

CLASSICAL MUSIC



DON'T MISS...

TDP addresses water supply issues

MP Kesineni Sivanath and MLA Gadde Rama Mohan have stated that the main aim of the Telugu Desam Party is to solve public issues. The duo, along with Municipal Commissioner Dhyanachandra, visited APIIC Colony of East Constituency on Tuesday morning. They held a special meeting to solve the drinking water problem that has been faced by the residents of Jamac Apartment for a ...



Drone-driven policing launched

Prakasam district SP A R Damodar has launched a special training programme aimed at incorporating advanced technology into policing by training officers in the use of drone cameras. On Tuesday, the SP himself operated a drone as part of a training session for women police constables at the district police office. He demonstrated how to fly, rotate, navigate, and direct drones while



-PAGE: 4

Haryana also has a right over Chandigarh, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said on Tuesday justifying the state's move to have an additional Vidhan Sabha building in the Union Territory much to Puniab's chaorin said the construction of the Haryana Vidhan Sabha complex in Chandigarh is a serious issue and all political parties in the state should rise above politics and present their views unanimously On Tuesday, during the

River-linking key to tide over water crisis: CM

Reiterates that the Polavaram Project will be completed by 2027

PNS VIJAYAWADA

ions

Naidu proposed that linking major rivers like the Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu reiterated that the Godavari, Krishna, and Polavaram Project will be com-Penna would eliminate pleted by 2027, with the dam height set at 45.72 meters. drought conditions and Addressing the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, Naidu highlighted that under the previprovide water to every acre of farmland, ensuring ous TDP government, ?16,493 <u>agricultural prosperity.</u> crore was spent on the project, compared to just Rs 4,099 crore Naidu emphasised that spent by the current government. The CM stressed that the comproviding water to farmers pletion of the Polavaram Project would transform the state and river linking are critical to resolving Andhra Pradesh's water into an agriculturally crisis. He proposed that linking major rivers like the Godavari, thriving region

> Rs 129 crore to Rs 55,000 crore, Naidu blamed the YSRCP government for deliberately stalling progress after coming to power in 2019. He accused them of neglecting the project, leading to delays and escalating costs.

During the TDP tenure (2014-2019), significant progress was made, including coordination with PPA and CWC to speed up construction. **Continued on Page 2**

PNS VIJAYAWADA

GODAVAR

The State Investment Promotion Board (SIPB), chaired by Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu, approved investments worth Rs 85,083 crore during its first meeting on Tuesday. These investments are expected to generate 33,966 jobs across various sectors, marking a major boost to the State's industrial growth and employment opportunities.

In his address, Chief Minister Naidu emphasized the growing competition among states for investment and pointed out that the previous government's policies had led to stagnation in industrial growth over the last five years. He noted that many agreements were abandoned due to a lack of proactive governance and ineffective policy measures.

Naidu underlined the need for state policies that would support both industrialists and the local communities. He stressed that industrial development should benefit not only investors but also the people of Andhra Pradesh. The

SIPB nod for Rs 85K cr investments

CM proposes land pooling model, akin to one used for Amaravati capital, for major industries

10 MAJOR PROJECTS						
ArcelorMittal & Nippon Steel	LG Electronics India Pvt Ltd	Kalyani Strategic Systems Ltd	Tafe Ferencia India Pvt Ltd			
	Rs 5,001 cr	5	8s 76 cr			
	(1,495 jobs)	(565 jobs)	(250 jobs)			
Philips Carbon Black Ltd	Azad India Mobility Ltd	Greenco Solar IREP Pvt Ltd	Ecoren Energy India Pvt Ltd			
Rs 3,798 cr		Rs 2,000 cr				
(200 jobs)	(2,381 jobs)	(1,725 jobs)	(350 jobs)			
Dallas Technology Center LLP Rs 50 cr (2,000 jobs)						
Asta Green Energy Ventures Pvt Ltd Rs $8,\!240$ cr (4,000 jobs)						

Chief Minister called for policies that promote job creation, especially for the youth, and urged officials to provide full cooperation to investors.

P4

On the issue of land acquisition for large industries, Naidu pro-posed the adoption of a land pooling model, similar to the one used for the Amaravati capital region. This model would involve pooling land from local farmers, ensuring they receive adequate compensation resettlement benefits. and Additionally, he suggested that companies receiving land should offer skill development programs to help local residents gain employment in these industries. In case land pooling is not feasible, Naidu advocated for exploring alternative land acquisition methods, ensuring the best compensation for affected landowners.

Continued on Page 2

SC issues notices to Avinash in Viveka case

PNS 📕 VIJAYAWADA

The Supreme Court has issued **Russian Prez** (YSRCP) MP Y.S. Avinash Reddy **Putin may visit** in connection with the mur-

Sunitha's lawyer, senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, informed the court that Chaitanya Reddy, an notices to YSR Congress Party approver in the case and the son of Shivasankar Reddy, had been allegedly intimidated by nash Reddy

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj & Rural Development, K Pawan Kalyan, has announced that the State ment is planning to establish centralised dumping yards for clusters of 10 to 15 gram panchayats, as there is insufficient government land to set up individual dumping yards in each village. This initiative is aimed at improving waste management in rural areas by optimising resources and ensuring more efficient waste disposal systems, he said.

PNS VIJAYAWADA



Centralised dumping yards for

village clusters: Dy CM Pawan

During the Ouestion Hour in the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council, Deputy CM Pawan Kalyan responded to a notice raised by YSRCP member Vanka Ravindra Nath. He explained that the proposed dumping yards would serve as shared facilities for multiple gram panchayats, thereby reducing the need for separate waste management sites in each village. He further added that the state government is examining the feasibility of establishing these cluster dumping yards across Gram Panchayats. tinued on Page 2



EV industry seeks **GST cuts on batteries**

GST on batteries and charging services needs to be cut to keep electric vehicles competitive and boost customer adoption, FICCI Electric Vehicle Committee Chair Sulajja Firodia Motwani said on Tuesday. Speaking at the sidelines of FICCI National Conference on EVs here, she also stressed enhancing PM E-Drive corpus to support enhanced sales of EVs. "We would be making a recommendation to the GST Council to rationalise the GST taxation on EV-related

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India next year

Krishna, and Penna would elim-

inate drought conditions and pro-

vide water to every acre of farm-

land, ensuring agricultural pros-

perity. Naidu emphasised that

providing water to farmers would

transform the state into an agri-

Initially, the Polavaram dam

was planned at a height of 170

feet, which was later revised to 208

feet, aiming to store between 340

to 700 TMC of water. While the

project's cost has ballooned from

culturally thriving region.

PNS NEW DELHI

Russian President Vladimir Putin may visit India next year as part of a laid down structure between the two countries for reciprocal annual visits by their leaders, diplomatic sources said on Tuesday.

The two sides are looking at the possibility of the visit but nothing has been finalised yet, they said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited the Russian President to visit India when the two leaders held summit talks in Moscow in July. He also visited Kazan in Russia last month to attend the BRICS summit.

Earlier Tuesday, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov in a video interaction with senior Indian Editors in Delhi referred to the strong bilateral relationship between India and Russia, and added Putin's visit is on the cards. He did not give any specific timeline or make a definitive announcement of the visit.

"We are looking forward to the visit. The dates will be mutually worked out soon," Peskov said.

minister Y.S. Vivekananda Reddy. The notice comes in response to a petition filed by Vivekananda's daughter, Sunitha, who has accused Avinash Reddy of being involved in the case and has sought the cancellation of his bail.

Taking up the petition, the Supreme Court bench, headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Justice Sanjiv Khanna, issued the notice in response to Sunitha's request for a review of Avinash Reddy's bail.

tinued on Page 2

Law student gang-raped; all four accused arrested

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

A third-year student of NVP Law College in Madhurawada of the city was allegedly gang-raped by four persons. The crime, spanning over two months, has sparked outrage and renewed calls for stringent measures to protect women.

According to police, the ordeal began when the victim befriended her classmate, Vamsi, who lured her with false promises of marriage. On August 10, Vamsi reportedly took her to Kambalakonda and sexually assaulted her. Days later, on August 13, he brought her to his



friend Anand's residence in Daba Gardens, where he again raped her. Subsequently, Anand, along with his friends Rajesh and Jagdish, joined in the assault, recording the crime on their phones.

The accused used these recordings to blackmail the victim, sub-

jecting her to repeated abuse over the next two months. When she sought Vamsi's help to stop the threats from his friends, he too turned against her, further harassing and pressuring her.

Unable to cope with the trauma, the victim attempted suicide by hanging herself. Her father's timely intervention saved her life and led to her revealing the harrowing details of the assault. He immediapproached ately the Visakhapatnam Two Town police, who registered a case and arrested all four accused.

Continued on Page 2

RGV skips police questioning Seeks HC protection from arrest

PNS ONGOLE

Popular film director Ram Gopal Varma (RGV) failed to appear before the Prakasam district police on Tuesday for questioning in connection with criminal cases related to derogatory posts against politi-cal leaders Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan on social media. The Prakasam district police had

served a notice to RGV, asking him to appear for questioning, but he did not turn up on the scheduled date. The police confirmed that RGV had failed to attend the inquiry. According to police sources,



RGV sent a text message to Ongole Rural Circle Inspector (CI) Srikanth, explaining that he could not appear for questioning.

Continued on Page 2

(RUSHIKONDA BUILDINGS)

Previous govt violated CRZ norms: Kandula

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Minister for Tourism, Culture, and Cinematography, Kandula Durgesh, has accused the previous YSRCP government of violating building plans and regulations while constructing buildings on Rushikonda Hill. He said that the government spent Rs 451 crore on the project, despite receiving approvals from the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) and the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ). However, the minister claimed the construction did not adhere to the approved plans.

Speaking in the 46th session of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Council on Tuesday, Durgesh responded to a question raised by TDP members Duvvarapu Rama Rao, Vepada Chiranjeevi Rao, and Panchuarthi Anuradha, regarding the permissions



for the Rishikonda buildings. He confirmed that the previous government had obtained necessary clearances, but violated these approvals by constructing seven blocks instead of following the original CRZ guidelines, which permitted development on just 9.88 acres. Durgesh further crit-icised the YSRCP government for demolishing 58 luxury rooms at the Haritha Resorts, promising better resorts in their place, but ultimately constructing only seven rooms. **Continued on Page 2**

Lokesh's team helps stranded Ayyappa devotees in Kerala

PNS VIJAYAWADA

A group of Ayyappa devotees, who found themselves stranded in Kerala after their vehicle met with an accident while en route to the Ayyappa shrine, received prompt assistance from Minister Nara Lokesh's team. The devotees, unfamiliar with the local language and far from home, were facing considerable distress after the mishap.

Following the accident, the devotees were taken to a local police station in Kerala, where they were temporarily held up. As soon as the Andhra Pradesh government was informed of the situation, Minister Nara Lokesh took immediate action. The stranded devotees, seeking help from their home state, reached out to Lokesh through media representatives.

Minister Lokesh swiftly coordi-



nated with Kerala police officials to ensure the devotees' release without any charges. Upon receiving the information, the police also provided the devotees with food and other necessary arrangements, allowing them to continue their journey without further obstacles.

from the Gangadhara Nellore constituency, especially from Godugu Chinta village, expressed their heartfelt thanks to Minister Lokesh for his timely intervention. They also extended their gratitude to the Andhra Pradesh government, MLA Thomas from Gangadhara Nellore, The grateful devotees, hailing TDP Parliamentary Coordinator

Tirupati Bheemineni from Chittibabu Naidu, and the media representatives who played a crucial role in facilitating communication. The devotees praised the swift response and support from Minister Lokesh and the Andhra Pradesh government during their moment of need

After an accident in Kerala, the devotees were taken to a local police station, where they were held up. As soon as the AP govt was informed of the situation, Minister Nara Lokesh took immediate action. The stranded devotees, seeking help from the<u>ir home state,</u> reached out to Lokesh. He swiftly coordinated with Kerala police to ensure the devotees' release without any charges

vijayawada 02

seeking ticket from the

Chandragiri constituency of

Chittoor district during the

1994 elections but then TDP

president NT Ramarao gave

him the ticket. Nara Rohit,

film star and son of

Ramamurthy Naidu, had to intervene in the matter and

condemn criticism made by

Due to distortions and

excesses in social media posts,

curbed with stringent laws and

nipped in the bud.

political opponents.



Time to nip in bud politically disturbing trends in social media

Social media is raising its ugly head by spoiling values in public service, which are crucial for all political organisations. The social media wings of political parties, **POINT** which engage activists,

seem to have adopted the way of attributing wrong motives to their political opponents with the sole purpose of drawing political mileage for the organisations they repre-sent. Their incendiary com-ments lead to wordy wars between political parties. Often highly objectionable words are being used by social media wings of political organisations against their opponents with a view to defame them and for character assassination of their targets. It leads to disgusting feelings among the persons who are at the receiving end.

The social media wings of the platform too provides them

political outfits operate at the behest of the brass of the orga-6 nization concerned. Those who criticise the PIN leadership of party may become easy targets for them for using unprint-

able words under the impression that such 'reaction' might be a fitting reply to the latter. This is an unhealthy trend for those in public life as every leader has to prove himself by only by service.

Certain recent developments in the political arenas of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states suggest how political activities are being taken up in the name of reaching out to people at the grassroots level. No doubt social media is now a platform for people in all walks of life. Sharing our views with people at large is just a click away and

Even family members of targeted political leaders are not spared by the social media wings of political parties. For instance, former chief minister YS Jaganmohan **Reddy's mother YS Vijayalakshmi and sister** YS Sharmila have been targeted by the social media wing of YSRCP. No one will believe that such tirades against family members would have been initiated without the knowledge of Jaganmohan Reddy

an opportunity to exchange their views with people across their promises. For instance, Nara Chandrababu Naidu, durthe globe. So, it is natural for ing his first stint (2014-19) in social media wings of political the residual state of Andhra parties to propagate their ide-Pradesh, did not fulfil his poll ologies through this medium with very little expenses. promise of waiving loans taken by farmers all over the state. Former chief minister YS However, social media is being used to target political oppo-Jaganmohan Reddy also had backtracked on his assurances As things stand today, there concerning total prohibition is no purity in politics with and the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) for employees of many leaders going back on



ratnakumarmd@gmail.com the state government. Both

leaders were targeted by the social media wings of their opponent political parties for their failure to implement poll promises made in the presence of the electorate. Instead of constructive criticism over non-fulfillment of promises, social

duels between political rivals. Even family members of targeted political leaders are not spared by the social media wings of political parties. For instance, former chief minister YS Jaganmohan Reddy's mother YS Vijayalakshmi and sister YS Sharmila have been targeted by the social media wing of YSRCP. No one will believe that such tirades against family members would have been initiated without the knowledge of Jaganmohan Reddy. In a way, combined AP's former CM and Congress leader Dr. YS Rajasekhara

Reddy's legacy and reputa-tion have been tarnished by the feud among siblings. It can be said that social media activity has taken away the decency and values left in politics. Some people argue that that Chandrababu had delibusing social media is nothing but a vehicle that enables freeerately opposed his brother

media posts are full of wordy dom of expression bestowed by the basic statute of the country to its citizens. The use of social media can be described as right only if it is accompanied by the use of decent language. It may be recalled that two young women were arrested under the provisions of the IT Act for expressing their views on the tense situation that prevailed after Shiv Sena patriarch Bal Thackeray passed away. There was widespread condemnation across the nation over this incident that focused on the right of freedom of expression. Social media activists of

leaders of certain political parties are of the considered opinion that there should be a piece of legislation to curb the inde-cent usage of social media plat-form by political rivals. The AP Assembly may take a step fur-ther in this regard as the ruling YSRCP highlighted the alleged strain in the relations between AP CM Chandrababu Naidu National Democratic Alliance and his brother, former legis-(NDA) is firm on the issue. For, lator Ramamurthy Naidu, who damaging the reputation of died recently following proany person is just a click away. longed illness. They alleged This dangerous trend has to be

APSSDC ties up with Pearson for **English skills assessment**

nents on a daily basis.

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (APSSDC) has entered into a strategic partnership with Pearson, a global leader in educational publishing and assessment, to conduct an English skills assessment as part of the state's Skill Census pilot project in the Mangalagiri constituency. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was

signed under G. Ganesh Kumar, IAS, Managing Director and CEO of APSSDC, and Prabhu Ravindran, Director of Pearson. This collaboration marks a significant step towards strengthening the skill development ecosystem in Andhra Pradesh.

As part of this initiative, Pearson will provide a 30minute English language assessment, the Versant (pre-diagnostic) test, which will be integrated into the Naipunyam app. This assessment will serve as a benchmark to gauge participants' English proficiency and guide their future skill development.

Highlights of

the partnership Pearson will offer technical support throughout the integration of the English assessment into the Naipunyam app.

A comprehensive project plan will be provided to APSSDC to ensure the smooth execution of the pilot phase.

English assessment scores will be included in participants' skill cards, adding an important dimension to their profiles and improving their employability.

A total of 200,000 assessments will be conducted during the oneyear pilot phase.

The partnership seeks to address the increasing demand for English language proficiency across various industries,



thereby improving the employ-ability of individuals and aligning skill development with industry needs. By incorporating English assessment scores into skill cards, APSSDC aims to provide a more holistic view of an individual's capabilities,

helping them stand out in the competitive job market. Prabhu Ravindran, Director of Pearson, and Bhavya Suri,

necessary to thrive in a rapid-Director at Pearson, expressed their enthusiasm for the collably evolving job market. This partnership also aims to foster oration, emphasising the importance of this initiative in greater inclusivity and ensure empowering individuals and advancing skill development efforts in the region. access to quality education and training resources for people across Andhra Pradesh.

Ganesh Kumar highlighted Visit the official APSSDC that the collaboration with website for more information Pearson is a key milestone in on the initiative and the skill APSSDC's ongoing efforts to develop equip citizens with the skills offered. development programmes

Govt committed to promotion of handloom industry: Minister

PNS VIJAYAWADA

Minister for BC, EBC, Handloom and Textiles, S Savitha, has outlined the government's commitment to proernment's commitment to pro-moting the handloom industry and ensuring year-round employment for weavers. In a discussion during the Legislative Assembly budget session on Tuesday, Savitha highlighted that the govern-ment plans to organise handment plans to organise hand-loom exhibitions both in other states and internationally to market handloom products more effectively.

Savitha responded to questions from various members regarding steps being taken to support the handloom industry, stressing that the government aims to increase sales and offer continuous employment opportunities for weavers.

Criticising the previous Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy-led government, Savitha accused it of neglecting the handloom sector. She claimed that under Jagan's leadership, there was no support for marketing handloom products or the welfare of weavers, which contributed to a rise in suicides among workers. In contrast, she praised former Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu for his efforts between 2014 and 2019 to prioritise the handloom

they were later abandoned the state's traditional crafts-

after his victory. However, Savitha outlined various initiatives taken by the current government, such as the establishment of Weaver Halls in Mangalagiri and the introduction of welfare programmes, including pensions and health insurance for

weavers. Savitha reported positive developments in handloom product sales, pointing to a 9.8% increase over the past five months, thanks to initiatives like the establishment of Apco showrooms. Additionally, online sales platforms have been launched, generating ?32.5 lakh in sales since the current government took office.

Minister also The d plans to host handnnour loom exhibitions abroad and

set up new Weaver Halls in

expedite construction,

Naidu assured that his

itor the progress of these

investments and ensure any

He emphasized the need

to create infrastructure and

social amenities, such as

housing colonies and essen-

tial services, around indus-

trial hubs to improve the

quality of life for workers

are swiftly

hurdles

addressed.

and residents.

manship. In a significant move for the welfare of handloom workers,

Savitha revealed that the government will introduce a new pension scheme for handloom workers aged 50 and above, providing them with a monthly pension of ?4,000. Furthermore, 10 new handloom clusters will be created in collaboration with the Aditya Birla Group to enhance the industry and improve the working conditions of

weavers. To provide financial relief, the Minister stated that the government will reimburse 5% GST on handloom sector products. Additionally, handloom units will receive free electricity-200 units for traditional looms and 500 units for modern looms. Subsidies

on yarn purchases will help

reduce production costs for

Centralised dumping yards ...

Continued from Page 1

Additionally, the Deputy CM highlighted that the govern-ment has developed Solid Waste Processing Centres (SWPCs) in 10,808 Gram Panchayats across the state under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGN-REGS). However, he noted that 2,518 Gram Panchayats still lack these SWPCs. To address this gap, the government has prepared an action plan to implement SWPCs in these villages in the year 2025-26.

Out of the 10,808 SWPCs built, 9,382 are fully or partially functional, with 5,556 fully operational and 3,826 partial-

TODAY	
ALMANAC	
Month & Paksham: Tithi:	Krishna Paksha
Panchami:	Nov 19 05:28 PM
Shashthi:	to Nov 20 04:49 PM Nov 20 04:49 PM to Nov 21 05:03 PM
Nakshatram:	
Punarvasu:	Nov 19 02:56 PM
Pushya:	to Nov 20 02:50 PM Nov 20 02:50 PM to Nov 21 03:35 PM
Rahukalam:	12:01 PM to 1:25 PM
Yamagandam:	7:51 AM to 9:14 AM
Varjyam:	11:05 PM to 12:44 AM
Gulika:	10:38 AM to 12:01 PM
Amritakalam:	12:27 PM to 02:02 PM
Abhijit Muhurtham:	NIL
VIJAYAWAD	A WEATHER
Forecast: Sunny	y and light winds

Temp: 32° Humidity: 56% Sunrise: 6:20 AM Sunset: 5:32 PM

Updated: November 19, 2024 5:00 PM

ly functional. The Deputy CM assured that the partially func-

tional SWPCs would be upgraded to full functionality by March 2025. Additionally, 1,426 non-functional SWPCs would be revived and made operational by March 2024, he said

Minister Pawan Kalyan also mentioned that the government is taking steps to ensure that Gram Panchayats maintain these SWPCs regularly so they can become self-sustainable by the end of 2026. He added that the state government is working on securing funds from the 15th Finance Commission, in

addition to regular allocations, to support the operation and maintenance of SWPCs.

SC issues ...

Continued from Page 1

In addition, the Supreme Court has also issued notices to Chaitanya Reddy, following allegations of intimidation. The petitioners, which include Sunitha, her husband Rajasekhar Reddy, and CBI Superintendent of Police Ramsingh, have challenged previous orders passed by the Andhra Pradesh High Court. They argue that the cases filed against them should be quashed. The court has initiated proceedings and sought responses from the parties involved, marking a significant development in the ongoing investi-gation into the highprofile murder case.

Ex-minister Rajini flays govt for ignoring key welfare schemes

PNS GUNTUR

Former Minister Vidadala Rajini has accused the TDP-led NDA government of neglecting vital welfare schemes, including the Aarogyasri health programme, ambulance services, and the construction of medical colleges. Addressing a press conference in Guntur on Tuesday, Rajini criticised the government's failure to continue important initiatives and alleged that the state administration was moving towards privatising essential public welfare services.

The Minister accused the

Rajini specifically took issue

Previous govt ...

said.

Continued from Page 1 for the use of Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, his family, and ministers' transit offices. He highlighted that before the demolition, Rishikonda had been generating revenue of Rs. 7 crore to Rs. 16 crore annually for the Tourism Department. previous government of wasting public funds on the Rishikonda palaces, asserting that the intention was not to develop the region for tourism but to serve the personal interests of the Chief Minister and his family. Despite opposition from various parties and the public, the YSRCP proceeded with the construction, Durgesh

The case stems from a com-RGV of uploading derogatowere registered against RGV November 19.

creating a false narrative about the progress made in the health sector under our leadership," Rajini said, adding that the government appeared to be shifting towards the privatisation of key health services.

Rajini pointed out that during ÝS Jagan Mohan Reddy's leadership, plans were made to construct 17 new medical colleges in three phases. "In the first phase, five medical colleges were completed, adding 750

seats for medical students by 2024. Construction for another five colleges had already begun in the second phase," she explained.

Law student ... **Continued from Page 1**

"We have taken all four into custody and are conducting a thorough investigation. Justice will be done for the victim," a senior police official said.

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha expressed shock and anger over the incident. She spoke with City Police Commissioner Shankabrata Bagchi, instructing him to ensure stringent action against the accused. "It is tragic and unacceptable that such a heinous act was committed against a law student. The government will take all steps to prevent such incidents in the future," she stated, extending her support to the victim's family. The incident has drawn wide-

spread condemnation. Women's rights activists emphasised the need for both legal and societal reforms to curb such crimes.

industry, introduce welfare schemes, and provide financial assistance to weavers.

areas like Vizianagaram and The Minister further accused the previous government of betraying the weavers, alleging that although promises of support were made during Jagan's election campaign,

River-linking key to tide over...

Continued from Page 1

including the use of German technology for the diaphragm wall. He also pro-The project team even set a Guinness World Record for pouring 32,215 cubic meters posed linking several rivers of concrete in one day. across the State to address

Naidu also highlighted the water scarcity in areas like successful completion of Ravalaseema and droughtprone districts. other irrigation projects like the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Scheme, which brought government would address Godavari water to the water shortages in all regions, with projects like Krishna Delta, alleviating

Telugu Ganga, Galeru-Nagari, and HNSS aimed at regional water scarcity. Despite setbacks, the CM committed to completing ensuring sustainable water the Polavaram Project by supply for drinking and irri-2027 and introduced plans to gation.

SIPB nod for Rs 85K cr ...

Continued from Page 1

The Chief Minister also highlighted the importance of balancing industrial growth with the welfare of displaced communities. He pointed out that large-scale industrial projects, such as the ArcelorMittal Steel Plant, would not only provide direct employment to thousands but also generate indirect employment for lakhs of people, thereby contributing to the region's socio-eco-

nomic development. Naidu directed ministers and officials to closely mon- and other cabinet colleagues.

Kurnool. She encouraged the weavers. The government is public to support the handalso set to launch a health loom industry by wearing insurance scheme for handhandloom products at least loom workers to ensure they once a week and urged everyhave access to necessary medone to contribute to preserving ical care, Savitha added.

Russian Prez...

Continued from Page 1

The media interaction was organised by the Russian state-owned Sputnik news agency.

Asked to comment on US President Joe Biden's decision to let Ukraine strike targets inside Russia with US-supplied longer-range missiles, Peskov said Russia's military capabilities are incomparable to those of Ukraine and it's unlikely that any missile will help Ukraine

Peskov's comments came on a day when President Putin signed a revised nuclear doctrine declaring that a conventional attack on Russia by any nation that is supported by a nuclear power will be considered a joint attack on his country.

Putin's endorsement of the new nuclear deterrent policy comes on the 1,000th day after he sent troops into Ukraine on Feb 24, 2022.

"Biden administration stands for war, not for peace.' "The authority in the White House takes a decision to use their weapons against the

The meeting was attended Russian Federation, and this by key officials including Chief Secretary Neerabh is a striking example of the new environment surround-Kumar Prasad, Deputy CM ing our country," Peskov said. Pawan Kalyan, Ministers "This makes it necessary for us Nara Lokesh, Atchennaidu, to ensure that our nuclear conception is updated."

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with the claims made by the current Health Minister, accusing them of spreading misinfor-mation about the health sector during the tenure of YS Jagan Mohan Reddy. "The present government is twisting facts and

RGV skips...

Continued from Page 1

These rooms were allotted When he did not receive a response from the CI, RGV sent a formal request through his lawyer, seeking additional time to appear. RGV cited his ongoing commitments to film shootings as the reason for his absence, police officials said.

plaint filed by TDP activist Ramalingam with the Maddipadu police, accusing ry posts and morphed images of Chandrababu Naidu, N. Lokesh, and Pawan Kalyan on the social media platform 'X'. Following the complaint, cases under seven sections of the law on November 10, and he was served a notice asking him to appear before the police on



vijayawada 03



Rs 456-cr Vizag Rly Station project remains stalled

Disputes with contractors, allegations of bribery derailed project

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Two years after plans were announced to develop the Visakhapatnam Railway Station at a cost of Rs 456 crore under the Amrit Bharat Scheme, the project remains stalled amid allegations of corruption. Despite Central government funding and tenders being awarded, progress has been negligible, causing concerns among residents and officials alike.

The redevelopment, which began 20 months ago, included ambitious plans to construct platforms 9 and 10 near Gnanapuram, install 20 lifts and escalators, and build two multi-level parking facilities. However, disputes with contrac-tors and allegations of bribery have derailed the project.

The first contractor was terminated six months after work began, reportedly due to poor performance. A second contractor was appointed, but also abandoned the project within six months, citing challenging site conditions such as loose soil and hard rock.

"We cleared trees and even closed Gate No. 4 to facilitate

The redevelopment, which began 20 months ago, included ambitious plans to construct platforms 9 and 10 near Ġnanapuram, install 20 lifts and escalators, and build two multi-level parking facilities. However, disputes with contractors and allegations of bribery have derailed the project

despite holding valid licenses. "If we refuse, they threaten us construction, but nothing has progressed," said a station employee, who wished to remain anonymous. "We are with accusations of selling adulterated food or even cancel our licences," alleged a vendor who sells packaged snacks at the station. A city-based bakery was reportedly banned from selling its products after declining to pay bribes. Residents and comstuck with half-completed work and no clarity on when it will resume." Recent tenders have failed to attract bidders, with allegations surfacing that offi-cials from the Waltair Division thorough investigation into the corruption allegations. are demanding hefty bribes and commissions for approving bills.

Concerns about corruption were amplified recently when DRM Saurabh Prasad was arrested by the CBI in Mumbai for allegedly demanding a Rs 25-lakh bribe to clear bills

35 red sanders logs seized; 4 smugglers arrested

PNS TIRUPATI

The Red Sanders Anti-Smuggling Task Force (RSASTF) seized 35 red sanders logs and arrested four smugglers in two separate incidents. Deputy Superinten dent of Police (DSP) G.

Balireddy informed the media that two police teams, led by Revenue Inspector (RI) Suresh Kumar Reddy and KSK Lingadhar, conducted a combing operation in the forest area. During the operation, a task force team spotted red sander smugglers loading logs into a car near the Chintalapalem check post area in Yerpedu mandal. The team seized 10 red sander logs, the vehicle, and arrested three smugglers.

worth Rs 3.17 crore and reduce

fines for project delays. "This

incident is a clear indicator of

the systemic corruption plagu-

ing the railway sector," said a local activist. "Contractors are

hesitant to take up projects due

to fear of harassment and

The corruption allegations

are not limited to construction

contractors. Vendors at the sta-

tion have also voiced griev-

ances, claiming they are forced

to pay commissions to officials

muters are now demanding a

"Visakhapatnam deserves a

world-class railway station, but

corruption is robbing the city of its progress," said Satish Kumar,

a frequent traveller. "The CBI

must take immediate action to

ensure accountability and revive

this critical project.

unreasonable demands.'

In another operation, a different task force team observed suspicious movement at a dumping yard in Pathapati Vari Palli village, Chandragiri man-dal. The police arrested dai. The police arrested one individual, seized 25 red sander logs, and impounded a lorry. Among the arrested smugglers, three are from Tamil Nadu, and

one is from Karnataka. Task Force Circle Inspector Suresh Kumar registered cases against the smugglers. Task Force Superintendent of Police (SP) P. Srinivas announced rewards for the task force personnel involved in the seizure of the logs and the arrests

TDP leaders address water supply issues at APIIC colony

MP vows to solve public issues with support of Central and State govts

PNS VIJAYAWADA

MP Kesineni Sivanath and MLA Gadde Rama Mohan have stated that the main aim have stated that the main aim of the Telugu Desam Party is to solve public issues. The duo, along with Municipal C o m m i s s i o n e r Dhyanachandra, visited APIIC Colony of East Constituency on Tuesday morning. They on Tuesday morning. They held a special meeting to solve the drinking water problem that has been faced by the residents of Jamac Apartment for a long time.

Speaking during the visit, the MP said that addressing public concerns has always been the core goal of the TDP. He highlighted that residents of Jamac Apartments have been struggling with a drinking water shortage for a long time, an issue that was totally ignored by the previous government. He explained that the problem arose due to a small issue between the IALA and Jamac Apartments, which had resulted in a disruption of the water supply. The MP assured the resi-

dents that he, along with the MLA and the Municipal Commissioner, were actively working to resolve the issue. "We are discussing this prob-lem with the concerned authorities and will ensure that the water supply is restored as soon as possible," the MP said. In another meeting with MP Kesineni Sivanath has

assured that he will resolve the issues faced by the public with the cooperation of both the Central and State governments. Speaking at a review meeting on the development





of Vijayawada, held at the dents. A key objective of the meeting was to plan the mobilisation of funds from command control room in the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation along with MLA Satyanarayana Chowdary (Sujana Chowdary), the the Central government by discussing the issues in Parliament. Several infra-Municipal Commissioner and structure projects were disvarious department heads. cussed, including the con-The meeting focused on struction of railway underdiscussing the development bridges, over-bridges, and needs of Vijayawada and the roads connecting the BRTS challenges faced by its resiroad to the railway station,

which are necessary to alleviate traffic congestion. The participants also discussed plans to build bridges in the Singh Nagar area and from Rajarajeswari Peta to Errakatta to ease traffic flow.

MP Kesineni stressed the ongoing efforts to improve basic infrastructure in the main urban areas, outskirts, and hilly regions of Vijayawada. He urged the Corporation to meet its annual revenue targets and take necessary steps to increase income generation. Kesineni also highlighted plans to transform Vijayawada into a "Smart City" with the support of both the Central and State governments. He also pointed out the importance of developing sports infrastructure by building stadiums to promote sports in the city.



Collector emphasises hygiene and sustainability on World Toilet Day

Exhorts public representatives to help make the district open defecation-free

Varudu Kalyani slams coalition govt over women's safety

hygiene and proper use of toi- scarcity, Prasad emphasised for the students' future. "I see cation to the government's IS 1150

As part of the event, Prasad distributed prizes to outstanding students and participated in a sapling plantation drive. "Planting trees today ensures a greener tomorrow. Let's make our environment sustainable," he remarked. The event was attended by DPO Srinivasa Rao, DEO Prem Kumar, local public representatives, teachers, issue of junior college land alloand students.

crimes against women occur every day in Andhra Pradesh. women's police stations, and special vehicles for immediate

complaint, no action was taken during YSRCP's rule. However, after the change in government, the case was reopened, leading to the recent Along with Mohanaranga, other arrested individuals include Anagani Ravi, Bhimavarapu Yatendra Ramakrishna (alias Ramu), Machineni Venkateswara Rao (alias Babu), Surapaneni Anil, G. Seemayya, and Gurram Anjaiah (alias Nani). Some of the arrested individuals have been taken to the Kankipadu Police Station, while others have been sent to different police stations. Reports indicate that another close aide of Vamsi, identified as Seshu, managed to evade arrest, and police are currently searching for him. After the preliminary investigation, the arrested individuals are expected to be presented before the Gannavaram Court. Meanwhile, YSRCP leaders and supporters gathered outside the Kankipadu Police Station and staged a protest against what they termed as "revenge actions" by the government against YSRCP leaders. Penamaluru in-charge Devabhaktui Chakravarthi and other YSRCP leaders condemned the arrests, accusing the government of political vendetta.

held for attack on **TDP** leader

Vamsi's followers

PNS VIJAYAWADA

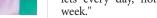
The police have arrested several followers of YSRCP leader and former Gannavaram MLA eni Vamsi Mohan i

Collector M.N. Harendhira Prasad attending World Toilet Day observance at Anandapuram District Parishad School

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

District Collector MN Harendhira Prasad stressed the importance of hygiene and sustainability during a World Toilet Day event at Anandapuram

District Parishad School. He urged students to take personresponsibility for cleanlial ness. "Cleanliness is not just a duty but a responsibility we all share. As Gandhi said, change begins with us. Let's ensure



The Collector called upon public representatives to help make the district open defecation-free. "If anyone requires toilets, they should report it to local authorities. Officials must also expedite proposals for constructing community sanitary complexes and repairing toilets in 79 panchayats," he

PNS VIJAYAWADA

in the State.

YSRCP MLC Varudu Kalyani

has strongly criticised the coali-

tion government for its failure

to ensure women's safety, cit-

ing the assault of a law student

in Visakhapatnam and deteri-

orating law and order situation

party's central office on

Tuesday, Kalyani expressed

deep concern over the increas-

Speaking to the media at the

regions like Rayalaseema, people demonstrate how to use drinking water sparingly. It's essential we adopt similar practices, use recycled water for agriculture, and protect our resources," he advised. He reassured residents that drinking water connections would soon reach every household under the Jal Jeevan Mission. Prasad expressed his hopes directed. Highlighting water

women in the State, accusing

the government of neglecting

safety measures such as the

Disha app. She claimed that the

government's priority had

shifted from public welfare to

political vendettas, leaving

women's safety and justice for

Visakhapatnam is just one

example of the alarming rise in

crimes against women. The

Home Minister herself admit-

'The recent incident in

victims in jeopardy.

ing number of crimes against ted in the Assembly that 49

hard work and determination, you will achieve great things." He reminisced about his own school days, adding, "Having a school in the village is a blessing, and I know its value deeply." The Collector pledged district administration's support to complete the school's pending construction projects and promised to bring the

connection with the attack on Kasaneni Rangababu, the former president of the Primary Gannavaram Agriculture Cooperative Society (PACS) and TDP leader. Among those arrested were Vamsi's key aide, Olupalli Mohanaranga, Gannavaram Mandal Parishad President (MPP) Anagani Ravi, Bhimavarapu Yatendra Ramakrishna (alias Ramu), along with several others. The arrests took place early this morning, around 3 AM, at dif-

ferent locations. According to the case details, Rangababu, who was initially with YSRCP, had switched his allegiance to TDP ahead of the elections. This decision angered Vamsi's supporters, who allegedly attacked Rangababu at Park Elite Hotel near Gannavaram in January this year, leaving him injured.

Following the attack, Rangababu filed a police complaint naming Vansi's supporters as the culprits. In his complaint, Rangababu claimed that he was lured by the attackers under the pretext of discussing a farmland issue, only to be assaulted later. Despite his

GCC chief promises to protect interests of tribal communities

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Kidari Sravan Kumar, the newly appointed Chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh Girijan Cooperative Corporation (GCC), emphasised his commitment to safeguarding the interests of tribal communities during his first interaction with the media on Tuesday. Speaking at the GCC headquarters, Sravan Kumar outlined initiatives aligned with Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu's vision to empower tribal farmers and promote their products on a national scale.

A grand reception marked

beating



Coffee across major cities in India. This product has already garnered international recognition, and we aim to further enhance its reputation," he said.

his arrival, with a vibrant display of tribal culture, including the Dhimsa dance performed by women in colourful saris and the rhythmic of drums. Accompanied by GCC Vice-Chairperson and Managing Director Kalpana Kumari, Sravan Kumar toured the office complex and engaged with officials and staff.

Highlighting the corporation's goals, Sravan Kumar said: "The GCC was established to protect and uplift tribal communities. We will take every step necessary to ensure it lives up to this purpose. One of our key priorities will be to promote Araku



He also announced plans to ensure better remuneration for tribal farmers by securing fair prices for crops such as pepper and turmeric. The Chairperson unveiled plans to open new GCC petrol bunks at Seethammapeta and Parvathipuram, creating

employment opportunities for the tribal youth. Kalpana Kumari shared future infrastructure plans. "We are set to begin construction of a 15-storey building at the GCC headquarters within the next five months. This will be a landmark development for the corporation and the city.

Collector launches initiative to empower technical students

PNS PARVATHIPURAM

District Collector A Shyam Prasad has devised a plan to harness the technical skills of students in polytechnic and ITI institutions to improve welfare hostels and educational facilities in the district. During a meeting with principals of these institutions, he emphasised the dual benefits of the programme. "This initiative not only equips students with practical voca-

tional experience, but also enhances the infrastructure of our welfare hostels and schools?

The programme, linked with the 'Palle Nidra' (sleeping in villages) and Gram Darshini schemes, involves assigning students to repair tasks in government institutions across the district. Based on reports from officials, the Collector directed ITI and polytechnic students to address maintenance issues such as fixing



electrical systems, plumbing, welding, and repairing furniture in schools, hostels, Anganwadi centres, and junior colleges. To ensure efficiency, every two mandals have been connected to one ITI and one polytechnic college.

response had been introduced to

address such issues effectively. In

addition to the safety concerns,

Kalyani also addressed allega-

tions regarding the construction of buildings at Rushikonda. She

clarified that these buildings

were constructed with all neces-

sary approvals and modern tech-

nology, contrasting them with

the substandard structures built

during the previous Telugu

Over the past week, students have been actively visiting these institutions and making improvements. Highlighting the future

"Students contributing to this initiative will receive an Apprenticeship Certificate after 10 months, which will add immense value to their vocational journey."

District Intermediate Vocational Education Officer D Manjula Veena, who serves as the Nodal Officer for the programme, commended the students' efforts. "Students from Saluru Government prospects for participants, Junior College and the Fire tions while the Collector announced, Department Centre have experience?

already completed repairs like fixing gates, fans, and painting work. More such initiatives are underway in other locations," she stated.

Also enhances

infrastructure of

welfare hostels

and schools

Principals and welfare officers described the programme as highly impactful. A hostel principal said, "This is a remarkable initiative. It's heartening to see students contributing to the development of educational institutions while gaining hands-on

tives such as POCSO courts, Desam Party regime.

This is a serious issue that can-

not be ignored," Kalyani said.

several high-profile incidents of

violence, including assaults, mur-

ders, and rapes, and criticised the

government's failure to imple-

ment preventive measures or

provide adequate justice to vic-

tims. Kalyani reminded the pub-

lic that during the previous

YSRCP administration, initia-

The MLC also pointed to





Contractors directed to speed up road repair works

PNS BAPATLA

District Collector J Venkata Murali has instructed contractors to complete road repair works without delay, stressing that the State Government is treating the road repairs as a high priority.

In a meeting with R&B officials and engineers on Tuesday, the Collector reviewed the progress of ongoing road repairs. He firmly directed the officials to take strict action against contractors who fail to carry out the work expeditiously, including terminating their contracts if necessary.

The State government has released adequate funds to ensure that all roads are pothole-free, and the officials must ensure that repairs are completed on a war footing," the Collector said. Expressing

his frustration, he pointed out that despite clear guidelines from the government, repairs had not been initiated at cer-

tain locations. In Bapatla district, 67 road repair works were identified

The State overnment has eleased adequate funds to ensure that all roads are pothole-free, and the officials must ensure that repairs are completed on a var footing," the ollector said

PNS VIZIANAGARAM

In a tragic incident, 80 sheep

were killed when an express

train ran over them at

awarded, the contractors had yet to begin the work. The Collector instructed officials to issue notices to contractors who have not commenced work despite being awarded contracts. "If the contractors do not respond to the notice, their contracts should be terminat-

across 337 km of roads, with the State Government allocating Rs 17.23 crore for the repairs. However, the Collector expressed dissatisfaction, noting that only 12 repair works had been started so far. He fur-

ed," he said. He also questioned why contractors had not started work on the Addanki-Santhamaguluru highway project, even after tenders had been invited. R&B Deputy Executive Engineer (DE) Geetharani, DE Aruna, and other engineers and officials were present during the meeting.

ther criticised the delay, stating that while tenders had been

completed for some of the

works and contracts had been

40 kg ganja seized; 6 peddlers arrested



PNS PADERU

In a major drug bust, the police seized 40 kilograms of ganja being transported illegally on three motor-cycles at Mothugudem village in Chintur Mandal, ASR district, on Tuesday. Donkari Sub-Inspe

ctor Shiva Narayana informed the media that a police team while conducting a routine vehicle check near Donkarai police station, intercepted the three motorcycles carrying the cannabis. The police seized the ganja along with the motorcycles and arrested six drug ped-dlers involved in the illegal transportation. The peddlers, who were transporting the ganja from Odisha, were en route to

Karimnagar in Telangana. The arrested individuals were later produced before the court in Rampa chodavaram.



Drone-aided policing launched in Prakasam

PNS ONGOLE

Prakasam district SP A R Damodar has launched a special training programme aimed at incorporating advanced technology into policing by training officers in the use of drone cameras.

On Tuesday, the SP himself operated a drone as part of a training session for women police constables at the district police office. He demonstrated how to fly, rotate, navigate, and direct drones while sharing key tips and techniques to help them become proficient in drone operations.

The SP explained that drone technology would be used for a variety of purposes, including maintaining law and order, crime control, crowd man-

agement during bandobasta, preventing incidents during operate drones and to under fairs and festivals, and traffic regulation. He further highlighted its utility in preventing road accidents, curbing illegal bike races on highways, dealing with eve-teasing, managing disaster situations, conducting coastal patrolling, and moni-toring anti-social activities. Emphasising the broader benefits of drone surveillance,

the SP noted that drones could

also help in curbing illegal

activities such as drug traffick-

ing, the manufacturing of illic-

stand drone technology. All drones will be connected to the command control centre for continuous monitoring. So far, around 300 police personnel have been trained as drone operators, and drone-driven policing will soon be implemented across the district. He encouraged the police to embrace such advanced technologies to enhance public safety and provide better services to the community.

The training programme was attended by Additional SP (Admin) K. Nageswara Rao, SB Inspector K.V. Raghavendra, IT Core Inspector V. Surya narayana, PCR SI Prabhakar Reddy, and Ongole Taluka PS SIs Krishna Pavani, Anita, and other

it liquor, gambling, and public drinking. He assured that surveillance would be carried out round-the-clock to control

these activities effectively. The SP stated that police personnel are being trained to staff members.

Police warn auto drivers against overloading schoolkids

PNS ONGOLE

Traffic Circle Inspector Y Panduranga Rao has issued strict instructions to auto-rickshaw drivers, warning them not to overload their vehicles with school children. He emphasized that action will be taken against auto rickshaws found carrying more children than permitted.

Speaking to the media on Tuesday, the CI stated that auto drivers must ensure they transport only the designated number of children to school and avoid allowing students to sit on the sides o he vehicle He



also extended the warning to buses with students. school management, urging them not to overload school Panduranga Rao further rected

vehicles at the side of the road while picking up or dropping off children. He stressed that all drivers of school buses and auto rickshaws must possess valid driving licenses and ensure they carry all necessary documents.

The CI also highlighted the use of drone cameras by the police to monitor and track instances of bike racing in the area. He cautioned that strict action will be taken against those indulging in such activities. Additionally, he advised parents to reconsider allowing their children to drive high-speed vehicles, stressing the importance of road

6 held with 1.8 kg ganja

The police arrested six drug

peddlers and seized 1.8 kg of

ganja from them at

Mallireddypalli near Heritage

Foods under Hindupur rural

police station limits on

Tuesday.Hindupur DSP KV

Mahesh told the media that on

a tip a police team led by CI

K Janardhan and Anjaneyulu

conducted a raid at Lepakshi

and found the six drug ped-

They found the peddlers

selling ganja in retail. The

police seized the ganja and

arrested the six peddlers

including Sd. Barkat Ali,

Vamshi Krishna, Uday Kiran,

Sd. Ameer, P Timmappa and

Syphullah Khan.

dlers were selling ganja.

PNS ANANTAPUR

Over 700 lost/stolen mobile phones recovered

and a state of a state of the s

PNS NELLORE

The Nellore district police have successfully recovered over 700 lost or stolen mobile phones, valued at Rs 1.50 crore.

In a press briefing on Tuesday, Superintendent of Police (SP) G. Krishnakanth informed the media that the district police had been receiving complaints through the 'Mobile Hunt" initiative for lost or stolen mobile phones. Using advanced technology, the police managed to recov-

er the mobile phones and return them to their rightful owners. The SP urged people to report lost or stolen mobile phones by calling the helpline number 91543 05600. He also advised mobile phone owners to be cautious of fraudsters and refrain from sharing per-

sonal data with strangers. During a special programme, some of the recovered phones were handed over to their own-

ers, who expressed their gratitude to the SP and the police personnel for their efforts.

Bhimasingi village in Jami Mandal on Tuesday. According to railway police, a herd of more than 100 sheep was crossing the railway track when a group of sheep sud-denly stopped in the middle of the track. At that moment, a speeding express train approached, running over the herd and killing 80 sheep on the spot. The sheep belonged to local herders Golakani Yerrinaidu, Simhachaam, Varadhi Ramanamma, and Goppa Bangarunaidu. The shepherds, who were guiding the flock for grazing, were unable to move the sheep

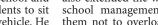
80 sheep

run over by train

in time. Despite their efforts, the herd remained on the be around Rs 30 lakh and have track, leading to the fatal acciappealed to the government for assistance to compensate dent. The shepherds estimated the loss of the 80 sheep to for the loss.

A festival of paddy in Telangana

PNS HYDERABAD



The Congress will not let the plant called KCR sprout again, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy said. "Write it down. Let's see what KCR does. KCR is sleeping in his farmhouse and I know everything that is happening inside the farmhouse. I am saying again that KCR should come out from his farmhouse," the CM said.

Addressing the 'Praja Palana-Praja Vijayotsavam' held in Warangal city on Tuesday, Revanth said, "KCR said paddy cultivation is nothing but hanging oneself. Our farmers cultivated paddy on 66 lakh acres and raised a bumper crop of 1 crore 53 lakh tonnes. No state in the country has ever produced so much rice."

"What is your (KCR) sorrow and what is your (KCR) pain? Come to the Assembly. Let us have a debate. Come to the people and speak. The govern-

issues raised by KCR. KCR won't come out but sent two cheap fellows. KCR is not coming but two 'petty guys' are making trouble," the CM said. Appealing to KCR to stay in

his farmhouse, the CM said, "I will send what KCR needs there. KCR promoted Telangana as a 'drunkard 'state. Only four people have lost their jobs in the last 10 months. Nothing else



TG CM Revanth Reddy is addressing the Praja Palana-Praja Vijayotsavam public meeting at Warangal City on Tuesday

ment is ready to correct all valid happened." The CM said that one leader commented that

is being set up by the Adani and

Telangana has realised what they lost in the last 10 months. However, women attained freedom during the last 10 months in Telangana. Today, women have reached the stage of estab-lishing solar power plants which

Ambani groups, the CM said. The CM said that women have been given free bus travcylinders for only Rs 500. We are supplying free power up to 200 units to poor like nowhere else in the country, he said.

el facility in TGSRTC buses.

Revanth said that he had filled 50,000 vacancies in government service in the last 10 months. "Our government has the credit of waiving loans amounting to Rs 18,000 crore benefiting 22 lakh farmer families. We pledged to waive farm loans in the presence of Bhadrakali and Sammakka Sarakka deities and did it by August 15. We promised and we delivered it," the CM said. He said that he is giving his word on this platform that it is his responsibility to waive the loans of everyone else. The Congress never backtracked and is committed to what it promises even if our heads are chopped off, he said.

"The opposition is cursing us. It does not have the heart to congratulate us," he said.

City police recover stolen property

102 persons arrested in connection with 72 cases in October

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

The city police have made significant strides in combating crime, arresting 102 individuals in connection with 72 cases reported during October. In a press conference held by Commissioner of Police Shankabrata Bagchi, the Police Department outlined its achievements for the month. The recovered stolen property includes items worth Rs 45.77 lakh and 285 mobile phones valued at Rs 42.75 lakh. The 72 detected cases encompass a range of offenses, including

robberies, burglaries, snatchrecovery of 285 stolen mobile ings, vehicle thefts, and other phones, bringing the total nummiscellaneous thefts. ber of recovered devices to They installed 294 CCTV 3,764, worth Rs 5.64 crore. cameras across the city and Residents can report stolen organised 154 crime awareness phones via the chatbot number meetings. These initiatives aim 9490617916 or the CEIR porto educate the public about crime prevention and encour-The department has recorded a significant increase in age the installation of CCTV cameras. Additionally, special

property recovery, with Rs 60 lakh recovered in August, Rs 84 night patrolling teams were deployed to monitor crimelakh in September, and Rs 88 lakh in October. Bagchi com-A key highlight of the month mended the efforts of the crime wing personnel, whose dedicawas the launch of a mobile tion has contributed to a noticephone recovery app. This innovative tool has facilitated the able reduction in crime rates.

dential school in G Madugula of

ducted an inquiry, and late at

night (Monday), the collector

issued suspension orders," Rao

said. The inquiry, led by the dis-

trict educational officer (DEO)

and the girl child development

officer, resulted in disciplinary

proceedings against Principal

Prasanna."The principal

(Prasanna) has admitted to tak-

ing action by cutting the

hair/excess hair of some students.

Hence, the prima facie allegation

has been proven beyond doubt,"

the suspension order stated.

'Yesterday (Monday), we con-

Alluri Sitaramaraju District.

School HM chops off girl students' hair; suspended

PNS PADERU

A government school principal, who recently cut the hair of some girl students for allegedly arriving late to the school here, has been suspended, an official said on Tuesday.

B Srinivasa Rao, State Project Director of Samagra Shiksha, said the incident occurred recently and came to light on Monday, prompting the department to initiate an inquiry against U Sai Prasanna. According to the director, the incident took place at Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), a girls' resi-

World Fisheries Day celebration tomorrow

PNS VIJAYAWADA

The World Fisheries Day celebrations will be organised by the AP govt at the Tummalapalli Kalakshetram in Vijayawada on November 21. At a press conference held at the Fisheries Commissioner's office

at Poranki near here on Tuesday, Fisheries Dept Commissioner Dola Sankar stated that the event would be attended by CM Chandrababu Naidu, Minister for Agriculture, Horticulture and Fisheries Atchan naiadu, and

other dignitaries.

AP's natural farming sets a national benchmark

prone areas.

Senior agriculture officials from 18 States explore various natural farming models under APCNF

PNS VISAKHAPATNAM

Natural farming practices implemented in Majjipeta village of Bheemunipatnam mandal are garnering national attention as a beacon of eco-friendly and sustainable agriculture. Dr. Devesh Chaturvedi, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Government of India, recently visited Majjipeta as part of a two-day regional conference held in Visakhapatnam to review major agricultural schemes. Impressed by the innovative techniques employed by local farmers, Dr. Chaturvedi commended the initiative. "This serves as a torchbearer for sustainable agricultural practices in

the country," he said A delegation of senior agriculture officials from 18 States had the opportunity to explore various natural farming models under the Andhra Pradesh Community-Managed Natural Farming (APCNF) programme. They witnessed firsthand the techniques used by farmers like Adari Kishore and others, who collectively manage an 8.2-acre compact block.

The delegation witnessed live demonstrations of various natural farming techniques, including the preparation of organic inputs like Beejamrutham, Neemastram, and Brahmastram by local Self-Help Group members, innovative poly-cropping models such as banana intercropped with mango, coconut, tapioca, and okra, and premonsoon dry sowing (PMDS) techniques utilising banana as



the primary crop with advanced seed pelletisation.

Dr. Chaturvedi, along with Budithi Rajasekhar, Special Chief Secretary, Agriculture, and Vijay Kumar Thallam, Executive Vice Chairperson, RySS, emphasised the importance of replicating these practices across the country. The delegation expressed their appreciation for the visit, highlighting the valuable insights gained from the experience.





Nation 05

ACROSS THE STATES



Four killed as truck hits auto-rickshaw in MP

our persons, including a four-month-old girl, were killed after a truck hit an auto-rickshaw in Sidhi district of Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday afternoon, police said. Four others were injured in the incident that occurred at Baniyadol village under Churhat police station limits around 1 pm, an official said. "A speeding truck hit an auto-rickshaw, in which three persons died on the spot while a four-month-old girl died in a hospital," Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Neelesh Sharma said. The deceased were identified as Premwati Tiwari (55), her daughter Sita Mishra (32), her nephew Bhole Tiwari (22) and infant Mandvi Singh, the police said. Of the four injured persons, one was seriously wounded and was referred to a medical college-cum-hospital in Rewa. Three others are undergoing treatment in the district hospital in Sidhi, he said



Thousands click selfies outside public toilets

housands of people clicked selfies with their mobile phones outside public toilets in Indore, the cleanest city in the country, as part of a unique campaign launched on World Toilet Day on Tuesday. Named "toilet super spots", the campaign was launched by the Indore Municipal Corporation to encourage cleanliness and maintenance in over 700 public toilets and urinals in the city, officials said. "Indore is the only city in the country guaranteeing cleanliness in public toilets, appealing to people to use them and clicking selfies outside if they are satisfied with the facilities," Mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava said at the event organised under the campaign. Around 78,000 people had clicked selfies outside public toilets by 5 pm under the "Toilet Super Spots" campaign that began at 7 am on Tuesday, officials said.

VIJAYAWADA | WEDNESDAY | NOVEMBER 20, 2024

India, China to focus on stabilising relations

PNS NEW DELH /RIO DE JANEIRO

India and China decided to soon convene a meeting of their Special Representatives their Special Representatives on the boundary question after a gap of nearly five years and inched closer to the resumption of direct flights as well as Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage, weeks after pulling back their troops from two back their troops from two face-off points in eastern Ladakh.

The next steps in India-China ties with a broader objective to stabilise the relationship figured prominently in talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi that took place on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro late Monday. The two ministers felt that

it was imperative that the focus should be on stabilising ties, managing differences and taking the next steps, accord-ing to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

It was the first high-level engagement between the two sides after the completion of the disengagement process in Depsang and Demchok along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

The Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India blamed the "tech-

nical problem for not shuffling

the language page" on its web-

site after the corporation was

strongly criticised on Tuesday

by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister

M K Stalin and other leaders for

its alleged attempt to impose

The national insurer informed that its "corporate

website was not shuffling the

language page due to some technical problem."

PNS CHENNAI

Hindi

tranquility. "The discussions focused on the next steps in India-

media platform X.

the pages on account of not knowing that language.

took strong exception to the use of Hindi language on the web-

Chief Minister M K Stalin

Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi that took place on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro late Monday The MEA said the two ministers recognised that the disengagement in the border

The next steps in India-China ties with a broader

objective to stabilise the relationship figured

prominently in talks between External Affairs

Foreign Secretary-Vice Minister mechanism will take place soon," it said. "Among the steps discussed were the resumption of the

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra pilgrimage, data sharing on trans-border rivers, direct flights between India and China and media exchanges," the MEA said.

The 22nd round of Special Representatives (SR) talks were held in New Delhi on December 21, 2019. India's SR for the dialogue is NSA Ajit Doval while the Chinese side is headed by Foreign Minister

Wang. The direct flights between India and China and the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage were suspended in view of the Covid-19 pandemic.



'Haryana too has a right over Chandigarh'

PNS CHANDIGARH

Haryana also has a right over Chandigarh, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said on Tuesday, justifying the state's move to have an additional Vidhan Sabha building in the Union Territory, much to Punjab's chagrin.

Saini said the construction of the Haryana Vidhan Sabha complex in Chandigarh is a serious issue and all political parties in the state should rise above politics and present their views unanimously.

On Tuesday, during the Haryana Assembly session, the opposition extended its support to the government over the issue, saying Saini should con-vene an all-party meeting to pre-sent a united front. "We also have a right over Chandigarh," Saini later told reporters here when asked to comment on Punjab's ruling Aam Aadmi Party and other political outfits protesting

over the Centre's reported move to clear the allotment of 10 acres of land in Chandigarh to Haryana for the construction of its additional Assembly building. Saini said Punjab can also extend its Vidhan Sabha building if needed.

Reacting to Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda's remark that Haryana should not give its land in exchange to Chandigarh and instead extend the existing Vidhan Sabha building, Saini said the area where the present structure lies, enjoys a heritage status' because of which we cannot extend the present building".

When the matter pertaining to the objection being raised by Punjab came up in the state Assembly on Tuesday, Saini pointed out that the Haryana Vidhan Sabha will need more space to accommodate an increase in the number of sitting legislators after the next delimitation exercise.

tributors? We demand an immediate rollback of this lin-

guistic tyranny. #StopHindiImposition," the CM

Terming the move as a "bla-

tant imposition" of Hindi on

said in the post.

China relations. It was agreed that a meeting of the Special Representatives and of the areas had contributed to the maintenance of peace and

"LIC grew with the patronage of all Indians. How dare it site of LIC of India, and said that the website has been reduced to betray the majority of its con-

a propaganda tool for imposing Hindi. Posting a screenshot of the LIC of India webpage containing Hindi, the chief minister said in a post on social media platform 'X': "The LIC website has been reduced to a propaganda tool for Hindi imposition. Even the option to select English

other language-speaking people, BJP's ally and PMK founder Dr is displayed in Hindi!" S Ramadoss, said this attempt This, he claimed, was noth-

by LIC is "highly condemnable" ing but cultural and language imposition by force, trampling on India's diversity.

as it was trying to "push" a lan-guage among the non-Hindi speaking people.

UP bypolls: Over 30 pc candidates have criminal cases, 48 pc are crorepatis

Not afraid of anything, I fight my own battles' PNS NEW DELHI Kailash Gahlot after joining BJP

Two days after he quit the AAP

MICCIA DEBCI MIC

ularly given his influence among the rural Jat community. Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar welcomed him into the party, calling him a "gamechanger' Gahlot pledged to work for strengthening the BJP's prospects in Delhi in the assembly polls, expressing confidence it will form the next government. "I will give my best here as I have always done in the past He also spoke about issues confronting the national capital, calling for a bipartisan approach to tackling pollution.'





Fire at vehicle showroom in K'taka; employee killed

20-year-old woman was killed in a fire that broke out at an electric vehicle showroom in Rajajinagar on Tuesday, Apolice said. The incident occurred at around 5.30 pm at My EV Store an electric bike showroom near Navrang Junction. Four fire tenders were dispatched to the scene, and the fire has since been fully extinguished. According to police, five to six people were inside the showroom when the fire broke out. All of them managed to escape, except for Priya, the cashier, who became trapped. The woman died of asphyxiation and severe burn injuries, a fire official said. Over 45 electric scooters were destroyed in the fire. "The charred body of the woman has been recovered. After the post-mortem, the body will be handed over to her family." a senior police official said. Preliminary investigations suggest that a short-circuit may have caused the fire, and further inquiries are ongoing.

PNS LUCKNOW

Over 30 per cent of the candidates contesting the bypolls in Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday have criminal cases against them while 48 per cent are crorepati, according to a report.

The bypolls will be held at

dates in the fray.

Katehari (Ambedkar Nagar), out of 90 candidates analyzed, Karhal (Mainpuri), Meerapur 29 (32 per cent) have declared in Muzaffarnagar, Ghaziabad, "criminal cases" while 24 (27 Majhawan in Mirzapur, per cent) have declared "seri-Sisamau in Kanpur city, Khair ous criminal cases" against in Aligarh, Phulpur in themselves. The report Prayagraj, and Kundarki in Moradabad on November 20. includes the 25 Independent candidates as well as those The findings have been backed by regional and nationshared in a report by NGOs al parties.

UP Election Watch and Association for Democratic In terms of financial background, out of the 90 candidates, 43 (48 per cent) are crorepatis and the average of Reforms (ADR) after analysis of criminal background, financial, education, gender and other details of all 90 candiassets per candidate contesting in the UP Assembly bye elections is Rs 3.76 crore, the According to the report, report showed.

BJP, former Delhi minister Kailash Gahlot on Tuesday said leaving Delhi's ruling party was a very difficult decision for him but it had become a neces-

In an interview on Tuesday, Gahlot, who has represented the Jat-dominated Najafgarh constituency since 2015, described his move to leave the AAP as 'deeply emotional".

"I gave 10 years to the AAP. This decision (to quit) was not easy for me. It was deeply emotional. It was one of the most difficult decisions I have made, but I believe it was for the best," he said. Gahlot also rejected AAP

leaders' allegations that he switched sides under pressure from central agencies.

"People don't think before speaking. At least they should check which IT orders are pending against me and what was found during the search at my home: nothing. I believe in



fighting my own battles. It the LG had proposed my name angers me when issues are cre-(to unfurl the Tricolour on ated out of nothing," he said. Independence Day as then chief "I gave 10 years to AAP, and minister Kejriwal was in jail), I this decision was very emotionconveyed this to the party. It was only with the CM's approval al one for me, and whatever that I participated in the August happened, happened for the best, and now I will work to 15 programme. So I have no strengthen the BJP," he added. grievances. This was not a fac-Gahlot also dismissed spector in my resignation," he said. ulation of a fallout with AAP Gahlot joined the saffron

party on Monday, a day after National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal over Independence resigning from the AAP. Day flag hoisting duties. The BJP has described Gahlot's switch as a "turning

"I had absolutely no resentment. When I got to know that point" in Delhi politics, partic-

"Even as a minister, I always said pollution is an issue where there should be no politics. These are matters where we must rise above politics, involve everyone, and work together to resolve them."

On the portfolios he held in the AAP government, including Transport and Women and Child Development, Gahlot highlighted the need for urgent action regarding bus marshals in Delhi.

killed when the S-6 coach of

Sabarmati Express was set afire

near Godhra station, triggering

been made to show the truth of

the story of the train incident

that happened in Godhra,

"In this film, an attempt has

widespread riots in Gujarat.

PNS NEW DELHI

Stakes could not be higher for a number of regional heavyweights in Maharashtra as the state goes to the polls on Wednesday in what promises to be a make-or-break election for satraps like Sharad Pawar, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, his predecessor Uddhav Thackeray and deputy CM Ajit Pawar.

The two Pawars, Shinde and Thackeray are engaged in an intense and riveting battle to seek popular legitimacy for their parties, and which way end of the road for two of them when the results of the election the 288-member Maharashtra Assembly are declared on November 23.

The senior Pawar, who will turn 84 next month, delivered a debilitation blow to his nephew, whose breakaway faction was recognised as the real Nationalist Congress Party by the Election Commission, in the Lok Sabha elections and is looking to strike a knockout

Fate of key satraps hangs in balance

punch in the assembly polls, while Ajit Pawar is hoping to bounce back.

ever, gave both Thackeray, who heads Shiv Sena (UBT) after the Shind-led group was recognised as the real Shiv Sena, and the chief minister something to the voters turn could spell the cheer about, rendering the assembly election the air of a final match that could deliver

> led NCP (SP) and Thackeray's party are part of the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, which has the Congress as its third important player, the NCP and Shiv Sena are allied with the BJP-led ruling Mahayuti.

How the four regional satraps perform is bound to

MAHARASHTRA ELECTIONS TODAY

While the Sharad Pawar-

dictate the politics of the two

The Lok Sabha results, how-

only one winner.

The BJP is contesting 149 seats, Shiv Sena 81 seats, and the Ajit Pawar-led NCP has fielded candidates in 59 constituencies. In the opposition alliance, the Congress has fielded 101 candidates, Shiv Sena (UBT) 95, and the NCP (SP) 86.

national parties.

seats, Shiv Sena 81 seats, and the Ajit Pawar-led NCP has fielded candidates in 59 constituencies. In the opposition alliance, the Congress has fielded 101 candidates, Shiv Sena (UBT) 95, and the NCP (SP) 86.

What has added a sharp edge to the factional fights is the fact that the two claimants of Shiv Sena's popular legacy have squared off against each other in over 50 seats, while the nominees of the two Pawars are up against each other in nearly 37 constituencies.

At the centre of poll sweepstakes involving the two Sena is the question mark over "Mumbai ka king kaun", as many of their workers said in

a reference to the sway the undivided Shiv Sena had over the country's financial capital and which is now being contested by the two parties.

The uncle-nephew battle is the sharpest in western Maharashtra, a prosperous region where the Pawar clan is rooted.

Sharad Pawar, a four-term former chief minister of the state whose wily moves have shaped the state's politics for decades, has called for the defeat of betrayers, a reference to Ajit Pawar and his nominees. The nephew in turn has refrained from using sharp words against him, wary of stirring popular sympathy for the ageing leader who had handed

him a big defeat in the Lok

Sabha polls

'The Sabarmati Report' declared tax-free in Chhattisgarh too

PNS RAIPUR

Just released Hindi film "The Sabarmati Report", based on the 2002 Godhra train burning incident in Gujarat, was on Tuesday declared tax-free in Chhattisgarh by the state's BJP government.

Gujarat 22 years ago," a state-Chief Minister Vishnu Deo ment issued by the state's pub-Sai announced that "The lic relations department said. Sabarmati Report", in which actor Vikrant Massey has played the role of a journalist, will be tax-free in the state, meaning the Bollywood film has been given exemption from entertainment levy.

Chhattisgarh has become the second BJP-ruled state, after Madhya Pradesh, to give tax-free status to the film, helmed by Dheeraj Sarna, which hit theatres on November 15.

On February 27, 2002, 59 people, mostly karsevaks, were tives, he noted.

The film should also be watched because the study of the past can give us better guidance about the present and the future, Sai said in the statement. The Hindi movie is a highly commendable and effective effort to expose the horrific

truth of history which vested interests tried to hide. It exposes the truth of the then existing system, which made a reprehensible attempt to suppress the truth by spreading false narra-

The BJP is contesting 149

VIJAYAWADA | WEDNESDAY | NOVEMBER 20, 2024

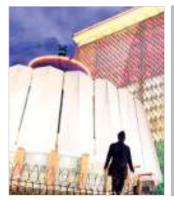
he pioneer

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Time for reckoning

Today Maharashtra will vote to decide its future leadership and political trajectory

aharashtra, one of India's most politically significant states, votes for all 288 Assembly seats today. This election comes at a time of heightened political fragmentation and social unrest, making its outcome crucial for both state and national politics. A key issue in this election is the split within the Shiv Sena, a party long associated with Maharashtra's regional pride. The party is now divided into two factions: one led by Uddhav Thackeray, aligned with the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) coalition of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Congress, and the other by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, supported by the BJP. This division has significantly eroded the party's traditional voter base, creating uncertainty about its performance in this election. Adding to the complexity is the Maratha reservation demand. The Maratha community, constituting about 30 per cent of the state's population, is pushing for inclusion in the Other Backward



Classes (OBC) category to access job and educational quotas. Protests, led by figures like Manoj Jarange Patil, have brought this issue to the forefront, with the ruling BJP-Shiv Sena alliance attempting to address it through policy measures. However, the unresolved tensions could influence voter sentiment, especially in rural areas.

The BJP-led alliance faces further challenges from agrarian distress in regions like Vidarbha and Marathwada. Falling crop prices for key produce such as cotton and onions have caused financial strain on farmers, traditionally a significant voting bloc. The MVA has capitalised on this dissatisfac-

tion, highlighting the BJP's failure to protect Maharashtra's economic interests, including the recent relocation of major industrial projects to Gujarat. This election also reflects national-level dynamics. The results will test the BJP's ability to maintain its dominance amid growing opposition unity and could signal the strength of the Congress and its allies. A victory for the MVA might energise the national opposition, while a BJP win could consolidate its position. With a fragmented political landscape, Maharashtra's election promises to be closely contested. Its outcome will likely shape not only the state's future but also set the tone for national politics in the coming years. The political landscape of the state stands at a crossroads today. With a deeply fragmented Shiv Sena, intense debates over Maratha reservations, and agrarian distress weighing on rural voters, this election carries stakes far beyond the state's borders. The outcome would indeed be a pointer to the prowess of the BJP at the national level and the resilience of the INDI alliance. Besides the state is an economic powerhouse and whosoever rules the state also enjoys the support of corporate world to keep its momentum going.



West Bengal's lost opportunity



pinion 06

ANIRBAN GANGULY

Tata Nano factory's relocation from West Bengal to Gujarat is a poignant reminder of how political myopia derailed a golden opportunity for Bengal's industrial revival

n a moving tribute to late Ratan Tata, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke of the many dimensions of the industrial icon's personality that endeared him to the people. Pursuit of excellence and empathy were among the most dominant traits in late Ratan Tata leading him to pilot the Tata conglomerate towards greater heights of success and expansion. Under his two decades of stewardship, the Tata group witnessed a phenomenal spread of its global footprints and established itself as a vibrant brand.

Perhaps like many others from West Bengal, Ratan Tata's passing brought to my mind the Singur - Tata Nano factory episode. Those dark days of lost opportunities, signified a major recul, for the hope of an industrial regeneration in the state. A party and government which had, for over three decades patronised, militant trade unionism had suddenly decided to reverse that trend. It was ironic to see it clamber for investment in a feverish pitch after having presided over the de-industrialisation of the state.

The destruction of Bengal's once formidable industrial might is a map of the CPI(M) rise in the state. Howrah, once famed as the 'Sheffield of the east', turned into West Bengal's principal industrial graveyard under the communists. As early as the 1920s Dr Ambedkar had seen through and realised the oftenduplicitous approach of the communist-led trade-unionism. In the pages of his Bahishkrut Bharat he wrote how communists were 'trying to capture the labour movement in the country and that 'the main aim behind the strike' was 'not to improve the economic conditions of workers but to train them for revolution.' He could foresee the cancer that was trying to claw into India's industrial entrails.

et us recall how

Bengal Chief Minister Jyoti Basu

had sanctioned protests against

the Metro Rail project. The

communist-driven frensied

trade-unionism destroyed sever-

al iconic public undertakings

such as the Haringhata Milk

Dairy, set up by Dr BC Roy had created a milk supply chain across the state while generating thousands of jobs. Much like Mamata Banerjee who has refused to enlist West Bengal in the Centre's flagship 'Aspirational District Project' and remains lukewarm to the 'Ekalavya Vidyalaya' scheme, Basu in 1986, had forbade the setting up of Navodaya Schools in the state. In 1974, three years before he came to power as Chief Minister, Basu had organised a relay protest in front of the Hongkong Bank regional office in Kolkata to stall the installation of computers. Yet ironically the same Jyoti Basu in 1994, commissioned Arthur Anderson, a multinational business consultant, to carry out a study of the chances of West Bengal's industrial revival based on foreign investment. But progress was halting, it lacked

ER BOD

a roadmap. Thus, when Ratan Tata decided to invest in the state it was a whiff of more than fresh air, it was a long-needed gush of

wind for breathing fresh life

into a dying industrial ethos.

A hopeful Tata had then said



MUCH LIKE MAMATA BANERJEE WHO HAS REFUSED TO ENLIST WEST BENGAL IN THE CENTRE'S FLAGSHIP 'ASPIRATIONAL DISTRICT PROJECT' AND REMAINS LUKEWARM TO THE

'EKALAVYA VIDYALAYA'

and one-upmanship between the ruling CPI(M) and the proposed Nano factory shifting to Gujarat. Modi told opposition Trinamool Congress, leading a blind Tata that the project was not only his, but ours. political opposition to the Later he had observed, in a proposal led to its grounding. lighter vein, that his one-In trying to bolster her flagrupee SMS had brought about ging political prospects, a major boost to Gujarat's Mamata Banerjee, desperateindustrial prospects. Ratan ly and deliberately jettisoned Tata later said that he would the project. Her political arrogance and self-centeredness led to its sinking. In her last fifteen years at the helm, the

forever remain grateful to Modi for placing faith in him and inviting him to Gujarat during those difficult days. The saga of the Singur-Tata Nano factory's shift to Gujarat is a saga of petty political squabbles, acute selfishness, arrogance and lack of true commitment to West Bengal's future and progress. That mindset and outlook among the ruling dispensation in the state still dominate. It has to be thrown overboard. Only ing dispensation then and then will West Bengal's indus-

Folk dancers perform during the celebration of the 297th foundation day of 'Pink City', Jaipur

Buddhas in the boardroom: How meditation can counter burnout



ISHAN SHIVANAND

Meditation, once reserved for monks, is emerging as a transformative practice for professionals, helping them fight burnout

more open to collaboration

time, back-to-back meetings and the constant scramble of the hustle culture, we need to consider – whether are we running the show, or just running. Workplace burnout is the price often paid for juggling high expectations, tight deadlines and the need to be available for work all the time - while disregarding personal health and wellbeing.

Understanding workplace burnout: Burnout is beyond the feeling of tiredness at the end of a busy day. It's a state of chronic physical and emotional exhaustion, coupled with detachment, cynicism and reduced performance. The WHO officially recognised burnout as an 'occupational phenomenon,' signifying its critical impact on modern work-life. It affects mental clarity and emotional resilience and can even have physiological repercussions on heart health and sleep patterns.

Why meditation: Amid the workday, meditation offers an oasis - a moment to pause, reflect, and realign. The prac-



monks and mountain retreats, is now being rediscovered in the boardroom. The reason is simple: meditation fosters the ability to be present, ground-ed and conscious of one's

thoughts and actions. Research has shown that regular meditation can alter brain activity, shifting it from the limbic system (responsible for our fight-or-flight responses) to the prefrontal cortex (the centre for rational thinking and calmness). This neurological shift trans-

as deep breathing, guided lates to a greater sense of conprotocols and visualisation trol over stress, enabling clearhelp individuals develop a er decision-making and enhancing focus. Yoga heightened state of nonjudgemental awareness, balemphasises how yogic, breathing and meditation ance emotions, and build a strong mental framework to techniques can lead to transmanage stress effectively. One formative wellbeing. Studies standout programme is YOI, which has garnered attention on Yoga have reported a posfor its multifaceted approach itive impact on holistic wellreflect, and realign. The prac- being, with participants to wellbeing. Imagine being tice, often associated with reporting reductions in anx- able to handle feedback with-

out feeling criticised or meet-ing a deadline without feeling panic - meditation offers a gateway to equanimity. As game-changers in the corporate world, meditative prac-Transforming work culture tices build the mental stamina to bounce back from setbacks, maintain composure itation go beyond stress relief. under pressure, and approach In practice, this means a situations with a growth

more focused team, resilient mindset. in the face of challenges, and Meditation at work

Meditation in the workplace Some organisations are doesn't require a meditation already creating environmat or a designated room; it just requires an integration of ments where wellness isn't a perk but a pillar of their intention, emotion and work culture. We need awareness. Here are some Buddhas in the boardroom. strategies to help you get How meditation rewrites started: A few minutes of your life script: Meditation is breathing or focusing on your more than sitting in silence; senses can help reset your it's about training the mind to mental state. Begin your be resilient. Techniques such meetings with a minute of silence or guided breathing. It helps everyone clear their minds and be more present. As the world continues to spin, meditation serves as a reminder – that the power to pause and find a balance lies within.

> (The writer is, mental health researcher and the founder of Yoga of *Immortals; views are* personal)

locations before deciding to locate this rather revolution-LETT

SCHEME, BASU IN 1986, HAD FORBADE THE SETTING UP OF that he had 'scanned the country and looked at various NAVODAYA SCHOOLS IN THE STATE

the opposition were respon-sible for pushing the state into a dark alley. The alley remains dark even to this day. Ratan Tata announced that he was shifting the car plant to Gujarat's Sanand. It was a plant that would eventually

state has failed to recover

from that mindless assault

and pushback. An epic oppor-

tunity was lost, with a belea-

guered Tata announcing his

exit from the state due to

political reasons. The people

Their hopes of a possibilities-

filled future receded in a mist

of uncertainty. Both the rul-

of West Bengal lost out.

trial rejuvenation an pear to be a possibility.

(The writer is chairman Dr Syama Prasad Mookerjee *Research Foundation and* member National Executive *Committee*, *BJP*; *views are personal)*

UKRAINE TO USE LONG-RANGE MISSILES

ly, US President Joe Biden has given the green signal to Ukraine to use long-range American missiles against Russia, then it is very good news for Ukraine. Because for the last one and a half years, Ukrainian President Zelensky was asking for permission to use these long-range weapons. Otherwise, this weapon will remain just a showpiece and one day Russia will capture it and then it will start using it to capture some third country.

This decision is also necessary because the Biden administration is now a guest for only two months. The president who will come after him, Trump, has already announced that he will stop giving any kind of help to Ukraine. The second big reason for Biden's change of heart seems to be that with the support of Russia, about 10 thousand combat soldiers of North Korea have taken up the front against Ukraine. In such a situation, Ukraine should have gotten this permission at all costs. The news of Biden's decision came after meetings with the leaders of South Korea, Japan and China in the last two days. The inclusion of North Korean troops was the main topic of the talks, which took place during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Peru. Europe was already ready to give permission. But America was not ready. It is said that American missiles will be able to hit up to 300 kilometers inside Russia at three times the speed of sound, which even Russia's anti-missile equipment will not be able to intercept.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

VIOLENCE ESCALATES IN MANIPUR

Madam—Apropos of the headlines on Manipur violence (November 18), the state and the assembly may be suspendresurgence of violence in Manipur goes unabated. The violence and sabotage look beyond control. The MLAs and ministers of different political parties are being attacked and their houses are ransacked. The democratic fabric in Manipur has tion parties. The India-Myanmar border

RS TO Ξ HE EDITO

Madam —If this news is true that final-



ndia's hypersonic missile technology has received a shot in the arm after a long-range hypersonic missile was tested by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). With a range exceeding 1500 km, the missile is intended to carry wide-ranging payloads for all three services of the Indian armed forces. These indigenously developed missiles are special because they travel with a speed five

mobs. Education, health, development and civic administration are in peril. The **Vinod Johri** | *Delhi* elected government has turned dysfunctional and there are threats and possibilities of destabilising the state government. It is quite apparent that the efforts of peace in the first phase of violence have failed despite the newly elected state government post-violence.

Earlier, there were reports of missionaries inciting violence in the state. The Manipur violence has affected neighbouring states of Assam, Tripura and Nagaland. In fact, the Manipur violence has a secessionist motive and the disruptive and separatist forces behind the Manipur violence are based across the borders. It is, therefore, imperative that President Rule may be imposed in the ed till normalcy returns and the political atmosphere is congenial for restoration of the assembly and the government. The Manipur mayhem should not be taken as political mileage by the opposibeen destroyed by the extremists and irate should be sealed with immediate effect,

India tests hypersonic missile

times that of sound at sea level, at approximate ly 6200 km per hour, and at a mile per second. Hypersonic missiles are extremely difficult to detect, making enemy radars nigh impossible to spot them before they are too close for com-

Their maneuverability and ability to fly at lower altitudes separate them from the ballistic missiles that follow a set path. Hypersonic missiles can also be partially projected into orbit via a glide vehicle through the fractional orbital bombardment system (FOBS) unlike the ballistic missiles, though the latter can travel faster. Till now. Russia, China and the United States possess fullfledged hypersonic capabilities, while Germany, France, Japan, Australia, Iran and Israel are on course to follow suit. India has, thus, joined the elite "hypersonic group." Kudos to ISRO for another feather in the cap

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

KAILASH GAHLOT QUITS AAP

Madam — Gahlot resigned from AAP, citing the party's shift from focusing on public welfare to prioritising political ambitions. In his resignation letter to AAP National Convener Arvind Kejriwal, Gahlot stated that instead of fighting for people's rights, the party had increasingbeen focused on its own agenda.

He also expressed dissatisfaction with controversies like the 'Sheeshmahal' row, questioning whether AAP still upheld its core identity as the party of the common man. AAP responded by alleging that Gahlot's resignation was influenced by pressure from central agencies investigating him, a claim Gahlot dismissed. The BJP believes that Gahlot's entry strengthens its position as it prepares to challenge AAP in the upcoming elections.

Åkhilesh Krishnan | Vashi

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



VIJAYAWADA | WEDNESDAY | NOVEMBER 20, 2024

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FIRSTCOLUMN A DIET FOR PEACE: KINDNESS OVER CRUELTY

The food we consume shapes not just our physical health but also our thoughts, actions and the world



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

t has been rightly said that we are what we eat because the kind of food that we eat has a direct impact on how we think and therefore it's crucial to what we become finally. Recent studies made by modern medical science have suggested that the human body is not naturally designed to digest and assimilate non-vegetarian food. That is why today most medical practitioners recommend a healthy vegetarian diet to their patients who are suffering from lifestyle disorders. Along with scientific studies, individual researchers made all over the world have also clearly pointed out that when an animal is killed for meat, it experiences fear, anxiety and pain. Its hormonal secretions are then passed on to its consumers.

Such a diet is therefore unhealthy both for the body and the mind. In many religions, a non-vegetarian diet is strictly forbidden not just because it causes pain and suffering to other living creatures but also because it is the source of vicious thoughts and attitudes to its consumers. In other words, non-vegetarian food is a gateway to a non-vegetarian lifestyle, a way of living where vices dwell comfortably. One must understand that human cruelty towards animals is nothing but a way of inviting cruelty onto the self. Also, the current trend of mass consumption of flesh by human beings highlights the way we look at other living beings and our desire to subjugate them.



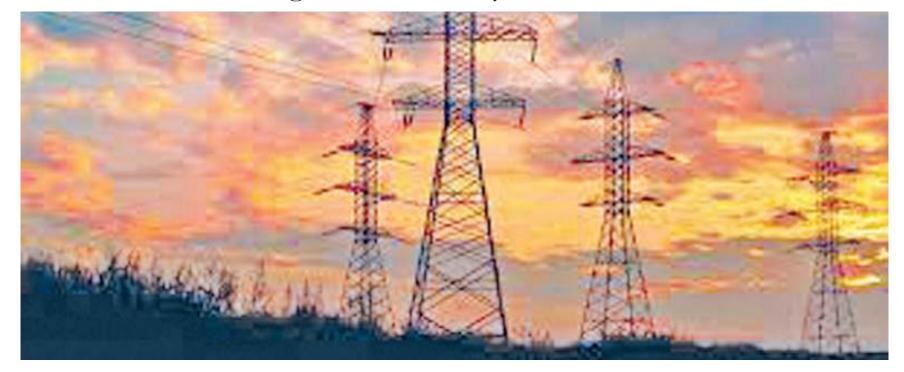
From a broader perspective, the mass consumption of non-vegetarian food is a way of heaping sin upon the human community. No peace marches, diplomatic dialogues and conferences can bring peace to the planet when we are burdening it with the desperate cries of hapless creatures. For what we sow, so shall we reap. It is so ironic that the largely meat-eating developed countries of the world have stringent laws when it comes to treating a pet and it is ensured that if the pet is hurt, the owner can even be imprisoned. However, in these very countries, millions of animals are killed every day for food and yet no one goes to jail. Isn't it surprising that so many animal lovers continue to be nonvegetarians because they are unable to connect with the cruelty that goes behind, in the making of such food? Even more surprising was a weird recommendation to find humane methods of animal slaughter made by some so-called animal sympathisers. But the contention here is what can be more inhuman than nourishing an animal to kill it one day. It is a breach of morality by all standards. What is more cruel than subjecting generations of animals to a life of stifling captivity that only leads them to a merciless end? And what is more cruel than killing animals in front of each other? While one is bleeding to death, the other watches in horror and waits for its turn. It is a great pity that even sympathetic humans are left with such little kindness that all they can think of is designing a better way to kill. It's high time that all of us should ask ourselves a question: why does our conscience need a rational argument, sanctioned by a research institute in the West, to realise that killing other living creatures is a form of cruelty? Why do we need facts and figures to understand that cruelty can never be a bringer of any form of health - be it mind, body or the environment & bring peace and harmony to the world? Can't we realise that a heart that heaves no sigh at the sight of violence cannot be a source of compassion for other fellow men? So how do we expect people who do not nurture the feeling of kindness for other living beings to nurture feelings of brotherhood and forgiveness for their community? Aren't we just walking on one path while seeking another's destination? Just give it a thought and then decide whether to Kill or Heal. Learn to live above self when life is precious to all. Let there be the right to live for all & not just Human Rights, then only world peace will descend.

Delhi discoms in crisis: Debt and regulatory gaps



analys \$ 07

A convoluted tariff regime, under-recoveries, power theft, and unpaid subsidies are threatening the sustainability of the Delhi discoms



elhi Government is looking at various options to address twin problems facing its three power distribution companies (discoms) namely BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL), discom for South & West Delhi; BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) - discom for Central & East Delhi; and Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited or TPDDL - discom for North Delhi. These are (i) "Regulatory Assets" or RAs of Rs 27,200 crore lying in the books of these discoms; (ii) an equally staggering amount of Rs 26,500 crore they owe to power generation and transmission companies viz. Indraprastha Power Generation Co. Ltd (IPGCL), Pragati Power Corporation Limited (PPCL) and Delhi Transco Limited or DTL at the end of September 2024. The discoms are expected to sell electricity to the consumers at tariffs –duly approved by the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) – that are set in a manner such that the revenue generated from sale at these tariffs fully cover the power purchase cost plus the cost of wheeling and distribution. The requirement is mandatory under the Electricity Act, of 2003. But, this is rarely complied with. Under a highly convoluted regime, the tariff charged from households (HHs) consuming up to 200 units a month is Rs 3 per unit which is just about half of the average cost leading to an under-recovery of Rs 3 per unit. Including levies adding to 44.6 per cent, the shortfall comes to Rs 4.3 per unit (3x1.446). For HHs consuming between 201 and 400 units, the tariff is Rs 4.5 per unit imply-ing an under-recovery of Rs 1.5 per unit. Including the levies, this comes to Rs 2.2 per unit. These under-recoveries are cross-subsidised by charging more from industries and businesses for which the tariff can go up to a high of Rs 16 per unit.

suming up to 200 units even as HHs consuming up to 400 units get a flat deduction of Rs 800 per month from the bill amount. Though the government promises to reimburse them for these sub-sidies from the state budget, this promise is held more in breach. This increases discoms' losses which are compounded by large-scale power theft. Where do RAs fit in? RAs are created when state electricity regula-THE IRONY IS

tory commissions (in this case, THAT DESPITE DERC) accept that the tariffs don't cover discounts' purchase costs but don't raise rates. The gap between CHARGING the cost and revenue generated **EXORBITANT** from sales at tariffs (albeit unrevised) for supplied power, is booked by discom as receivable and classified as RA. This is con-RATES FROM INDUSTRIES trary to the Electricity Act (2003) AND and the National Power Tariff

dated June 22, 2023, by 9.42 per cent for BYPL, 6.39 per cent for BRPL and 2 per cent for TPDDL. The current PPACs for these dis-3 per unit (courtesy, of Kejriwal's freebies). Thus, discoms are told not to raise any bill on HHs concoms are 31.6 per cent, 27.08 per cent and 33 per cent respectively. Moreover, DERC has allowed discoms to levy a surcharge of eight per cent.

This is intended to plug any shortfall in revenue vis-à-vis the cost still left unplugged after collection of PPAC. Despite these two impositions, the discoms continue to report a substantial shortfall in their revenue from the sale of electricity which is manifest in cumulative monumental RAs of Rs 27,200 crore. It is a manifestation of several glaring pitfalls: (i) the Delhi government isn't reimbursing discoms for the subsidies they give to target consumers on its behalf; (ii) large-scale power theft continues unabated; (iii) discoms have been submitting inflated bills/claims and other financial wrongs: (iv) inefficiencies get full

(SC) which in an order given in early 2023 had directed the DERC to let discoms recover their RAs. This could lead to a 100 per cent hike in tariff.

So, the regulator decided to contest that order. Second, until such time the requisite tariff hike is actually sanctioned by the DERC, the RAs can't be treated as an asset. Hence, there remains every possibility of the loans taken from banks and financial institutions (FIs) for funding them becoming non-performing assets (NPAs). Moreover, the banks/FIs may not give more to discoms and their suppliers namely IPGCL/PPCL/DTL more loans. Third, the discoms can leverage the ambiguous classification (neither outright rejection of a claim for tariff hike nor approval) to present claims to the DERC which the latter may not be willing to accept.

This leads to substantial claims getting bogged down in legal disputes ne appeal level or in h courts. To conclude, providing for RAs in the books of discoms is a bad practice. Apart from discoms, it also puts the power generators and transmission companies at serious risk. It can impair the balance sheet of banks and FIs who have given loans to them. It could mean a steep hike in tariffs on supplies to industries/businesses besides HHs consuming more than 400 units a month. To cap it all, it provides a 'cover up' for financial irregularities and corruption. The practice must be shunned. As for the RAs already piled up, a thorough enquiry should be ordered to look into irregularities followed by recovery of money from those found guilty. The discoms should be 'unshackled' from the controls of the State government. If the latter wants to subsidize or provide free power to certain consumers, the money should be given to them directly. (The writer is a policy analyst;

(Writer is a spiritual educator&popular columnist; views are personal)

The irony is that despite charging exorbitant rates from industries and businesses, a good slice of under-recoveries from HHs consuming less than 400 units a month remains uncovered. Additionally, the Delhi government doesn't want the latter to even pay the small tariff of Rs BUSINESSES, A Policy (NPTP) which says that 'tariffs must reflect costs and reg-GOOD SLICE OF ulatory assets should not be creat-

ed". In December 2022, the **UNDER-**Ministry of Power (MoP) even warned against creating a pile of RECOVERIES But, all these RAs. FROM HHS regulations/warnings have fallen on deaf ears. CONSUMING

All losses incurred by discoms in Delhi during the last 11 years or LESS THAN 400 so have been shown in their books UNITS A MONTH as RAs. Regrettably, the RAs persist despite subsisting mechanisms REMAINS to enable discoms to offset cost escalation by suitable increases in UNCOVERED tariff. As per the order issued by MoP on November 9, 2021, dis-

coms are allowed to impose a surcharge known as PPAC (Power Purchase Agreement Cost). Levied as a percentage of the 'total energy cost and fixed charge compo-nent' of the electricity bill, the surcharge is meant to compensate them for variations in the fuel and power procurement cost. Effective from July 2023, the DERC had last increased PPAC vide its order

protection. Hesitant to sanction tariff hikes against these extra/unjustified costs, DERC chooses the easy option of putting all these under RAs.

The idea of creating RAs is flawed. When, a discom petitions DERC to allow any cost increase in tariff, the latter can either reject or accept. In case of acceptance, it should take the process to its logical conclusion by sanctioning the requisite tariff hike and notifying it. It can't leave things hanging in the air by accepting but not 'approving' and 'notifying' the tar-iff hike. Unfortunately, this is what the DERC has been doing for over a decade. This has dangerous consequences. First, once recorded in their books

as RAs, discoms will leave no stone unturned in recovering the money say by getting sanction of a steep hike in tariff to make up for the entire cumulative deficit in revenue. Indeed, the matter had gone right up to the Supreme Court

views are personal)

Delhi's air quality crisis: Action taken for now, but long-term solutions are crucial

The city faces an urgent need for sustainable, long-term strategies to tackle pollution at its root

the air quality in Delhi has recently deteriorated to dangerously high levels. To address this issue swiftly and effectively, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has implemented Stage 4 of the Graded Response Action Plan

(GRAP). This stage involves measures such as restricting bus services, pausing construction work and mining activities, and transitioning primary school classes to online learning. Although these steps are crucial in addressing the current pollution issue promptly, they alone cannot effectively address the underlying factors contributing to air pollution in the long term. It is crucial to



practices

able development.

EILIA JAFAR

overlook the factors that contribute to pollution in the long term as well. One significant factor is the dust produced during construction activities.

While the temporary suspension of construction operations following GRAP guidelines is a move in the right direction, it also underscores the urgency

with connectivity that need methods. Germany and Sweden serve as examples of attention. nations that have successfully

Expanding the metro network implemented construction and integrating buses can lead to a decrease in private car For instance, Germany prioriusage. Moreover, promoting tises the use of low-carbon the adoption of electric vehiconcrete, whereas Sweden cles (EVs) could play a role in focuses on promoting energyreducing emissions. Providing efficient structures with benefits such as tax incentives, improved insulation and solar toll discounts, and even offering parking for EVs could potentially increase their innovations. India has the opportunity to implement attractiveness to commuters. strategies to minimise dust and emissions from construction Biking is becoming more popular as an eco-friendly option activities and promote sustainin Delhi; however, the city's The need for transformation in infrastructure doesn't fully

transportation is crucial to support it yet. address the issue of pollution Although smart bikes are in Delhi caused by road dust being introduced in some and vehicle emissions. areas, which is a move forward, the absence of marked biking Although the metro system prioritise short-term soluions of implementing more envi-for relief; however, we must not ronmentally friendly building in Delhi, there are still areas deters many people from bik-



ing. Cities such as Copenhagen and Amsterdam serve as models for incorporating biking into urban environments. Delhi could take inspiration from its approach by investing in infrastructure for cyclists, such as bike lanes and bikesharing services, to enhance the safety and convenience of cycling for its residents. Éncouraging the use of sus-tainable building methods is

crucial too!

Providing incentives for individuals who build energy-efficient houses or utilise ecofriendly materials could greatly support sustainability efforts in communities worldwide. Numerous nations offer tax advantages or financial aid to developers who embrace green building strategies. India could introduce perks like discounts

on energy-saving devices, offers on solar panel setups, or financial assistance for homeowners undertaking eco-conscious improvements. These initiatives would not only lessen the burden on energy reserves but also encourage environmentally responsible

construction practices. Another helpful way to decrease the number of cars on the road is through carpooling initiatives, such as carpool

lanes and discounts for vehicles with passengers, which have proven effective in countries around the world. Introducing strategies in Delhi, such as designated carpool lanes or toll reductions for cars carrying two or more passengers, could play a role in alleviating traffic congestion and decreasing harmful emissions levels.

By implementing these measures, not only would pollution be reduced, but it would also enhance the daily commute experience for numerous residents in the area. The call for action is critical now. The air pollution crisis in

NCR intensified on November 17, 2024, as Delhi's average Air Quality Index (AQI) climbed to a hazardous 441 by 4 PM, classified as 'severe,' up from

419 the previous day. The harmful pollutants are linked to health concerns, such as respiratory illnesses and cardiovascular diseases.

The Stage 4 actions outlined in the GRAP are crucial for providing relief; however, it is evident that a comprehensive long-term plan is essential to enhance the air quality in Delhi. By emphasising the enhancement of public transportation services, implementing infrastructure for cyclists, advocating for eco-friendly construction methods and encouraging carpooling, Delhi can strive to diminish pollution levels and establish a healthier and more sustainable environment for all residents. (The writer is humanitarian and development professional; views are personal)





Money 08

IN BRIEF



Gold jumps Rs 600 to Rs 78,050 per 10 gm

old prices jumped Rs 600 to Rs 78,050 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid a strong global trend in the Goverseas market, according to the All India Sarafa Association. On Monday, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity closed at Rs 77,450 per 10 grams. Gold prices also rose due to increased buying by local jewellers and retailers for the wedding festivities, traders said. Silver bounced Rs 1,500 to Rs 93,500 per kg against the previous close of Rs 92,000 per kg on Monday. Gold price of 99.5 per cent purity rose Rs 600 to Rs 77,650 per 10 grams. It had ended at Rs 77,050 per 10 grams in the previous session. Meanwhile, in futures trade on the MCX, gold contracts for December delivery jumped Rs 615 or 0.82 per cent to trade at Rs 75,662 per 10 grams.



Emerging India Focus Funds settles case with Sebi

oreign portfolio investor Emerging India Focus Funds has settled a case pertaining to the alleged violations of FPI rules with capital markets watchdog Sebi after paying Rs 64.35 lakh as settlement charges. In a corrigendum to its settlement order, Sebi on Tuesday said that the case concerns to non-compliance with the 'fit and proper' criteria for the period from October 13, 2022, to April 11, 2023. The latest order came after the applicant filed an application with Sebi proposing to settle the proceedings initiated against it, "without admitting or denying the findings of facts and conclusions of law" through a settlement order. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) initiated adjudication proceedings against the applicant and issued a show cause notice in February for the alleged violations of FPI Regulations and Intermediaries Regulations. Pending adjudication proceedings, Emerging India Focus Funds filed an application with Sebi and paid Rs 64.35 lakh on November 13 to settle the alleged violations

RBI should cut rates for pushing growth: Goyal

VIJAYAWADA | WEDNESDAY | NOVEMBER 20, 2024

PNS MUMBAI

Union Commerce Minister Pivush Goval on Thursday said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) should cut interest rates and give an impetus to growth. Using food inflation, which

restricted the RBI from any rate action for two years in the rate setting is a "flawed theo-ry", the Chartered Accountant-turned-politician said at an event hosted by CNBC TV18.

"I certainly believe they should cut interest rates, growth needs a further impetus. We are the fastest growing economy in the world, we can do even better," Goyal said.

Speaking at the same event later, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das declined to comment on the senior minister's suggestion, saying that the six-member rate setting panel will take the appropriate call at its next meeting scheduled in December first week. Goyal's demands found a resonance in finance industry veteran Deepak Parekh,



who advocated that the RBI cut both its repo rate and con-sider the cash reserve ratio (CRR).

Chief Economic Advisor G Anantha Nageswaran had made the suggestion of excluding food inflation in the headline inflation computation.

Goyal said he has been a proponent of the exclusion of food inflation in rates for the last 20 years, even when he was in the Opposition. "I've been consistently say-

ing it's a flawed theory that food inflation should be considered while deciding on the



inflation has nothing whatsoever to do with managing inflation. That's a demandsupply situation," he said.

Goyal, who has also handled the consumer affairs portfolio in the past, said food stocks are not hoarded or stocked in large proportions. "It is time that the policy-

makers and regulators seriously sat down, discussed with all stakeholders, economists beyond their own and come to a considered view of food inflation should be a part of the decision making for inflation or interest rates," he said.

'India looks for fair trade in FTA talks'

PNS NEW DELHI

India looks for equity, balance and fair trade while negotiating a free trade agreement (FTA), Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday. He asserted that India has entered into FTAs with countries which are transparent, open and where governments' economic systems align with India. Speaking at a programme in Mumbai, he said: "India looks for equity, balance and fair trade when negotiating a FTA". The country has implemented these agreements with countries, including Australia, and UAE, and is negotiating such pacts with nations such as the UK and European Union

Trump presidency may be a positive for India: CEA

Says energy prices can remain affordable

PNS MUMBAI

inflation and pointed out that

tomatoes, onions and potatoes, along

with gold and sil-

ver, were the

source of a third of

the overall 6.2 per

cent print for

zero transition".

Speaking at SBI's annual banking and economic conclave

here, Nageswaran said that if

India were to grow at a higher

pace in the next 25-odd years,

energy prices would have to be

affordable to fuel the economy.

while net zero goals are impor-

tant, it is essential to generate

He also made it clear that

October.

Baku, the senior economic pol-Chief Economic Advisor G icy maker from India hit out at Anantha Nageswaran on Tuesday said Donald Trump's Presidency may be a "positive" for India as it will contain the energy prices, a crucial component for the GDP growth. Nageswaran seemed to reit-

CII

the developed world for burying the concept of differentiated responsibilities agreed at Paris and added that Trump's win in the US election may be of help for India. "The fact that we have some-

amid the COP29 happening in

erate his concerns on food one who is not religiously com-

mitted to net zero will actually offer higher degrees of freedom to countries like India to pursue its own net zero goals keeping in mind its own growth aspirations," he said.

There are some headwinds which India - running a surplus on goods and services exports to the US - faces under the Trump administration, Nageswaran said, adding that any tinkering with tariffs may actually end up aiding India as it will reduce duties to become more competitive.

"Positives may actually end economic growth and called it up being better than the negaa "prerequisite for achieving net tives" under the new Trump In the remarks that come administration, he said.

Fifth shipment of 720-tonnes of onion to reach Delhi tomorrow NCR.

PNS NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday said the fifth bulk shipment of 720 tonnes of buffer onion will reach the national capital on November 21 as part of its market intervention to control

prices. This marks the continuation of the government's initiative, started last month, to transport buffer onion from Maharashtra to Delhi via railways

for the first time. So far, 4,010 tonnes have been dispatched for retail sale at Rs 35 per kg. "Another shipment of 720 tonnes, fifth in the series, has left Nashik yesterday and likely to reach Delhi by 21st of November," according to an official statement.

From the fourth bulk shipment of 840 tonnes that arrived on November 17, the government has allocated 500 tonnes to Mother Dairy, 190 tonnes to onnes to Nate

The government noted that bulk shipments have signifi-cantly impacted onion prices in Delhi, both at wholesale and retail levels.

Besides Delhi, similar initiatives are underway in other

planned this week, while Lucknow will receive a similar quantity in 2-3 days. The Centre has decided to increase onion disposal following supply constraints in certain markets during the festival season and mandi closures.

Cooperative Nafed has requested two additional rakes for Delhi-NCR and one for Guwahati this week. Cooperative NCCF plans to deploy another rake in the week while road trans

Irani calls for enhanced data on women in gems, jewellery sector

PNS NEW DELHI

Former Union Minister Smriti Zubin Irani on Tuesday expressed concerns over the lack of comprehensive data on women in the gems and jewellery sector and suggested the industry to look into the issue.

She also said there is a need to provide sufficient information about different opportunities available in the sector for women.

"The question that I was most perturbed by is that when you talk about women in the business of gems and jewellery and try to research the very concept data and studies are few and far between," she said.

She was speaking at a pro-gramme of gems and jewellery exporters on empowering women entrepreneurs in the business of jewellery

Majority of corporates want realtime reporting for audit: Deloitte

that taxpayers expect issuance

of automated programming

interface (API) to fetch data

administration would help tax-

payers have seamless connec-

tivity with I-T portals to enable

Opening up of API by the

from income tax portals.

PNS NEW DELHI

Deloitte India said on Tuesday that about 74 percent of highend corporate taxpayers want the income tax department to enable near real-time reporting and compliance monitor-

ing. Deloitte India's Income Tax Digitalisation in India survey, which took views of about 250 highest corporate taxpayers, also found that 67 per cent of businesses seek tax e-wallets to promptly credit refunds on passing orders, enabling adjustment against outstanding demands or future tax liabilities.

The survey said the respondents requested to adopt Standard Audit File for Tax (SAF-T), which would enable near real-time reporting and compliance monitoring. This signalled their intention to make the tax function techenabled. Addition

67 per cent last year highlighting the growing recognition of the need for a robust, technology-driven tax ecosystem.

'Organisations are embracing advanced technologies, such as Robotic Process Automation, Blockchain, GenAI, machine learning, data integration and analytics to accelerate the digital transformation of their tax functions," Sidhwa said.

The use of third-party tax software and cloud-based solutions has increased significantly with 69 per cent of respondents, up from 57 per cent in 2023, confirming their

efficient compliance. About 57 per cent of the adoption of these tools. respondents expect the admin-However, organisations still istration to use new-age tech-nologies such as blockchain and AI. face challenges in their journey towards tax digitalisation, the survey said, adding that key Deloitte India Partner obstacles include a shortage of skilled tax technology profes-Rohinton Sidhwa said Deloitte's survey reveals that 77 sionals, resistance to adopting new technologies and difficulper cent of companies have increased their budgets for ties integrating existing systax transformati exter l solut tems wi the survey respondents said automation in FY24, up from government portals.





Sebi resolves over 6,000 complaints through SCORES

apital markets regulator Sebi has disposed of 6,327 complaints against companies and market intermediaries Uthrough its grievance redressal platform SCORES in October. As many as 15 complaints were pending for more than three months on SCORES as of October-end, involving entities such as Angel One, Groww Invest Tech, Jainam Broking, Computer Age Management Services Ltd, CAMS Investor Services and Lml Ltd, according to Sebi data. The number of pending complaints slipped to 6,490 as of October 31 from 6,685 as of September 30, as 6,132 fresh complaints were received on the platform last month. SCORES is a grievance redressal system launched in June 2011. It is designed to help investors lodge their complaints online with Sebi, pertaining to the securities market, against companies, intermediaries and market infrastructure institutions. Sebi, in April this year, launched a new version of SCORES with additional features.

for retail sale across Delhi- port is being scaled up.

Sensex rebounds 239 pts, Nifty ends 7-day decline

PNS MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex rebounded 239 points while Nifty ended its seven-day losing streak on Tuesday following value-buy-ing in banking, IT and auto shares amid mixed global trends.

Snapping its four days of decline, the 30-share Sensex climbed 239.37 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 77,578.38. The index opened with gains and spurted further 1,112.64 points or 1.43 per cent to hit the day's high of 78,451.65. However, fag-end decline in Reliance Industries restricted the market rally

The NSE Nifty also bounced back after seven straight sessions of losses. The broader 50issue barometer gained 64.70 points or 0.28 per cent to set-tle at 23,518.50. The index jumped over 300 points to hit 23,780 level in the day.

Stock markets were on a decline in the past seven sessions with Nifty tanking 1,030 points or over 4.3 per cent due to FII selling, weaker-thanexpected quarterly results and strengthening US bond yields. Sensex plunged more than 3,000 points to 77,300 levels during the period.

"A strong bounce back due to bottom fishing was shortlived as caution prevails in the market. Investors tend to use every opportunity to book

profit amidst consistent FII selling and weak Q2 earnings. Profit-booking was also seen ahead of the upcoming Maharashtra state election," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. The recent correction in

valuation suggests a potential pause in further price erosion. However, the recovery will depend on an uptick in earnings which is likely to rebound due to the likely spurt in central and state expenditure in H2, Nair added From the 30-share Sensex pack, Mahindra & Mahindra,

Tech Mahindra, HDFC Bank, Titan, Tata Motors, UltraTech Cement, Power Grid and Infosys were the biggest gainers.

In contrast, Reliance Industries, State Bank of India, Bajaj Finserv, Maruti, Tata Steel and Bharti Airtel were among the laggards.

ESIC new member addition rises to 20.58 lakh PNS NEW DELHI

Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) logged over nine per cent on-year rise in new workers enrolment at 20.58 lakh under its ESI Scheme in September, 2024, according to payroll data. Number of new employees registered during the month of September 2023 stood at 18.88 lakh, stated a labour ministry statement. According to the statement, the provisional payroll data of ESIC revealed that 20.58 lakh new employees have been added in September, 2024, registering a 9 per cent rise in net registrations compared to September, 2023. As many 23,043 new establishments have been brought under the social security ambit of the ESI Scheme during September this year, ensuring social security to more workers, it stated.

EV industry seeks GST cuts on batteries, charging services

PNS NEW DELHI

GST on batteries and charging services needs to be cut to keep electric vehicles competitive and boost customer adoption, FICCI Electric Vehicle Committee Chair Sulajja Firodia Motwani said on Tuesday.

Speaking at the sidelines of FICCI National Conference on EVs here, she also stressed enhancing PM E-Drive corpus to support enhanced sales of

EVs. "We would be recommaking a recommendation to the GST Council to rationalise the GST taxation on EVrelated areas,' Motwani said. Elaborating on

the demands, she

tive for the consumers, she stated While welcoming the PM E-

Drive scheme, Motwani said that with rising demand there is a need to review the incentive amounts. "We believe that because the

demand is growing, perhaps the incentive amounts have to be reviewed so that the budget under the PM E-Drive scheme overall is enhanced to ensure that the total number of vehicles sold in the next two years

In October this year, the

setting up of charging infra-

structure and development of

EV manufacturing ecosystem in

India. The scheme shall be

implemented from October 1,

2024, to March 31, 2026.

are eligible for the incentive," she stated.

She further said, "We do believe that PM E-Drive has great potential, and it will go a long way in further accelerating electric mobili

GenX, millennials more open to adopting agentic AI: Report

PNS NEW DELHI

A report has said Generation X and millennials are more receptive to adopting agentic artificial intelligence (AI). Agentic AI refers to

autonomous agents that can independently make decisions and perform tasks, adapting and learning from their experiences without direct human oversight.

It can be deployed in retail and e-commerce for personalised recommendations and inventory management, and in logistics for supply chain management. Agentic AI

also has several use cases in healthcare, finance, telecom, IT, customer service, among

others. Salesforce's State of the AI Connected Customer research said millennials and Gen Xers in India are more willing than Gen Z and Baby Boomers to work with agents for faster, more proactive

service. "The research shows Gen X (58 per cent) and millennials (57 per cent) are more willing than Gen Z (51 per cent) and Baby Boomers (42 per cent) to use AI agents to improve their customer



born between 1946 and 1964, experience by creating more Generation X from 1965 to personalised, or useful content," it said. 1980, Millennials from 1981 Baby Boomers are people to 1996, and Generation Z

from 1997 to 2012. The report further said

consumer trust has reached its lowest level in eight years, making it more essential than ever to build that trust, especially with the advancements in AI.

More than half of the respondents surveyed trust companies less than they did a year ago, and feel companies are reckless with customer data.

"As we enter a new era of intelligent customer engagement, brands that prioritize trust in their AI strategies will be best positioned to

deliver impactful, lasting connections," Arun Parameswaran, SVP & Managing Director, Sales and Distribution, Salesforce India, said.

Transparency is key to building consumer confi-dence in the AI agent era, the report said.

The research is based on a survey of 15,015 consumers across India, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, the UK, and the US.

noted, "Currently the GST on charging services is ty.' still 18 per cent which we would request to bring down to government launched the PM 5 per cent so that charging E-DRIVE Scheme, with an outbecomes more affordable to lay of Rs 10,900 crore for faster the consumers. adoption of electric vehicles,

Secondly, the GST on batteries should also come down to 5 per cent, Motwani, who is also the founder and CEO of Kinetic Green Energy & Power Solutions, added

"While EVs attract a GST of 5 per cent, GST on batteries is 18 per cent. The request is to reduce it to 5 per cent so that when consumers buy replacement batteries, it is more affordable," Motwani said.

Meeting that these two reforms on GST will help a lot in making EVs more competisaid.

Motwani also emphasised that EVs should be part of priority sector lending. "We do believe there's a strong case to allow and to help having affordable financing for EVs that can make it more cost competitive for not just the classes, but for the masses," she



what's brewing?

RITWIK, SHREYA TALK THEIR MUSICAL SAGA BANDISH BANDITS S2

◄ he much-anticipated second season of Bandish Bandits is finally on the horizon and the excitement among fans is palpable. After the soulful success of songs like Ghar Aa Maahi, the series is ready to return, bringing with it more music, drama and unforgettable characters. As the trailer launch approaches, lead actors Ritwik Bhowmik and Shreya Chaudhry look back on how their musical training and character development shaped their performances in this next chapter.

For Ritwik Bhowmik, who portrays the passionate musician Radhe, the journey into Season 2 was not just about revisiting his character but also about deepening his musical roots. "Even after Season 1 ended, I never stopped training," Ritwik shares. "I continued working with our music coach, Akshat, on a daily basis. We began reworking our training program about 3-4 months before filming, even though we weren't sure what the second season or the soundtrack would involve. Akshat and I started our rehearsals long before we even saw the script or stepped onto set." His determination to classical music, which he's been training in for over five years specifi-cally for *Bandish Bandits*, has transformed his approach not only to acting but also to life. "Classical music has been a game-changer for me. It's taught me to stay calm and approach life with more clarity, far beyond just my role.

Ritwik's excitement for Season 2 is evident. especially when reflecting on the evolution of Radhe's character. "I was genuine-

ly impressed with how the character was written for this season," he reveals. "Radhe, like all of us, has evolved over time. With each experience, we grow, and so does he. I can't wait for the audience to see the changes."

For Shreya Chaudhry, who plays the fearless vet vulnerable Tamanna, the preparation for Season 2 was just as transformative. "I remember when Anand called to tell me about Season 2. His first words were, 'Let's start your music lessons' and I knew then that I was in for an unforgettable experience," Shreva recalls. For her, the musical workshops and keyboard sessions were invaluable, but it was the deeper exploration of her character that truly resonated. "Reading the script and seeing how the plot unfolds, with each character getting their own unique arc, was such a special experience for me."

Shreya's portrayal of Tamanna in Season 2 is a powerful journey of growth. "Tamanna's arc this season is a metamorphosis, both for her and for me as an actor. She's become more fearless, but she also has this vulnerability. She's determined, yet starting from scratch in many ways. It's been such a fun and fulfilling process to dive into her world and live through her evolution."

The series, produced by Amritpal Singh Bindra and directed by Anand Tiwari, promises to be as captivating as ever. Along with the return of the talented original cast, including Ritwik, Shreya, Sheeba Chaddha, Atul Kulkarni, Rajesh Tailang and Kunaal Roy Kapur, the second season will introduce new faces, including Divya Dutta, Rohan Gurbaxani, Yashaswini Dayama, Aaliyah Qureshi and Saurabh Nayyar, who will play pivotal roles.

'Shikha in Season 2 takes challenges to another level'

hweta Tripathi, known for her versatile perfor-Smances across acclaimed projects like Mirzapur, Masaan and Yeh Kaali Kaali Aankhein, is once again captivating audiences in the highly anticipated second season of *Yeh Kaali Kaali Aankhein*. As she steps back into the shoes of Shikha, a character that stands in stark contrast to her own personality, Shweta opens up about her approach to acting and why she seeks out roles that challenge her as an artist.

In a conversation, Shweta explained her unique method of selecting roles. "I deliberately choose characters that are unlike me in real life. I find joy in exploring personalities that are different from my own and distinct from each other. I thrive on the intensity of high-drama roles, where the stakes are high and every character's journey has a significant impact," she shared. This approach, she believes, allows her to grow as an actor and keeps her performances fresh and diverse. Shweta's portrayal of Shikha in Yeh Kaali Kaali Aankhein is a prime example of her commitment to bringing challenging roles to life. "Shikha is a very different person from me and I relish the opportunity to step into her world. It's always a challenge to take on a character who doesn't align with my own traits, and Shikha in Season 2 takes that challenge to another level," Shweta said.

The new season promises to delve deeper into Shikha's emotional landscape, with love and heartbreak at the center of her journey. "The question the show poses is, 'How far would you go for love?' That's exactly what Shikha grapples with this season. It's an intense journey that I think audiences will find both relatable



and haunting," Shweta explained. This season, Shikha's character evolves, showing a more vulnerable side while also revealing her strength and determination. "It's an exciting balance to bring to life. She's fierce, but she's also deeply vulnerable. Finding that equilibrium has been a rewarding experience for me."

As the story unfolds, Shikha's emotional turmoil takes center stage. "In Season 2, Shikha experiences a devastating heartbreak when the love of her life, Vikrant, marries Purva. This shatters her world and leaves her feeling lost and hopeless. Although she is naturally fearful and avoids confrontation, her love for Vikrant forces her to take action," Shweta revealed. As the season progresses, viewers will see Shikha shift from passivity to an empowered state, as she begins to fight for her love.

'This season explores the complexities of love. We often think of it as a romantic or idealised feeling, but here, we see how love can also drive a person to their limits. Shikha's journey shows how love can empower you, but it can also consume you. It's a beautiful yet terrifying emotion," Shweta reflects.

For Shweta, playing a character driven by pure passion rather than revenge or anger was a refreshing change. "I've played roles in the past that involved anger, revenge and resilience, but this character has shown me how love can transform you."

Abhishek Bachchan on asking for help, inspired by daughter Aaradhya!

shows a

person's

A bhishek Bachchan, known for his versatility on screen, recently opened up about a deeply personal lesson that resonates with his upcoming role in I Want to Talk. The actor revealed how a simple moment with his daughter, Aaradhya, gave him a profound insight into the resilience of his character, Arjun Singh, in the film.



commitment to carrying on and facing challenges head-on. This concept deeply moved Abhishek, who reflected, "Asking for help means you are not giving up. You are ready to fight through whatever comes your way. I will do whatever it takes to carry on."

Abhishek found this lesson to be at the heart of his portrayal of Arjun Singh. In the film, Arjun is a man battling significant personal struggles, yet he refuses to surrender. "Arjun is not afraid to ask for help, he's not afraid to seek treatment, and most importantly, he doesn't give up," Abhishek explained. He highlighted the strength of his character, even when faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. "It's easy for someone to reach a point where they feel completely defeated and want to walk away, but Arjun is someone who refuses to do that. The fact that he keeps going, despite everything he's been through, makes him incredibly courageous. I Want to Talk. directed by Shooiit Sircar. delves into themes of resilience and the human spirit. Abhishek's character, Arjun, finds strength not just in himself but also in his willingness to ask for help, something that Abhishek believes is central to the message of the film. Set for release on November 22, 2024, I Want to Talk also stars Johnny Lever and Ahilya Bamroo and is produced by Ronnie Lahiri and Shoojit Sircar under Rising Sun Films.



FEASES IDENT OF NEX1 JAMES BOND 👖 t the 15th annual Governors Awards

Aheld at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, Daniel Craig playfully teased the identity of his successor as the legendary James Bond. During his speech to introduce Bond producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G Wilson, Craig shared a light-

hearted moment with the audience. "If you came here to find out who the next James Bond is, don't look at me, but he might be in the room," Craig said with a grin. "Maybe I'm joking, maybe I'm not," he added, sparking excitement and curiosity among fans and attendees alike.

Craig, who portrayed the British spy in Casino Royale (2006), Quantum of Solace (2008), Skyfall (2012), Spectre (2015), and No *Time to Die (2021),* had previously expressed that he had no strong opinion on who should play the next Bond. His comments at the Governors Awards were his first public remarks on the highly anticipated casting decision since his departure from the role. As speculation around the casting continues, actor Colman Domingo added a humorous twist by pitching himself for the role, saying, "I know there's a list of phenomenal, handsome, athletic, suave and debonair actors vying to be the next James Bond. Now, if you're thinking of me, I don't know what to tell you: Bond or Bond villain? You decide... I'll leave my headshots on your table. The conversation surrounding the next James Bond continues to dominate headlines as fans eagerly await the producers' big decision on who will take on the iconic role next.

FUN

How Randeep Hooda's support helped Lin land her dream role?

in Laishram, the model, actor and entrepreneur, recently tied the knot with actor Randeep Hooda on November 29, 2023, in an intimate ceremony. However, amidst the wedding festivities, Lin was also immersed in her latest professional endeavor: her role in the upcoming film Bun Tikki. Produced by the renowned designer-turned-producer Manish Malhotra, this film marks a significant shift in Laishram's acting career, as she steps into her first-ever negative role!

In a conversation about her experience working on Bun Tikki, Lin shared, "Manish would often say, 'I can't believe you're doing this while planning your wedding!' The support from him and the entire team was incredible." While the film's release date is still under wraps, Laishram is certain that this project will be a major milestone in her career. "It's definitely one I feel very proud of," she says. Balancing her wedding and professional commitments, Laishram juggled filming *Bun Tikki* while shuttling between Mumbai and Delhi. Despite the hectic schedule, she managed to make it work, with Randeep by her side offering unwavering support. "As they say, when the universe gives you opportunities, it does so in abundance," Lin reflects. "I didn't want to let this chance slip by, especially since work has been sporadic for me in the industry. Randeep encouraged me, telling me, 'You can do anything, be anything.' That encouragement has been truly empowering." Lin made her Hindi film debut in 2007 with Om Shanti

Om and was recently seen in the 2023 film Jaane Jaan, alongside Kareena Kapoor Khan. Now, with Bun Tikki, she's all set to take on a completely new challenge that promises to showcase her versatility as an actor.

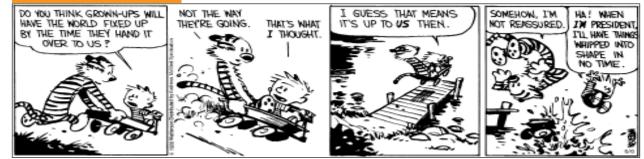
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HOT POG'S A PRETTY AMAZING POGI LOOKI HE WANTS TO PLAY WITH THE BALL!





CALVIN AND HOBBES



GARFIELD







THE NEXT DAY



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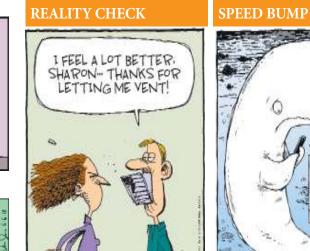
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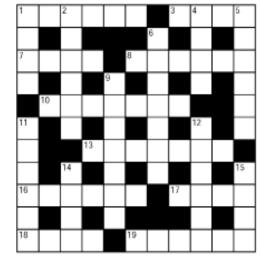
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- 3 Twirl around
- 7 Very impolite
- 8 A fire-breathing monster 10 A repairer of teeth
- 13 The head of an empire
- 16 Look very carefully for
- something 17 Jealousy
- 18 Moist
- 19 Centre

DOWN

- 1 A wriggly creature living
- in soil
- 2 Said "yes" with the head 4 These hold clothes on a line



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6 A painter uses these

9 A body organ

someone

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11 Touched lips with

12 Connected together

15 A rubber cover for a

SOLUTION

14 Peaceful and still

Vijayawada

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Wednesday November 20, 2024

Master flutist redefining Indian classical music

AARTI SREENATH aarti.sreenath9@gmail.com

andit Ronu Majumdar, often celebrated as the "Flute Wizard" or the "Flute King," has cemented his place as a legend in the world of music, enchanting audiences across continents with the soulful magic of his bansuri. From performing at prestigious global venues to setting remarkable world records, his journey is a symphony of passion, humility and an unwavering spiritual connection to his art. In a candid conversation with *The Pioneer*, the maestro shared the milestones of his life—his early influences, collaborations with music legends and the profound philosophy that has shaped his career. His tryst with music began at the

His tryst with music began at the tender age of six, a time when most children are merely discovering the world around them. "Music was always my passion," he reminisces with a smile. "At first, I never thought I'd pursue it full-time. My first inspiration was my father, followed by my guru, Pandit Ravi Shankar."

It was under the guidance of these towering figures that his love for the *bansuri* blossomed. By the 1970s, music had become the axis around which his world revolved, eclipsing all other pursuits. "I never imagined doing anything else. Music became my entire world," he reflects.

Throughout his illustrious career, he has shared the stage with some of the greatest names in music, spanning Indian classical, Bollywood and even global icons. Among his most cherished collaborations are those with Pandit Ravi Shankar, Asha Bhosle, RD Burman and George Harrison of the *Beatles*!

One of his fondest memories

involves working with George Harrison during the recording of *Chants of India.* "I was in his house in Britain, expecting someone as famous as George Harrison to exude grandeur," he shares. Instead, what he encountered was humility and warmth. Harrison's simplicity left an indelible mark on Majumdar. "He was a man who balanced his fame with an extraordinary sense of humanity. His acts of kindness, like donating to the underprivileged, taught me lessons that extended far beyond music," he recalls. His achievements are as

vast as his repertoire. A Grammy nomination for his album Tabula Rasa, the prestigious Sangeet Natak Akademi Award and a Guinness World Record for conducting 5,378 flutists stand as shining milestones in his career. "These accolades gave me confidence and reminded me of the responsibility I carry as an artist," he shares.

Among these, the Guinness record holds a special place in his heart. Organised under the guidance of Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the event brought together flutists from around the globe. "We initially didn't think we'd cross 5,000 participants. But on the day of the concert, more and more musicians joined until we hit 5,378. It was a surreal moment, a true celebration of the flute," he says with pride. His work in Bollywood has also PEOPLE OFTEN TELL ME THAT I'M THE ONLY FLUTE PLAYER WHO HAS SEAMLESSLY TRAVERSED BOLLYWOOD, HOLLYWOOD AND INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC. MANY TELL ME THEY FEEL A SPIRITUAL CONNECTION DURING MY PERFORMANCES. I'M ALIVE BECAUSE OF THE FLUTE.

ELL ME THAT UTE PLAYER SEAMLESSLY HOLLYWOOD

with the notes," he explains to resonate with the notes," he explains. His concerts are an invitation to introspection, particularly during the *aalap* segment, where the absence of percussion creates a meditative atmosphere. "I often encourage audiences to close their eyes and let the music take them on a journey within. Many tell me they feel a spiritual connection during my performances," he reveals.

been legendary, particularly his collaborations with RD Burman. "People often

Bollywood, Hollywood and Indian clas-

tell me that I'm the only flute player

who has seamlessly traversed

He has also been a pioneer in fusion music, blending Hindustani classical with Western styles. *Tabula Rasa*, recorded in a church in Santa Barbara, is a shining example of this endeavour. Collaborating with banjo maestro Béla Fleck, he created *Radha Krishna Bela*, a nicco incrined bu the

Radha Krishna Bela, a piece inspired by the divine love story of Radha and Krishna.

With the gentle touch of his fingers on the bansuri, Pandit Ronu Majumdar weaves a sonic tapestry that transcends borders and generations. Celebrated as the 'Flute Wizard' or 'Flute King,' this master flutist has redefined Indian classical music, enchanting audiences worldwide with his soul-stirring renditions. From prestigious global stages to record-breaking feats, Majumdar's five-decade journey is a testament to passion, humility and an unwavering spiritual connection to his craft

"Explaining such a deeply spiritual concept to Béla and watching him interpret it through his instrument was an incredible experience," he recalls.

As Indian classical music evolves in an era of technology and global collaborations, he remains a staunch advocate of preserving its purity. "Traditional music must always be performed in its traditional form," he asserts. While he embraces fusion as a creative outlet, he ensures that it remains distinct from his classical performances. "Both genres deserve respect and understanding," he emphasises.

To him, the key to success lies in mastery. "Focus on your craft, not on success. If you excel at what you do, success will follow naturally," he advises aspiring musicians.

For him, the flute is far more than an instrument; it is his spiritual lifeline. "I'm alive because of the flute. It gives me peace before I share that peace with the world," he says. Every note he plays carries a sense of divine purpose. "When I strike the perfect pitch, I feel the presence of the Almighty," he shares with reverence.

Even after nearly five decades in music, for him, shows no signs of slowing down. His upcoming album with Grammy-winner Ricky Kej promises to be another milestone in his career! "We've worked on two singles before, but this time, we're creating a full album with seven to eight tracks," he reveals. Their previous collaboration, a reimagining of the classic *Babul Mora*, beautifully blended tradition with modernity.

tion with modernity. Pandit Ronu Majumdar's story resonates like the notes of a *raga*, unfolding with grace and depth. His flute is not just an instrument but a sacred bridge—connecting the earthly to the divine, the artist's soul to the hearts of his audience.

'Situationship is surefire way to end badly,' fill in first-time writer Harshita Gupta



SHIKHA DUGGAL shikhaduggalwork@gmail.com

th every stroke of her pen, Harshita poured out the shards of her shattered heart, transforming the agony of lost love into a cathartic rpiece! The pa became a canvas of emotions, a vibrant tapestry woven from threads of sorrow and acceptance. As words flowed onto paper, the weight of heartbreak slowly lifted, replaced by a sense of purpose and healing. And when the final sentence was penned, she smiled, knowing that her heart, though broken, had found a way to heal-and perhaps, in the process, help his heal too as she prepared to tie the knot with someone else. While travelling, Harshita Gupta, the digital sensation who has gained popularity for her relatable storytelling and sense of humour, was with us for an exclusive interview, but there's a special purpose for it! Well, Harshita, who was recently listed among Forbes India's Top 10 Digital Stars of 2024, has made her literary debut with the release of Unloved: The Art of Moving On. Yes, we definitely recall seeing a book with an amazing cover in Hyderabad as well! "I experienced two distinct cultural nuances while writing this book: I discussed therapy because it is still taboo in India. I have purposefully included a page devoted to therapist therapy after each chapter. I want to use my mental health issues to educate people about the differences between anxiety and panic attacks. Second, this book will help you end relationships without having to tell your parents or cope with social taboos," Harshita sees a uniquely Indian perspective on grief and recovery. Through a distinctively Indian vision that strikes a deep chord with her audience, *Unloved* takes readers on a journey of loss, healing and selfdiscovery. Anyone negotiating the intricacies of relationships should read Harshita's book since her voice offers new insights on personal development! "I was writing something really different from my typical Instagram posts. Do I only have a sense of humour on social media? I am well-known for my chatty chatter! However, I wanted to show the world that I am more than just a comedian with this book. As I was writing this book, I realised how vulnerable we all are. Three years ago, the Penguin editor who was following me was surprised to learn that she knew the real Harshita after reading what I had written! She was shocked by what she saw, particularly when I pleaded with a man to stay in my life. My reality is not social media.' More details about her new book are revealed by the versatile artiste: "The best character development occurs during heartbreaks, when we cease giving way to our feelings. We make an effort to avoid those due to the lack of acceptability. I have therefore made an effort to educate the public on how to deal with heartbreak. Let's talk about loving oneself!

Heartbreak is followed by infidelity. Since I've experienced all of this, I could also write about confidence. I had days when I was unable to take rejection. I simply don't care about people anymore; I don't dislike them and I don't wish my ex any good or bad things because I don't want to give him any. I don't really think about him. Indifference, not hatred, is the antithesis of love!"

According to one of the stories she told us,

HIDDEN CULPRITS: Everyday habits that lead to kidney and bladder stones

idney and bladder stones are crystalline deposits that form in the urinary tract, causing significant discomfort and health complications. These stones often result from a combination of genetic predisposition, dietary factors, and lifestyle habits.

PHYSIOLOGY OF STONE FORMATION

Kidney and bladder stones develop when urine becomes supersaturated with minerals like calcium, oxalate, or uric acid. This creates an environment where crystals can precipitate and grow. Protective factors, such as citrate, which inhibit crystal aggregation, may be deficient in individuals.

4. LOW CALCIUM DIETS

Paradoxically, avoiding calcium to prevent stones can increase risk. Dietary calcium deficiency leads to greater oxalate absorption, contributing to stone formation. The key is consuming calcium in moderation from dairy or fortified foods.

5. SEDENTARY LIFESTYLE

th Physical inactivity contributes to calci-

Forbes India's Top 10 internet star and well-known sensation Harshita Gupta has turned her tragedy into a moving story of self-discovery and healing. She takes readers on a very intimate journey of love, grief and resiliency in her debut book, *Unloved: The Art of Moving On.* The book, which was written during her own life-changing time, presents a distinctively Indian viewpoint on grief and healing! "Because of the circumstances that are being created, people in my generation are giving up on love. Can you top the time I gave up on love? It's the most depressing thing to witness. Love is, as we say, the most exquisite emotion in the world. Rekindling love despite a broken heart is a sign of strength rather than weakness. I want people to love who they are. After a breakup, self-esteem is crucial! I dislike it when people look to their partners for approval."

We hear from the other end, which leads to some deeper discussions: "It became the national bestseller, which is a big professional success for me. Who could have imagined this? Particularly when it wasn't even available for purchase. I wanted individuals to know that they are no longer alone during this heartbreak journey by writing this book. I was getting thank-you emails in the Instagram generation. Now beat that. Haha, the Unloved is loved." All about empowerment and self-love, the former radio jockey continues, "I recall writing a chapter titled 'Modern Dating,' which discussed how millennials, particularly those living in large cities, have no other option but to give in to the modern dating scene. A situationship is a surefire way to end badly! What the hell are you doing by voluntarily accepting uncertainty? Are we not talking about red and green flags a lot these days? Unloving is what we aren't being taught! My book serves as a plan for leaving your failing romantic relationship with dignity, respect and grace. Writing about heartbreak may be extremely difficult and intimate. Did she find any particular chapters especially difficult to write? The comedy content creator shares her insights on navigating the same. "While writing the book, I was getting ready for my wedding. In the morning, I had to decide what I would wear to my wedding and by nightfall, I was back to finishing this book. I found this to be difficult! As I continued to write, I had to go over a lot of memories again, which was really hard for me (she pauses and continues the interview). Naturally, my wedding is meant to be a really joyous occasion, but I had to balance conflicting expectations. I found the book's first three chapters to be the most challenging!" Finally, we listen to her say, "I am a pretty strong individual who doesn't constantly cry about my circumstances. I always look for the good! Although it was the worst decision I made in 2009, moving to Bombay taught me self-satisfaction and value for money. During those days, I reached my lowest point as a professional! I've cited myself as referring to the "other woman" quite openly in the book. To

come out of this, I required a lot of therapy.

EVERYDAY HABITS THAT CON-TRIBUTE TO STONE FORMATION

1. INSUFFICIENT HYDRATION

Dehydration is one of the most significant risk factors for stone formation. Inadequate water intake concentrates urine, increasing the likelihood of mineral crystallization. A habit of drinking less than the recommended 2-3 liters of water daily can lead to this condition. Tea, coffee, and sugary sodas, often consumed in place of water, exacerbate the issue due to their diuretic and oxalate-rich properties.

2. EXCESSIVE SALT INTAKE

High dietary sodium levels promote calcium excretion into the urine, a primary component of calcium-based stones. Common culprits include processed foods, salty snacks, and canned goods. A diet persistently high in sodium overwhelms the kidney's ability to reabsorb calcium, leaving it to combine with oxalate or phosphate to form stones.

3. HIGH OXALATE FOODS

Spinach, nuts, and chocolate are rich in oxalates, compounds that bind with calcium to form stones. While these foods are nutritious, excessive consumption, especially without adequate calcium intake, raises stone risk. Calcium binds with oxalate in the gut to reduce absorption, underscoring the importance of a balanced diet. um loss from bones, increasing urinary calcium levels. Prolonged immobility or a desk-bound lifestyle creates an ideal environment for stone formation.

6. EXCESSIVE ANIMAL PROTEIN

Diets high in animal protein, such as red meat, eggs, and fish, can acidify urine, reducing citrate levels. Citrate binds with calcium, preventing stone formation. High protein intake also increases uric acid excretion, a common component of stones.

7. IRREGULAR URINATION

Holding urine for extended periods can concentrate minerals in the bladder, facilitating stone formation. Regular urination flushes out potential stone-forming substances, reducing risk.

Preventive measures

Prevention is better than cure. Drinking adequate water, maintaining a balanced diet with moderate calcium and low sodium, and adopting an active lifestyle can significantly reduce stone risk. Regular health check-ups and dietary adjustments tailored to individual metabolic profiles are essential for those with a history of stones.

Kidney and bladder stones are often preventable. Identifying and modifying hidden habits, such as dehydration, high sodium intake, or a sedentary lifestyle, can go a long way in promoting urinary health. By making small but significant changes to daily routines, individuals can reduce the risk of this painful and recurrent condition.

(The author Dr. Kinjal Banerjee, is a Consultant - Renal Transplant, Urology, Sarvodaya Hospital.)



sports 11



Australia have to leave Kohli alone, hope he doesn't bring the intensity: Shane Watson

PTI PERTH

ormer all-rounder Shane Watson has advised the Australian team to avoid getting into confrontations with Virat Kohli in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy as he feels the intensity the celebrated Indian batter derives from provocations brings the best out of him.

Going through a lean run of form, Kohli has enjoyed great success in Australia in the past and will look to regain his touch in the five-match

regain his touch in the five-match Test series, which gets underway on Friday at the Optus Stadium here. Provoking the Indian batting mainstay has often proved to be counterproductive for the Australians, and Watson has Watson has experienced it himself.

"The one thing that I know of Virat is... Because the fire burns so brightly and deep inside him, the intensity he brings to every ball that he is engaged in a game has been superhuman," Watson was quoted as saying on the Willow Talk podcast. "But, there have been in recent times where moments in this career that fire has started to go out because it is just so hard to maintain that intensity in every moment he is involved in a game.

"And, that is where Australia have to leave him alone and hope he doesn't bring the intensity -- nine out of 10 intensity -- to every ball."

Kohli has played 13 Tests in



Australia since 2011, amassing 1,352 runs at an average of 54.08, including six centuries and four fifties, with a top score of 169. While this would be his fifth tour

Down Under in the longest format, Kohli's best outing came during the

2014-15 series when he aggregated 692 runs in four Tests at an average of 86.50, including four hundreds and a half-century. These remarkable numbers are not lost on Watson. "We have seen that when he

and above for everything in the middle. Every ball he is up for every single moment.

"You can see the fierce intensity that he brings, and if he gets that, then it shuts everything else out. That is has had success in Australia, he is up when he is at his absolute best.

version of Virat. So from an Australian perspective, let's hope we get to see that version of him," Watson said. Kohli's performance in the red-ball format this year has been below par, managing just 250 runs in six Tests at an average of 22.72.

'Smith wasn't actually batting at his best as an opener'

When the discussion turned to Australian batting, Watson backed Steve Smith to bring the very best of him against the formidable Indian bowling attack.

Smith will be back at his usual number four slot after struggling as opener following the retirement of David Warner.

"Steve wanted to open. He was super keen to take up a new challenge. But, one thing with that opportunity he had was he wasn't actually batting at his best at that time," Watson noted. his best at that time, Watson noted. "So, he got an opportunity to open, and Steve Smith at his very best would have made the most out of it because he just loves scoring runs, whether it is opening or at No. 4. You could see it a few times he got out when he was opening – his game out when he was opening – his game and his technique was a little bit off." For the marquee series against fierce rivals India, the Australian selectors have picked 25-year-old uncapped

Nathan McSweeney to open the innings alongside Usman Khawaja.



I've got nothing but respect for Virat, he's a champion: Lyon

PTI 📕 PERTH

Virat Kohli has been struggling for form of late but veteran Australia spinner has nothing but respect for the Indian super star, who he says is a champion you can not write off.

Kohli has been enduring a lean patch over the past few months. In his last 60 Test innings, he has managed just two centuries and 11 half-centuries.

This year, he has averaged only 22.72 across six Tests, and in the three games against New Zealand, he could manage only 93 runs.

But Lyon remains wary of what Kohli could do in the five-match Test series beginning here on Friday. "Overall, look at his record. You

don't write off champions. I've got nothing but respect for Virat," Lyon was quoted as saying by cricket.Com.Au. "I want to get him out, there's

no point in hiding behind that, but it's challenging. It's been pretty amazing competing against him for so many times. "Him and Smithy (Steve Smith) are probably the best two batters in our last era of this last decade," said the 36-year-old off-spinner with 530 wickets

from 129 Tests. Lyon is one of the four members of the current squad who were part of Australia's last successful Test series against India in 2014-15.

India have won the last two series in Australia but they have come here after a shock 0-3 loss at home against New Zealand. Lyon doesn't believe that India are vulnerable this time around. "They're dangerous all the time. They're a side full of superstars. They've got so much experience, but talented youth as well and you can never write off that," said Lyon, who took 22 wickets when Australia toured India in 2023.



Kane believes 2026 World Cup

Pant rejects Gavaskar's assessment, says did not leave DC due to disagreement over retention fee

PTI NEW DELHI

Rishabh Pant on Tuesday rejected the Gavaskar's assessment that the India wicketkeeper-batter left Delhi Capitals due to disagreement over his retention fee ahead of the mega auction of the Indian

Premier League. Pant, who captained Delhi Capitals last year after making a comeback from a horrific car accident, is among the marquee players who were not retained but the fourth international states of the sta by their franchises.

He is expected to be one of the most sought-after players when the auction takes place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia on November 24 and 25.

"My retention wasn't about the money for sure that I can say," Pant wrote on X. responding to a broadcaster video Savaskar talking about the showing (



Capitals to rope in Pant once again, he also wondered if there was a disagreement over the fee between the franchise and the player. The auction dynamics



would certainly want Rishabh Pant back in the squad," Gavaskar told Star Sports. "Sometimes, when a player is to be retained, there is talk between the franchise and the player and franchise

have been retained by the franchise, they've gone for more than say, what the No 1 retention fee deduction would be. Clearly I think, maybe there was some disagreement over there," he said. Gavaskar said Delhi Capitals will have

to look for a new captain as well if Pant is not there in the roster.

"My feeling is that Delhi would definitely want Pant back because they need a captain as well. If Rishabh Pant is not in their squad then they have to look for a new captain. My feeling is (that) Delhi would definitely go for Rishabh Pant," he said.

Pant, along with other former captains Shreyas Iyer (Kolkata Knight Riders) and KL Rahul (Lucknow Super Giants), is listed at a base price of Rs 2 crore each

among marquee Indian players. Pant has always been a part of the Delhi franchise since his IPL debut in 2016, auction dynamics. accord will go. But what I feel is that Delhi "As you can see, some of the players who century and 18 fifties in 111 matches. scoring 3,284 runs at 35.31 with one

won't be his England swansong

AP LONDON

Captain Harry Kane believes the 2026 World Kane Cup will not be his last appearance for England.

There is increasing scrutiny about the 31-year-old Kane's future, even though he extended his all-time England scoring record to 69 goals in 103 appearances as Ireland was beaten 5-0 on Sunday at Wembley Stadium.

The Bayern Munich striker was surprisingly omitted from the 3-0 win against Greece last Thursday.

A statue and mural of Kane were unveiled on Monday at the east London home of his former youth team Ridgeway Rovers. The British Press Association asked him if the 2026 World Cup is his last "It's pretty special to be identity on the way we play shot at glory for England. "I honest, these are things I tactically.

don't think so," he said. "I think there's a perception when you get to your 30s that you're coming to an end, but for me I'm performing at the highest level I've ever performed and feel as good as I've ever felt, so it's about taking in the moment.

"I don't like to look too far ahead, and in my career I never have.

"The World Cup (in the U.S., Mexico and Canada) is going to be exciting. In America it will be an incredible occasion

and ultimately it's about trying to win that, looking at where you are, where to improve and it will be no different in a couple of years." Kane started playing at Ridgeway Rovers at age five, and liked his statue.

didn't think of when I was young. It all began here and it was the building blocks of my career. This is a great inspiration for the boys and girls who play." Asked what it will take for him to have a statue outside Wembley, alongside Bobby Moore, England's 1966 World

Cup-winning captain, Kane said, "I think we need to win a

major tournament. "We've come close on a couple of occasions and the next step is for me and the other boys to win.

We have a new coach coming in March (Thomas Tuchel). He'll be great for us, he has vast experience in the big competitions, he'll bring a great energy to the team and he'll put his own stamp and

India's confidence 'damaged' but Australia won't underestimate visitors: Labuschagne

PTI 📕 PERTH

 $A^{\rm shattering \ defeat \ to \ New}_{\rm Zealand \ on \ home \ soil}$ would have caused a "little bit of damage" to India's confidence but Australia will not make the mistake of underestimating the visitors, said charismatic batter Marnus Labuschagne here on Tuesday. The world No. 2 India are heading into the five-Test Border-Gavaskar series. starting here on Friday, following their whitewash at home, which ended their 12year unbeaten run in their own backvard.

Australia's middle-order Labuschagne mainstay believes the loss to the Kiwis would have dented India's confidence.

"It's really hard to judge. They

played in completely different conditions — spinning conditions — but having India conditions come here off the back of a loss at home is something that's never happened before (in my career)," Labuschagne told the media.

"I think that is a good thing in terms of... They are probably a little bit lower on confidence, not coming off a Test victory, losing to New Zealand 3-0. I think that's going to do a little bit of damage to their

confidence." Labuschagne However, insisted that Australia, who have lost each of their last four series to India both home and away, will have to guard against complacency. "They're a quality line-up and they're one of the best teams in the world. So you can never

Australia tour in 2020-21 to win 2-1, despite the absence of regular skipper Virat Kohli and injuries to several other

frontline players along the way.



underestimate a team like that," he said.

"That's what happened in 2021 — the likes of (T) India staged an incredible comeback on their last Natarajan played, Natarajan piayeu, (Mohammad) Siraj got his first crack in Australia, Washington Sundar played," Labuschagne recalled. "They had all these guys that

those couple of games (in the 2020-21 series) - so there were new faces around," he added.

With India set to take the field without regular captain Rohit Sharma and No. 3 batter Gill in the first Test at the Optus Stadium here, Labuschagne said India have enough talent in their ranks to meet all challenges.

"They're a quality line-up and they've showed that over a period of time. You can't ever underestimate the depth of

Indian cricket," he said. "Anyone that's gets the opportunity to play for India have had to do a lot of hard work and find their way into that side... To actually play for a team like that, you have to be were probably a little bit new a very good player," — Shubman (Gill) played Labuschagne added.

Shastri confident 'world class' Jaiswal will return from Australia as a better batter

PTI PERTH

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri is confident that the "already world class" Yashasvi Jaiswal will return from the Australian tour a significantly improved batter, no matter the challenges he

encounters along the way. Shastri said if Jaiswal can adapt to the challenging Perth pitch, known for its lively bounce, the young opener will play with freedom later on in the series. "I think he'll be a better player when he leaves Australian shores. Already he's world class," Shastri said at a Fox Cricket event.

'You saw what he did against England (and) just the freedom with which he plays. "I think once he adapts to these

conditions – it's not going to be easy to adjust in Perth with

talented you are. You have got to be prepared to do the hard

yards. "But if he can see that phase through, I think he'll entertain. He will love these pitches. He's someone who score pretty freely as well."

Hailed as one of Indian cricket's brightest young talents, the 21-year-old made a dazzling start to his Test career. He cemented his spot in the team with a stunning series performance against England earlier this year.

"He's come up the hard way, so you can see that hunger and passion, not just in his eyes, but when he's out there in the middle, fielding in the slips. He wants to be involved in the

game." Having led India to two series victories in Australia, Shastri knows firsthand that defeating that bounce, no matter how the Aussies on their home turf



is no easy feat. "It's going to be tough," Shastri

said. "As I found out on my three has to come to the park very early if you want to catch

Australia on the wrong foot. "You don't want to give an inch. I think that is the only way. There is no other way you you're not going to get an inch. "You have got to understand very early what to expect from the media as well, because they'll be behind the Australian team. "You mellow with age, don't you? But I think at the start of the Test series, you might just see (Kohli) firing again.He needs to be, I'd like to see him (Here that) again," Shastri was

get out there and play as hard as it gets be ready for some tough cricket and perform, the media will respect you." 'You will see Kohli firing in the start of the series'

Virat Kohli has been enduring

a lean patch across all formats in recent months, with just two centuries and 11 half-centuries

in his last 60 Test innings. tours here as a coach, you have However, despite these to be at your best. Your A game struggles, Kohli boasts a remarkable record in Australia.

Having toured Down Under four times, the right-hander averages an impressive 54.0, and Shastri has once again can play. You've got to, or backed the veteran batter to you're not going to get an inch. excel in the upcoming series. excel in the upcoming series.

(like that) again," Shastri was quoted as saying by saying news.Com.Au.

"In the face, that's Kohli. Come Australia, he'll get his juices going. It's (about) how he starts off, and for Australia, it's with Steve Smith."



tollywood

Vishwak Sen sets record straight on Mechanic Rocky and Gangs of Godavari!

SURESH KAVIRAYANI sureshkavirayani@gmail.com

oung actor Vishwak Sen is coming up with another film, Mechanic *Rocky* and this is his third film this year. Earlier his films Gangs of Godavari and Gaami were released. The film is releasing on November 22. "The story is based on some real incidents and we have taken a burning point that we are discussing from the last four to five years," said Vishwak Sen about the film.

The actor said he was a bit scared when he did this film. "As I said, it's a topical point and if anyone gets the same thought and makes a film on the same subject, that's why I'm scared. But luckily no one got the idea," he said. He added that he did this film simultaneously along with Gangs of Godavari.

"I had to grow a moustache for Gangs of Godavari, then I had to get rid of it for Mechanic Rocky. I must therefore wait a while for the first movie when I work on this one," said Vishwak Sen about doing it simultaneously. "The accent is also completely different for these two films. For this one it is the Telangana accent; for *Gangs of Godavari* it was the Godavari accent, so I had to adjust," he added.

The actor said that it is not a big thing. "The first two hours may be difficult; after that, I get into the character and can adjust," said Vishwak Sen.

Vishwak Sen earlier turned down the director

for a few other films! In response to the question, Mechanic Rocky, did he dawdle here and there? 'No, I didn't and moreover, director Ravi Teja didn't give me a chance as he completely took over the project," said Vishwak. The earlier film Gangs of Godavari didn't do well because it is reported that Vishwak Sen was involved in the direction for it. "It is not true; I didn't do anything in that direction. There are many bigwigs in that project, like China Babu (producer), Vamsi Anna (Suryadevara Naga Vamsi) and Chaitanya (director). So when these people are around, I can't be involved in the direction department," said Vishwak Sen.

The actor said that they all met and decided with a majority. "We are a group of five or six people that include the director, me, the producer, editor and the cinematographer discuss and share our ideas and then go with the majority," said Vishwak Sen. Asked about the actor sometimes talking like a warning at the public meet-ing of his films, he said 'no.' "Generally I speak loudly, because when I am on stage, I can't hear my voice," he said.

A few days back, at the pre-release function of Mechanic Rocky, Vishwak Sen said, 'Veepulu Paguluthayi' (if anyone writes personal.) "It's not a vulgar word; those are common words used in most of the houses," said the actor. He also pointed out a person at the same function. "No, I didn't point out the regular and established organisations or people. I pointed out a few people who don't want to show their face but write something wrong," clarified the actor.

anything that he wanted to be in the news. 'Now, the media has become huge and whatever I talk about goes viral. But I never wanted to be in the controversy and I know that controversies never help my film business. I was completely silent about Gaami and it collected nearly Rs 10 crores," he said. He added that everyone has frustration, happiness and other emotions in them. "Sometimes the emotions come out," he said. He added that he doesn't know how to talk diplomatically. "I don't know diplomacy and from the beginning I talk about whatever comes to

For another question, he said he didn't say

my mind," he said. The actor said this film is going to have premiere shows in main cities. "I just watched the film and wanted to screen the premiere on November 21," he said. In his upcoming projects, he said there are four films hitting the screens next year. *Laila* completed 60 percent and a film with Anudeep will start soon and also another film with Sudhakar.

VISHWAK SEN. THE **TALENTED ACTOR BEHIND** *GANGS OF* **GODAVARI** AND **GAAMI, IS BACK WITH MECHANIC ROCKY AND** THIS TIME, HE'S **SPEAKING HIS MIND. IN** A CANDID INTERVIEW. **HE DISCUSSES MECHANIC ROCKY. DISPELS RUMOURS AND SHARES HIS VISION FOR HIS UPCOMING PROJECTS!**

Pushpa 2 makers' overly confident?

the sequel to the film featuring Allu Arjun and director Sukumar, Pushpa 2, is scheduled to release on December 5. The makers recently organised a successful promotional event in Patna, leading them to become overly confident about the success of the film, according to the source. Currently in the industry, there are rumours that the film producers have already prepared promotional materials for the first and second day earnings before the film's release. The producers have already prepared promotional boards worth Rs 300 crore to be distributed on the

movie's premiere day.

The film has not been released yet, but the producers are already predicting the first day, second day and weekday's earnings, displaying their excessive confidence, according to a producer, on the condition of anonymity.

"If the film has good content, it automatically collects money; there is hype for this film; promote it carefully and you have to wait till the release of the film," said the producer.

According to a source, the creators invested a significant amount of funds in Pushpa 2 since the production schedule lasts for an extended period and involves hundreds of working days. "For a big star like Allu Arjun, the shooting expenses for

a day are going to be Rs 1 crore and you can imagine how many days they worked for this film," said a source. To earn profits for the producers, the film must amass over Rs 500 crore in revenue. The OTT rights were already sold for almost Rs 250 crore; however, the movie needs to make significant earnings from theatrical releases.

The makers also unveiled the trailer; however, it received mixed feedback as it failed to attract the Telugu viewers much.

"It seems they focused more on the Hindi audience and according to that, they made the trailer," added the source.

Ram Charan's gesture of loyalty; visits Kadapa Dargah 🔍 amid Ayyappa Swamy Deeksha

s a mark of his deep respect and commitment, global superstar Ram Charan attended the 80th at the event as a testament to his principles and humility, transcending religious bound National Mushaira Ghazal event at Kadapa Ameen Peer Dargah as the chief guest, fulfilling a personal request from music maestro A R Rahman. Despite being in Ayyappa Swamy Deeksha, Ram Charan offered prayers, a 'chadar', and flowers at the historic Dargah, spreading a message of unity and harmony. Last year, A R Rahman invited the Game Changer

star to attend the annual Mushaira Ghazal event at Kadapa Dargah and Ram Charan kept his promise.

Ram Charan's admirers are lauding his presence

adds to the excitement surrounding his upcoming film *Game Changer*, which marks his first collaboration with A.R. Rahman. Meanwhile, *Game Changer*, produced by Dil Raju and Sirish under Sri Venkateswara

Creations, promises a cinematic spectacle, with Thaman's riveting music and S S sThirunavukkarasu's stunning visuals. The movie is set for a grand worldwide release on January 10, 2025, in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi.

and humility, transcending religious bound-

aries and showcasing harmony. The visit also

Allu Aravind banking on Sai Pallavi!

N ot long ago, an event was organised by producer Allu Aravind to reveal the release date of his upcoming movie Thandel, which is set to hit the theatres on February 7, 2025. Chandoo Mondeti is the director of this film



starring Naga Chaitanya and Sai Pallavi as the lead pair. The movie is being made under Allu Aravind's Geetha Arts banner with Bunny Vasu, who is associated with the banner, serving as the producer for the film. During the event, Bunny Vas confidently declared that this film is aiming to reach Rs 100 crore for Naga Chaitanya and they are working towards that goal. According to a report, the success of this film is heavily reliant on Sai Pallavi rather than Naga Chaitanya, as per Allu Aravind's strategy. That's the reason they declared

that this movie has surely joined the Rs 100 crore club. Sai Pallavi's latest film Amaran once again solidified her status as a major superstar in the southern film industry. The movie is produced in Tamil but it is also simultaneously released in Telugu. The collections of the

Telugu dubbed version outperformed those of a usual Telugu movie and was a massive success in the Telugu industry. The film continues to perform well at the box office, with trade analysts attributing its success solely to Sai Pallavi

After witnessing the success of the *Amaran* collections on its launch day, Allu Aravind and Bunny Vas have faith that the film *Thandel* will also achieve strong box office numbers due to Sai Pallavi. The movie was initially set to be released in December and then during Sankranthi, but it is now scheduled to be released alone on February 7. "They are banking on Sai Pallavi for this film and that's why they announced it will give the first Rs 100 crore film for Naga Chaitanya," said a source.

CARDS! KEERTHY CARDS! KEERTHY SURESH SET TO WED SURESH SET TO WED HER LONGTINE BEAU eerthy Suresh, the actress who is preparing to enter

Bollywood with Varun Dhawan's Baby John, will the the knot with her partner Antony Thattil in the second week of December. Reports indicate that Antony, a businessman

WEDDING ON

securiu week ur becember. Reports indicate that Antony, a pusinessi who resides in Dubai, has been in a committed relationship with the with resides in public, has been in a commuted relationship with the individual for 15 years. Reports have mentioned that Keerthy and Antony are pleasing to be a destinction workding in Cos port ment Individual for 15 years, reports have menuoned that reeling and are planning to have a destination wedding in Goa next month. are planning to have a destination wedding in Goa next month. The wedding will take place with the approval of their own families. The levish wedding is est to accur in Coa on December 11 and 19 The weating will take place with the approval of their own lamiles. The lavish wedding is set to occur in Goa on December 11 and 12. A formal declaration of their partnership is expected to be announced in the upcoming days. Rumours suggest Antony Thattil and Keerthy Suresh attended school together and were high school suretheaster Advisor NUMUUIS SUGUESE AMUUIY MALLI and Neeruny Suresh allended school together and were high school sweethearts. Additional Sciloui logeller and were nigh sciloui sweemearts. Additional information regarding Antony, his occupation and his connection with Keerby is anticipated. The Gee wordding will have family information regarding Antony, his occupation and his connectivity with Keerthy is anticipated. The Goa wedding will have family will recently to annicipated. The QUA wedding will have faint members and close friends present. The guest list has not

URE I I REPARENT YEL. In 2023, Keerthy criticised a magazine for referring to her friend as her boyfriend. Her words were, "Hahaha!! I been released yet. dializes the identity of the matched this time! I will disclose the identity of the mysterious man whenever uisouse me memory or me mysichous man wheneve necessary. Relax and wait calmly in the meantime! 'Making KCR was life-changing movement for me Note: It never got it correct even once (sic).

him in ensuring that this film would

ocking Rakesh is famous for

hosting the clever comedy

show Jabardasth. The for-

mer actor has transitioned to

becoming a producer and is devel-

oping a movie called KCR: Keshava

Chandra Ramavath. The actor

intentionally used the abbreviation

KCR for the title, which stands for

the ex-Chief Minister of Telangana

and a key figure in the Telangana

movement leader, but to make this film I faced a big movement in my

'Though I put the title with a

Movement.

"I don't know much about films, but I heard that Rakesh came from a village to this stage and he got his own name. He made this film with the inspiration of KCR garu and I am happy for it. KCR is not just a name, it is history and ten years he took the Telangana state into development," said Harish Rao. Several industry professionals and politicians, such as Chadalavada Srinivasa Rao, Siva Balaji, N Shankar, Jaani Master, MLA Desapathi and Rasamayi Balakishan, showed up to congratulate Rakesh and wish him success.

be released on November 22. Anji

to show their support to Rakesh for his hard work. Roja, who transi-

