar finished a miserable series with just 56 runs from six innings at an average of 9.33, raising yet more questions about his future as South Africa's Test skipper.

"Touring Australia is never easy," Elgar said. "The message to the group



yesterday was to fight it out on day five.

"Only three or four guys have played here before, so there are a lot of learnings. It is a tough place to tour, maybe the toughest in the world.

"Test cricket teaches you resilience. When things aren't on your side, you still have to wake up and try again."

Australia opener Usman Khawaja was named man-of-the-match for his unbeaten 195 in Australia's first innings declaration of 475-4.

Fellow opener David Warner was man-of-the-series, based largely on his double century in Melbourne.

Asked about his feelings on being stranded short of his first Test double-century by the declaration, Khawaja said: "I would have loved to get a double ton.

"But this is what cricket is about. You play for milestones but you also need to do the best for the team."