

The BRS government introduced the Dharani Portal and grabbed lakhs of acres. The Dharani website has become synonymous with corruption. The Modi government provided land rights to everyone through the Bhū Swamitva Yojana scheme. Land borders were recorded using satellite data to eliminate disputes through the Swamitva scheme. Banks are giving loans to people based on land records which they get through the Swamitva scheme.



-Rajnath Singh, Union Defence Minister P4

'DMK will get a fitting reply for remark on Sanatana Dharma'

VIKRANT DIVING SOMETHING INTO MORE THAN JUST AN EXAM

'I've been trying to be as realistic as POSSIBLE'

DON'T MISS...

Standing crops in 4 L acres hit by...

Chairman of the Jana Sena Political Affairs Committee, Nadendla Manohar, has expressed his concerns over the deteriorating agricultural conditions in the Krishna West Delta region, where approximately four lakh acres of crops are suffering due to water scarcity. Addressing the media at the state office in Mangalagiri on Monday, Manohar criticised the administration under Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, attributing Andhra Pradesh's hardships to what he referred to as a leader with limited knowledge. He further asserted...

-PAGE: 4

Allahabad HC acquits Pandher...

The Allahabad High Court on Monday acquitted domestic help Surendra Koli and his employer Moninder Singh Pandher in the 2006 Nithari serial killings for lack of evidence, recalling for many the chilling crime targeting young girls that came to light with skeletal remains being found behind a Noida bungalow. A two-judge bench of Justices Ashwani Kumar Mishra and SHA Rizvi allowed the appeals filed by Koli and Pandher, who were challenging the death sentence given by a CBI court in Ghaziabad. The high...

-PAGE: 5

India expected to grow at 6.3% in...

India's economic growth is expected at 6.3 per cent during 2023-24 on the back of good health of the financial sector and uptick in private investment even as downside risks remain, said a survey by industry body Fici unveiled on Monday. The latest round of Fici's Economic Outlook Survey pegs annual median gross domestic product (GDP) growth for 2023-24 at 6.3 per cent - with a minimum and maximum growth estimate of 6 per cent and 6.6 per cent, respectively, the chamber stated. The median...

-PAGE: 8

Cricket is included in 2028 Olympics...

For long, cricket remained a statistical global sport sans a true global footing. A solid fan base of 2.5 billion and an ever-swelling TV revenue formed its axis to be labelled as a sport with a worldwide appeal, second only to football. However, in reality, all of it is parked in the Commonwealth countries and even among them India alone helm around 70 percent, if not more, of those numbers. But now, all this could change as cricket, in its T20 avatar, has made its re-entry into the Olympic fold...

-SPORTS

Vizag will turn IT hub: CM

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy inaugurated the Rs 35 crore Infosys Development Centre here on Monday. The IT giant's unit, built with state-of-the-art facilities at the IT Hill No-2 at Madhurawada, will house 1,000 employees initially.

Addressing the Infosys staff on the occasion, the Chief Minister said that Visakhapatnam, a happening city with good facilities, has the potential to become an IT hub city like Hyderabad and Bangalore soon.

"Unfortunately, we had lost Hyderabad due to bifurcation. Nevertheless, Vizag is the biggest city in the State and has the high potential to catapult into a tier-one city. It is an education hub having eight universities including National Law University, four medical colleges, 14 engineering colleges, and 12 degree colleges besides several Public Sector Undertakings and Eastern Naval Command," he said, adding that it also has strong port-based infrastructure.

He further said that the Bhogapuram International Airport will also be ready in another two years. The Chief Minister said he would be shifting to Visakhapatnam soon and the official machinery is looking for suitable accommodation.

2



Opens Infosys Development Centre with 1,000 jobs Says State administration will shift to port city by December

Unfortunately, we had lost Hyderabad due to bifurcation. Nevertheless, Vizag is the biggest city in the State and has the high potential to catapult into a tier-one city. It is an education hub having eight universities including National Law University, four medical colleges, 14 engineering colleges, and 12 degree colleges besides several Public Sector Undertakings and Eastern Naval Command.



Jagan inaugurates pharma units

PNS ■ ANAKAPALLE

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy inaugurated three pharma companies and participated in the groundbreaking ceremony of two bulk drugs units at the JNPC here on Monday.

The Chief Minister inaugurated Eugia Steriles Private Limited at Parawada which has come up with an investment of Rs 500 crores in an extent of 20 acres and has an employment potential of 750. The plant would be manufacturing injectables and is a green

field project. The Chief Minister also inaugurated Laurus Labs Private Limited at Atchutapuram SEZ with an investment of Rs 440 crore in an extent of 45 acres and has an employment potential of 500 which carries out formulations and bulk drugs manufacturing.

PAGE: 2

Mixed response to AP CMO shift by year-end

Chief Secretary Dr. KS Jawahar Reddy has appointed a three-member committee, consisting of Special Chief Secretary (MA&UD) Y Sri Lakshmi, Special Chief Secretary (Finance) SS Rawat, and Secretary (Services HRM) of the General Administration Department, to assess accommodation options. The committee members visited the port city on Monday.

C PRADEEP KUMAR ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's decision to postpone the relocation of the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) from the originally scheduled date of Dasara to December has elicited mixed response from the people of Andhra Pradesh, particularly those in the port city. While some citizens maintain their confidence in the Chief Minister's commitment to his recent statement, others raise questions about the government's actions and intentions.

A section of the population strongly believes that the Chief Minister will uphold his promise to move the CMO to Vizag, as he reiterated during the inauguration of Infosys. However, the opposition remains skeptical, citing past promises and recent contradictions.

Despite previous delays, there is optimism that this time the CMO will indeed relocate to Vizag, with hopes that administrative operations will commence in the port city before the New Year.

On Monday, the CM also underscored the promising future of Vizag as a world-class city, which he envisions becoming a dream city for everyone in the future.

With the arrival of Infosys, the city is expected to attract more IT and infrastructure companies.

CM Jagan stated that he would make Visakhapatnam his permanent residence and that work would be conducted from the port city starting in December.

2



CID registers case against Ramoji Rao

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A case has been filed against media baron Ch Ramoji Rao by the AP CID based on a complaint given by Gadireddy Uri Reddy, son of Gadireddy Jagannadha Reddy, the founder of Margadarsi.

Uri Reddy claimed that Ramoji Rao threatened him with a gun, coercing him into signing papers that deprived his family of their rightful share in Margadarsi.

The case has been filed under IPC sections 420, 467, 120-B, R/w 34, naming Margadarsi Chairman Ramoji Rao, MD Sailaja Kiran, and others as the accused.

According to Uri Reddy's complaint, his father GJ Reddy hailing from Jonnapadu in Krishna District completed his education in the then Czechoslovakia and established Navabharat Enterprises in Delhi.

2

INNER RING ROAD CASE

Naidu's anticipatory bail plea posted for tomorrow

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Monday posted TDP chief N Chandrababu Naidu's anticipatory bail petition in the Amaravati Inner Ring Road Alignment Scam case to October 18.

The Amaravati Inner Ring Road case pertains to the alleged manipulation of the master plan of the capital city of Amaravati, the alignment of the inner ring road, and the alleged use of the seed capital to offer undue enrichment to several companies during Naidu's regime.

The Andhra Pradesh Police CID filed its counter to Naidu's anticipatory bail petition on Monday.



In the same case, three more persons, R Sambasiva Rao, P Pramila and P Rama Devi, who are connected to former minister P Narayana also filed anticipatory bail petitions.

The CID issued notices under Section 41 A CrPC to two of them and is in the process of serving them to the remaining person. Following these developments, the high court closed their petitions.

Further, the CID petitioned the high court to reopen the Amaravati Land Scam case in which the former chief minister and Narayana are accused.

The probe agency petitioned the court to reopen the case saying it has stumbled upon more evidence, which it wants to place before the court.

As the opposing lawyers wanted to file objections in the Amaravati Land Scam case, the high court posted it to November 1.

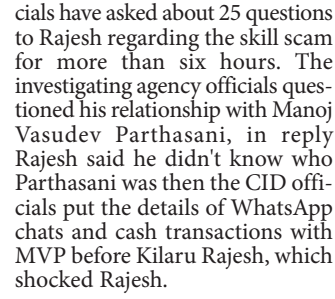
2

Lokesh's close aide Kilaru Rajesh grilled by CID

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The AP CID questioned TDP leader Kilaru Rajesh in the skill development scam case at the SIT office on Monday. Rajesh was a close aide of TDP General Secretary Nara Lokesh. CID Officials tried to get key details from him regarding the skill scam. The CID officials asked Rajesh to come once again as there are questions to be asked.

Sources say that the CID officials have asked about 25 questions to Rajesh regarding the skill scam for more than six hours. The investigating agency officials questioned his relationship with Manoj Vasudev Parthasani, in reply Rajesh said he didn't know who Parthasani was then the CID officials put the details of WhatsApp chats and cash transactions with MVP before Kilaru Rajesh, which shocked Rajesh.



It also noted that where India -- with 57 per cent of them celebrating their achievements with high sugar, high salt and high fat food -- loves to imitate the West's fast-food trends, they are not following them when it comes to their fitness habits.

According to the survey, unlike the West, Indians do not prefer to indulge in high cardio exercises or sports with most of them preferring light exercises at home (46 per cent) or walks (55 per cent).

Only 3 per cent of all the respondents enjoy swimming as a fitness activity and only 6 per cent of them indulge in sports as an everyday activity," it added.

Rajini launches extensive public healthcare outreach

Now, JAS camps to be conducted in every ward secretariat, UHC

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Health Minister Vidadala Rajini inaugurated a crucial campaign, marking the commencement of medical camps in every ward secretariat at Bikkannapalem in the district on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said that to enhance healthcare services in the State, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had approved the implementation of medical camps in every ward secretariat as part of the 'Jagananna Arogya Suraksha' programme. The primary objective is



to deliver essential healthcare services to the citizens of the state, with particular emphasis on those residing in rural and underserved regions.

Minister Rajini revealed that the initial plan was to organise 10,574 medical camps statewide.

2

76% of Indians' health choices influenced by family & friends

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Not celebrities or social media stars, a new survey reveals that as many "76 per cent" of Indians are influenced by their family, friends and colleagues when it comes to health choices, especially weight loss goals.

"State of Your Plate", out on the occasion of World Food Day, is a study of 5,000 people conducted by the fitness technology app Fitelo. It also recorded that while 58 per cent of Indians think of weight loss only when the size of their clothes increases, 46 per cent of them reconsider their eating habits after casual remarks on their body weight by family and friends.

"Unlike popular perception that celebrities and social media stars influence health choices, 76 per cent Indians are more influenced by family, friends, and colleagues to pursue health goals, especially

weight loss programmes," read the survey's findings. The survey, conducted across all age groups from 18 to 63 years, has 90 per cent of respondents from millennial and Gen Z category and 77 per cent of

its respondents are women. The findings, coming ahead of the start of the festive season in India, shows family get-togethers (57 per cent), festive occasions (44 per cent) and stressful times (35 per

cent) as the "three most difficult moments" leading to emotional eating where respondents admitted to giving up on their health goals. "Surprisingly, 33 per cent women feel that they stress-eat and lose

sight of health goals due to family responsibilities, particularly childcare. On the other hand, 35 per cent of men reported that they are more likely to go astray when their health goals at office parties," read the report.



"Surprisingly, 33 per cent women feel that they stress-eat and lose sight of health goals due to family responsibilities, particularly childcare. On the other hand, 35 per cent of men reported that they are more likely to go astray when their health goals at office parties."

Congress has not learnt from its previous flaws

The BJP figuring as the main rival in four of the five states that go to polls in November stands as a testimony how it is influencing the political consequences in the country.

To contain the BJP, the Congress has been making various false promises to the people in MP, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan, like supply of LPG connection for only Rs 500 each, paying Rs 1500 to each woman, waiving of crop loans and providing free power up to 100 units.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is going about these states and making the promises. Even in Rajasthan, the Congress offers Rs 2,000 per month to women, 10 kg of rice free of cost to each family, free travel by RTC buses for women, unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 pm for the unemployed and free supply of power up to 200 units a month and so on.

It made similar promises even in Chhattisgarh. The

Congress, which held power for over six decades in the country, is making such false promises at the national as well as the State level. Had these promises been implemented earlier, India would have become a heaven on earth.

The then PM Indira Gandhi gave the call Garibi Hatao. But, the Congress leaders filled up their coffers and became rich, the poor became poorer.

The regime of Rajiv Gandhi, who came to power with Mr Clean image, saw perpetration of the Bofors scandal. During the 10 year UPA rule, corruption was rampant. Therefore, the people buried the Congress in elections.

What happened in Karnataka five months ago? To come to power at any cost, the Congress included five major guarantees in its election manifesto and gave wide publicity to it. Now the Congress is finding it difficult

KCR seems to have learnt the trick of making false promises. KCR who hitherto had not reduced the price of the LPG cylinder is now out offering to slash the price by at least Rs 500. He is promising pucca houses, life insurance cover for all, creation of 3 lakh jobs, unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month. The million dollar question is who stopped KCR from implementing all these programmes during his 10-year tenure?

to fulfil the promises. The government would have to spend 22 per cent of the budgeted income to implement the guarantees.

The Congress that came to power in Karnataka on the plank of supplying free power up to 200 units, soon after coming to power hiked the power tariff by more than 50%. It is facing a lot of difficulties to supply 10 kg of rice to each family. The Congress government promised free

bus ride for women, but there are no sufficient number of buses. The State government is yet to kick off its other scheme of paying unemployment allowance.

The Chhattisgarh government offered to give 10 lakh jobs and pay Rs 2,500 pm towards unemployment allowance. The State is going to polls again, but there was no trace of fulfilling the promises made.

In Rajasthan, a Rs 20-crore



Y SATYA KUMAR
BJP National Secretary

scandal surfaced at tenders level in implementing Jal-Jeevan Mission. In IT sector, irregularities to the tune of another Rs 5,000 crore were reported. Large-scale corruption came to light in the mid-day meals scheme.

Now KCR seems to have learnt the trick of making false promises. KCR who hitherto had not reduced the price of the LPG cylinder is now out offering to slash the price by at least Rs 500. He is promis-

ing pucca houses, life insurance cover for all, creation of 3 lakh jobs, unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000 per month. The million dollar question is who stopped KCR from implementing all these programmes during his 10-year tenure?

Had he created jobs for the unemployed, why should a woman called Pravalika commit suicide?

Because of the inefficiency of the State government, question paper leaks have become a routine. Did anyone pay attention to the agitation of the unemployed in Telangana? Can KCR, who did not have the capacity to conduct the exams, release a White Paper on the status of his election promises made during 2014, 2018 and 2019?

Did KCR give relief to the people reducing the tax on petrol? Did anyone benefit in Telangana except KCR, his family members and his camp

followers? KCR boasted of building 24 hospitals on a par with NIMS, announced special package of Rs 50,000 crore for Dalits, reviving the closed companies, developing an industrial corridor from Hyderabad to Warangal, creation of roads and drainages in all towns and villages, cleansing the River Musi and so on.

He created several useless corporations and borrowed money recklessly for them. The Hyderabad city, which should have become a global city, reminds us of a slum even if it experiences a minor shower.

The electricity department, which was caught in a mire of debts, is about to collapse. In fact, 20 per cent of the state's revenue is going to service the debts.

The BJP never makes false promises practising election politics. The BJP is the only

party that submits progress report card on the fulfilment of the promises made to the people. Ever since Modi came to power, he changed the culture of making false promises. The BJP prepares its election manifesto only after receiving feedback from the people.

During the past nine years of the BJP regime in the country, unprecedented infrastructure development projects have been implemented. Bharat, which emerged as the fifth largest economy in the world, is soon going to improve its rank by climbing up to the third position.

Of the total Rs 50 lakh crore foreign investments received, lion's share of the foreign investments went to the productive sector. The BJP's agenda is development, but nationalism is akin to the flag for the party.

The BJP is going to secure highest number of seats in the forthcoming elections as people are aware of these facts.



Vizag police collaborate with experts to tackle traffic woes

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

The persistent issue of traffic congestion in the city has spurred the local police into action as they launch a comprehensive study of traffic movements at key junctions and seek expert opinions to alleviate traffic woes for commuters.

In a recent "stakeholder consultation meeting for easing traffic and improving road connectivity," organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in the city, PP Lal Krishna, the Managing Director and CEO of Visakha Pharmacy Limited and Chairman for the CII Visakhapatnam Zone, shared valuable insights to address the traffic challenges. He urged the district administration to crack down on violations on service roads as a short-term solution to alleviate traffic congestion. Additionally, he recommended the construction of flyovers at crucial junctions to facilitate the free flow of goods between Sheelanagar in Vizag city and Anakapalle.

The city police have been diligently observing traffic patterns during peak and non-peak hours at 15 major junctions, including Kommadi, Hanumanthuwaka, Maddilapalem, Gajuwaka, Siripuram, Jagadamba Junction, Vepagunta, and other key locations within the city. To gain a comprehensive perspective, authorities have also resorted to collecting drone visuals at strategic junctions to monitor traffic flow, especially during peak hours.

The need for immediate action is evident, given the city's rapid growth and its proximity to major public sector undertakings (PSUs) and pharmaceutical industries in the neighboring Anakapalle district.

IT Minister Gudivada Amarnath expressed confidence that the district administration was diligently working on measures to address the city's traffic woes in the near future.



Traffic wardens mooted for safer roads

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In a bid to address the alarming rise in road accidents and fatalities, the city police have unveiled a comprehensive plan to appoint traffic wardens across the city. The initiative comes as a response to the persistent issue of road accidents, which have claimed over 300 lives and left approximately 900 individuals with severe injuries annually.

The brainchild behind this innovative strategy is Dr A Ravi Sankar, the Police Commissioner and former ADG of the Road Safety Authority who meticulously analysed data from the past five years to identify accident-prone hotspots within the city limits. With his findings, a plan was devised to mitigate accidents and ensure safer roads for all residents.

These hotspots, known to contribute to more than 80 per cent of deaths and accidents in the city, will be divided into 10 separate stretches, each measuring 3.3 kilometers. Dr. Sankar emphasised that monitoring the speed and vehicular movement within those stretches was key

The appointed traffic wardens will operate in three shifts, with three members in each shift. They will be equipped with various tools and technologies to effectively manage traffic and reduce accidents.

to reducing the accident rate. To fund this initiative, the city police will leverage Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds from local industries. Their goal is to appoint 10 traffic wardens for each of the accident-prone stretches, totaling 100 wardens to cover the city's top areas for road accidents.

The appointed traffic wardens will operate in three shifts, with three members in each shift. They will be equipped with various tools and technologies to effectively manage traffic and reduce accidents. The equipment provided will include two motorcycles for each stretch, also meters for alcohol level testing, drones for aerial surveillance, video cameras, barricades, and other necessary tools to ensure traffic safety.

The city police chief expressed his commitment to ensuring the success of this initiative, stating, "Our traffic police will provide comprehensive training to the appointed wardens, and one sub-inspector will be assigned to oversee each of the designated stretches."

TODAY ALMANAC
Month & Paksham: Sukla Paksha
Tithi: Tritiya: Oct 17 01:13 AM to Oct 18 01:26 AM
Chaturthi: Oct 18 01:26 AM to Oct 19 01:12 AM
Nakshatram: Vishaka: Oct 16 07:35 PM to Oct 17 08:31 PM
Anuradha: Oct 17 08:31 PM to Oct 18 07:35 PM
Rahukalam: 2:55 PM to 4:22 PM
Yamagandam: 9:07 AM to 10:34 AM
Varjyam: 12:36 AM to 02:14 AM
Gulika: 12:01 PM to 1:28 PM
Amritakalam: 11:22 AM to 01:02 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham: 11:38 AM to 12:24 PM

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER
Forecast: Mostly Sunny
Temp: 34°C
Humidity: 58%
Sunrise: 6:00 AM
Sunset: 5:45 PM
Updated: October 16, 2023 5:00 PM

Vizag will turn IT...

Continued from Page 1

"I am hoping to shift in October but the outer line is December for me to stay here," he said. Companies like TCS and Infosys can change the face of Information Technology, he said and added that more companies like Adani Data Centre and Submarine Cable Company from Singapore will soon come to the city spurring growth. "I hope Infosys will create wonders in the path of development taking the lead for other IT companies to arrive here," he said and wished the company good luck in its endeavors.

He further assured the top management of the company that the Government

Jagan inaugurates pharma units

Continued from Page 1

He also inaugurated Rs 191 crore Laurus Synthesis Pvt. Ltd. at Atchutapuram SEZ in an extent of 24 acres providing jobs to 300 in its bulk drugs unit. The Chief Minister participated in the groundbreaking ceremony of Rs 240 crore Laurus Labs Private Limited at JNPC Parawada which would be coming up in an area of 15 acres and would provide employment to about 450 in its bulk drugs plant. He also participated in the groundbreaking ceremony of Laurus Synthesis Pvt Ltd for its Rs 240 crore bulk drugs unit coming up at JNPC, Parawada on 15 acres which would provide jobs to 450.

was just a phone call away in case it needed any support. The Chief Minister also inaugurated the unit of Eugia Sterile at Jawaharlar Nehru Pharma City at Parawada in Anakapalle district and the second unit of the Laurus Labs at the Special Economic Zone at Atchutapuram. He laid the foundation stone for a new unit of the Laurus Labs and flagged off beach cleaning machines procured by the Greater Visakha Municipal Corporation.

CM sets the tone for AP's IT revolution

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

In the heart of India's bustling tech landscape, where dreams are coded into reality and innovation flows like the azure sea, Visakhapatnam stands tall as the rising star of Tier-2 cities, spearheading the country's dynamic tech revolution. Amid the bustling heart of the digital world, a spectacle unfolded, one that would send ripples through the very fabric of the IT industry. The grand inauguration of the colossal IT behemoth, Infosys, by Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, was nothing short of a radiant testament to innovation and ambition.

Beneath the visionary stew-

Tech titans such as Tech Mahindra, HCL, Accenture, Randstad, and WNS have all set their sights on this burgeoning tech hotspot, eager to seize the opportunities that lie within its promising environment.

ardship of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, the Andhra Pradesh State government has unfurled a revolutionary IT policy that casts Visakhapatnam as an irresistible prospect for tech enterprises. With an ecosystem that rivals the giants of the metro cities and a plethora of state-of-the-art facilities, Visakhapatnam has swiftly

risen to become the preferred destination for tech expansion. But there's more to Visakhapatnam than meets the eye. The government has unveiled the innovative "Beach IT" concept, a visionary display of the city's potential as a vibrant hub for IT and IT-enabled industries, harnessing the charm of its pristine coastline. Tech titans such as Tech

Mahindra, HCL, Accenture, Randstad, and WNS have all set their sights on this burgeoning tech hotspot, eager to seize the opportunities that lie within its promising environment.

The allure of Visakhapatnam's business atmosphere has captured the imagination of countless IT companies, who are now actively expanding their operations within the city. Moreover, the government's renewed commitment to IT development is evident in its collaboration with Wipro. What was once a dormant plan, allocating land for Wipro's campus in 2006, is now reborn and ready to flourish.

Lokesh's close aide Kilaru Rajesh...

Continued from Page 1

When the CID inquired about Nara Lokesh's business dealings, Rajesh remained silent. Then the officials inquired to whom the cash received from the shell companies was delivered and Rajesh did not reply to it. Finally, the CID also inquired about the

email conversations between Chandrababu and Lokesh. As he said that he did not send the mail, the officials put the details of some mail in front of Rajesh, then he pretended and said "I don't know - I don't remember" and tried to skip the question. CID has asked Kilaru Rajesh to come for an investigation tomorrow (Tuesday, October 17) as he did not answer the key

questions. The CID officials have issued a notice to Kilaru Rajesh to appear for the inquiry related to the skill scam. Earlier he approached the High Court for anticipatory bail fearing arrest in the case. However, the CID told the court that Rajesh was not included as an accused in the skill case, and if necessary, they would issue notices and investigate under CrPC 41 A.

Mixed response to AP...

Continued from Page 1

Until recently, there were discussions about Jagan moving the CMO to Visakhapatnam during Dasara on October 23 and performing puja at his proposed camp office in Rushikonda.

On the other hand, YSRC leader and party in-charge of North Andhra, YV Subba Reddy, has mentioned that it might take a few more months due to technical reasons. It appears that more time is needed for the completion of the entire infrastructure. Furthermore, suitable accommodations for shifting other government offices and buildings for bureaucrats in Visakhapatnam have proven challenging for the state government.

Chief Secretary Dr. KS Jawahar Reddy has appointed a three-member committee, consisting of Special Chief Secretary (MA&UD) Y Sri Lakshmi, Special Chief Secretary (Finance) SS Rawat, and Secretary (Services HRM) of the General Administration Department, to assess

accommodation options. The committee members will identify suitable transit accommodations, including a camp office for Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, and accommodations for senior government officials in Visakhapatnam. The committee members visited the port city on Monday.

According to Industry Minister Gudivada Amarnath, the decision to reschedule the relocation of the CMO to Vizag from Dasara to December was primarily due to pending construction work at the proposed CM camp office. These pending tasks are expected to be completed within the next 20-25 days. While the interior work of the buildings is finished, tasks like tile installation and electrical fittings are still in progress.

This situation is considered a safety concern, as it is not advisable for the chief minister to occupy the building while workers are still onsite, explained Minister Amarnath.

CS urges Centre's...

Continued from Page 1

Vadhra elucidated the project's goals, team approach, and theme-wise vision, highlighting opportunities for development in coastal areas, such as trade, tourism, and shipbuilding within Andhra Pradesh. Vadhra said that the State, already a prominent hub in agriculture, horticulture, and aquaculture, holds immense potential to achieve its ambitious goals by further advancing these sectors.

Furthermore, Vadhra addressed the pressing need for infrastructure development and outlined the specific steps to be taken in accordance with various Dhims.

Rajini launches...

Continued from Page 1

However, due to an overwhelming demand and a highly positive public response, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy directed an expansion of the initiative. Consequently, these medical camps will now be conducted not only in ward secretariats but also in primary urban health centres within urban areas, effectively increasing the total number of medical camps to around 15,000. Highlighting the programme's early success, the Health Minister reported that 23.78 lakh OP (Outpatient) services were registered by the 13th of the month. In the first 14 days of operation, 6,334 medical camps have been conducted, providing crucial medical care to over 52,000 individuals who

will subsequently be referred to larger hospitals for further treatment, all of which will be provided free of charge. One of the standout aspects of these medical camps is the participation of specialist doctors who offer free consultations, medications, and diagnostic tests to patients. Besides free tests for blood pressure, blood sugar, and hemoglobin levels, an additional three tests are carried out with patient consent, offering a total of seven types of tests. These camps also dispense over 100 different types of medicines to address various medical needs.

Minister Rajini acknowledged the success of the Aarogyasri programme, crediting it to the visionary leadership of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

CID registers case...

Continued from Page 1

Cherukuri Ramoji Rao, from Pedaparupudi in the same district, was recommended for employment by Communist leader Kondapalli Seetaramaiah to GJ Reddy. Uri Reddy stated that over time, Ramoji Rao impressed his father with his business acumen, leading to the establishment of a chit fund company with an initial investment of Rs 5000. According to Uri Reddy's complaint, in return for this investment, Ramoji Rao supposedly allocated shares to his father. Following GJ Reddy's demise in 1985, Uri Reddy was unaware of these shares until a media report surfaced in 2014. Despite numerous attempts to contact Ramoji Rao, no communication occurred until 2016 when he secured an appointment.

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH MUNICIPAL ADMIN. & URBAN DEVELOPMENT (A1) DEPARTMENT
E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE
No.731 & 730/TS-JTD.2/2023 Dt: 13-10-2023
Online tenders are invited for 2 Providing Water Supply Facilities in Kovvur & Nuzvid Municipalities under AMRUT-2.0. Estimate Value: Rs. 9,22,69,207/- for 2 works. Last Date for receipt 03.11.2023 upto 5.00 PM. Further details visit: <http://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in> from 18.10.2023 @ 11.00 AM onwards. Sd/- Superintending Engineer (PP), Rajamahendravaram. R.D.No: 11283/CLADVT/11/2021-22. Dt: 16.10.2023

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DASARA NAVARATRI FESTIVITIES

40,000 devotees have darshan on Day 2

Pilgrims happy as waiting time in queue lines comes down significantly

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The second day of the Dasara Sarannavaratri festivities at the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam on Indrakeeladri witnessed a notable reduction in the waiting time for devotees to have darshan of Goddess Kanaka Durga Devi. On Monday, around 40,000 devotees had the opportunity to offer their prayers and seek blessings within just one hour, a significant improvement from the four-hour wait experienced on the inaugural day of the festivities on Sunday.

During this second day, the presiding deity, Goddess Kanaka Durga, appeared as Sri Gayatri Devi. Gayatri Devi is revered as the Veda Mata, the mother of Vedas, depicted seated upon a red lotus with five heads and five pairs of hands, symbolizing her incarnations as Parvati and Saraswati.

Pilgrims from across the Telugu states flocked to the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Devasthanam, forming orderly queues that stretched from Sri Vinayaka Temple near Vijayawada Municipal Corporation.

In response to the first-day experiences, the authorities in charge, including the Endowments, Revenue, and



Police departments, implemented special measures to ensure a hassle-free darshan for devotees. They reinforced the queue lines and provided refreshments like milk, buttermilk, mango juice packets, and biscuits to pilgrims waiting in line.

The festivities continue with the appearance of Sri Annapurna Devi on the third day of Dasara Sarannavaratri. On October 17, the presiding

deity, Kanaka Durga Devi, will be adorned as Sri Annapurna Devi, bearing a feeding bowl and ladle to serve food, with Lord Siva standing at her doorstep, symbolizing his request for sustenance.

Sri Annapurna Devi, the deity of 'Annam' (food), is revered for bestowing her devotees with abundant nourishment.

Police Commissioner

Kanthi Rana Tata conducted a thorough inspection of the arrangements and devotee facilities at Indrakeeladri, accompanied by AIG M Ravindranath Babu, DCPs Vishal Gunni, DCP Ajitha Vejjendla, ACP Dr K Hanumantharao, and other officials. Reports surfaced regarding police personnel allegedly interfering with the duties of endowment officials, prompting the Commissioner to address these concerns in a discussion with endowment authorities.

Furthermore, NTR District Collector S Dilli Rao, along with VMC Commissioner Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar and Sub Collector Aditi Singh, inspected the arrangements and instructed Temple EO KS Rama Rao and other relevant authorities to prioritize the convenience of devotees in the queue lines.

Endowments Minister Kottu Satya Narayana also visited the temple and offered his prayers to the Goddess. Speaking to the media, he assured that the authorities were giving the highest priority to the devotees and had already resolved the issues that arose on the first day. He further conveyed some instructions to Temple EO KS Rama Rao.

TTD offers silk robes to Goddess Durga Devi

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

As a part of the Dasara festivities, members of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Trust Board, M Seshu Babu and G Venkata Subba Raju, offered silk robes to the Goddess Kanaka Durga Devi. After presenting the silk robes, both members took the darshan of Durga Devi.

The Vedic Scholars of the Durga temple welcomed the TTD board members, Seshu Babu and Venkata Subba

Raju, in accordance with the temple's tradition.

Later, they spoke to the reporters at the media point and stated that the Durga temple authorities have provided all the necessary facilities for the devotees to take darshan during the Dasara festival. They also mentioned that they worshipped the goddess Durga Devi for the welfare of the people.

The Chairman of the Kanaka Durga Temple Trust Board, Karnati Rambabu, and others accompanied them.



TODAY'S ALANKARAM ANNAPURANA DEVI



Temple earns Rs 41.6 L on inaugural day

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

On the inaugural day of the Sri Dasara Sarannavaratri festivities, the Sri Kanaka Durga Temple reported an income of Rs 41.60 lakh, marking a notable increase compared to the previous year's first-day earnings. This information was disclosed by the Executive Officer (EO) of the temple, KS Rama Rao.

Rama Rao, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Durga Temple Trust Board, Karnati Rambabu, convened a press briefing at the media center on Indrakeeladri. During this event, they announced that approximately 95,000 devotees had visited the temple on the festival's opening day to seek the blessings of Goddess Durga Devi. The revenue of Rs 41.60 lakhs was primarily generated through the sale of various items, including Laddu Prasadam, Darshan Tickets,

and other offerings.

Rama Rao pointed out that this year's income of Rs. 41.60 lakhs displayed a significant increase from the previous year's figure of Rs. 26 lakhs for the same day. On the second day of the festivities, the temple accrued a revenue of Rs 20.20 lakhs by 5 p.m. He highlighted that on the second day, the sale of Rs 500 tickets resulted in an income of Rs 7 lakh from 1,400 tickets sold, while the sale of Rs 300 tickets yielded Rs 2.85 lakh from 950 tickets sold. Additionally, the sale of 2,000 tickets priced at Rs. 100 each contributed Rs 2 lakh to the total income.

Rama Rao also shared that any issues that arose on the first day had been promptly addressed on the following Monday. The temple's objective is to ensure a smooth and hassle-free darshan experience for all devotees.

KEEP CITY NEAT AND TIDY DURING DASARA FESTIVITIES: VMC COMMISSIONER

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In preparation for the upcoming Dasara festivities, Swapnil Dinakar Pundkar, the Commissioner of the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC), conducted an inspection of the city's sanitation efforts on Monday. The Commissioner underlined the need for round-the-clock availability of sanitary workers to maintain the city's cleanliness during the festival.

Commissioner Pundkar also inquired about the breakfast and meal facilities provided to the workers and urged the authorities to ensure timely service.

During his visit, he assessed several key areas, including the bathing ghats along the Krishna River, temporary toilet facilities, queue lines, drinking water distribution, and city roads. The Commissioner instructed officials to remain vigilant in maintaining

cleanliness, given the anticipated influx of devotees to the Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeeladri during the Dasara Sarannavaratri Festivities.

In a meeting with officials and staff, Commissioner Pundkar stressed the importance of providing improved amenities to the devotees. He sought details about sanitation work schedules and food facilities. The sanitation

workers have been directed to work in three shifts, ensuring daily cleaning of roads, ghats, and queue lines to guarantee a hygienic environment for all devotees.

Expressing his concern about the city's image during the festive season, Commissioner Pundkar underlined the need for diligent work by officials and staff to leave a positive impression on the lakhs of devotees who will visit the spiritual city.

'Hamsa Vahana Seva' held at Tirumala



PNS ■ TIRUMALA

As a part of the ongoing Navaratri Brahmotsavam in Tirumala on Monday evening 'Hamsa Vahana Seva' was held.

Sri Malayappa decked as Saraswati Ammavaru took out a celestial ride on the divine swan carrier to bless the devotees along the four mada streets.

Both the senior and junior pontiffs of Tirumala, TTD Chairman Sri B Karunakara Reddy, EO Sri AV Dharna Reddy, and others were present.

In the cultural programs, different mythological characters were portrayed in front of Hamsa Vahana Seva which impressed devotees.

TTD 'Srinivasa Kalyanam' in Europe conclude

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) Srinivasa Kalyanams performed across Europe concluded with splendid events in UK's Belfast, Basingstoke, Milton Keynes, and Gloucester from October 10 to 15.

APNRTS, as part of services offered to NRIs of AP origin, closely coordinated with the TTD and NRI religious and cultural organisations and ensured that all Kalyanams were organized as per Vykanasa Aagamam tradition. Hindu volunteer organizations in the UK and Europe made all the necessary

arrangements for these events, including providing boarding and lodging facilities for the visiting TTD priests and Vedic pundits.

Thousands of NRI devotees participated in these events and witnessed Lord Venkateswara's splendid Kalyanams at all locations. G Ramesh, Satish from Belfast (North Ireland); M Arun, Sreeni from Basingstoke (London); M Lokanadha, C Janardhana from Milton Keynes; G Siva Rama, E Narasimha, A Shiva from Gloucester along with volunteer organizations in the UK made all the necessary arrangements for the events.

Venkat S Medapati, President

of APNRT Society, released a press note on the successful completion of Srinivasa Kalyanam events in various cities of the UK and Europe.

Venkat Medapati informed that Kalyanam events are being organized every year in various countries at the request of NRI Telugu and other spiritual and cultural associations, following the directives of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

He added that 45 Kalyanam events have been organized over the last 16 months across various countries and that more than 2 lakh NRI Hindu devotees and locals participated in these events and sought the Lord's blessings.

Check EVMs & VVPAT devices thoroughly: Collector

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector, S Dilli Rao, has issued instructions to the officials overseeing the First Level Checking (FLC) of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) devices to conduct the process with the utmost precision and adherence to protocols. The FLC is scheduled to continue until November 5, and Collector Dilli Rao has emphasised the need for seamless and issue-free execution of this critical task.

Collector Dilli Rao personally inspected the First Level Checking procedures of the EVMs and VVPATs at the Agricultural Marketing Yard Godown located in Gollapudi, near Vijayawada, on Monday.

In his remarks during the visit, the Collector highlighted that the FLC is being carried out under the directives of the Election Commission of India (ECI) within the district. He underscored the significance of all officials strictly adhering to the rules and regulations stipulated by the ECI. Furthermore, he noted that the FLC process has been proceeding without any notable hitches, with the operating hours set from 9 am



to 7 pm. In line with maintaining the integrity of the process, Collector Dilli Rao unequivocally stated that the use of mobile phones, cameras, and spy cameras is strictly prohibited during the FLC.

The district administration has proactively taken measures to ensure that a total of 5,700 units of EVMs and VVPATs are checked and prepared within a 20-day timeframe, with an impressive daily rate of 280 units undergoing FLC, as he elaborated.

Additionally, Collector Dilli Rao stressed that the FLC is being conducted with rigorous security measures, including

proper barricading at the godown facilities. The entire process is under constant surveillance through webcasting and recording via closed-circuit cameras (CC cameras).

Moreover, the district administration has extended invitations to representatives from all political parties to participate in the verification of the FLC, as confirmed by Dilli Rao.

The NTR District Revenue Officer (DRO) SV Nageswara Rao, Civil Supplies District Manager G. Venkateswarlu, Collector Election Cell Superintendent Ch. Durga Prasad, and Vijayawada Rural in-charge MPDO BLV Seshagiri Rao also attended.

18th SOFT TENNIS JR NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

Day 1: Tamil Nadu girls emerge champs

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The 18th Soft Tennis Junior National Tournament has taken centre stage at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium in Vijayawada, where young talents from across the country are showcasing their skills with great enthusiasm. This five-day event has already witnessed the conclusion of the girls' team event on Monday, while the boys' category matches continue to unfold, heading toward the finals scheduled for October 17 (Tuesday).



of 2-0 sets, while Chhattisgarh overcame Uttar Pradesh with a close 2-1 sets victory in the semi-finals.

During the quarter-finals of the tournament, the Andhra Pradesh girls' team faced a narrow loss against the Karnataka team, who clinched victory with a 2-1 set score. Meanwhile, Tamil Nadu comfortably outperformed Jharkhand with a 2-0 victory, Chhattisgarh showcased their

TEAM EVENT RESULTS

GIRLS FINALS
Tamil Nadu beat Chhattisgarh, 2-0,
Semi-Finals: Tamil Nadu beat Karnataka, 2-0, Chhattisgarh beat Uttar Pradesh, 2-1,
Quarter-Finals: Tamil Nadu beat Jharkhand, 2-0, Karnataka beat Andhra Pradesh, 2-1, Chhattisgarh beat Maharashtra, 2-0, Uttar Pradesh beat Haryana, 2-1

BOYS SEMI-FINALS
Madhya Pradesh beat Gujarat, 2-0, Haryana beat Tamil Nadu, 2-1,

QUARTER-FINALS
Gujarat beat Punjab, 2-1, Madhya Pradesh beat Maharashtra, 2-0, Tamil Nadu beat Andhra Pradesh, 2-1, Haryana beat Delhi, 2-0

skill by defeating Maharashtra with a 2-0 set win, and Uttar Pradesh claimed a close 2-1 victory over Haryana.

In the boys' category, Madhya Pradesh and Haryana states have emerged as the finalists. Their clash for supremacy is scheduled for Tuesday. In the semi-final matches, Madhya Pradesh displayed

their dominance by securing a 2-0 win against Gujarat, while Haryana fought a tough battle against Tamil Nadu, ultimately prevailing with a 2-1 set score.

Unfortunately, the host Andhra Pradesh boys' team fell short in the quarter-finals as they were defeated by Tamil Nadu with a 2-1 set score.

Min Buggana inaugurates YSR Urban Health Centres

PNS ■ NANDYALA

Finance Minister Buggana Rajendranath Reddy inaugurated the YSR Urban Health Centres in Dhone on Monday at Pathapat and Rokalibanda Satram areas. The YSR Urban Health Centres were constructed at a cost of Rs 1.6 crore.

Speaking on the occasion, the Finance Minister said that YSR Urban Primary Health Centres were made available to the people of Dhone town and treatment had become more accessible. Later he took petitions from the people on their grievances. He also interacted with the ANMs and ASHA workers.

Later the Finance Minister inspected the works of Club House being constructed adjacent to the Buggana Seshareddy Indore stadium. He also inspected the construction works vegetable market.

The vegetable market is being constructed at a cost of Rs 7.6 crore. He directed the contractors and officials to complete the work at the earliest.

He also inspected the Maddileti Narasimha Swamy



The Finance Minister inspected the works of Club House being constructed adjacent to the Buggana Seshareddy Indore stadium. He also inspected the construction works vegetable market.

temple construction works at SR Rangapuram. They inspected the construction of the facade of the temple which is

being constructed at a cost of Rs 2.75 crore using granite stone. Temple chairman

Ramachandrudu explained to the Finance Minister the construction works of the temple.

He told him the temple reconstruction works were taken up at a total cost of Rs 40 crore. Tahasildar Narendranath Reddy, state-man corporation chairman Sriramulu, Dhone municipal chairman S Rajesh, and RDO Venkata Reddy were among those who accompanied the Finance Minister.

RMP doctors warned against attending serious cases

PNS ■ ONGOLE



District Health and Medical Officer Dr. S Rajyalakshmi has warned the RMP doctors not to attend serious cases and provide only the primary medical treatment to the patients.

In a statement here on Monday, she said that it was brought to her notice that some RMP doctors are attending major cases. In fact, the RMP doctor should provide primary medical treatment and they should not attend serious cases. They should strictly follow the guidelines of the allopathy medical authority.

The RMP doctors should not send patients to the laboratories for various tests either, she said. If they send patients to laboratories for tests, action would be taken against the RMP doctors and against the laboratory management as well. The DMHO also asked all laboratories to get their labs registered by the end of October. She warned of sealing the labs if they were found not registered.

Standing crops in 4 L acres hit by water scarcity: Manohar

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA



Chairman of the Jana Sena Political Affairs Committee, Nandendla Manohar, has expressed his concerns over the deteriorating agricultural conditions in the Krishna West Delta region, where approximately four lakh acres of crops are suffering due to water scarcity.

Addressing the media at the state office in Mangalagiri on Monday, Manohar criticised the administration under Chief Minister Jagan Mohan Reddy, attributing Andhra Pradesh's hardships to what he referred to as a leader with limited knowledge. He further asserted that Andhra Pradesh has lost its status as a capital city due to the actions of the Chief Minister.

Manohar said that should the Chief Minister choose to relocate to Visakhapatnam for governance, it is incumbent upon him to acknowledge the deception of the public. He criticised the YSRCP government, claiming that over the past four and a half years, both the industrial and agricultural sectors have faced significant challenges, with the farming community suffering from what he perceives as detrimental anti-farmer policies.

Manohar pledged the Jana Sena's commitment to collaborating with the TDP to safeguard the interests of farmers. He expressed dismay over the situation in the Krishna West Delta, where crops across four lakh acres are withering due to the unavailability of irrigation water, forcing farmers to resort to alternative water sources.

Manohar also raised concerns about the underutilization of the Pattiseema lift scheme project for providing water to the Krishna deltas, suggesting a lack of knowledge in the field of irrigation. He

noted that many agricultural laborers have lost their livelihoods as a result of crop failures and criticized the government for its failure to allocate funds for the modernization of irrigation canals and projects.

Manohar questioned the government's actions in response to Infosys opening an office in Visakhapatnam, stating that while Infosys established offices for its employees, the government was attempting to take credit for it. He highlighted the existence of 2.5 lakh square feet of vacant space in IT towers in Visakhapatnam and questioned the government's inaction in utilizing these facilities for IT-related activities. Furthermore, he expressed skepticism regarding the effectiveness of the government's Global Investors Summit held in Visakhapatnam, given the alleged lack of concrete industrial investments following the summit.

Manohar accused the government of exaggerating its role in attracting Infosys to the state and raised concerns about the adverse impact of exorbitant power tariff increases on small and medium industries, resulting in a loss of jobs for a significant number of workers.

21 kg ganja seized, 12 held

PNS ■ BAPATLA

The police seized 21 kg ganja worth Rs 2.10 lakh while being transported on a motorcycle in Chirala.

Police here on Monday said that on a tip-off the police conducted checking of vehicles. The police found 21 kg of ganja being transported on a motorcycle. The police arrested 12 peddlers in this connection.

SP Vakaul Jindal made it clear that stringent measures were taken to curb ganja sale and consumption in the district, adding that during the year 2023, a suspect sheet was opened against 156 accused in connection with cannabis in the district.

Man run over by tipper

PNS ■ SRIKAKULAM

One person was killed when a tipper ran over him in Tekkali on Monday.

Police said that Chandrasekhar (30) was run over by a tipper lorry belonging to Moolapeta Port. He was killed instantaneously. The head of the deceased was crushed under the impact of the accident. The police registered a case and shifted the body to the GGH for post-mortem.

The locals alleged that the Moolapeta port vehicles go at high speed on the road causing several accidents. They said that one person lost his leg as the Moolapeta port vehicle hit him a few days ago at the same place.

Light rain likely in AP in next 7 days

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Light rain is likely to occur at one or two places in North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, and Rayalaseema during the next seven days, the Meteorological Centre said on Monday. A daily weather report here, said that rainfall occurred at one or two places over Coastal AP and Rseema during the last 24 hours.

Prof: Explore ways to develop assistive devices for disabled

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Dr. G. Sayaha Baskaran, the Coordinator of Higher Education for Persons with Special Needs (HEPSN) at Andhra Loyola College, and also a professor of Physics, on Monday made a presentation at an orientation programme on "Developing Assistive Devices for Divyangjan." Dr Baskaran was invited by the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) of Andhra Loyola College of Engineering and Technology (ALIET) in Vijayawada to share his insights on this vital topic.

During his presentation, Dr Baskaran highlighted the staggering figure of approximately 4.95 million visually impaired individuals in India. He encouraged aspiring engineers to explore innovative avenues for creating assistive devices that could significantly enhance the lives of persons with disabilities. Dr. Baskaran emphasized that applying engineering principles could lead to groundbreaking developments in assistive technology, empowering visually impaired individuals to navigate the world with greater independence and efficiency.

In his discourse, Dr. Baskaran



also delved into the core principles underlying smart vision glasses designed for the visually impaired. He elucidated how these glasses incorporate various technologies to enhance the user's experience, including optics for clear image capture, light sensors to adjust display visibility, and acoustics for audio feedback. Environmental sensors, such as ultrasonic and LiDAR, are used to detect obstacles, image processing interprets data, and navigation relies on gyroscopes and accelerometers.

Furthermore, in addition to smart vision glasses, Dr. Baskaran discussed a range of other assistive devices, including smart canes, screen readers,

Braille displays, navigation devices, wearable technologies, and assistive robots. He suggested that making these devices domestically could potentially make them more affordable for individuals with disabilities, particularly through the involvement of engineering students who can harness present-day technology and devices such as smartphones.

The guest lecture garnered an enthusiastic response from students, faculty, and attendees, reflecting the increasing interest in the convergence of physics, engineering, and technology for the betterment of society's most vulnerable populations. Subsequently, 15 students expressed their commitment to embark on projects aimed at developing assistive devices to benefit those in need.

The seminar received a commendation from the leadership of Andhra Loyola Engineering College, with Director B. Joji Reddy, Principal Dr. O. Mahesh, and Assistant Director D. Balaswamy acknowledging the efforts of IQAC Coordinators Prof. A. Srinivasa Rao and N. Divya Krupa in organizing this insightful event.

Distinguished lecture delivered at SRM Prof Pant asks students to explore dynamics of Lighter than Air Systems

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Prof Rajkumar S Pant, Professor of Aerospace Engineering, has stated: "If we start working today towards developing Lighter than Air (LTA) systems, in 10 years India will lead the sustainable air transportation." He was delivering a lecture at SRM University-AP on Monday. He spoke on "The Design and Development of Lighter than Air Systems" as part of the Distinguished Lecture Series-2023 organised by the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The lecture extensively discussed the latest developments in the area of conceptual design, sizing, design, development and flight/field testing of LTA Systems.

Prof Pant encouraged students to explore the dynamics



of Lighter than Air Systems, beginning with aerostats and then gradually proceeding to more complex airships. The session highlighted the disaster of Hindenburg, breaking the myth that airship transportation is dangerous and unreliable. Prof. Pant engaged the session with video presentations on the building, developing and working of airships and aerostats that have been conducted at the Lighter-Than-Air Systems Laboratory of IIT Bombay. His lecture also showcased some of the research and

development activities that have been carried out in the LTA Systems Laboratory of IIT Bombay including Project HERCARE, and other projects carried out in collaboration with ISRO and DRDO.

The distinguished lecture was followed by a workshop on "Sizing of Reusable Indoor Hot Air Balloons (RIHAB)". The workshop provided the students with practical knowledge and hands-on experience on LTE systems and vehicles inducing research interest in the domain of aerospace engineering and sustainable air transportation.

Prof Ranjit Thapa, Dean - Research, Prof Prakash Jadhav, Head, Department of Mechanical Engineering, faculty and students of the university actively participated in the lecture and the workshop.

Congress leaders vow to revive party

PNS ■ KAKINADA

Congress party leaders, who were elected to the AP Congress Committee (APCC), have assured partymen of striving hard to strengthen the party in the State.

State vice-presidents Mutta Sivaprasad, Akula Venkataramani and state general secretary Peddaada Subba Rao were felicitated by the Congress leaders here on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Mutta Sivaprasad, Akula



Venkataramani, and Peddaada Subba Rao thanked those who elected them. They assured of

striving hard to strengthen the Congress at the state level and make the party's programmes

more successful.

The event was attended by party district president Dr. Chilukoti Panduranga Rao, city president Datla Gandhi Raju, AICC member Mallipudi Rambabu, constituency in-charges Kola Prasad Verma, Marothu Shiva Ganesh, Umidi Venkata Rao, Medidi Srinivas, Tummala Dorababu, Kukkala Pothuraju, Surya Prakash Rao, Battin Lalitha, Burra Padmanabha, Abba Reddy, Jyothi, Naraya, and Paramesh were among those who were present.

Rally against Israeli attack on Gaza

PNS ■ ELURU

Activists of CPI (ML) New Democracy took out a rally here on Monday condemning the attacks of Israel on Gaza.

The CPI (ML) New Democracy activists and leaders held placards, flex banners, and raised slogans denouncing the attacks of Israel on Gaza causing deaths of a large number of people. The rally began at the Fire Station centre and went through via the ZP office and ended at the Collector's office where they organised a dharna.

Addressing the gathering, CPI (ML) New Democracy official Spokesperson U Venkateswara Rao said that Israel's attacks on Gaza is unjust and it is vitiating peace in the region. The Israeli army should go back from Gaza and stop the attacks, he demanded.

"The Palestinian people have been living as refugees for the last 75 years. Announcing support for Israel by America is condemnable. America is trying to grab the oil sources in the region," he alleged.

Left party leaders decry 'exorbitant' power tariffs

PNS ■ ONGOLE

The leaders of various Left parties have decry the hike of power tariffs exorbitantly and lamented that the power tariffs have become additional burdens on the poor and common men.

The Left parties activists led by their leaders organized a dharna in front of the Collector's office on Monday in protest against the steep hike in power tariff and demanding to reduction of power tariff. The CPI, CPI(ML), and CPI (New Democracy) leaders were among those who took part in the dharna.

Addressing the gathering, CPI leader G Eswaraiyah alleged that the state government is giving shock treatment to the people by steeply hiking power tariffs. The CPI leader vehemently objected to collecting arrears from the power consumers.

The state government has put Rs 6000 crore burden by imposing various charges on the power consumers, he deplored.

Previously, the power tariff used to be hiked once every two or three years. But now the Jagan Mohan Reddy-headed government surrendered to



the Narendra Modi-led Central government and is collecting exorbitant power tariffs from the consumers.

"We strongly object to collecting fixed charges, current charges, customer charges, and other charges from the consumers. The government is trying to hand over the electricity sector to the Adani company," he slammed.

The electricity sector is going into the hands of corporate companies. The seaports to import coal and supply smart meters are also being done by the Adani company, the CPI leader lashed out.

"The corrupt political leaders are purchasing power in the open market at Rs 10 to Rs 20 per unit as against Rs 2 or Rs Rs 3. The government is fixing

smart meters to the agriculture pump sets which will be detrimental to the entire farming sector in the state," he cautioned.

CPI (ML) district secretary DVN Swamy demanded the government reduce the power tariff and warned of intensifying agitation if the government did not concede their demand. CPI (ML) New Democracy state leader Ch Venkateswarulu also spoke.

Leaders of various Left parties including ML Narayana, PVR Chowdary, Vaddi Hanuma Reddy, D Srinivas, AITUC district general secretary K Venkateswarulu, IFTU leader R Mohan and PDSU state general secretary Rajasekhar among those who took part in the programme.

'KCR grabbed lakhs of acres using Dharani'

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said that KCR and the BRS government introduced the Dharani Portal and grabbed lakhs of acres using it. He said that the Dharani portal synonymous with corruption.

He said that Modi's government provided land rights to everyone through the Bhu Swamitva Yojana scheme. He said that they decided borders using satellite data and ensured that no disputes arose among



people through the Swamitva scheme.

He said that banks are giving loans to people based on land records which they got through

the Swamitva scheme.

He said the Modi government provided houses to four crore people across the nation through the PM Awas Yojana

Scheme. People must bring the BJP to power in Telangana if they want development. He asked people to give a chance to the BJP as the people gave a chance to the BRS twice.

He said the political parties in Telangana have been operating on the basis of caste, religion and sections, but the BJP will not do such things, Rajnath said.

He said that Goddess Laxmi Devi will sit on the Lotus flower and good things will take place if people vote for the Lotus.

APSCPCR warns schools to strictly follow Dasara vacation schedule

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (APSCPCR), K Appa Rao, has issued a stern warning to both private and government schools, stressing the importance of adhering to the Dussehra vacation schedule as mandated by the Department of School Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Apparao has vowed to take strict action against those who violate these guidelines by organizing special classes or conducting online lessons.

Speaking at a press conference held at the commission's office in Mangalagiri, Apparao revealed that they have been inundated with complaints from several districts, reporting that certain schools are blatantly disregarding the government's rules and regulations regarding holiday periods.

Apparao expressed his concerns about the apparent pressure being placed on students through excessive homework assigned during holidays, often delivered through mobile phones. He also highlighted that certain corporate schools are opting to initiate online classes during the Dussehra break.

He encouraged concerned citizens to report any instances of schools conducting online or offline classes, as well as online examinations during the vacation period. Complaints can be made to the toll-free number 1902 or 0863 2444270, the State Child Rights Commission at 7702979797, or via email at apscpcr2018@gmail.com.

Chairperson Appa Rao underscored the need for vigilance, instructing education officials at the mandal and district levels to diligently identify and take appropriate actions against those who continue to hold classes during the prescribed holidays.

APSCPCR Chairperson Appa Rao underscored the need for vigilance, instructing education officials at the mandal and district levels to diligently identify and take appropriate actions against those who continue to hold classes during the prescribed holidays.

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INDIA CORNER

Woman accused of honey trapping paraded with footwear garland

A 38-year-old woman accused of extorting several men by honey trapping them, was allegedly physically assaulted and paraded with footwear garland by a group of angry villagers in Karnataka's Belagavi district, police said on Monday. The woman was later rescued by the police and admitted to a nearby hospital where she is undergoing treatment for her minor injuries, they said. The video of the Friday night incident in Ghataprabha village also went viral following which police registered a case and arrested 13 people. According to police, the woman has allegedly extorted several men by honey trapping them. Out of frustration, a group of people allegedly went to her house to confront her. They got into a fight and during altercation, they physically assaulted the woman and made her wear a footwear garland. Thereafter, they paraded her with the garland on the streets of her village.



Gas-leak threat in West Delhi's Naraina forces school evacuation

Students on Monday were evacuated from a school after a foul smell was reported emanating from a gas godown in west Delhi's Naraina area, police said. Teams from NDRF, Delhi Police, and Delhi Fire Service rushed to the spot and started the evacuation, they said. "PCR calls were received regarding a foul smell in the area of C-block, Naraina. After getting calls, the concerned agencies have responded to the situation and taken required precautionary measures," said the Deputy Commissioner of Police (west), Vichitra Veer. "We are examining the matter. Appropriate legal action will be initiated based on the facts," the DCP said. The DFS said that it got a call at 12.18 pm from a person saying that some gas or chemical is leaking from drums kept in a godown. "Immediately a fire tender were responded with leading fireman."



Govt accepts IIPS director's resignation, revokes suspension

The Centre has accepted the resignation of International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) Director K S James and revoked his suspension for alleged irregularities during his tenure, the health ministry said. James was suspended on July 28 after the ministry launched a probe into the alleged irregularities in appointments and recruitment of faculty and compliance to reservation rosters during his tenure. The IIPS is an institute functioning under the ministry's administrative control. The statistics division of the ministry issued an order on October 11, stating that the "competent authority on subsequent review is of the opinion that in view of material changes in the circumstances, the suspension of professor K S James may not be extended further". "Now, therefore, the president... revokes the suspension of Prof. James, Director and Senior Professor, IIPS, Mumbai, with immediate effect," the order read.



NITHARI SERIAL KILLINGS

Allahabad HC acquits Pandher, Koli; bars to continue for Koli

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ/NEW DELHI

The Allahabad High Court on Monday acquitted domestic help Surendra Koli and his employer Moninder Singh Pandher in the 2006 Nithari serial killings for lack of evidence, recalling for many the chilling crime targeting young girls that came to light with skeletal remains being found behind a Noida bungalow. A two-judge bench of Justices Ashwani Kumar Mishra and SHA Rizvi allowed the appeals filed by Koli and Pandher, who were challenging the death sentence given by a CBI court in Ghaziabad. The high court said the prosecution failed to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt. "The Allahabad High Court order may pave the way for Pandher to walk out of jail," the businessman's lawyer Manisha Bhandari told PTI over the phone. However, Koli is likely to remain behind bars. He

still faces life imprisonment in one case. A CBI official in New Delhi said the team was waiting for the judgment copy and would take a call on next steps after studying it. Koli, who is in a Ghaziabad prison, was sentenced to death in 12 cases being heard by the Allahabad High Court. His former employer Pandher, lodged in a Noida jail, faced death sentence in two cases. Both were charged with rape and murder and sentenced to

death in the killings that horrified the nation with the details on sexual assault, brutal murder and hints of possible cannibalism. In all, 19 cases had been lodged against Pandher and Koli in 2007. The CBI had filed closure reports in three of the 19 cases due to lack of evidence. In the remaining 16 cases, Koli was earlier acquitted in three cases and his death sentence in one case was commuted to life.

Justice denied: Victim's parents

PNS ■ NOIDA

As the media watches, Ram Kishan hurls a brick into the abandoned bungalow of Moninder Singh Pandher, anger and frustration reflecting on his face. The labourer's three-year-old son was one of the victims of the 2006 serial killings. Emotions overflowed as nearly two-decade-old wounds were opened again on Monday with an order of the Allahabad High Court that acquitted domestic help Surendra Koli and his employer Pandher in the case for lack of evidence.

Norms of collecting evidence violated: HC

prayagraj: Expressing "disappointment" with the Nithari killings probe, the Allahabad High Court on Monday acquitted accused Moninder Singh Pandher and Surendra Koli noting that the investigation was "botched up" and "basic norms of collecting evidence" were "brazenly violated". The failure of the prosecution was nothing short of a "betrayal of public trust" by responsible agencies, the high court said. Pandher was acquitted in two cases in which he was facing the death penalty while Koli was let off in 12 cases in which he was awarded capital punishment. "Upon evaluation of the evidence, on the touchstone of fair trial guaranteed to an accused, we hold that prosecution has failed to prove the guilt of the accused."

Delhi seeks 'sister city' agreement with Brisbane

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi wishes to become a 'sister city' with Brisbane, Mayor Shelly Oberoi said on Monday, asserting that she has conveyed this to her counterpart in the Australian city. The mayor, who represented the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) at the recently held Asia Pacific Cities Summit and Mayor's Forum in Brisbane, told PTI that she was impressed by the city's "sanitation and cleanliness management and preservation of built heritage". The urban summit took place from October 11-13 and was attended by over 1,000 delegates, including more than 100 mayors and deputy mayors. "During the Summit, I interacted with the Lord Mayor of Brisbane (Adrian Schrinner), and mayors and deputy mayors from several other cities," Oberoi said.

'DMK will get a fitting reply for remark on Sanatana Dharma'

PNS ■ COIMBATORE

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry and Textiles Piyush Goyal on Monday said that the people of Tamil Nadu would give a fitting reply in the Lok Sabha election next year to the DMK and its Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin for his remark on Sanatana Dharma. Accusing the ruling DMK of "furthering only the first family's interests" Goyal claimed that whenever the Dravidian party faced corruption charges, it tried to divide the people on religious lines. "The DMK is the most corrupt party in the country. It became doubly corrupt after M K Stalin became the chief minister... Law and order is going back to worse and there's no development in the state," the minister said, while launching the third phase of state BJP President K Annamalai's 'En Mann, En Makkal (My Land, My People)' state-wide padayatra at Avinashi in Tiruppur district, here. The padayatra, which commenced six months ago, aims to



take Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'achievements' to the doorsteps of the people and also highlight the "failures" of the DMK. Annamalai resumed his yatra today after halting the scheduled programme on October 6 citing ill health. People in the state were suffering for want of amenities, including medical facilities particularly in Avinashi, Goyal said, adding, "The Prime Minister will bring a 100-bed ESI hospital here soon. If you give a chance to the BJP to serve you, then Tamil Nadu will witness numerous large projects including drinking water schemes." He later reviewed the progress

of the construction of the upcoming ESI Hospital in Avinashi. The hospital would offer state-of-the-art facilities and high quality medical services to the public, the minister said in a post on social media platform X. "PM @NarendraModi ji's visionary leadership is truly transforming healthcare across the nation," he said. At the padayatra, he claimed the DMK was not interested in the welfare of the people, including farmers of Tamil Nadu, but was keen on perpetuating one family's interest as it banked on one family -- father, son and grandson. But he claimed that the BJP is different as its leaders assumed positions "purely based on their merit." "You need a vision to develop Tamil Nadu and to make it the number one state in the country. Only Modi ji has that vision and so does Annamalai who has been touring the state for the last six months," Goyal said at the meeting in which Union Minister L Murugan and Coimbatore South MLA Vanathi Srinivasan too participated.

Cong will continue its appeasement if elected again in Chhattisgarh: Amit Shah

PNS ■ RAJNANDGAON

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday alleged the Congress will continue to indulge in "appeasement" politics for a vote bank if it returns to power in Chhattisgarh after the Assembly polls next month. Addressing a rally in Rajnandgaon city, Shah said the Congress government has built a "corruption chain" up to Delhi like a food chain (of restaurants). "If BJP comes to power in Chhattisgarh, we will recover

every penny from the corrupt and they will be hanged upside down," he added. He also said undivided Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh had remained a "BIMARU" (laggard) state during the Congress rule, but in 15 years after Raman Singh came to power (in 2003), it became a developed state. Shah attacked the Bhupesh Baghel government over communal violence in Biranpur village of Bemetara district in April and asked people whether they wanted Chhattisgarh to become a centre of communal riots again.

Khattar makes offer of dialogue to Mann on SYL

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has reached out to his Punjab counterpart on the Sutlej-Yamuna Link issue, making an offer of a dialogue to resolve "any hurdle or obstacles" hindering the canal construction. Haryana's offer comes, notwithstanding Punjab government's stand that it will not share a single drop of additional water with any other state at any cost. In his letter dated October 14, Khattar cited a Supreme Court order to say that "a comprehensive order on October 4, explicitly stating that the execution is not related to the allocation of water." The Supreme Court had on October 4 asked the Centre to survey the portion of land in Punjab which was allocated for the construction of part of the SYL canal in the state and make an estimate of the extent of construction carried out there. All political parties in Punjab asserted that the state does not have a single drop of additional water to share with any other state, though political outfits in Haryana welcomed the apex court

'OTTs should not cross line separating good from bad'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Digital Media Content Regulatory Council chairperson Justice (ret'd) Mukul Mudgal has asked the member OTT platforms to remain "disciplined" and not cross the line that separates good content from "unnecessary profanity". Speaking to representatives of the member OTT (over-the-top) channels during an interactive session recently, Mudgal noted that it was "very encouraging" that member OTT platforms of the Digital Media Content Regulatory Council (DMCRC) have been abiding

by the various regulations and the code of ethics. "There is a need for everyone to remain disciplined and not cross the line that separates good content from unnecessary profanity," DMCRC quoted Justice Mudgal as saying in a statement. The DMCRC is a self-regulatory body, and Disney+Hotstar, Zee5, SonyLiv, Jio Cinema, Voot, Manorama Max, Sun Nxt, Discovery+, Yupp TV, Net Stream and Fancode are its member OTT platforms. "The Digital Media Content Regulatory Council held an



interactive session with its member OTT platforms on October 13, 2023 in New Delhi. The meeting was chaired by Justice Mukul Mudgal," the statement said. Among other issues, matters relating to depiction of alleged obscenity, vulgarity, profanity

and violence in the content of OTT platforms were discussed and mitigating measures were also suggested during the interactive session, it added. Addressing the session, the DMCRC chairperson said, "What you show has a deep impact on society since you reach millions of viewers. You have a great responsibility in a diverse democracy like India." "It is natural that the platforms have the freedom to show online curated content after thorough due diligence. This is what content self-regulation is all about," he added. Justice Mudgal, who had

earlier chaired the non-news television content regulator Broadcasting Content Complaints Council (BCCC), said the efforts made in self-regulation "must continue without any letup." "The platforms have a robust grievance redressal mechanism for their content," Justice Mudgal said. The meeting also discussed issues related to implementation of the Rights of Person with Disabilities Act, 2016 and the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, 2003 on OTT platforms, the statement said.

'Will pray to Maa Durga to end graft in Bengal'

PNS ■ KOLKATA

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday inaugurated a Durga Puja in Kolkata and said he would pray to the goddess that "corruption and atrocities" end soon in West Bengal. Shah, while emphasising that he wouldn't delve into political matters, pledged to continue his fight in the state until a political transformation takes place. "I

am not here to discuss politics, but I will keep coming to Bengal and continue my fight until we witness a change in the state's (political) landscape," he said during the Durga Puja inauguration at the renowned Santosh Mitra Square in north Kolkata. "I would pray for an end to corruption, crime and atrocities in the state at the earliest," the home minister said.

SC to deliver verdict on legal validation for same-sex marriage today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court is scheduled to deliver its much anticipated judgement on Tuesday on pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage. A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud had on May 11 reserved its verdict on the pleas after a marathon hearing of 10 days. The other members of the bench are Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, S Ravindra Bhat, Hima Kohli and P S Narasimha. The judgement will be delivered on Tuesday and accord-



ingly, the information will be updated on the apex court website, sources said. During the arguments, the Centre had told the apex court that any constitutional declaration made by it on pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriage may not be a "correct course of action" as the court will not be able to foresee, envisage, comprehend and deal with its fallout. The Centre had also told the court it had received responses from seven states on the issue of same-sex marriage and the governments of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Assam had opposed the petitioners' contention seeking legal endorsement for such wedlock. The apex court had commenced hearing arguments in the matter on April 18.

Planning to make AAP accused in Delhi excise policy cases: CBI, ED tell SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In more trouble for the city's ruling AAP, the CBI and the ED told the Supreme Court on Monday they are contemplating making the party an accused in the corruption and money laundering cases linked to the scrapped Delhi excise policy. Additional Solicitor General (ASG) S V Raju, representing the two probe agencies, told a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and SVN Bhatti he has instructions to state that the agencies are considering making AAP an accused, invoking legal provisions on "vicarious liability" under the anti-corruption law and section 70 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). "I want to make a statement I have received instructions to make. We are contemplating making the Aam Aadmi Party an accused and invoking offences of vicarious liability under the Prevention of Corruption Act and section 70 of the PMLA," Raju told the court. However, the bench asked Raju to clarify his stand on Tuesday on whether there will be separate charges against the AAP in the cases being probed

by the CBI and the ED. Raju said charges in corruption and money laundering cases will be different but for the same offence. "Be careful and take specific instructions and tell us tomorrow on whether there will be same charge or different charge with respect to these cases," Justice Khanna told Raju. The ASG made the statement while the bench was hearing the bail pleas of AAP leader and former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who was arrested in the excise policy cases being probed by the CBI and ED. Senior AAP leader and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh has also been arrested in connection with the excise policy cases and is currently in jail. The bench also asked senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Sisodia, to answer legal questions on Tuesday on the CBI's allegation that change in excise policy led to a loss to the state exchequer. "We want you to answer on the allegation of the CBI that the changes in policy was done for unjust enrichment of A, B and C at state exchequer's expense and consumers were made to pay higher price," the bench told Singhvi.

TO COVER 11 MILLION SCHOOL STUDENTS

1st State Edn Achievement Survey to be held on Nov 3

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The first State Education Achievement Survey will be conducted on November 3 by the national assessment regulator PARAKH and will cover 11 million students across the country, according to officials. The survey aimed at identifying areas requiring improvement in learning will be held across states, targeting school students up to the block level. It will be a precursor to the Education Ministry's annual National Achievement Survey (NAS), which is conducted at the district level. Officials familiar with the development told PTI that it will be the first survey conducted by the Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH), an organisation under the NCERT. It is tasked with bringing the school boards across the states and the Union territories on a common platform. Scheduled for November 3, SEAS (State Education Achievement Survey) 2023 has been designed to enhance the learning standards for students in Classes 3, 6 and 9. Operating

at the block level, this survey encompasses a comprehensive range of competencies, spanning the foundational, preparatory, and middle stages of education. According to the officials, SEAS will represent a distinctive and baseline assessment, marking a gradual shift from rote learning to competency-based education.



The adoption of competency-based learning holds the potential to foster the holistic development of students, they said, adding that these efforts are dedicated to nurturing the well-rounded growth of future generations. This survey will prove invaluable in realising this aspiration, the officials said. "At the heart of this endeavour is the belief that every child deserves a well-rounded education. Our competency-based assessment system aims to assess not just what students know but also how well they can apply that knowledge in real-world scenarios,"

head and CEO of PARAKH Indrani Bhaduri said. Bhaduri also heads the NAS cell at the NCERT which conducts the crucial national level large-scale assessment to obtain information about the learning achievement of students of Classes 3, 5, 8 and 10 studying in state government schools, government-aided schools, private unaided and central government schools. The ETS, which conducts key tests such as TOEFL and GRE, was chosen by the National Council for Education Research (NCERT) for setting up the regulatory platform.

also been arrested in connection with the excise policy cases and is currently in jail. The bench also asked senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Sisodia, to answer legal questions on Tuesday on the CBI's allegation that change in excise policy led to a loss to the state exchequer. "We want you to answer on the allegation of the CBI that the changes in policy was done for unjust enrichment of A, B and C at state exchequer's expense and consumers were made to pay higher price," the bench told Singhvi.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Underdogs no more!

Buzkashi-playing Afghanistan has braved high odds to make a mark on world cricket, and how!

Ignoring long years of wars, conflicts and turmoil, Afghanistan's cricket team threw up the biggest upset in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023, vanquishing defending champions England by a convincing margin of 69 runs. This victory marked only their second win in World Cup history. But it changes everything: Afghanistan's battle-hardened cricket team is now firmly established among the sport's elite. Of course, some credit is due to India, which has helped the Afghan team reach this position of strength. The journey of Afghan cricketers was shaped by their early training in Pakistan, with some even starting their crickering careers in refugee camps across the border. As they played in dusty and makeshift grounds, they harboured dreams of representing their country on the international stage. The team from this war-torn country made its T20 and ODI debuts against Pakistan. However, the turning point came when the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) stepped in to play a pivotal role in the swift ascension of the sport within the strife-ridden nation. In 2015, the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex in Greater Noida served as a temporary "home ground" for the Afghans. In the world of cricket, few stories are as captivating and inspirational as the meteoric rise of the Afghan team. Over the past two decades, its journey has been a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Afghans and their unrelenting pursuit of excellence. From its humble beginnings to becoming a formidable force, Afghanistan has not only earned the confidence and respect of major cricketing nations but also made a mark in history.

Its remarkable progress in cricket came through their participation in domestic and international tournaments, such as the World Cricket League. Under the guidance of coaches and mentors, Afghan players honed their skills and developed a unique brand of cricket. Their bowlers, known for their pace and spin prowess, have become a force to reckon with, while their batters have shown glimpses of brilliance. One of the defining moments for Afghanistan was gaining Full Member status from the International Cricket Council (ICC) in 2017. It meant they were granted the same status as giants like India, England and Australia. The emergence of the Afghanistan cricket team is a story of resilience and dedication. It has captured the hearts of cricket enthusiasts and earned the confidence and respect of their peers. The fear factor now associated with Afghanistan's spinners and batters is a testament to their remarkable journey. As Afghanistan continues to take impressive strides in international cricket, it is crucial to celebrate its success as a reminder of the power of sports to bring people together, regardless of their background or circumstances. Afghanistan's cricketering journey is a story of hope and inspiration, one that demonstrates how determination can lead to triumph in the most challenging circumstances. To rephrase Shah Rukh Khan's famous dialogue from a Hindi movie: "Don't underestimate the grit of a war-torn nation!"

PICTALK



Artists perform during the annual presentation 'Shri Ram', a dance drama on Sampurna Ramayana, in New Delhi PTI

Is it worth going to study in a foreign university?

Most students fall for the smart marketing tactics and the lure of getting good employment overseas, realising little that the jobs are scarce there

For the past few years, the craze for people from India to go abroad to gain admission to foreign colleges and settle there has been on the increase. According to the government, between 2016 and 2021, 26.44 lakh Indian students went abroad to study. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) estimates show that in the year 2020, 4.5 lakh Indian students went abroad for education and they spent \$ 13.5 billion in this process. In the year 2022, this expenditure was 24 billion dollars that is, about 2 lakh crore rupees. According to the report of Redseer Strategy Consultant, by 2024 this expenditure may reach US\$ 80 billion, that is, 7 lakh crore rupees, when an estimated 20 lakh Indian students will go abroad to study. If we make a state-wise analysis, till the year 2021, among the students going to study abroad, 12 per cent were from Punjab and Andhra Pradesh each; and 8 per cent were from Gujarat. If seen in proportion to the total number of youth, then 7 out of



every thousand youth from Punjab, 4 out of every thousand youth from Andhra Pradesh and at least 2 out of every thousand youth from Gujarat are going to study abroad every year. If we take the cumulative numbers from 2016 to 2022, the situation looks quite alarming. This number is 50 per thousand in Punjab, 30 per thousand in Andhra Pradesh and 14 per thousand in Gujarat. The exponential increase in the number of students going abroad to study is a matter of concern for many reasons. The biggest concern is that these youth are migrating to foreign countries in search of education and employment and this migration is causing a shortage of labour for the economic activities in the country. There has been huge progress in the field of education in the country. If we

look at the admission of students in higher education, then in 1990-91, only 49.2 lakh students took admission in higher educational institutions; but this number reached 41.4 lakh in the year 2020-21. Broadly speaking, the number of students taking admission to higher education has increased more than 10 times in the last 30 years. If we talk about higher education institutions, we see that in the year 2021, there were 1113 universities and equivalent institutions, 43796 colleges and 11296 standalone educational institutions in the country. As far as the fee for admission into educational institutions is concerned, in most of the Indian educational institutions it's much lower than the fees in foreign institutions and most of the foreign institutions in which Indian youth are taking admission are of very low standard. So, the question arises why do Indian youth spend huge amounts of money and get admission to foreign educational institutions? The simple answer is that most of the students who go abroad to pursue higher education, actually don't go to

get a higher degree. The real intent of Indian students going to other countries including Australia, Canada, and European countries including the United Kingdom, is not too keen to get an education. Their real objective is to get employment there. But Indian youth fail to realise that there is a huge shortage of employment in these countries also. In many countries, incidents of violence by local people, against Indians and youth coming from other countries, generally from South Asia, are also being witnessed. Most of the young students leaving the country fail to get employment there and have to return home, due to which they are also facing frustration. The students are not able to realise that today in Canada, Australia and European countries, where they are taking admission to educational institutions, those educational institutions are giving easy admission to Indian students in their institutions, for profit. (The writer is a professor, at PGDAV college, University of Delhi, views are personal)



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

The world is used to the spectacle of scholars, academics and social and political activists propagating and conferring for global peace, but it is increasingly difficult to dismiss the notion that peace is little more than an uneasy halt between wars. While civilians somehow cling to some unreal hope, those in charge of the political destinies talk of peace, but actually build and sharpen the weaponry for the next bout.

In the land of origin of the three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, peace is currently the biggest casualty. Virtually everyone is concerned about the Israel-Hamas war. One, however, does almost immediately ponder as to how Tel Aviv was caught by utter surprise. Needless to add, the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad has been reputed to be one of the most efficient in the world, possibly the best spy agency.

On balance, it appears that Hamas was conscious that there are groups within Israel that desire the Jewish homeland and country to further expand into a Greater Israel, as large and great as possible. Undoubtedly, the Hamas leaders themselves yearn to wipe the Jewish nation out of existence. Curiously, like in love, so in hate; such desires are mutual. With the help of friends and allies, it is likely that Hamas has been, for a long time planning to strike a 'grand slam' at their Jewish neighbour.

Just as the Israeli leaders would like to get rid of Hamas from the country's neighbourhood. All of this lays the grounds for a conflict before the end of which the other side would supposedly be wiped out. A wounded enemy is more dangerous than one who hasn't been wounded. A grand slam, so to say, might have been thought to be necessary. The question is whether Israel too sees the Hamas invasion and barbarity as a great opportunity for "setting things right" in the Middle East.

An organized state in Tel Aviv would certainly be functioning round the clock and would not give its adversaries any chance to destroy it. As luck would have it,

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FIRST COLUMN MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS YOUR ATTENTION

Forbearance and endurance are paramount keys to achieving success



RAVI VALLURI

Anand was a mere mentee at a celebrated flautist's music school. The youngster was bewitched by a damsel who too was learning to play the flute under the expertise of the legendary musician.

Anand and Bhairavi were ensnared by craving; they were in a tearing hurry to achieve stardom through soulful renditions of the fabled Ananda Bhairavi raga. Their respected Master was however certainly not impressed at the proffer of his novitiates and admonished them.

"One needs enormous tapas to arrive at the world stage," he added.

A Zen Story: Years ago, a greenhorn was learning various nuances of breathing techniques and meditation at a temple of knowledge. After acquiring some basic skills, he approached his monk as to how soon he could graduate from the monastery and begin to spread the knowledge of Zen Buddhism. The impassioned monk was to say impassively, "It will take you ten more years."

"Master, I will practice twice the number of hours, then how long will it take me to become a suzerain of Buddhism?"

"Thirty years," was the bland reply.

Learning to Learn: Forbearance and endurance are paramount keys to achieving success. Tearing hurry and sheer desperation to climb the ladder to achieve fame in any field leads only to severe psychological problems.



Psychotherapy: The intent of a therapeutic approach is to upend the pyramid. It is to ensure the betterment of the victim's life. The therapy reinforces the client's resolve for mitigating distress leading to an improved lifestyle. By adopting a holistic line of treatment, the mind is blessed with positivity, becomes robust and develops the ability to eschew unwelcome habits.

There is astonishing progress in the victim who undergoes a mental transformation; the thinking pattern changes dramatically and becomes empowered to make mindful decisions on the voyage of rehabilitation. Gifted and trained psychotherapists combine their clinical insights and their mental GPS to zero in on suitable psychodynamic therapies.

Dynamics of Rehabilitation and Recuperation: Fundamentally, psychodynamic therapy cogitates that it is an intra-psychic conflict that is primarily responsible for the psychological malady. The fountainhead of the problem lies within the psyche of the individual. Research in the field opines that querulous desires of childhood and unmitigated childhood fears are essentially responsible for intra-psychic disorders. Keeping in mind the above two factors, psychotherapists deploy the technique of free association and eliciting information through visualisation, dreams, thoughts, and feelings to create a database. The cutting edge of the therapy is provided as the therapist glides and floats from the intellectual frame to an emotional plane. Psychodynamic therapy enfranchised the therapist to understand the mind of the patient and provide emotional succour.

Last but not least, the duration of treatment is of tremendous significance. The magnitude of the problem is obviously a key determinant of the span of treatment. However, around 15 to 20 vigorous sessions put the patient well on the road to renaissance.

Alternative therapies

Unbridled ambition could also trigger alcoholism, bulimia, heavy smoking, and substance abuse among others. In such cases, alternative therapies such as practising the unique rhythmic breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya, Vipassana, sessions of yoga and pranayama, and meditation techniques of Yoga Nidra, help in the relaxation of the mind and body immensely.

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

Igniting the passion of traditional entrepreneurs



DINESH SOOD

'PM Vishwakarma' is an attempt to empower the self-employed traditional entrepreneurs who contribute to their communities and create employment



Many people strive to secure their dream job and are unwilling to risk becoming an entrepreneur. However, it is notable that professions such as blacksmiths, goldsmiths, potters, carpenters, sculptors, barbers, cobblers, and others are a significant part of India's workforce. These traditional tiny entrepreneurs work with their hands and tools and are usually self-employed individuals whose skills are passed down from generation to generation. This proves that entrepreneurs are born, not made. The culture in which these individuals are raised plays a significant role in shaping their entrepreneurial mindset. They witness the ups and downs of entrepreneurship and choose to live their lives similarly. Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the 'PM Vishwakarma' scheme worth Rs 13,000 crore to promote such traditional tiny entrepreneurs to create more employers than employees. The aim is to integrate traditional tiny entrepreneurs into the domestic and global value chains by providing skill upgradation and modernisation. This will help to enhance their already existing traditional skill sets and make them more relevant, thereby improving their socio-economic status and quality of life.

Successful entrepreneurs are not limited to those who inherit family businesses. An individual's mindset towards entrepreneurship is crucial and develops with age and experience. As people mature, they become aware of the advantages of entrepreneurship and often choose it as a career path. However, how can we motivate those who do not come from entrepreneurial backgrounds to become future employers and contribute to our sustainable econo-



SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS ARE NOT LIMITED TO THOSE WHO INHERIT FAMILY BUSINESSES. AN INDIVIDUAL'S MINDSET TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS CRUCIAL AND DEVELOPS WITH AGE AND EXPERIENCE

(The writer is a Co-Founder and MD of Orane International and a network member of India International Skill Centres. Views are personal)

my? It is our responsibility to take the necessary steps to make this happen. Can't we start at least with these initial steps?

Home; the parents should start from the early school days of their young ones, read to them the stories of successful entrepreneurs, ones their young buds could relate to and get them acquainted with their day-to-day life attributes and the attributes and benefits they pass on to the society. Well, it is better to tell your bud to aim at making a hospital or hotel than just being a doctor or a chef, in the process, the young mind will keep his trajectory not confined to just being a doctor or a chef but keep his horizons much open and farther even after turning a successful super specialist doctor or a celebrity chef.

Schools; To fuel the entrepreneurship spirit among job seekers, multi-faceted efforts are needed to accelerate the creation of more job providers in the bustling industrial, services and tertiary sectors. Unfortunately, our education system did not focus on the development of essential entrepreneurial skills in school students, while entrepreneurial skill is the main pillar of job providers, intend to march forward.

Thus, to support the entrepreneurial spirit must give a nod to the Business Blaster Young Entrepreneur Programme in schools to encourage school children from class 11 to become entrepreneurs. Successful entrepre-

neurs and unicorns who bring with them years of entrepreneurial experience can play a vital role as mentors and can contribute the angel funding to build entrepreneurial orientation and mindset among the youths, especially school dropouts can be skilled and would equip their budding entrepreneurship to take charge as a job provider.

Colleges; there should be a structured curriculum with frequent seminars and workshops on entrepreneurship, emphasizing hands-on experience rather than just classroom learning. Encouraging idea sponsorships and mentorship from entrepreneurs would be beneficial. Additionally, students should be encouraged to visit actual facilities to better understand the entrepreneurial culture.

Business schools; should place equal emphasis on teaching entrepreneurship as they do on teaching business. Mock drills should be implemented, where students spend an equal amount of time shadowing an entrepreneur as they do during internships with organizations. Evaluations should hold equal weight in determining the student's level of business acumen and entrepreneurial spirit.

Skill Development Centres; we have some of the brightest minds who are driving change in skill development. These leaders should focus on imparting entrepreneurship skills with the same energy and dedication as employability skills. Entrepreneurship

Development Institutes; how many successful entrepreneurs have we connected with to mentor our future entrepreneurs? We don't need teachers to teach how to be an entrepreneur; if they knew, they would already be one. We need proven entrepreneurs to guide and support our future entrepreneurs and set them on the path to success. Providing resources is only part of the equation, providing expert guidance is equally important.

Lastly; successful entrepreneurs must step forward and make time in their busy schedules to mentor future entrepreneurs regularly. This can be done for a specific period until the mentee establishes their trajectory, after which the mentor can move on to the next aspiring entrepreneur. This would be a more effective and impactful form of corporate social responsibility.

Entrepreneurship is driven by aspirations that exceed available resources. Entrepreneurs do not start businesses because everything falls into place perfectly. Even the self-employed, or "Vishwakarma" in traditional terms, continue to hone their skills for personal fulfilment and to contribute to their communities. Society as a whole should come together to support these individuals and in doing so, benefit itself. The goal should be to create more employers than employees, and it is hoped that "PM Vishwakarma" will help make this a reality.

Developing argumentative skills with Moot Courts

In a bid to improve the argumentative skills of budding lawyers, law colleges and schools across India are choosing 'Moot Court' competitions

The syllabus of the law universities features 'Moot Court' as a compulsory topic, the marks scored in it playing a crucial role in determining the grade with which the students pass out of the LLB degree examination. Persons outside the legal fraternity or law colleges may stare back when they are asked about Moot Court. "Though Moot Courts are as important and interesting as Mathematics Olympiad, they are yet to get the public recognition. For those interested in legal affairs, this is an event equal in status to the Mathematics Olympiad," said Prof V R Jayadevan, principal, of Government Law College, Thrissur, who successfully conducted an all-India Moot Court event in his college in



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

(The writer is a special correspondent at The Pioneer; views expressed are personal)

the last week of September. Though planned as a low-profile event the Thrissur Moot Court Competition drew 36 teams from all over India. The winners walked away with the Justice T Ramachandran Memorial Trophy. The event saw intense competition as participating undergraduates switched over from one section of the law to another section with elan and poise. If you ask a person without a legal background what moot court is about, chances are that you will get a grumpy look. No one can blame him/her because persons without knowledge of legal education are not at all familiar with the term. Moot Courts are simulated lessons held in law schools to make budding lawyers ready to face

real-life battles in courtrooms. It is an intellectual bout conceived to test the prowess of law students in their academic pursuits. The organisers take out subjects of national and international events, put them as a legal issue and ask the students to argue for and against the topic. Classrooms in law schools are converted into real-life courtrooms with all resplendent ambience. These bouts turn out future Jethmalanis, Servais, Narimans and Sorabjees! Those familiar with the nuances of law and legal codes are sure to take a liking to the event. "I always feel that Moot Courts resemble Kathakali, a pantomime of Kerala, which could be enjoyed only by the connoisseurs of art. For those

who are uninitiated about Kathakali, watching it is a futile exercise. There is a saying in Malayalam that watching the art form without knowing the story is a waste of time," said Parvathi Sreejith Valliathan, Assistant Professor, SRM Law School, Chennai. The Thrissur event was the 12th edition of the annual Moot Court competition held by the College. "This year we selected a topic right out of a real-life event. Dharmanchal, a State in the Union of India, enacted Dharmanchal Infrastructure Investment Fund Act 2001. The preamble of the Act states that it was expedient to constitute a fund for investment in infrastructure projects in the State. The Act was similar to the provisions of the

Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Act 1999," explained Prof Sonia K Das, the lawwre of the event. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India took strong objections to the way the KIIFB was functioning and the availing of loans beyond the repaying capacity of the State. The Articles concerning the federal structure and the freedom of the States were used as weapons by the participants in simulated courtrooms which were presided over by judges who needed the counsels appearing for the petitioners and respondents with questions that went deep into the subject. The expressions on the faces of the audience spoke a lot. They too were taken to the hitherto undebated issues in the Indian

Constitution. "Our intention is to tone up the skills of advocacy," said Prof Jayadevan. The competition witnessed high-pitch arguments and counter-arguments. "Besides arguments, Moot Courts are the path for law students to have practical knowledge in drafting, pleading and conveyancing. The Moot Courts will intellectually stimulate students to develop skills that will be of great importance in future. The participants (addressed as Mooters) should possess sharp analytical skills to dissect complex legal issues, identify key arguments and develop logical frameworks," said Parvathi Kumar, who has more than a dozen Moot Court events to her credit. Moot Court also have a

number of participants performing various tasks like researching and drafting which are put to the Court for approval/consideration. The participants are hopeful that one day they will be able to compete in the Philip C Jessup International Law Moot Court hosted in Washington DC. Considering the fact that there is no empowered body to ask the global community of nations to follow the diktat of the International Court of Justice, it is for the Gen Next to come up with ideas and solutions that make the States obey the orders issued by it. The progress made in science and technology has brought together warring nations of Europe is a hopeful signature. Let the Moot Courts flourish in India.

MONEY MATTERS

Federal Bank reports best-ever net profit as provisions decline sharply

Private sector lender Federal Bank on Monday reported a 36 per cent jump in its September quarter net profit at Rs 994 crore on a consolidated basis, as provisions declined sharply. On a standalone basis, the South-based lender reported a 36 per cent jump in its profit after tax at Rs 954 crore. Its core net interest income grew 17 per cent to Rs 2,056 crore for the quarter on the back of a 20 per cent growth in advances and a slight expansion in the net interest margin to 3.16 per cent. The other income came in at Rs 730 crore in the quarter under review, as against Rs 610 crore in the year-ago period, but was down when compared with the quarter ago period's Rs 732 crore. Its overall provisions decreased to Rs 43.9 crore on a standalone basis, compared to Rs 267.86 crore in the year-ago period, majorly on a heavy reduction in the money set aside for potential loan losses, which came down to Rs 61 crore, from Rs 205 crore.



Mines ministry collects Rs 13.08L from disposal of scrap

The mines ministry on Monday said it has collected Rs 13.08 lakh through disposal of scrap as part of a special drive to weed out physical files. The exercise for eliminating physical files has resulted in freeing up of about 29,050 square feet office space. "Disposal of scrap has resulted in revenue of Rs 13,08,406 collected so far," the mines ministry said in a statement. Under its Special Campaign 3.0, the ministry has set targets for disposal of pending matters, including easing of rules/processes, records management, public grievances and elevating workplace experience in the offices under its control. "Special endeavour made for disposal of pending references have fetched 100 per cent achievement in redressing public grievances...and references received from state government. Besides, Ministry of Mines is close to attain 100 per cent achievement in PMO references too," the ministry said.



Semen Station emerges top in quality parameters

NDDB Dairy Services-owned Rahuri Semen Station in Maharashtra has got highest mark among 55 such facilities across India in an audit report submitted by the government-constituted Central Monitoring Unit. National Dairy Development Board's (NDDB) arm NDS said in a statement that Rahuri Semen Station has emerged first on parameters ranging from quality, animal genetics to health and safety protocols. NDS is NDDB Dairy Services. Earlier this month, NDS said that the CMU has submitted a technical audit report of 55 semen stations across the country for 2022-23 to the Union government's Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairy Development. In the audit report, Rahuri station was given a mark of 97 followed by 95 for Animal Breeding Centre Salon, a NDS station, in Uttar Pradesh. The CMU report accorded a total of nine semen stations a score of 90 and above under Grade A.



Bank of Maharashtra shares climb over 1 pc after Q2 performance



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) on Monday climbed over 1 per cent after the company posted a 72 per cent jump in net profit for the September quarter. The stock advanced 1.26 per cent to settle at Rs 47.42 apiece on the BSE. During the day, it climbed 2.49 per cent to Rs 48. On the NSE, it gained 1.38 per cent to end at Rs 47.45 per piece. In volume terms, 48.35 lakh shares of the company were traded on the BSE and over 4.94 crore shares on the NSE during the day. Bank of Maharashtra on Monday posted a 72 per cent jump in net profit at Rs 920 crore for the September quarter, aided by a decline in bad loans and a rise in interest

income. The lender had reported a standalone profit of Rs 535 crore in the year-ago period. Total income increased to Rs 5,796 crore during the quarter under review, against Rs 4,317 crore in the same period last year, BoM said in a regulatory filing. The bank earned interest income of Rs 5,068 crore during the quarter, compared to Rs 3,815 crore in the same period a year ago. The bank was able to reduce gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) to 2.19 per cent of the gross loans by the end of September 2023, from 3.40 per cent a year ago. Likewise, net NPAs or bad loans came down to 0.23 per cent, from 0.68 per cent at the end of the second quarter of the previous fiscal.

India expected to grow at 6.3% in FY24: Ficci survey

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's economic growth is expected at 6.3 per cent during 2023-24 on the back of good health of the financial sector and uptick in private investment even as downside risks remain, said a survey by industry body Ficci unveiled on Monday. The latest round of Ficci's Economic Outlook Survey pegs annual median gross domestic product (GDP) growth for 2023-24 at 6.3 per cent - with a minimum and maximum growth estimate of 6 per cent and 6.6 per cent, respectively, the chamber stated. The median growth forecast for agriculture and allied activities has been put at 2.7 per cent for 2023-24. This marks a moderation vis-a-vis growth of about 4 per cent reported in 2022-23. The El Nino effect has had an impact on the spatial distribution of rainfall this monsoon. Industry and services sector, on the other hand, are



anticipated to grow 5.6 per cent and 7.3 per cent, respectively in current fiscal year, the survey shows. Ficci said the survey was conducted in September 2023 and drew responses from leading economists representing industry, banking and financial services sector. "Persisting headwinds on account of geopolitical stress, slowing growth in China, lagged impact of monetary tightening and below normal monsoons pose downside risks to growth," it said. According to survey results, median GDP growth is esti-

mated to slow down to 6.1 per cent and 6 per cent in Q2 2023-24 and Q3 2023-24, respectively after posting a four-quarter high growth of 7.8 per cent in Q1 2023-24. Further, the chamber said the median forecast for CPI based inflation has been put at 5.5 per cent for 2023-24, with a minimum and maximum range of 5.3 per cent and 5.7 per cent, respectively. The survey participants opined that the course of inflation remains uncertain. "There was an unanimous view among the participants

that global growth is poised to slow in the current year vis-a-vis 2022, and this trend is expected to continue in the year 2024 as well," Ficci said, and added significant downside risks continue to remain on fore that could hamper the momentum in recovery. Back home, the survey said though India's economic performance has remained relatively steady amid recent challenges, the country has not been unscathed from the external shocks. Weak external demand is already reflecting in India's merchandise exports performance and is expected to be a drag on domestic growth, it added. "Nonetheless, growth in India is expected to hold ground on the back of good health of the financial sector, robust urban demand, uptick in private investment as a result of government's front-loading of capex, pick up in real estate/construction sector and the forthcoming festive season," the survey said.

Experts see WPI inflation rising in 2nd half this fiscal

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) in India is likely to rise in the second half of the ongoing fiscal and a prolonged deflationary trend could impact growth, experts said on Monday. Wholesale inflation remained in the negative territory for the sixth straight month in September at (-) 0.26 per cent on easing prices of food items, especially vegetables. Deflation in WPI in September is primarily due to the fall in prices of chemicals and chemical products, mineral oils, textiles, basic metals, and food products as compared to the year-ago period, the commerce and industry ministry said on Monday. "In September, the WPI exhibited its sixth consecutive month of contraction, with a decline of 0.3 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y), lower than the previous month's contraction of 0.5



per cent," CareEdge Chief Economist Rajani Sinha said. "The continued contraction in WPI can be attributed to the deceleration in food prices, as well as the ongoing decline in fuel and manufactured product prices," Sinha said. She suggested that while the fading impact of a high base may lead to a "slight increase" in WPI in the second half of the fiscal year, the overall WPI inflation is expected to remain low. Elevated global crude oil prices and potential risks to kharif harvest due to uneven rainfall also pose upside risks to WPI inflation, Sinha said.

Petrol, diesel sales fall ahead of start of festive season

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Petrol and diesel sales fell in the first half of October ahead of the start of festive season that is expected to boost consumption, preliminary data of state-owned firms showed. Last year, Durga Puja/Dussehra as well as Diwali fell in October. This year the festive season, when consumption picks up, starts in the second half of October. Petrol sales by three state-owned fuel retailers fell 9 per cent year-on-year, the first drop in two months. Diesel consumption dropped 3.2 per cent. The decline was largely because of the larger base of last year. Petrol sales dropped to 1.17 million tonnes during the first half of October from 1.29 million tonnes a year back. Sales dropped 9 per cent month-on-month as well. Consumption of diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country -- accounting for about two-fifths of the demand, dropped to 2.99 million tonnes during October 1 to 15 from 3.09 million tonnes a year back. Month-on-month sales were, however, up 9.6 per cent when compared with 2.73 million tonnes in the first



half of September. Diesel sales typically fall in monsoon months as rains lower demand in the agriculture sector which uses the fuel for irrigation, harvesting and transportation. Also, rains slow vehicular movements. This had led to a fall in diesel consumption in the last three months. And once the monsoon ended, consumption has risen month-on-month. Consumption of diesel had soared 6.7 per cent and 9.3 per cent in April and May, respectively, as agriculture demand picked up and cars yanked up air-conditioning to beat the summer heat. It started to taper in the second half of June after the monsoon set in. It has continued to fall since. Suppliers' group OPEC sees India's oil demand expanding on average by 2,20,000 barrels per day on the back of vigor-

ous economic growth. Consumption of petrol during October 1-15 was 12 per cent more than in the COVID-marred October 2021 and 21.7 per cent more than in pre-pandemic October 2019. Diesel consumption was up 23.4 per cent over October 1-15 in 2021 and 23.1 per cent compared to October 2019. With the continuing rise in passenger traffic at airports, jet fuel (ATF) demand rose 5.7 per cent to 2,95,200 tonnes during first fortnight of October against the same period last year. It was 36.5 per cent more than in October 1-15, 2021, but 6.6 per cent lower than pre-COVID October 2019. Month-on-month jet fuel sales were almost 2 per cent lower compared to 3,00,900 tonnes in September 1-15, 2023.

JK Paper to acquire Manipal Utility Packaging Solutions for Rs 90 crore

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

JK Paper Ltd on Monday said it will fully acquire Manipal Utility Packaging Solutions Pvt Ltd for nearly Rs 90 crore. The company has entered into a share purchase agreement (SPA) for the acquisition of 100 per cent shares of Manipal Utility Packaging Solutions Pvt Ltd (MUPSPL). JK Paper said in a regulatory filing. Under the SPA, JK Paper will acquire 4.07 crore equity shares representing 100 per cent of capital of MUPSPL at Rs 21.80 per equity share of Rs 10 each, subject to adjustments as per terms of agreement, it added. The acquisition is expected to be completed within six weeks of execution of the SPA with the target entity and its promoters/shareholders, subject to fulfilment of conditions mentioned in the SPA, the company said. JK Paper Vice Chairman and Managing Director Harsh Pati Singhania said, "This acquisition is in line with the long-term strategic objective of the company in the packaging business and gives us an opportunity to offer combined solution to the customers with respect to secondary and tertiary packaging, improve operational efficiencies and ensure that MUPSPL grows and adds value to stakeholders."

Delta Corp gets Rs 6,384-cr notice for short payment of GST

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In another blow to the company, Delta Corp has received a GST notice for short payment of tax to the tune of Rs 6,384 crore, taking the overall tax demand on the company to over Rs 23,000 crore. The company said that the tax demands are arbitrary and contrary to law, and added it will challenge them. DGGI (Directorate General of GST Intelligence) Kolkata on October 13, 2023 has served an intimation notice on Deltatech Gaming, a subsidiary of Delta Corp, seeking GST of Rs 6,236.8 crore for the period January 2018 to November 2022, the company said in a filing on



Saturday. For the period July 2017 to October 2022, another demand worth Rs 147.5 crore has been served, it said. "The notice advises Deltatech Gaming to pay the alleged tax shortfall along with interest and penalty failing which a show cause notice will be issued to the company..." it further said. It added: "The notice also states that the CEO and Executive Director of Deltatech Gaming Limited, being in charge of its day to day affairs, is liable for a penalty" under GST law. The amounts claimed

in the said notice are based on the gross bet value of all games played during the relevant period, according to Delta Corp. Demand of GST on gross bet value, rather than gross rake amount, has been an industry issue and various representations have already been made to the government at an industry level in relation to this issue, the company contended. "The company and its subsidiary have been legally advised that the above notice and the tax demands are arbitrary and contrary to law, and the company and its subsidiary will pursue all legal remedies available to them to challenge such tax demands and related proceedings," it said.

Sidbi's growth accelerator drive for small NBFCs

PNS ■ MUMBAI

National development bank Sidbi on Monday announced a growth accelerator programme for small NBFCs to help them become eligible for bank funding. Under the initiative, being carried out in association with the global alliance for mass entrepreneurship and national NBFC lobby FIDC (Finance Industry Development Council), it has onboarded 18 small NBFCs as the first cohort of the programme. The five-month-long programme is designed to scale



mentorship from domain experts on risk, operations, governance, and technology and is structured to encourage and facilitate peer learning, reviews and networking through a blend of in-person, virtual and individualised sessions, Umesh Revankar, FIDC chairman and executive vice-chairman of Shriram Finance, said. Of the nearly 80 million small businesses, only 15 per cent get access to formal credit, showing the large addressable market for MSME (Micro, Small & Medium Enterprise) funding, Ramann said.

'Sales of apartments up 21% to 1,96L units'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sales of apartments during the Jan-Sept period went up 21% year-on-year to 1,96,227 units across seven major cities on better demand, according to property consultant JLL India. As many as 1,61,575 units were sold in the same period last year. Sales of apartments in Jan-Sept period of this year have already touched 91% of 2022 annual sales. "With the onset of the festive season, robust sales are expected in the upcoming quarter and as a result, annual sales in 2023 are expected to surpass sales of 215,000 units."

Pfizer shares down due to decline in sale of Covid-19 products

PNS ■ NEW YORK

Shares of Pfizer are in retreat on the first day of trading after the drug company said sales of its COVID-19 vaccine and its coronavirus treatment are in less than expected and cut revenue expectations for the year by USD 9 billion. Falling sales of both clipped sales in the second quarter, but Pfizer said in August that it expected a rebound in the second half of 2023. Shares of Pfizer slid nearly 3 per cent before the opening bell Monday and Moderna, which makes a competing vaccine, slid as well. The company said Friday



that global usage of Paxlovid is trending slightly above last year, but that it's still below expectations. The fall vaccination period just began and the New York

City drugmaker said that it's too soon to get a handle on vaccination rates for the year. Full-year revenue for Paxlovid and Comirnaty is expected to be approximately

USD 12.5 billion, short USD 9 billion of what it had expected. Pfizer is lowering its full-year revenue expectations for Paxlovid by approximately

USD 7 billion. That number also accounts for delayed commercialization of the product, which was pushed to January 2024 from the company's previous expectation of commercialization in the second half of this year. Pfizer is also lowering its 2023 revenue expectations for Comirnaty by approximately USD 2 billion due to lower-than-expected vaccination rates. Pfizer Inc. now foresees 2023 revenue in a range of USD 58 billion to USD 61 billion, down from its prior forecast for USD 67 billion to USD 70 billion. It now projects full-year adjusted earnings between USD 1.45 and USD 1.65 per share due to

lower-than-anticipated revenue for COVID-19-related products and inventory write-offs. That is short of the full-year revenue of USD 63.61 billion and earnings of USD 2.77 per share that Wall Street was expecting, and far short of the company's previous projections of per-share earnings between USD 3.25 and USD 3.45. JPMorgan said the company's update solves an ongoing US Paxlovid inventory debate and it anticipates the company's bigger-than-expected cuts to its sales projections will help put a floor under per-share earnings expectations for next year.

Markets fall for 3rd day on weak global equities, spike in Brent crude oil prices

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices ended lower on Monday, falling for the third day running, amid weak trends in global markets and spike in Brent crude oil prices due to geopolitical tension in the Middle East. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 115.81 points or 0.17 per cent to settle at 66,166.93. During the day, it fell 243.36 points or 0.36 per cent to 66,039.38. The Nifty slipped 19.30 points or 0.10 per cent to 19,731.75. From the Sensex pack, Nestle, Tata Consultancy Services, IndusInd Bank, Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Hindustan Unilever were among



the major laggards. Tata Steel, JSW Steel, HCL Technologies, Axis Bank, Power Grid and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the gainers. "Markets continued to witness range-bound trend with a negative bias amid weak Asian cues as selective profit-taking was seen in banking, realty and IT stocks, whereas buying in metal, auto and consumer durable stocks helped markets curb losses.

Grammy Award-winner BLACK COFFEE announces maiden India Sunburn Tour

Grammy Award-winning DJ and record producer Black Coffee will return to India to headline his first-ever multi-city tour in December this year after having played the mainstage at Sunburn Festival in 2022.

Spanning across three days, the South African dance music superstar will kickstart his tour on December 7 in Hyderabad followed by Bengaluru on December 8 and Mumbai on December 8 and will finally culminate in Delhi-NCR on December 10.

Karan Singh, CEO of Sunburn Festival, said: "There has been a massive demand for a standalone Black Coffee India tour for a few years now. I'm glad that we could finally pull this off for our dedicated fan community and once again uniquely position India's burgeoning dance music scene. We can't wait to host him in India once again." Black Coffee will soon become the first South African DJ/producer to headline Madison Square Garden this fall. The MSG show follows Black Coffee's three sold-out shows at The Brooklyn Mirage last fall.

Since the release of 2021's Subconsciously LP, Black Coffee has been a dominant force on the global festival circuit.

The album resulted in him making Grammy history as the first African artist to win the award in the Best Dance/Electronic album category. Black Coffee India Tour 2023 is presented by Absolute Glassware, powered by Kingfisher packaged drinking water and produced by Sunburn.



what's brewing?

Alan Hamel's final love letter to wife Suzanne Somers: Uniquely, magically, indescribably wonderful 'Us'

Suzanne Somers, the actress from Three's Company, died a day before her husband Alan Hamel, 87, wrote her a handwritten love letter as an early birthday present. Somers died on Sunday, October 15, at the age of 76, one day before her 77th birthday. She has been battling breast cancer for almost 23 years. According to R. Couri Hay, Somers' publicist, after receiving his message, she went to bed and died peacefully in her sleep.

In 1977, Somers and Hamel married. Her first marriage to Bruce Somers produced a son, Bruce, 57, and she was also a stepmother to Hamel's children, Stephen and Leslie. Hamel's love letter to his life's love was written in big characters and covered in pink peonies.

According to People, the note stated: "Love I use it every day, sometimes several times a day. I use it at the end of emails to my loving family. I even use it in emails to close friends. I use it when I'm leaving the house." "There's love, then love you and I love you!! Therein lies some of the different ways we use love. Sometimes I feel obliged to use love, responding to someone who signed love in their email, when I'm uncomfortable using love but I use it anyway."

"I also use love to describe a great meal. I use it to express how I feel about a show on Netflix. I often use love referring to my home, my cat Gloria, to things Gloria does, to the taste of

a cantaloupe I grew in my garden. I love the taste of a freshly harvested organic royal jumbo med-jool date. I love biting a fig off the tree. I love watching two giant blackbirds who live nearby swooping by my window in a power dive. My daily life encompasses things and people I love and things and people I am indifferent to."

"I could go on ad infinitum, but you get it. What brand of love do I feel for my wife Suzanne? Can I find it in any of the above? A resounding no!!!! There is no version of the word that is applicable to Suzanne and I even use the word applicable advisedly."

"The closest version in words isn't even close. It's not even a fraction of a fraction of a fraction. Unconditional love does not do it. I'll take a bullet for you doesn't do it. I weep when I think about my feelings for you. Feelings... That's getting close, but not all the way."

"55 years together, 46 married and not even one hour apart for 42 of those years. Even that doesn't do it. Even going to bed at 6 o'clock and holding hands while we sleep doesn't do it. Staring at your beautiful face while you sleep doesn't do it."

"I'm back to feelings. There are no words. There are no actions. No promises. No declarations. Even the green shaded scholars of the Oxford University Press have spent 150 years and still have failed to come up with that one word. So I will call it, 'Us,' uniquely, magically, indescribably wonderful 'Us.'"

Hina Khan on Country of Blind invited by the Oscar Library: It feels surreal!



scale. Right from people in the US loving the story we told through Country of Blind, to our screenplay being invited by the Oscar Library of the Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences, it all feels surreal! The actress said, "I am hoping that we achieve even greater heights with our film, as the story is an entire experience that people will get to live while watching it."

Meanwhile, Shah Kazmi shared, "I am happy that the vision I had for this film is being appreciated so widely. Country of Blind being accepted by the audience in the US and the screenplay now being invited by the Academy's Library of the Motion Pictures and Sciences, is a huge feat for our entire team."

Actress Hina Khan-starrer Country of Blind is now being invited by the Oscar Library to be a part of the permanent collection at the Library of the Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences. The film, which features a story about the 'sightless' and their lives, is directed by Rahhat Shah Kazmi. An elated Hina shared, "Our team has worked really hard on this film, and there is nothing better than it being recognised at such a large

"I can only hope that we achieve all that this film deserves, because right from the story to the way it's shot, everything about Country of Blind is beautiful!"

Based on H.G Wells novel, Country of Blind presents a satirical drama about a community thriving in isolation.

The film stars Hina Khan and Shoib Nikash Shah.

Salman Khan Katrina Kaif team up for a 'personal' mission in Tiger 3

Production banner Yash Raj Films on Monday released the trailer of its much-anticipated Salman Khan-starrer Tiger 3, in which the titular spy races against time to save both his family and country. Directed by Maneesh Sharma and also starring Katrina Kaif as Zoya, the upcoming movie is set after the events of this year's Shah Rukh Khan-starrer Pathaan.

The production banner shared the 2.51 minute-long trailer of the film on its official X page. Tiger 3 will hit the screens on Diwali in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

"Tiger and Zoya are back - to save the country and their family. This time it's personal! #Tiger3 arriving in cinemas on 12th November," Yash Raj Films captioned the post. The film also stars Emraan Hashmi as the vengeful antagonist who holds Tiger hostage in Pakistan and makes him choose between saving his family and country.

Kumud Mishra, Revathi, Riddhi Dogra and Anant Vidhaat round out the cast. Shah Rukh is expected to make a special appearance in Tiger 3, which is the fifth film in the YRF Spy Universe, conceptualised by studio head Aditya Chopra.



Sahil Salathia on refusing Bigg Boss: I don't think I'm ready to put myself out there in reality television

The season of Bigg Boss is upon us with the latest edition of the Salman Khan hosted show set to premiere on October 15. Amongst the celebrities approached to be a contestant on Bigg Boss 17 includes actor and young fashion icon Sahil Salathia. However, the actor said no to be a part of the popular reality show and consciously decided to refuse the offer.

Explaining the reason behind his decision, Sahil informs, "I think Bigg Boss is a great platform, it's so entertaining. But I, personally, as an actor enjoying playing different characters on screen. I don't think I am ready to put myself out there in reality television but its really kind of them to approach me. I feel privileged but I had to gracefully deny

being a part of it." Interestingly, it's learnt that the makers of the show have approached Sahil for the fourth consecutive season.

Meanwhile, professionally it has been a good year for Sahil as he was seen in the Amazon Prime Video's first horror series, Adhura. It was widely appreciated and the actor got a lot of compliments for his work in the show. Reflecting on the same, Sahil says, "I'm still filled with the love that I have gotten for Adhura and now soon, I will kickstart our promotions for the next series that I have finished with Viacom."

Sahil has some other very interesting projects in the pipeline, and they are all surely going to entertain his audience.

FUN

ARCHIE



CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



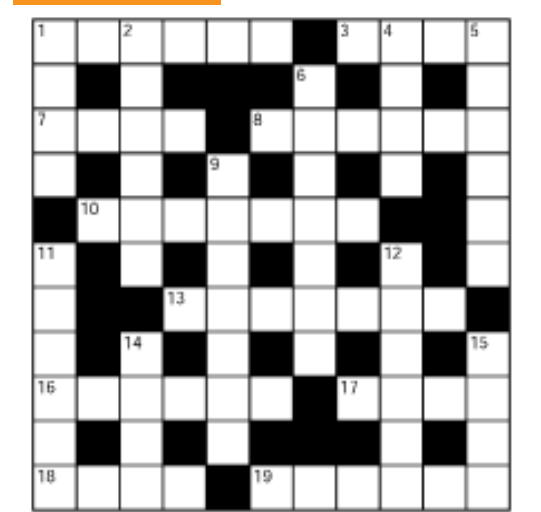
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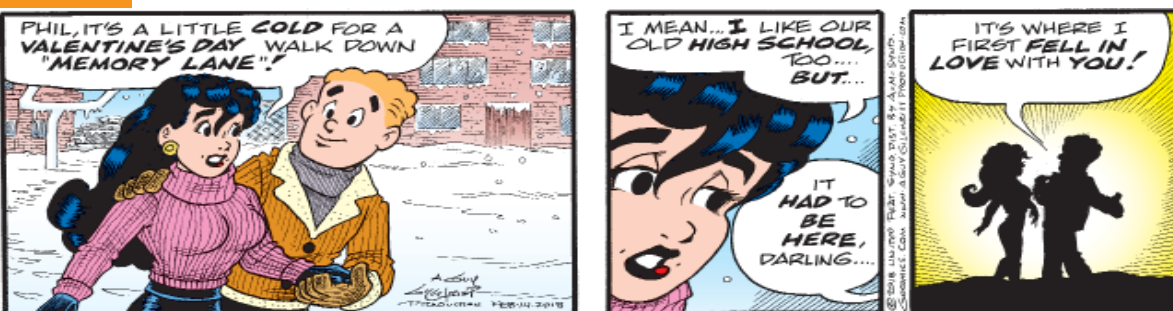
SPEED BUMP



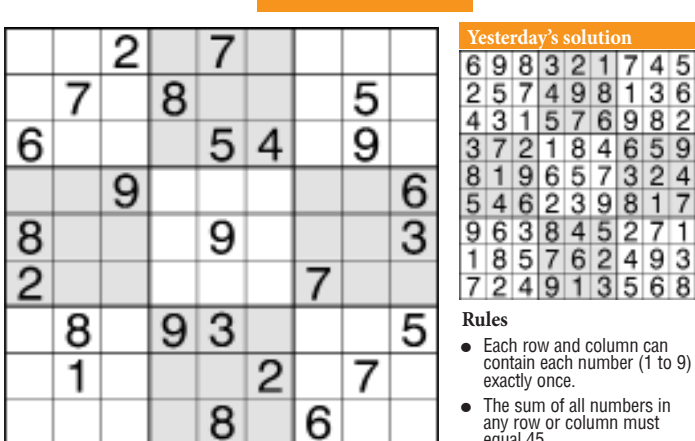
CROSSWORD



NANCY



SUDOKU



Yesterday's solution

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

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

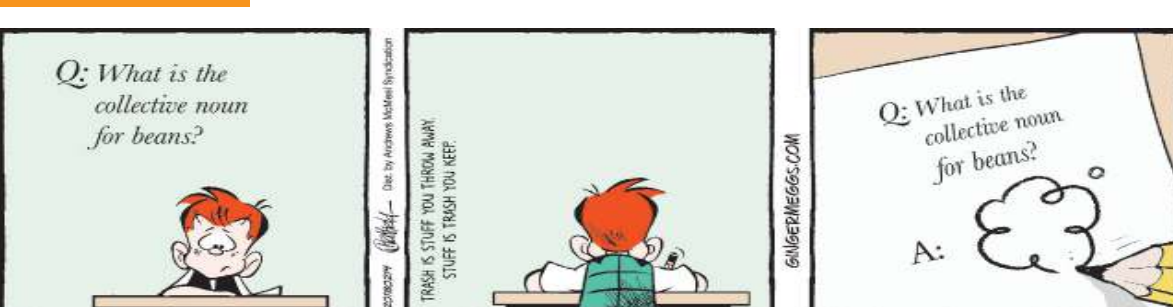
- Pepper might make you do this
- Use needles and wool to make something
- Quick
- Spread this on bread
- Rich
- Injured
- Repaired
- Factual
- Utters
- A weight to stop a boat drifting
- A short letter
- Wearing
- Showing
- Permitted
- Postage stickers
- Look carefully for
- Jealousy
- Expensive

DOWN

- Not in danger
- Less difficult



GINGER MEGGS





Vikrant diving something into more than just an exam

SHIKHA DUGGAL

In his next, Vikrant Massey is aspiring to be a civil aspirant, and oh my my, the swedges and competition he has shown in collaboration with Vidhu Vinod Chopra is something that we would like to define as implausible. Being directed by an imposing figure in this industry, Vikrant somewhere down the line felt sacred. *12th Fail* for Vikrant is one of his hallowed movies. He helped and urged detaching from so many misconceptions through his on-ground research from the movie.



I INTERACTED WITH SO MANY OF THE CIVIL ASPIRANTS. WE SHOT AT ACTUAL LOCATIONS! THESE STUDENTS ARE AWAY FROM ENTERTAINMENT; THEY ACTUALLY HAVE A WORLD VIEW AND A DEFINITION OF SUCCESS.

Beginning with seeking that refuge under, as we mentioned earlier, t h e

helms of classics *Vidhu*, *Balika Vadhu* fame showcased, "I juiced him out. I feel we were meant to do a movie together. Like most of his fans, even I have admired his cinema all these years. He's a true blues filmmaker; at least I have never worked with anyone like him, even after so many films. His honesty is his selling point. I was told, Oh, he's a task master; he's temperamental. I would like to denounce this now as one of his actors. It's coming from a space of sheer moral correctness. He's someone who cannot mince words and allows himself to leave integrity in the back seat. Our industry is a make-believe world, and it's difficult to find honorable men like him. I would like to protect and fall in love with someone like him. And he's childlike too."

Based on a novel, Vikrant was asked to go through the whole novel, and he did. What did he derive from the next question imposed on him? The *Lootera* fame revealed how the book is well-read globally; the figure is nearing almost five crore readers. And

because this novel turned into an adaptation, what the actor really enjoyed on the sets of the movie was how he got to relive his college memories. He described to us in detail, "I interacted with so many of the civil aspirants. We shot at actual locations! These students are away from entertainment; they actually have a world view and a definition of success. Even in their daily routine, they are struggling. I so wanted to stay in their locality, but due to security reasons, I wasn't allowed to."

At the same time, in this film, there is somebody who breaks the myth that Chambal is equal to dacoity. To know how, let's hear it from the horse's mouth himself with a pinch of laughter: "All along the shoot, I was only hearing 'chambal ke daaku', move on guys. The dacoity culture is no longer alive! To begin with, there are so many successful civil aspirants coming from there, helping to run our very own country. They are not robbers or plunderers. Now Chambal is actually a ravine, so there is that certain

temperament, not just in its topography but even in the population's behavior. I saw them living a very tough life. With no means of agriculture and a scarcity of water, the villagers are already living a daunting life. My director chose Chambal for a reason, and it's going to be quite evident in the film."

Now Vikrant feels he may really not be able to stop the corruption going on in the country, but as a professional artist, through the fulfilling job that he does, he can at least raise awareness about it. Are we treading on the right path, readers? For example, he finds Vidhu Vinod Chopra, a high-profile man who is a naysayer. Kumar Mangalam Birla inspired Vikrant to make a change. Although he had his fair share of defeats too, as he conquers them all in the film, so does he in real life. He recalled, "I was very conscious about leaving the television industry and giving myself a lifetime of risk by entering movies. Will I succeed or not? Or sometimes when my movies don't work out! But such is life."

ACTOR VIKRANT MASSEY, WHO WILL NEXT BE SEEN IN VIDHU VINOD CHOPRA'S DIRECTORIAL *12TH FAIL*, SHARES HIS EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH SUCH AN IMPOSING FIGURE, RELIEVING HIS COLLEGE MEMORIES, AND MORE IN THIS EXCLUSIVE CHAT WITH *THE PIONEER*.

Finding 'Joy' in content-rich shows

K. RAMYA SREE

Joy Sengupta is an actor for whom content is the king. All his films, right from his debut movie, *Hazaar Chaurasi Ki Maa*, in 1998, were filled with content. The actor is always drawn to content-driven, independent, multilingual projects across different formats. This is why he is seen in Hindi, Bengali, and English cinema and continues to work in theater, radio, TV, and web shows.

Joy Sengupta is back with a *Kanyadaan*, which will telecast on October 29 on Airtel Theatre, Dish TV Rangmanch Active, and D2H Rangmanch Active.

The show is also available in Telugu. Like we said earlier, even this show of joy is a perfect amalgamation of art, ideas, and aesthetics and will appeal to audiences,

especially in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, because these regions have very vibrant literary, artistic, and dramatic traditions. "Most of Vijay Tendulkar's work, in any case, has universal relevance. In *Kanyadaan*, too, he has portrayed the complexities of a caste-ridden society and the psyche of a man who comes from a historically oppressed community. The play very astutely depicts just how prevalent patriarchy is in all strata of society. Audiences will also connect with a very relatable bond between a father and a daughter. And the way her relationship and subsequent marriage with Arun impact her entire family. This is a very nuanced story that shows that until we bring about fundamental changes in society, superficial solutions won't make a difference," said the actor in conversation with *The Pioneer*.

His character, Arun, carries the

historical baggage of systemic and often violent oppression within him. He shared, "He is a complicated character, and his past makes him volatile, pushes him towards self-harm, and also makes him mistreat his wife. As Nath, the character portrayed by Darshan Jariwala, puts it, he has knots of intergenerational trauma and anger within him. It was challenging to play him because I realized during the process that empathy for the downtrodden in society is one thing, but to live as them is totally different."

The actor has been seen in many teleplays in recent times. Asked for his take on this format, he responded, "Recorded performances have their own advantages. A teleplay not only archives theater, playwriting, and dramaturgy for posterity but also gives people an opportunity to enjoy plays even if they may

never have seen theater before. Teleplays also bring certain elements of theater and cinema together to create an interesting format for actors to explore. Through streaming apps, theater, one of the oldest living art forms, can now grow beyond just live performances and reach a wider audience across the world. What is interesting is the way teleplays capture the dramatic moments that a live play brings to life on stage. The shooting and editing process is such that it gives the audience the experience of a live stage performance. This trend is not recent, as in the 60s, BBC used to air recordings of plays by Royal Shakespeare societies. Today, the National Theatre also

airs plays, and it's an incredible experience."



'Duranga season 2 is a great face-off between two male actors for a change'

TEJAL SINHA

After a phenomenal season, get ready to enter the dark world of *Duranga*, which is all set to stream on Zee 5 on October 24.

The Indian adaptation of the South Korean drama *Flower of Evil* stars Drashti Dhami and Gulshan Devaiah, and now joining the cast is Amit Sadh.

Directed by Rohan Sippy, the upcoming season has been produced by Goldie Behl's Rose Audio Visuals. Ahead of enrapturing hearts yet again, the producer gets candid with *The Pioneer*, sharing some insights about the upcoming season.

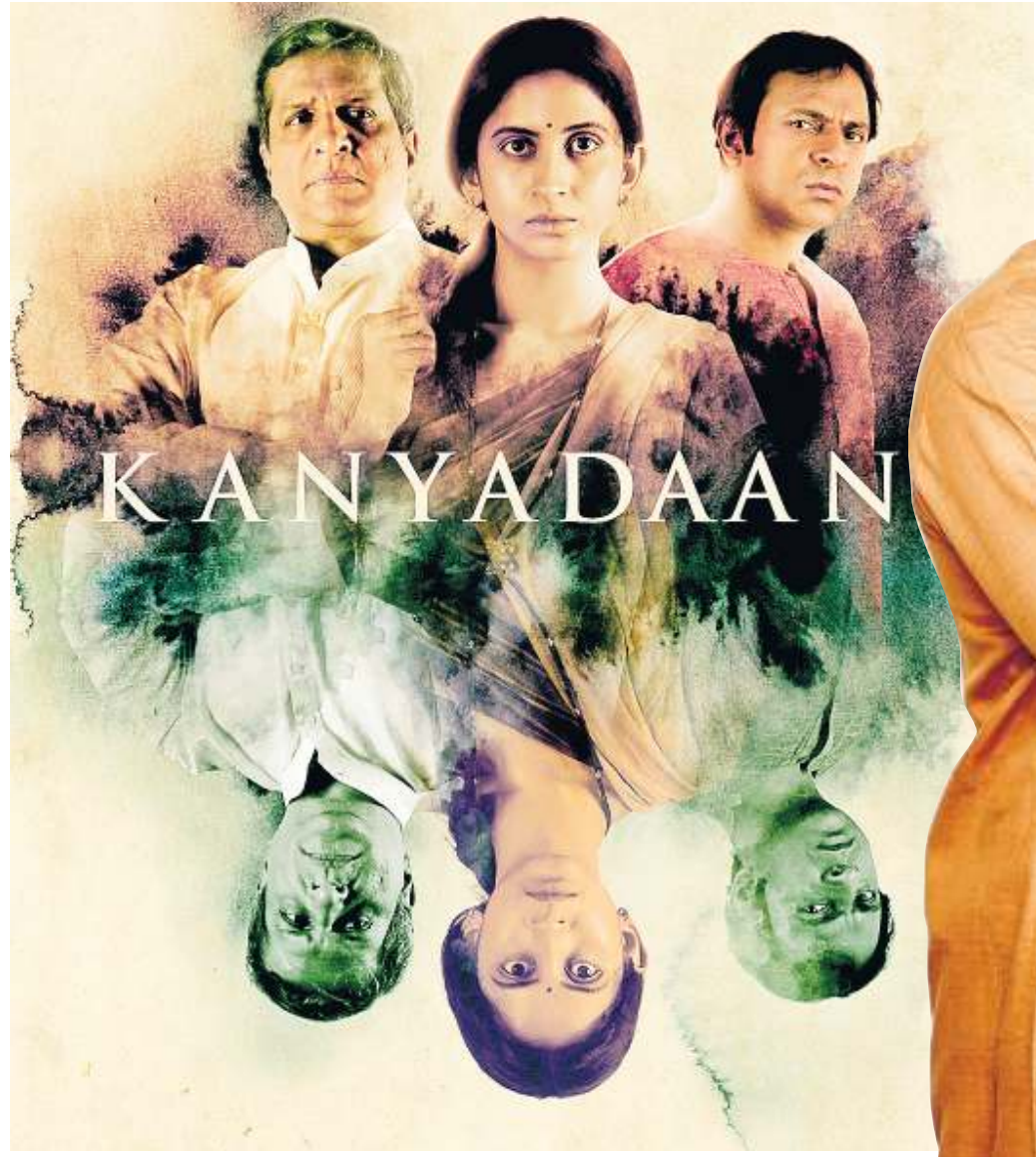
Basically, when he saw the original series, it really intrigued him enough to make a remake of it. "I wanted to explore the hidden, unkept secrets between a husband and wife. Does a relationship really require full disclosure? And if certain undisclosed things do not affect the current relationship, do they still need to be disclosed? That was the starting point from where we began with season one, and it's grown into this more exciting story about the husband's past catching up in so many ways, and whether his wife can live with those things or forgive him for those things

is the unraveling of the story."

According to a note from the makers, *Duranga Season 2* will witness the real Sammit Patel (played by Amit Sadh) wake up from a coma and go after Abhishek Banne (Devaiah), who has been living as Sammit Patel. With Amit Sadh being a prominent part of the second season, he shares, "Amit Sadh being a part of this season, there is far more excitement and some fantastic face-offs between Amit's character and Gulshan's character. The performances of these two leads have been sensational. It's a great face-off between two male actors for a change, and I'm very excited. Amit is in a very never-before-seen kind of role. He has always been the protector, but this time he is the attacker."

All of the main lead cast members, be it Gulshan, Drashti, or Amit, have been the first choice for their respective roles. "Gulshan was the very first choice for the role," shares Goldie, adding, "I mean, he is a fantastic actor. Along with Amit, we needed some sort of similarity between the way they looked and their personas. As you watch the series, you will understand why they have been cast. Drashti was also one of the initial choices, as she just brings a level of freshness. We have never seen Drashti like this before, so it is very exciting to see all three of them in these very roles that we have not seen them in before."

ALL SET FOR ITS UPCOMING SEASON, *DURANGA* WILL STREAM ON ZEE 5 ON OCTOBER 24. FILMMAKER GOLDIE BEHL GETS CANDID WITH *THE PIONEER*, SHARING SOME EXCLUSIVE INSIGHTS ABOUT THE SERIES.





Zampa bags four wickets against Sri Lanka

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Leg-spinner Adam Zampa roared back to form with a four-wicket haul as Australia bowled out Sri Lanka for 209 in the World Cup here on Monday.

An out-of-form Kusal Perera (78) got some much-needed runs while Pathum Nissanka struck 61 for his second consecutive fifty.

Australia benefitted from the timely return to form of Zampa, who had been having an awful tournament. The wrist spinner enjoyed an excellent outing to help bundle out Sri Lanka in 43.3 overs.

Looking on course for a 300-plus score, the 1996 winners faced a bizarre batting collapse and went from 125 for no loss to 209 all out.

There were lots going on in the field as Mitchell Starc aborted his delivery stride thrice to warn Perera to not leave his crease early on at the non-striker's end.

Perera was also struck in the head by a Marcus Stoinis bouncer which caught the Sri Lankan off guard.

But the experienced south-paw didn't let the blow deter him and went on to send Stoinis' slower cutter down the ground to bring up his fifty.

With both openers piling on the runs, the Australian



bowlers looked clueless. But skipper Pat Cummins kept shuffling his bowlers in search of that first breakthrough.

Cummins, who has been far from his best with the ball, stood up at the opportune moment to give Australia the breakthrough they needed.

Cummins cramped Nissanka for room and the Sri Lankan hit it high and in front of square only for David Warner to run and complete a stunning catch.

Cummins bowled a peach of a delivery five overs later to clean up the other set batter in Perera, who picked the wrong line to swing his bat.

The dismissal marked the beginning of Australia's dominance as the Sri Lanka batting unravelling and the five-time champions grew in confidence.

Zampa got rid of the in-form Kusal Mendis. But the wicket belonged to Warner who ran across from deep midwicket, covering about 25ms to complete a spectacular diving catch.

Sadeera Samarawickrama, Chamika Karunaratne and Maheesh Theekshana were Zampa's other victims with Mitchell Starc pitching in with two wickets.

Apart from the openers and Charith Asalanka's 25, no other Sri Lankan batter reached double digits.



Cricket is included in 2028 Olympics

PTI ■ BENGALURU

For long, cricket remained a statistical global sport sans a true global footing. A solid fan base of 2.5 billion and an ever-swelling TV revenue formed its axis to be labelled as a sport with a worldwide appeal, second only to football.

However, in reality, all of it is parked in the Commonwealth countries and even among them India alone helm around 70 percent, if not more, of those numbers.

But now, all this could change as cricket, in its T20 avatar has made its re-entry into the Olympic fold through the 2028 edition at Los Angeles, and it is a mutually beneficial association from sporting and commercial angles.

From a sporting perspective, the Olympics provides an unmatched platform for cricket, perhaps even bigger than a World Cup.

Standing on the podium wearing an Olympic medal around the neck is an unmatched feeling for any sportsman, as it is a reverentially warm handshake with history that dates back to 1896.

"It is an excellent piece of news for cricket to be part of the Olympics. It will certainly add to the global image of cricket," says Keith Joseph, president of the Caribbean Association of National Olympic Committees (CANOC), who gave a strong backing to ICC's efforts to get cricket included in the LA Olympics.

"T20 provides an excellent platform too in terms of duration and connection with younger audiences. That USA will be co-hosting the T20 World Cup in 2024 will also work as a very good precursor to cricket ahead of the Olympics," he points out.

However, expecting cricket to match the universal appeal of football, something the sport always cherished, just because of an Olympic appearance is quite naïve.

Sample this: The ICC men's T20 ranking list features 87 nations in the men's section and 66 in the women's segment. But the FIFA ranking list touches 207 men's teams and 186 women's outfits, the numbers reveal the vast gulf between the two sports.

Of course, this is not to deny that the T20 format has helped cricket to reach some hitherto

unexplored corners of Africa, Europe and Latin America.

"Yes, it is a good first step to take cricket to a global audience. As the USA is a big market and there is a strong presence of sub-continent crowd. But as of now, it has been included only in Los Angeles, and hopefully it will figure in Brisbane as well (in 2032).

"It is important because Australia is a traditional cricketing nation, and being able to play there will be a big boost to the sport. It may even open doors to cricket being a permanent Olympic sport," opines a veteran BCCI administrator.

However, cricket had to leap over several self-imposed hurdles to make its return to the Olympics.

Both the officials and players did not want to follow several clauses, especially the one pertaining to their whereabouts that is mandatory for random dope testing, laid out by the IOC, IOA, WADA etc.

England, the champion side when cricket was last staged in the Olympics in 1900, was another country which was initially reluctant to take this plunge.

"Yes, there were some difficulties in reaching an understanding for some time over certain issues such as the whereabouts clause.

"However, most importantly, the BCCI and ICC and few other boards have found a common ground to take cricket to a global stage," said the administrator.

Beyond the sporting field, the IOA also might have thought about the crowd-pulling power of cricket, especially in the USA, a country with a large Asian diaspora.

An industry insider, whom PTI contacted, said the million eyeballs that cricket ensures will have a massive influence on the purchase of broadcasting rights of the LA Olympics.

"It is great news (cricket in Olympics) if you are a businessperson. America has a large section of Asian expats, who are crazy about cricket and they will fill the stadium and of course will follow the game on TV or streaming apps.

"Since cricket is in LA, our estimate is that the selling price of broadcasting rights might see at least a 20-30 percent jump from the existing one, which is huge for a single edition," the expert said.

South Africa looks strong against Netherlands



PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

South Africa are making quite a statement at the World Cup, playing entertaining cricket and plundering tons of runs as they steamroll rival teams.

As the Proteas take on the Netherlands in this hilly paradise on Tuesday, the perennial under-performers and 'chokers' have shown in the last two games their determination to go the distance in the tournament.

Their 102-run win against Sri Lanka in the opener in New Delhi after putting a record 428/5 on the board, followed by 134-run victory against five-time champions Australia in Lucknow, have made South Africa the team to beat in the competition.

From staying under the radar in the lead-up to the ODI showpiece to becoming high-flyers, the Proteas have started playing to potential and will be firm favourites against the Dutch.

Unlike the Australian and England cricket teams, whose patchy performance so far has left a lot to be desired, the South Africans have come

out with full combat capabilities -with the likes of wicket-keeping stalwart Quinton de Kock, top-order batter Rassie van der Dussen and Aiden Markram making a massive impact here.

The trio smashed a century each against Sri Lanka to pile up a mountain of runs with Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller playing useful cameos in the 428-run total.

Though their bowlers did take a beating from the Sri Lankans, they hit back with full force against the Australians in the next match.

A second consecutive century by De Kock and a massively improved performance from tall pace bowler Marco Jansen and Kagiso Rabada floored Pat Cummins' side.

The 177-run loss for the five-time champions following the humiliating loss to India in the opener has put the Kangaroos on the mat.

The Proteas would look to attack with even more firepower against the Netherlands, a side that has very few recognisable faces in mainstream cricket. But they have posed a challenge occasionally, like the huge upset they made during the 2009 T20 World Cup, defeating England at Lord's.

Last year, the Dutch eliminated the Proteas, handing them a shocking 13-run defeat in the Super 12 stage of the T20 World Cup in Australia. The Scott Edwards-led side will certainly take inspiration from that victory, though T20 and 50-over formats are like chalk and cheese.

But, on a cricket field, where miracles happen, the Dutch too would want to aim for a victory for the ages after seeing Afghanistan overrun defending champions England on Sunday night in New Delhi.

The Proteas, once bitten twice shy, would be looking to opener De Kock, Rassie van der Dussen and Aiden Markram to once again set the stage on fire and then give their bowlers a big total to defend.

England have to show resilience: Buttler

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

England will have to play some of their "best cricket" to come out of the hole they find themselves in following their shock defeat to Afghanistan in the ODI World Cup.

England suffered a shock 69-run defeat to the Hashmatullah Shahidi-led side with the defending champions faltering in their chase of the 285-run target at the Ferozshah Kotla on Sunday.

The win was Afghanistan's second-ever in a World Cup match and lifted them to sixth position on the points table behind England.

On whether it was premature to say that England's World Cup defence was under threat, Buttler, whose team is yet to face India, Australia and South Africa, said, "Yeah. As I mentioned just before, it's not been the way we wanted to start the competition, but this is the situation we find ourselves in and we're going to have to play some of our best cricket moving forward."

The skipper said he had full faith in his team to pull through this crisis.

"Yeah, it's a big setback obviously. Before the tournament starts you have a different idea of how the first three games would pan out. We've got to show a lot of character, a lot of



resilience within the team and most of all a lot of belief. There was a lot of excellent players in there and we haven't played well enough today but we must keep that belief," said Buttler.

Afghanistan were helped on their way to their second-highest World Cup total by a fine 80-run innings from Rahmanullah Gurbaz at the start and a superb 28-run cameo by Mujeeb Ur Rahman in the final overs.

Afghanistan didn't lose a wicket till they had crossed the century mark. England, on the other hand, were 91/4 at one stage.

Asked if he could pinpoint where things started going wrong for England, Buttler said, "No, we didn't, no we started poorly, first ball of the game I missed one and it sort of set the tone for that first 10 overs, we didn't hit the areas that we wanted to and credit to Gurbaz (80 runs) as he put us under a lot of pressure, played some

good shots, but maybe a few too many easy boundaries in there."

England's aggressive style of batting, called 'Bazball', has come to epitomise their cricket in all these formats, more so in Tests under coach Brendon McCullum.

Asked if the team could not "execute properly" the style he wanted it to play, Buttler said, "We always want to play positive and be aggressive and some days you don't play as well as you want to. Though Afghanistan built good pressure on us, maybe the wicket didn't play exactly how we thought it would play and maybe the dew didn't come in as much as we thought as well."

England have played their best cricket when their backs are to the wall of late, with the fight-back during the Ashes this year being fresh in the mind.

Asked if the two losses in three World Cup matches will sharpen the team's focus a little bit more, Buttler added, "We've played some good cricket in all scenarios, whether we've been on top and frontrunners and fancied or whether we've had our backs against the wall. It's a position you find yourselves in, it's not the position you wanted to be in three games ago but the character is excellent as I've mentioned, there'll always be belief and we'll dust ourselves down and go again."

OTHER SPORTS

Jordan Thompson upsets Zverev in first round



AP ■ TOKYO

Jordan Thompson upset ninth-ranked Alexander Zverev 6-3, 6-4 in the opening round of the Japan Open on Monday for his second win over a top-10 opponent this season.

The 29-year-old Australian saved four of the five break points he faced to claim his first career win over Zverev after losing their only previous meeting six years ago. He also beat seventh-ranked Stefanos Tsitsipas at Indian Wells in March.

"I fought off 0-40 first game and I really got into the match after that," the 60th-ranked Thompson said. "But I held on, I was playing an unpredictable style of tennis, and I think he didn't handle it that well in the first set and adapted in the second. But I somehow hung around."

Thompson will next play either Shanghai Masters semifinalist Ben Shelton or qualifier Taro Daniel.

The other three Australians in action Monday all lost as

eighth-seeded Felix Auger-Aliassime defeated Aleksander Vukic 7-6 (3), 6-7 (2), 6-2, while Mackenzie McDonald beat Max Purcell 7-5, 6-4 and Sebastian Ofner outlasted Christopher O'Connell 6-7 (2), 7-6 (5), 7-5.

Fifth-seeded Tommy Paul plays Daniel Altmaier in a late match. Top-seeded Taylor Fritz plays his first-round match against Cameron Norrie on Tuesday, while second-seeded Casper Ruud meets wild-card entry Yosuke Watanuki.

Shanghai Masters winner Hubert Hurkacz is also in the draw. He opens against Zhang Zhizhen on Wednesday.

JIANGXI OPEN

Tour veteran Vera Zvonareva beat Arianne Hatano 6-1, 6-2 in her opening match of the Jiangxi Open.

The 39-year-old Zvonareva, who made her tour debut in 2000, broke her 166th-ranked opponent's serve six times as she cruised to victory in 61 minutes. Zvonareva next plays fifth-seeded Zhu Lin or Diana Shnaider.

Also, eighth-seeded Sara Sorribes Tormo beat wild-card entry Jiang Xinyu 6-4, 6-0. The Spaniard will next play Camila Osorio, who beat Ma Ye-Xin 6-1, 6-0.

Injured Prannoy withdraws from Denmark and French Open

PTI ■ ODENSE (DENMARK)

Star Indian shuttler HS Prannoy has pulled out of the Denmark Open Super 750 tournament due to a back injury that troubled him during his maiden bronze medal-winning run at the recently-concluded Asian Games.

The 31-year-old Indian had battled excruciating back pain to secure India's first medal in men's singles in 41 years at Hangzhou but now he will have to sit out for two to three weeks due to the injury.

"We are not looking at playing any tournament this month. Something also came up in the MRI as well, so I will have to be out for 2-3 weeks, so I will not be able to play Denmark and France," Prannoy told PTI.

"I will need to rest and then start with rehab."

In his absence, India's charge will be led by Lakshya Sen, who will be back on the court after playing a vital role in India's first-ever silver medal in men's team event at the Asian Games.

World No. 15 Sen, who remained unbeaten at the Asian Games, will open against Thailand's Kantaphon Wangcharoen and is likely to meet sixth seed Shi Yuqi of China in the second round.

Two-time Olympic medalist PV Sindhu too will look for a good outing after a semifinal finish at the Arctic Open last week. She will be up against



Scotland's Kirsty Gilmour.

World No. 20 Kidambi Srikanth, who is also desperately looking to accumulate ranking points to make the cut for the Paris Olympics, will take on China's Weng Hong Yang in his opening game.

It is going to be a tricky affair for the former world No. 1, who has blown hot and cold throughout the season.

Priyanshu Rajawat, currently ranked No. 30 in the world, will also have his task cut out as he faces world No. 14 Lee Zhi Jia, who is brimming with confidence following his title-winning run in the Arctic Open.

Newly-crowned world No. 1 pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who claimed an epic gold at Hangzhou, is pitted against Malaysia's

Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi. MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila will also miss out after the former suffered a back injury at Hangzhou.

The women's pairing of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, however, will be back on the court after the Asian Games and will take on Thailand's Benyapa Aimsaard and Nuntakarn Aimsaard.



Dr. Rajasekhar to play a key role in *Extra Ordinary Man*

Actor Nithiin's latest movie *Extra Ordinary Man* is being directed by writer-director Vakkant Vamshi is directing this movie. The movie is being made as an out and out entertainer. Most happening beauty Sreeleela is playing the female lead. The shooting of the film is progressing at a rapid pace.

On Monday, the makers of this movie made a special announcement. In this film, Angry Man Dr. Rajasekhar is playing a key role in the movie.

Raj Shekhar has been a special surprise for the ordinary man by enthralling the audience with his many different characters. As a part of this, he entered the sets on Monday. Rajshekhar is spotted in a stylish look. With this sudden surprising announcement, the speculations on the film reached the next level. This film will have a grand release worldwide on December 8.

This character based story, with its unique entertainer, will appeal to the audience, said the director.

'Mansion 24 will be a good watch with your family'

Director Ohmkar, who impressed the audience with his horror comedy franchise Raju Gari Gadhi, is coming up with a new horror web series titled *Mansion 24*. The series was exclusively created for Disney Plus Hotstar. The character posters raised curiosity among the audience. *Mansion 24* stars Varalaxmi Sarath Kumar, Avika Gor, Bindu Madhavi, Nandu, Manas, Ayyappa P. Sharma, Rao Ramesh, and others in key roles. The makers of the horror thriller *Mansion 24* organised a pre-release press meet event held in Hyderabad.

Speaking on this occasion, actress Avika Gor said, "Working with Ohmkar feels like being with a family. In *Mansion 24*, I have done a different character,

which I have never done before. That's a character with a lot of depth. Ohmkar used to tell how every expression and look should be. It has a huge cast. Acting with all of them gave me a happy feeling. Ohmkar's working style and creativity as a director is impressive."

Meanwhile, director Ohmkar, who initially began his career from a small cable TV, shares that from then until the release of *Mansion 24* series, he has received immense support from the media, friends, family, and the audience. "Every project I do has been well supported. I thank you all for that. This is the first web series I have created. *Mansion 24* trailer got good response. Now the series will start streaming on Disney plus Hotstar from tonight. It will

be a good web series that you will enjoy watching with your whole family. Our art director, DOP, music director and artists all worked hard and we made a good product."

Actress Varalaxmi Sarath Kumar shared her excitement and said that she is happy to act with a great actor like Sathyaraj in the *Mansion 24* web series. This is my first web series. I watched all the episodes while dubbing. The series is very good. We don't watch horror movies at home at night. So I watch all the episodes in a day. I like to do roles that I find challenging. I got such a challenging role in *Mansion 24*. In this, I will be seen as a daughter who goes in search of her father. I acted naturally, like the girls we see outside."



Siddhu Jonnalagadda, Raashi Khanna, Srinidhi Shetty, Neeraja Kona to star in *Telusu Kada*

Saindhav's teaser impresses big time with its intriguing elements

The makers of Victory Venkatesh's upcoming Pan India film *Saindhav* commenced the promotions by launching its teaser on Monday. Earlier, all the main characters of this Sailesh Kolanu directorial were unveiled.

The teaser shows two different aspects of the movie. While it starts as a family drama, the core point of the movie is revealed with the introduction of Nawazuddin Siddiqui as a frightful villain who takes up a big assignment from his boss, which is unaccommodated because of the protagonist. Nawazuddin Siddiqui looked brutal as the antagonist, who goes to any extent to accomplish his tasks. He hires young kids, trains them, and tries to use them for his anti-social work. This man calling Venkatesh a psycho (Saiko) indicates the violent nature of the protagonist. Venkatesh looks peaceful and emotional in the initial portions; he shows his ferocious attitude in the latter portions. The way he warns the opponents is just terrific.

Director Sailesh Kolanu proved his mettle in handling crime and thrilling subjects. This is a next-level subject, and there's more than what we saw in the teaser. His visionary approach is evident in every precisely crafted frame, transporting the audience into the world of *Saindhav*. The cinematography by S. Manikandan effortlessly weaves incredible landscapes with a gritty ambience, creating a visual spectacle that complements the storytelling experience. Music director Santosh Narayanan elevated every moment to new heights with his thundering score.

Avinash Kolla's production design is one of the major assets, other than Garry BH's sharp editing. The movie was produced by Venkat Boyanapalli under the banner of Niharika Entertainment, and the production values looked grand all through. The mission is accomplished as the teaser impresses big time with its intriguing set-up, gripping narrative, exceptional performances, and technical brilliance.

Arya, Shraddha Srinath, Ruhani Sharma, Andrea Jeremiah, Baby Sara, and Jayaprakash are the other prominent cast of the movie. Kishore Thallur is the co-producer. *Saindhav* will be released in all south Indian languages and Hindi on January 13th for Sankranthi.

Star Boy Siddhu Jonnalagadda who is basking under the glory of consecutive hits and lined up some exciting projects has announced his new film on Monday. This will be a very special movie for its director and producers. While popular stylist Neeraja Kona is making her debut as a director with the movie, it marks the landmark 30th film for People Media Factory. TG Vishwa Prasad will produce the movie on a high budget and Vivek Kuchibhotla is the co-producer. The movie is titled *Telusu Kada* and the announcement video designates this one is going to offer a full-meal feast. The visuals looked grand, hinting at top-notch production and technical standards. It's indeed a unique and impressive concept to make the announcement.

Billed to be a soulful love story, the movie will present Siddhu in a new avatar. This subject deals with not only beautiful human emotions but also some very relevant social aspects and relationships. It's not just a story between a boy and a



girl, but a story of friendship, family, sacrifice, self-love, and more.

The movie stars Raashi Khanna and Srinidhi Shetty of *KGF* fame playing the heroines. It features music by the in-form composer Thaman S, cinematography by the skilled Yuvraj J, and editing by National Award-winning techni-

cian Sreekar Prasad. Avinash Kolla who is one of the busiest Production Designers is part of the movie for which Archana Rao designs costumes. *Telusu Kada* is poised to win the hearts of movie buffs with its refreshing storyline, and top-class technical standards.

The shooting of the movie begins in the next few weeks.



Prithviraj Sukumaran's rugged look from *Salaar* out now

Celebrated actor Prithviraj Sukumaran received a special gift from the makers of the upcoming Christmas release, *Salaar: Part 1 - Ceasefire*. They unveiled the first look of Prithviraj in his role as Vardharaja Mannar, the king. The production company, Hombale Films, extended their birthday wishes to their lead actor through a post on Instagram, saying, "Wishing Vardharaja Mannar, The King @therealprithvi, a majestic birthday."

Prithviraj's character sports a rugged appearance, wearing a dusty t-shirt and a septum nose pin that adds a unique flair to his look. The look emanates a sense of intensity and controlled chaos, with a composed demeanour. The colour scheme in his attire revolves around black and grey. Prithviraj is also seen with a septum ring and a black tilak on his forehead, collectively contributing to his regal appearance.

Prithviraj Sukumaran had been on a brief hiatus due to a recent injury and knee surgery sustained during the filming of his next Malayalam film, *Vilayath Buddha*. This unfortunate incident required him to take a voluntary leave from his film commitments for a couple of months.



Deepavali starring Poo Ramu & Kali Venkat will release on November 11

The film has received praise from the audience and critics at the National and International film festivals, receiving standing ovation at the International Film Festival of India, Goa and the 20th Chennai International Film Festival where it won Best Film and Best Actor awards. Officially selected for Indian Panorama, Indian Film Festival of Melbourne and the Jagran Film Festival, this film has been receiving recognition and acclaim for all sectors of audience across the world in the last six months.

Now, the film is dubbed into Telugu as *Deepavali* and preparations are in progress to release it in Telugu and Tamil on November 11th.

Sri Sravanthi Movies entered Tollywood with the movie *Ladies Tailor* in 1986. In this journey of 38 years, 'Sravanthi' Ravi Kishore has produced 38 films. He is one of the few producers who believe that content is the king in any film. Hence, all his movies have greater acceptance amongst audience. *Kida* is his 38th movie and the first Tamil film. In *Deepavali*, the story revolves around a grandfather, grandson and a goat and has a beautiful story enveloping the characters. Immediately liking the story written by director Ra. Venkat,

Ravi Kishore came forward to produce *Deepavali*, a film he believed was rich with wonderful emotions.

'Sravanthi' Ravi Kishore said, "When I went to Chennai, I heard the story of this movie for five minutes from a friend. I got connected immediately with content. I asked the director to record the entire story and send it to me. I really liked the story, so I decided to produce it. I gave complete freedom to the director with the belief that he can do it well and do justice to the story even though he is a debutant director. Whatever he has penned in the script, he brought it to the screen and we are releasing it on November 11th."

The film's director RA Venkat said, "A grandfather, a grandson, a kid and the emotions between these three characters is the main theme of *Deepavali*. *Deepavali* is celebrated in Tamil Nadu and I grew up with my grandparents in my childhood. This film was inspired by my childhood events. The story takes place in a village in Chittoor district on the border of Andhra and Tamil Nadu. Emotions connect to the audience of all languages. I am lucky to have a producer like 'Sravanthi' Ravi Kishore garu. He gave me complete freedom. He provided me what I wanted. Thanks a lot to Ravi Kishore sir. Most of the artists are newcomers in this film along with the director, music director, cinematographer. This is the first film for many people."

Poo Ramu, Kali Venkat, Deepan, Pandiyamma, Vijaya, Kamali and others.

Mimoh Chakraborty starrer *Nenekkadunna* in cinemas on Nov 17



Senior Hindi hero Mithun Chakraborty's son Mimoh Chakraborty debuts in Tollywood with the movie *Nenekkadunna* directed by Madhav Kodad also a debutant. The movie is made in Telugu and Hindi languages. Airtel Ad fame Sasha Chettri plays the female lead role in this film which is Produced by Maruti Shyam Prasad Reddy under KBR presentation. The film will hit the theatres on November 17.

Director Madhav Kodad said, "This is a suspense thriller which has both journalism and politics as its base. Both Sasha Chettri and Mimoh Chakraborty will be seen as journalists. Right from the beginning till end, the movie will be thrilling with twists beyond the imagination of the audience. This is a Female oriented movie that connects well with the women. Apart from this, we have shown in the film that how politics affect journalism."

The film's producer Maruti Shyam Prasad Reddy said, "The first copy of the film is ready. We recently finished sensor. We shot in Mumbai, Hyderabad and Bangalore. Story, music, visuals, direction are the core strength of our film. A special attraction is the pub song with Russian belly dancers choreographed by renowned choreographer Prem Rakshit." The film is releasing worldwide on November 17 in both Telugu and Hindi languages.

Shivarajkumar's first pan-India film *Ghost* to have its Telugu release on Oct 27

Kannada actor Shivarajkumar's first pan-India flick is titled *Ghost*. The high-octane heist thriller will head to the theatres on October 19 in Kannada but not in Telugu. Earlier, a simultaneous pan-India release was planned.

However, *Ghost* hasn't found any takers in Telugu this Dasara. The distributors and exhibitors are busy wooing *Bhagavanth Kesari*, *Leo* and *Tiger Nageswara Rao*. Nandamuri Balakrishna, Thalapaty Vijay and Ravi Teja have ensured that *Ghost* is absent from the box-office.

The Telugu release of *Ghost* will happen on October 27. The lack of buzz for the action thriller in Telugu is telling. Directed by Srinu, *Ghost* is produced by Sandesh Nagraj. Arjun Janya is setting the songs to tune. Anupam Kher and Jayaram have key roles.

The pre-release promotional material released so far have contributed to the film's unpopularity in Telugu.

'I'VE BEEN TRYING TO BE AS REALISTIC AS POSSIBLE'

Sreeleela has a few high profile projects like Pawan Kalyan's *Ustaad Bhagat Singh*, Nithiin's *Extra Ordinary Man*, Vaissnav Tej's *Aadikeshava*, to name a few. Her upcoming film *Bhagavanth Kesari* with Balakrishna is releasing on October 19, 2023. Speaking to scribes, Sree Leela spoke about authenticity in her characters. She said, "What excites me as an actor is doing things differently. Another actress too can do the same role, but giving the part my own spin makes me authentic, and that's what I have been aiming for—try to be as realistic as possible."

In the upcoming film, *Bhagavanth Kesari* Sreeleela plays the character of Viji Papa, Balakrishna's daughter. "The film also explores a father-daughter relationship. The depth and arc of my role was something I couldn't resist taking up. The role has several emotions and layers that are so challenging. People associate me with grooving but at the same time I also want to prove myself as an actor. This film gave me the opportunity to establish my acting and performance. Balakrishna's knowledge over various subject issues. And the energy he brings to the film sets is infectious. I am amazed to see his discipline and it was very inspiring."

