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DEEPA BHATIA

ON LONG-FORM DOCUMENTARY EDITING



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Vikram

'READY TO SHINE'

with Roti Kapda Romance




P12

QUOTE OF THE DAY

The pioneer

In just 10 days 100 students fell ill due to food poisoning. How many more students must suffer or lose their lives before the government wakes up? The Chief Minister's promise of strict action against those responsible for serving contaminated food has proven to be hollow



- Harish Rao, BRS MLA P4

DON'T MISS...

Fervour marks Constitution Day

The 75th Indian Constitution Day was celebrated with great fervour in NTR and Krishna districts, with a series of events aimed at honouring the Indian Constitution and raising awareness about its core values. These programmes underscored the Constitution's pivotal role in shaping India's democratic framework and protecting the rights of its citizens. At a special ceremony held at the NTR district collectorate in Vijayawada, District Collector Dr G Lakshminsha administered the oath to district-level officers and employees. Prior ...

-PAGE: 3

Rahul, Priyanka to lead agitation

The Congress said on Tuesday that it will launch protests, both inside and outside Parliament, under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, against the lack of Central assistance for the landslide survivors of Wayanad. Party leader and Kalpetta MLA T Siddique described the Centre's alleged reluctance to provide financial aid to the people in landslide-affected areas as an "inhuman" approach. He said that, besides Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, he, as the local ...

-PAGE: 5

Milk production up despite fall in output

India's milk production rose nearly 4 per cent annually to 239.3 million tonnes in 2023-24 on better productivity, even as milk output of buffaloes declined 16 per cent annually, according to government data on Tuesday. The milk output of India, the world's largest milk producer, stood at 230.58 MT in 2022-23. However, the annual growth rate has slowed down in the previous two fiscal years, the data showed. The growth rate was 6.62 per cent in 2017-18; 6.47 per cent in FY19; 5.69 per cent in ...

-PAGE: 8

'Getting Venky was our main priority'

Former West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo, who is now the mentor of reigning champions Kolkata Knight Riders, has defended the team's strategy of "going all out" for Venkatesh Iyer to keep the "core" of the IPL championship-winning side intact. Seen as a potential captaincy candidate for KKR, Venkatesh's acquisition has sparked some criticism over why he wasn't retained if leadership was part of the team thinktank's plan for him. "Getting Venky (Venkatesh Iyer) was one of the main ...

-SPORTS

AP likely to suspend Adani power deal

- BJP refuses to defend Gautam Adani in the bribery case
- State govt to ask Centre, SECI to probe charges



REUTERS/NEW DELHI

Andhra Pradesh is likely to suspend a power purchase deal linked to the Adani Group due to the US indictment of the group's billionaire founder Gautam Adani over an alleged bribery scheme, Reuters news agency said quoting two State government sources.

The southern state will ask the federal government and the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI), which awards power supply contracts to companies like Adani, to investigate the charges, the sources said.

Sri Lanka finance, foreign ministries weigh allegations

Fitch puts Adani bonds on negative watch

Moody's changes outlook on seven group firms to negative

Adani stock losses reach \$34 billion

Adani dollar bonds steady after three days of falls



The suspension, likely to be announced soon, would be the first such action by an Indian state government after U.S. prosecutors charged Gautam Adani and seven others with agreeing to pay bribes of \$265 million to unidentified Indian government officials to obtain solar power supply contracts.

Meanwhile, the BJP sources refused to defend Adani in the case. "We have nothing to defend him and we are not involved. Let him defend himself," BJP spokesperson Gopal Krishna Agarwal said by phone to Reuters. "We are not

against industrialists. We consider them as partners in nation-building. But the law will take its own course if they do something wrong," he added. Adani Group and the Andhra government did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Most of the alleged bribes - \$228 million - were paid to a government official to get Andhra Pradesh's state electricity distribution companies to agree to purchase power, the US indictment said. Adani has said the allegations are baseless

Continued on Page 2

RRR CUSTODIAL TORTURE CASE

Retd Addl SP Vijay Paul arrested



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

In a major development in the investigation into the custodial torture of former Member of Parliament K Raghurama Krishna Raju, the Prakasam district police arrested retired Additional Superintendent of Police R Vijay Paul on Tuesday night.

Following the dismissal of his petition, Vijay Paul appeared before Prakasam district SP AR Damodar today. The police interrogated him from 11 am and arrested him around 9 pm. The Prakasam police officially announced his arrest later in the evening.

Sources revealed that the police have prepared a remand report. Vijay Paul is expected to be housed at the SP office overnight and will be produced before the court in Guntur on Wednesday.

Continued on Page 2

Cyclonic storm likely to intensify in next 12 hours

Spl CS Sisodia asks farmers to take precautions

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Special Chief Secretary for Revenue and Disaster Management, R.P. Sisodia, has issued a warning regarding a low pressure area formed over the South Bay of Bengal and the eastern Equatorial Indian Ocean, which is expected to intensify into a severe cyclonic storm within the next 12 hours. The storm is currently moving north-northwest at a speed of 10 km per hour and is situated in the southeast



Bay of Bengal.

Continued on Page 2

ECI announces schedule for Rajya Sabha by-polls in AP

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Election Commission (EC) has announced the schedule for by-elections to fill three vacancies in the Rajya Sabha from Andhra Pradesh. These vacancies arose following the resignations of sitting members Beeda Mastan Rao, Mopidevi Venkataramana, and R. Krishnaiah. On Tuesday, the EC released the schedule for the by-elections to these three seats.

Andhra Pradesh has a total of 175

assembly seats, with the NDA alliance having won 164. The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) secured only 11 seats, failing to achieve opposition status. A minimum of 25 MLA votes is required for a single candidate to win a Rajya Sabha seat. With its current strength of 11, the YSRCP is not in a position to contest the by-elections. As a result, it is almost certain that the NDA alliance will win all three seats. However, there is speculation over whether the TDP will secure all three seats or



whether its alliance partners, the BJP and Jana Sena, will also be given a chance.

Continued on Page 2

CM NAIDU'S VISION FOR AMARAVATI

Deep tech, hub of innovation

Plans include iconic building, incentives for IT growth

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has unveiled ambitious plans to position Amaravati as a global hub for deep technology and innovation. He has directed officials to design a Deep Technology Iconic Building in the State capital, inspired by the success of the Hi-Tech City in Hyderabad. Highlighting the transformative potential of emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence and Deep Tech, the Chief Minister stated that such initiatives would shape the future of the youth.

During a review meeting on the State's new IT policy held on Tuesday, the Chief Minister proposed measures to attract IT companies and foster entrepreneurship. He set a target of creating five lakh workstations by 2029 and ten lakh by 2034, suggesting that land for co-working spaces and office complexes be leased at subsidised rates. He also discussed providing single-window clearances for infrastructure projects and industrial power tariffs for IT companies.

The government's startup policy includes plans to offer seed funding of up to Rs 25 lakh to entrepreneurs from marginalised communities, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward



- Targets set for 5 lakh workstations by 2029 and 10 lakh by 2034.
- Amaravati to anchor the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub, with five zonal innovation hubs across the State.
- Subsidies, single-window clearances, and industrial power tariffs proposed for IT infrastructure.
- Government to link hubs with 25 IITs to boost research and innovation.
- Rs 25 lakh seed funding planned for entrepreneurs from marginalised groups and women.

Focus on creating jobs, upgrading skills, and supporting IT companies with performance-based incentives.

Classes, minorities, and women. IT and Human Resources Development Minister Nara Lokesh also shared inputs on the new policy.

Continued on Page 2

Constitution is only safeguard for democracy, says Naidu

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, speaking at a function in the State Secretariat on Tuesday to celebrate Constitution Day, emphasised that the Constitution is the only safeguard for democracy. He asserted that the Indian Constitution is so robust that no one can alter it. "If any forces violate its provisions, the people will teach them a lesson through the power of the vote," he said.



The Chief Minister paid tribute to Dr.B.R. Ambedkar, the Father of the Constitution, by garlanding his statue. He highlighted the return of

democratic values in the state under the TDP-led NDA government. Naidu noted that India, which had faced discrimination during pre-independence times, has made significant strides towards equality, thanks to the directions outlined in the Constitution.

Naidu also pointed out that 2024 marks 75 years since the adoption of the Indian Constitution on November 29, 1949.

Continued on Page 2

AP's Textile Policy targets Rs 10,000 cr investment

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has introduced a new textile policy aimed at fostering industrial development and attracting significant investments to the state. With an investment target of Rs 10,000 crore, the policy is expected to create up to 2 lakh jobs, with a particular focus on generating large-scale employment opportunities for women in garment factories.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu reviewed the details of the new policy at the Secretariat on

Tuesday, highlighting plans to promote weaving, processing, garment manufacturing, and integrated textile units. The policy also includes increased capital subsidies and additional incentives for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Backward Classes (BC), minorities, and women entrepreneurs.

Naidu emphasized that this new policy aims to surpass the previous 2018-2023 policy, making Andhra Pradesh a leading destination for textile manufacturing investments.

Continued on Page 2

Pawan discusses key AP issues with Union ministers



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Deputy Chief Minister K Pawan Kalyan met Union Ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Agriculture) and Nirmala Sitharaman (Finance) in New Delhi on Tuesday to discuss key issues

regarding agriculture and rural development in Andhra Pradesh.

During his meeting with Chouhan, Pawan Kalyan led a delegation to discuss agricultural schemes, farmers' welfare, and rural development.

Continued on Page 2

Jagan: Why not return to ballot papers?

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

YSRCP chief and former chief minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy extended his wishes to the nation on National Constitution Day, marking the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1949. Taking to X (formerly Twitter), he remarked, "Our Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic guarantees us Justice, Equality, Liberty, and Fraternity. As we celebrate the 75th Constitution Day, let us reflect on its significance and reaffirm our commitment to its guiding principles."

Expressing concern over the credibility of electronic voting machines (EVMs), he questioned, "Why not return to ballot papers, as practised in many countries? Democracy must not only prevail but also appear robust."

Continued on Page 2

Vizag faces surge in ganja trafficking



PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Visakhapatnam is facing a rise in drug and marijuana trafficking, which has become a significant issue for the city's law enforcement. Investigations show that marijuana is being smuggled from the Agency areas and neighbouring Odisha, and is then transported to other states via trains and buses. While check posts have been set up to control the illegal trade, authorities are finding it challenging to fully address the problem, prompting them to increase their efforts.

"We are dealing with a growing challenge, and we've deployed sniffer dogs to help us tackle it more effectively," said a senior officer from the

Port City police increase crackdown with sniffer dogs as ganja smuggling from Odisha and Agency areas escalates

Visakhapatnam Police Department. "The dogs have been crucial in detecting contraband and helping us seize large amounts of drugs that might otherwise have slipped through our checks."

As part of an ongoing crackdown, the city police have already seized 50 kg of Ganja. These operations are part of a coordinated effort led by the police commissioner-

ate. To strengthen their work, the police are also training eight more sniffer dogs, who will join the force next year.

The sniffer dogs, chosen for their high-quality breed, undergo an eight-month intensive training program at the Canine Training Centre (CTC) in Mangalagiri. "The first two months focus on physical conditioning and familiarising the dogs with their names," explained the chief trainer. "The next two months concentrate on obedience and discipline, teaching the dogs basic tasks like saluting, shaking hands, and bowing. The final four months are crucial for teaching them to identify narcotics-related items."

Continued on Page 2

Chandrababu may have to go soft on Jagan

What an opportunity it was for Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu which would have enabled him to marginalise his main opponent YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

The issue of business tycoon Gowtham Adani facing indictment by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the US for allegedly paying YSRC's Government Rs 1,750 crore to get the contract for executing solar power projects is likely to impact state politics soon.

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu seems to be perplexed over the development as Gowtham Adani is facing a serious charge and is close to the Indian leadership. Naidu has been sailing with Modi and that has ensured him stability in AP.

Will the development make Naidu examine his options



afresh? He is probably hoping to have a safe journey with his National Democratic Alliance (NDA) Government in the state.

People know that Naidu hit the headlines a quarter century ago for supporting the NDA government headed by Vajpayee. During the mid-term LS polls in February 1998, Naidu's TDP had an alliance with the CPI and the CPM and fought both the Congress and the BJP. After winning 12 LS seats, he turned towards the NDA headed by the BJP shocking non-NDA parties who accused him of deceiving 'secular' forces.

It may be mentioned here that Naidu had fiercely attacked the BJP during the 1998 LS poll by branding it as the party that had 'demolished' masjids. But he changed tracks immediately after the election and sup-

Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu seems to be perplexed over the development as Gowtham Adani is facing a serious charge and is close to the Indian leadership. Naidu has been sailing with Modi and that has ensured him stability in AP



M D RATNA KUMAR
Senior Journalist

ported the BJP. Naidu defended his somersault by saying that the Congress should be kept away from the Centre.

In the 1999 LS polls, he became an NDA partner. This time Naidu hit the jackpot and his TDP won 29 seats in the Lok Sabha. For five years Naidu played a key role as the 'lifeline' of the NDA Government.

Now, after 25 years, Naidu has become a partner in the ruling NDA both in AP and at

the Centre. This is the first time the TDP has a presence in the Union Cabinet after the United Front governments headed by Prime Ministers HD Deve Gowda and IK Gujral between 1996 and 1998.

Naidu managed to come back in the elections held in 2014 and tried to suppress the YSRC headed by YS Jagan Mohan Reddy by extending Jagan's jail term due to the DA cases filed against him. But due to the soft approach of the

Naidu to spend 53 days in the Rajahmundry prison and that made opposition parties join the NDA to topple Jagan.

As expected the NDA which included the TDP, the Jana Sena Party and the BJP scored a grand victory in the 2024 polls and limited the YSRC to just 11 seats.

Adani's alleged bribes of 265 Million US\$ (Rs 2,200 crore) may lead to tremors in AP and Telangana. As US laws are strict, Adani might face serious problems in court. Bribing the government for securing solar power supply projects is punishable. But Adani is supposed to be in the good books of Modi and political observers think that could enable Adani to bail out safely.

But what about the country's image if a global businessman walks away free from a serious criminal case?

Coming to the situation in AP after the Adani case, polit-

ical parties are exploring options on how to respond. If parties are concerned about development, the government as well as the opposition have to welcome investors despite their offences elsewhere.

It would be embarrassing for Chandrababu to remain silent about the Adani case as it was the Jagan admin that helped Adani to enter AP. Earlier, the assets of Gangavaram Port valued at thousands of crores were given to Adani for just Rs 600 crore by Jagan. Chandrababu strongly criticised that and accused Jagan of a quid pro quo deal. But Jagan claimed that Adani had never entered AP and described it as a plus point for his approach.

As an NDA partner, Chandrababu is carefully watching the situation. He wants to weaken Jagan. But the situation may not permit him to take action against Adani. If Chandrababu takes the issue

further it is nothing but pressuring the Modi Government.

Jagan's sister and APCC President YS Sharmila demanded that the AP government cancel all PPAs signed with the Adani group. She said the people of AP would lose Rs 1.5 lakh crore due to inflated power bills in the next 25 years.

The Congress approach is entirely different from that of parties in the BJP alliance. If Chandrababu decides to be firm on the Adani issue he may agree with Sharmila and take a serious look at the PPAs. But he can't act as freely as Sharmila although he would like to liquidate her brother politically.

Chandrababu may be tempted to use this case to fix Jagan, but Modi is likely to continue his soft approach towards Jagan. So Chandrababu seems to have lost an opportunity to marginalise his opponent.

Constitution stands as a shield for democracy: I & PR Addl Director

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Information and Public Relations Additional Director L Swarnalatha has stated that the Indian Constitution embodies the core values of sovereignty, socialism, secularism, democracy, equality, and fraternity. She emphasized that, for 75 years, the Constitution has served as a shield for democracy, not just in India but also for democratic nations worldwide.



Speaking to the employees of the Information and Public Relations department on Tuesday, Swarnalatha highlighted the significant impact of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who effectively proved the concept of human equality. She pointed out that the Indian Constitution has become a guiding model for many con-

stitutions globally, built on the foundational pillars of freedom, equality, and fraternity. Swarnalatha encouraged the employees to take pride in being part of this historic process.

She also acknowledged that the Constitution was framed under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the principal architect, whose contributions were pivotal in preserving the spirit of democracy.

Swarnalatha stressed the importance of commemorating Constitution Day and emphasized the need to pass on its significance to future generations.

Poornachandra Rao, Assistant Directors M. Bhaskar Narayana, Venkataraj Goud, G.V. Prasad, Accounts Officer G. Ramanaiah, and other officers were also present.

SC dismisses KA Paul's PIL on ballot voting

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Supreme Court on Tuesday dismissed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by evangelist Dr KA Paul, which sought the reintroduction of physical ballot voting in India. The PIL also urged the Election Commission to disqualify candidates for at least five years if found guilty of distributing money, liquor, or other inducements during elections.

Dr Paul, appearing as the petitioner-in-person, explained that the PIL was filed after much deliberation and prayer. However, Justice Vikram Nath questioned his repeated filing of PILs, asking, "You have filed PILs before. How do you come up with such brilliant ideas?"

Dr Paul cited his global humanitarian work and support from 180 retired IAS/IPS officers and judges, mentioning his recent participation in the Global Peace Summit in Los Angeles. He argued that India should adopt physical ballot voting, a practice he claimed is followed by 180 democracies worldwide, while only authoritarian regimes like Russia and Syria avoid it.

He further alleged that the current electoral system violates Articles 14, 19, and 21 of the Constitution, citing instances of corruption and malpractice in Indian elections. The accused major political parties of receiving large sums of money from businessmen and highlighted allegations of EVM tampering, referencing comments by experts and tweets by leaders like Chandrababu Naidu and YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

Justice Nath, however, dismissed the petition, remarking that claims of EVM tampering often arise only after electoral defeats.

Vizag faces...

Continued from Page 1

Currently, the canine team consists of two sniffer dogs, trained in 2018, and they are now six years old. These dogs play an important role in the city's drug detection operations, working alongside a team of 12 handlers. The team conducts inspections twice a day—from 9:30 am to 12 pm and from 5 pm to 7 pm—at busy places like the railway station, the Dwarka bus complex, logistics centres, and parcel hubs, which have become key points for marijuana trafficking. "The dogs have been very helpful in our operations," said Police Commissioner Shanka Brata Bagchi. "They are an essential part of our ongoing efforts to fight the drug problem in Visakhapatnam." With the support of these specially trained dogs and the dedicated efforts of the city police, authorities are determined to continue their fight against drug trafficking and to reclaim the city.

ECI announces schedule ...

Continued from Page 1

It may be recalled that following their loss of power, YSRC MPs Mopidevi Venkataramana and Beeda Mastan Rao resigned from the Rajya Sabha, dissatisfied with the party's internal affairs. Their resignations were accepted by Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on August 29. Both later joined the TDP and are hopeful of regaining their Rajya Sabha seats.

R. Krishnaiah, elected from the YSRC, also resigned from his Rajya Sabha position. His resignation, submitted to Rajya Sabha

Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on September 23, was accepted the following day. Krishnaiah resigned with four years remaining in his term, citing challenges in strengthening the BC movement in Telangana.

The EC will issue a notification for the Rajya Sabha elections on December 3. The last date for filing nominations is December 10, scrutiny will take place on December 11, the last date for withdrawal of nominations is December 13, polling will be held on December 20, and the counting of votes will take place on the same day.

AP's Textile Policy targets...

Continued from Page 1

He noted that the policy will not only boost industrial growth but also provide substantial employment opportunities, especially for women in rural areas. The draft of the pol-

icy has been approved by the Chief Minister and will soon be presented to the state cabinet for final approval. In addition to the textile policy, CM Naidu also reviewed the state's leather policy and suggested further efforts to advance its implementation.

TODAY ALMANAC

Month & Paksham: Krishna Paksha

Tithi: Dwadashi: Nov 27 03:47 AM to Nov 28 06:24 AM
Trayodashi: Nov 28 06:24 AM to Nov 29 08:40 AM

Nakshatram: Chitra: Nov 27 04:34 AM to Nov 28 07:36 AM

Rahukalam: 12:03 PM to 1:26 PM
Yamagandam: 7:54 AM to 9:17 AM

Variyam: 01:35 PM to 03:23 PM
Gulika: 10:40 PM to 12:03 PM
Amritakalam: 12:23 AM to 2:11 AM

Abhijit Muhurtham: NIL

VIJAYAWADA WEATHER

Forecast: Cloudy
Temp: 31°C
Humidity: 51%
Sunrise: 6:17 AM
Sunset: 5:32 PM
Updated: November 26, 2024 5:00 PM

Jagan: Why...

Continued from Page 1

He also highlighted the importance of safeguarding freedom of speech, terming it the most fundamental right. In Tadepalli, YSRC leaders organised grand celebrations at the party's central office, paying floral tributes to Dr BR Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Constitution. Speaking on the occasion, MLC and party office in-charge Lella Appi Reddy criticised the TDP coalition government, alleging that it undermines constitutional principles. He accused TDP leaders N Chandrababu Naidu and his son Lokesh of promoting a lawlessness culture marked by violence and disregard for constitutional values.

Pawan ...

Continued from Page 1

The two leaders discussed various initiatives, including PM Gram Sadak Yojana, PM Awas Yojana, and MGNREGA, with Chouhan assuring full support for Andhra Pradesh under Prime Minister Modi's leadership. Pawan Kalyan also highlighted the success of the Lakhpati Didi scheme and invited the Union Minister to visit AP, which was accepted.

Later, Pawan Kalyan met Finance Minister Sitharaman to discuss an extension on the AIB loan for the Andhra Pradesh Rural Roads Project (APRRP). He requested that the loan deadline be extended to December 31, 2026, as the project could not be completed by the original deadline of December 31, 2024.

Constitution is only safeguard ...

Continued from Page 1

"This is a sacred day for all of us," he said, recalling the significant contributions of leaders like Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu, and Acharya NG Ranga in framing the Constitution, as well as Pingali Venkaiah's role in designing the National Flag.

The Chief Minister urged the people to work towards fulfilling Dr. Ambedkar's vision of achieving equality and announced his goal of making Andhra Pradesh the top state in India by 2047.

Cyclonic storm ...

Continued from Page 1

Sisodia provided further details, stating that the storm is located 340 km southeast of Trincomalee, 630 km southeast of Nagapattinam, 750 km southeast of Puducherry, and 830 km southeast of Chennai. It is expected to continue moving northwest over the next two days, heading towards the coasts of Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu. As a result, moderate to light rainfall is expected in several southern coastal regions from November 26 to 29. Fishermen are advised not to venture into the sea from November 27 to 29 due to the increased risk posed by the storm in the western central Bay of Bengal.

Sisodia also urged farmers to take necessary precautions in light of the weather conditions.

CREDAI AP hails govt's single-window system for building permits

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) Andhra Pradesh has wholeheartedly welcomed the state government's decision to implement a single window system for construction and layout approvals. This initiative, set to be launched on December 31st, 2023, under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, aims to streamline the approval process, reducing administrative burdens on developers and stakeholders.



Industry leaders praise Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's Initiative to streamline approvals, enhancing efficiency and transparency in real estate development

CREDAI AP Chairman, Alla Siva Reddy, hailed the move as a "game-changer" for the real estate industry. He stated, "This progressive move by the Chief Minister will simplify the approval process, reduce delays, and foster a more transparent and efficient environment for development." Under the new system, developers will no longer need to approach multiple departments for various approvals. Key approvals, including those for Vacant Land Tax, NALA, Registration Department, Mining Department, Fire NOC, Airport Authority of India,

and Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ), will be integrated into a single, streamlined process.

CREDAI AP President, YV Ramana Rao, emphasized the positive impact this change will have on developers. He said, "Previously, developers had to make multiple rounds to various departments, which caused unnecessary delays. Now, with this single window system, the process has been made much easier and more efficient."

General Secretary, Bayana Srinivasa Rao, highlighted the practical advantages for developers and stakeholders, noting, "This reform will significantly ease the burdens on developers and stakeholders.

The new system will speed up the approval process, enabling us to focus more on actual construction and development."

CREDAI members also expressed their gratitude to Municipal Administration and Urban Development (MA & UD) Minister P. Narayana and IT & HRD Minister Nara Lokesh for their efforts in addressing long-standing challenges in the real estate sector. They stated, "We are deeply thankful to MA & UD Minister P. Narayana and IT & HRD Minister Nara Lokesh for their unwavering dedication to alleviating the challenges faced by stakeholders. Their efforts have been crucial in making this initiative a reality."

With the implementation of this single window system, Andhra Pradesh is poised to witness a significant improvement in the ease of doing business, providing a faster, more transparent, and efficient approval process for all construction-related activities. This move is expected to not only benefit developers but also encourage sustained growth and development across the state.

Deep tech, ...

Continued from Page 1

To strengthen the innovation ecosystem, the Chief Minister proposed linking the state with the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH), with Amaravati serving as the central hub. This initiative would also involve establishing five zonal innovation hubs in Central Andhra, Rayalaseema, South Andhra, Godavari, and North Andhra. These hubs will be connected to 25 IITs across the country to enhance research and innovation capabilities.

Chandrababu Naidu stressed the importance of setting clear monthly job creation targets and urged officials to assess the number of people working remotely in villages and ward secretariats. This data would help identify suitable locations for new workstations. He also highlighted the need to upgrade the skills of rural youth, stating that while they possess knowledge, the lack of proper skills often limits their success.

The government has also proposed an incentive structure for IT infrastructure development based on three categories: co-working spaces, neighbourhood working spaces, and IT campuses. Subsidies will be granted based on factors such as the number of seats and the size of the office space. IT companies generating a turnover of Rs 30 crore or employing at least 100 people will also be eligible for these incentives. The Chief Minister reaffirmed his commitment to making Amaravati a beacon of innovation and ensuring Andhra Pradesh becomes a leader in deep technology and entrepreneurship.

AP likely to suspend Adani...

Continued from Page 1

Andhra Pradesh is ruled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's key ally N Chandrababu Naidu, whose party has the second highest number of parliamentary seats in the coalition government formed after the main Bharatiya Janata Party failed to get a majority in national elections concluded in June.

Modi's NDA government has not yet commented on the U.S. indictment of Adani. The power supply to Andhra Pradesh under the SECI agreement was scheduled to start from next year, according to one of the sources.

"The decision will be taken very soon," the second source said about the planned suspension.

Clauses in the power supply agreements provide for Indian states to terminate contracts and also bar the companies involved from any future bidding if the bidder has committed a serious transgression. Earlier on Tuesday Andhra Pradesh was exploring the pos-

● The indictment accuses Adani and others of paying \$265 million in bribes, with \$228 million paid to influence Andhra Pradesh's electricity distribution companies.

● The SECI agreement for power supply to AP was set to begin next year. Clauses in the contract allow termination if serious misconduct is proven.

● Gautam Adani has denied the bribery allegations, calling them baseless.

● The YSR Congress Party, the prevailing ruling party in the State, has denied any wrongdoing related to the case.

sibility of cancelling a power supply contract linked to Adani Group. Andhra Pradesh's previous ruling party - YSR Congress Party - under whose administration the alleged misconduct took place, last week denied any wrongdoing.

Retd Addl SP Vijay Paul...

Continued from Page 1

It may be noted that cases were filed against then YSRC MP K Raghurama Krishna Raju, also known as RRR, who is now a TDP leader and deputy speaker of the Legislative Assembly, for making abusive and derogatory remarks against the then Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy.

RRR was arrested at his residence in Hyderabad in July 2021 and was taken to the CID

office in Mangalagiri for questioning, where he allegedly faced physical torture.

On the directions of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, he was subsequently sent to a military hospital in Secunderabad for a medical examination. Cases were registered against the then CID chief PV Sunil Kumar, Intelligence Chief PSR Anjaneyulu, CID Additional SP Vijay Paul, and Guntur GGH Superintendent Prabhavathi for custodial torture.

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Fervour marks Constitution Day celebration in NTR, Krishna districts

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The 75th Indian Constitution Day was celebrated with great fervour in NTR and Krishna districts, with a series of events aimed at honouring the Indian Constitution and raising awareness about its core values. These programmes underscored the Constitution's pivotal role in shaping India's democratic framework and protecting the rights of its citizens.

At a special ceremony held at the NTR district collectorate in Vijayawada, District Collector Dr G Lakshminsha administered the oath to district-level officers and employees. Prior to the oath-taking, Collector Lakshminsha paid a heartfelt tribute to Dr BR Ambedkar, the principal architect of the Constitution. NTR District Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu also paid floral tributes to Dr Ambedkar and participated in the pledge ceremony.



In Krishna district, Collector DK Balaji marked the occasion by participating in the Constitution Day event at the collectorate in Machilipatnam. He highlighted Dr Ambedkar's crucial role in drafting the Constitution,

acknowledging his invaluable contribution to India's democratic ethos. Constitution Day was also observed in all government offices across both districts.

Public gatherings, seminars, and cultural programmes were

organised in both districts to underscore the Constitution's significance in ensuring justice, equality, and freedom for all. Educational institutions played an active role, with students delivering speeches, essays, and skits

centred around the values enshrined in the Preamble and the fundamental duties of citizens.

A special event, a Mock Parliament session, was held at the ZP High School in Nunna, where students discussed the significance of the day and the sacrifices made by the framers of the Constitution. Organised by the school's Social Science Department and supervised by Headmaster Vazra Bhupal Reddy, the event aimed to inspire students to uphold democratic and secular values.

Additionally, the Department of English, in collaboration with the Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) at Andhra Loyola Institute of Engineering and Technology (ALIET), organised a grand celebration of National Constitution Day. The day's events reflected a collective effort to deepen public understanding of constitutional values and their practical application in daily life.



NTR Collector stresses employee coordination for district's progress

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

NTR District Collector Dr G Lakshminsha has underscored the importance of employee coordination in delivering effective public services and elevating the district to the top rank in Andhra Pradesh. Speaking during a meeting with Andhra Pradesh Non-Gazetted and Gazetted Officers (APNGGO) Association leaders on Tuesday at the collectorate in Vijayawada, he highlighted the critical role of employees in achieving development and welfare goals.

The APNGGO Association's NTR district president, A Vidyasagar, along with other members, felicitated the collector during their visit. In his address, Dr Lakshminsha emphasised the state government's focus on development and welfare schemes and sought the association's cooperation in achieving district-

APNGGO district president Vidyasagar assured the collector of the association's commitment to serving the public with transparency and fulfilling their responsibilities diligently

wide targets. He urged employees to bring any challenges they face to his attention for prompt resolution, ensuring a smooth workflow.

APNGGO district president Vidyasagar assured the collector of the association's commitment to serving the public with transparency and fulfilling their responsibilities diligently. Prominent APNGGO leaders,

including D Satyanarayana Reddy, P Ramesh, B Satish Kumar, BV Ramana, and Vijayawada City president CVR Prasad, were present at the meeting.

Later in the day, Dr Lakshminsha convened a meeting with collectorate superintendents, urging them to clear all pending files swiftly, especially those related to development and welfare. He stressed the need for transparency, commitment, and responsibility in their work.

Highlighting the district's significance, the collector noted that NTR district hosts numerous state-level programmes and urged employees to actively participate in these initiatives alongside their routine duties. He assured officials of his support in addressing any difficulties they encounter. District Revenue Officer (DRO) M Lakshmi Narasimha and Administrative Officer S Srinivas Reddy were among those who attended the meeting.

Sanjeevani Scheme benefits Forest dept employees

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Forest Department has launched the Sanjeevani scheme, aimed at providing welfare and social security benefits to its 2,870 employees (both gazetted and non-gazetted) from November 1, 2023. The scheme is designed to ensure financial protection for employees and their families.

Under the Sanjeevani scheme, gazetted employees contribute Rs 1,000 per month, while non-gazetted employees contribute Rs 500 per month. These amounts are deducted from their salaries and deposited into the Sanjeevani bank account.

The scheme offers financial assistance to the families of employees who pass away while in service. In the event of the death of a gazetted employee, the family will receive Rs 10,00,000, while the family of a non-gazetted employee will be provided Rs 5,00,000 as financial aid.

Since the implementation of the scheme on November 1, 2023, financial assistance amounting to Rs 35,00,000



has been provided to the families of seven non-gazetted employees who passed away in service. Additionally, for employees who retired during the year, Rs 3,08,215, including interest on contributions, was paid to 60 retiring employees. A total of Rs 1,89,50,316 has been collected from the contributions of the 2,870 employees under the Sanjeevani scheme.

On November 25, the scheme provided Rs 5,00,000 as financial assistance to the family of the late G. Venkateswari, Forest Beat Officer of Tirupati Division. The assistance was handed over by Chiranjeev Chowdary, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Mangalagiri.

Dr. Shanti Priya Pandey, APCCF (HRD), and N. Ramachandra Rao, Deputy Conservator of Forests, were also present.

Atchannaidu promises better homes for the poor

PNS ■ SRIKAKULAM

Agriculture Minister Kinjarapu Atchannaidu has called upon eligible citizens to apply for new homes under the government's housing scheme. During a review meeting on Tuesday, the minister reiterated the government's commitment to providing permanent housing to every poor person. "You should apply to the authorities for new houses. The government is working diligently to ensure that every poor person has a permanent home," said Minister Atchannaidu. He assured that applications would be reviewed promptly, with officials following up as needed.

The minister also addressed the issue of pending housing applications from 2014 to 2019. "Housing officials have suggested that we identify and resolve issues for those sanctioned



homes during these years but not yet listed online," he stated.

Atchannaidu outlined plans to develop Tekkali into an ideal colony with all necessary amenities. "We are committed to developing Tekkali into a model colony with comprehensive facilities," he said. He also highlighted ongoing efforts to improve village infrastructure, including the construction of roads, sewers, and providing access to clean drinking water. "Funds have already been sanctioned through the Rural

Development Fund, and work is underway to improve basic amenities in the villages," he added.

The minister emphasised the government's goal of providing irrigation water to every farmer. "The goal is clear: to ensure every farmer has access to irrigation water. We are focusing on full coverage through lift irrigation schemes," he explained. He instructed the Andhra Pradesh State Irrigation Development Corporation to prepare necessary proposals and complete pending irrigation projects.

Atchannaidu also stressed the importance of quality standards for ongoing road construction projects. "The Roads Department must ensure that all ongoing works adhere to the highest quality standards," he said. Roads Department officials informed him about 52 road projects, totalling Rs 5 crore, currently underway.

Sharmila: Congress committed to safeguarding Constitution



PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president YS Sharmila has asserted that the Congress party remains committed to safeguarding the Indian Constitution, describing it as an inspiration for many democratic countries.

Sharmila, along with APCC vice-president Kolanukonda Sivaji and Congress activists, participated in a padayatra from the Congress office to Ambedkar Smriti Vanam at the Swaraj Maidan in Vijayawada on Tuesday to mark Constitution Day. During the march, Sharmila carried a copy of the Constitution.

Speaking to the media later, Sharmila emphasised that the Indian Constitution ensures fundamental rights and protects the secular fabric of the nation. She reiterated that the Congress party had always played a cru-

cial role in protecting the Constitution and would continue to do so.

Sharmila accused the BJP-led central government of undermining the Constitution, alleging that it is now being replaced by a "BJP Constitution." She claimed that the government is registering cases against those who criticise the BJP and suppressing media freedom.

She also criticised the Modi-led government for allegedly favouring corporates and intimidating non-BJP state governments. Sharmila called for a caste census to ensure justice for all communities.

Targeting former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, she questioned his decision to boycott Assembly sessions, stating that if he did not wish to attend, he should resign, as the Constitution mandates that elected MLAs must participate in sessions.

Maha official praises AP govt over skill development

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Director of the Maharashtra State Board of Technical Education (MSBTE), Dr. Pramod Naik, commended the Andhra Pradesh state government for its proactive measures in addressing skill gaps aligned with industry requirements. He emphasised that such initiatives are crucial for developing a skilled workforce capable of meeting the evolving demands of the industrial sector.

Dr. Naik praised Andhra Pradesh's focus on skill development programmes, vocational training, and industry partnerships, calling it a benchmark for other states. He recognised the state's efforts in bridging the gap between education and employment, which, in turn, enhances job opportunities and contributes to economic growth.

A team from Maharashtra, led by Dr. Naik, conducted a study tour in the NTR and Guntur districts over two days. The team visited several polytechnic colleges in these districts. During their visit, the Maharashtra team held meetings with Andhra Pradesh State Technical Education officials to enquire about ongoing skill development activities.

Krishna ZP general body meet postponed to Nov 30

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Krishna Zilla Parishad (ZP) general body meeting has been postponed to November 30, owing to the ongoing Parliamentary Winter Sessions. The meeting was initially scheduled for November 27, according to ZP Chief Executive Officer V Kannama Naidu.

In a press release issued on Tuesday from Machilipatnam,

CEO Kannama Naidu informed that the meeting will be chaired by ZP Chairperson Uppala Harika and will take place at the ZP Convention Hall, Machilipatnam.

He urged all ZPTC members, invitees, and special invitees to note the revised date and ensure their participation. Furthermore, officials from Krishna, NTR, and Eluru districts have been requested to attend the meeting without fail.

City to host major volleyball tourney for women

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Nadella Basavapurnaiah Trust is set to organise the All India Invitation Volleyball Tournament for Women from December 12 to 15 at the newly constructed Indoor Stadium on the VR Siddhartha Engineering College premises, Kanuru, near Vijayawada.

Speaking at the poster release event held at the Indira Gandhi Municipal Corporation (IGMC) Stadium premises on Tuesday, Trust Managing Trustee and former national volleyball player Nadella Brahmaji Rao announced that six teams will compete in the tournament. The participating teams include South Central Railway (Secunderabad), Central Railway (Mumbai), Southern Railway (Chennai), Bank of Maharashtra (Pune), Integral Coach Factory



(Chennai), and Gujarat Sports Hostel (Ahmedabad). Many Indian volleyball players, including Krishna District's Sindhu, representing the Bank of Maharashtra, will feature in the matches.

The tournament will follow a league format, with the team scoring the highest points winning the Nadella Basavapurnaiah Memorial Trophy. The total prize money is ₹2.75 lakh, with the winning team receiving ₹75,000. Sponsors include GRG Trust, Siddhartha Academy, Steel Exchange India Limited,

Andhra Hospitals, and others.

Brahmaji Rao highlighted that this will be the first event at the newly constructed indoor stadium, which has a seating capacity of 450 in its gallery and can accommodate over 1,000 spectators. He termed the tournament a special occasion for Vijayawada residents to witness high-level women's volleyball matches.

Former trustee Nadella Srinivasa Rao, Trust members Nadella Sambasiva Rao, Nadella Mounika Rao, and others were also present at the event.

SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT

World meet at GITAM from tomorrow

PNS ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

GITAM (Deemed to be University) is all set to host the 14th International Conference on Sustainable Waste Management - Circular Economy and IPLA Global Forum 2024 (14th IconSWM-CE & IPLA GF 2024) from November 28 to December 1, 2024, in a hybrid format. The prestigious event, announced during a media briefing by Conference Chairman Prof. Sadhan K. Ghosh, will gather global leaders, researchers, and innovators dedicated to advancing sustainable waste management and circular economy practices.

"This year's conference will showcase cutting-edge research and innovative solutions that pave the way for a sustainable future," said Prof. Ghosh. "With 580 abstracts submitted—448 from India and 132 from international contributors—this platform under-



scores the growing global interest in advancing sustainable practices."

The conference agenda is set to be dynamic and engaging, featuring highlights such as a Student Congress on November 27, a Hackathon, research

presentations, and prestigious awards like the Best Paper Awards, Student Awards, and Lifetime Achievement Awards. Conference Convener Dr. Thorani emphasized the event's focus on youth and innovation. "The confer-

ence is designed to engage students in critical discussions on sustainability, foster the exchange of ideas, and inspire innovative solutions to global waste management challenges."

Adding to its appeal, the event will

include an Expo and exhibitions showcasing student-led innovations in sustainability. "We aim to create awareness, promote circular economy practices, and explore opportunities for sustainable business ventures, particularly in water and waste management," Dr. Thorani added.

Conference Co-Convener Dr. Sai Sudhakar highlighted the collaborative impact of the event. "Supported by the International Society for Waste Management, the conference will not only drive impactful discussions but also facilitate collaborations through the signing of MOUs and the initiation of research projects focused on environmental protection," he said.

As one of the most anticipated global forums on sustainability, the 14th IconSWM-CE & IPLA GF 2024 promises to foster innovation, build international partnerships, and drive actionable solutions for a greener, more sustainable future.

TTD Addl EO reviews progress of 'PAC-5' works

PNS ■ TIRUMALA

TTD Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary held a review meeting at Annamaiah Bhavan on Tuesday on the progress of the ongoing construction works of the new Pilgrim Amenities Complex (PAC-5) under construction in Tirumala.

On this occasion, the engineering officers gave a PowerPoint presentation about the status of the works to the Additional EO. As a part of this, the Additional EO directed the concern to complete the work at a fast pace. He instructed the officers to set a deadline for each task and

complete the works on time as per schedule.

He said there should not be any compromise on the quality of materials. Similarly, Anna Prasadam Dining Hall, Kalyana Katta and dispensary facilities which are in offing in PAC-5 were also discussed.

Deputy EOs Rajendra, Bhaskar, Sri Venkataiah, Asha Jyoti, Estate Officer Venkateshwarlu, EEs Venu Gopal, Sudhakar, Electrical DE Chandra Sekhar, Health Officer Madhusudan Prasad, Ashwini Hospital Civil Surgeon Dr Kusuma, Catering Special Officer Shastri and other officers participated.



Dy CM Pawan urges Railway Minister to approve RoB in Pithapuram

PNS ■ GUNTUR

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Panchayat Raj, K. Pawan Kalyan, has appealed to Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw to take steps for the construction of a railway overbridge (ROB) in Pithapuram. Pawan Kalyan met the Railway Minister in New Delhi on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister highlighted the urgent need for an overbridge on the Samarlakota-Uppada road within Pithapuram municipal limits and urged the Railway Minister to approve its construction.

Pawan Kalyan also discussed various railway projects planned for Andhra Pradesh with the Minister. He informed Vaishnaw that the state government has identified the



need for an ROB at Level Crossing No. 431, located at Railway Km 640/30-32 on the Samarlakota-Uppada Road in

Pithapuram town. The construction of the ROB is seen as crucial to resolving persistent traffic congestion and improv-

ing road connectivity in the region. Pawan Kalyan further requested the Railway Minister to approve the project under

the Prime Minister's 'Gati Shakti' programme.

In addition, the Deputy Chief Minister asked the Railway Minister to provide halts for four express trains at Pithapuram, considering the heavy influx of devotees to the famous Sripada Vallabha Swamy temple. He specifically requested halts for the Nanded-Sambalpur Nagavali Express, Nanded-Visakhapatnam Superfast Express, Visakhapatnam-Sainagar Shirdi Express, and the AP Express (Visakhapatnam-New Delhi).

Pawan Kalyan also raised the issue of the people of Latur in Maharashtra, who have requested a direct train service to the pilgrim city of Tirupati. He urged the Railway Minister to consider these appeals and take a positive decision at the earliest.



Sand-laden tipper knocks down motorcyclist, villagers stage 'rasta roko'

PNS ■ MACHILIPATNAM

Villagers of Kasarabada staged a 'rasta roko' on Tuesday in protest against the reckless driving of sand-laden tippers and demanded that the government revoke the sand reach licence for their village.

The incident occurred when a sand-laden tipper knocked down a motorcyclist, Nandya Rami Reddy, in Kasarabada village, located in Chandralapadu mandal, on Tuesday. Rami Reddy sustained serious injuries, with his leg crushed in the accident. He was found in

a pool of blood on the road and was rushed to the Government General Hospital (GGH), where his condition was reported to be critical.

Angered by the accident, the villagers blocked the road, preventing sand transport vehicles from passing through. They pointed out that sand is being mined and transported from the nearby River Krishna in large quantities every day.

The villagers claimed that the tippers are overloaded and that drivers often drive the heavy vehicles recklessly at high speeds, causing frequent

accidents. They raised slogans against the sand reach near their village and demanded that the government take immediate action to prevent sand-laden vehicles from passing through.

"We have been protesting against the movement of sand transport vehicles through our village for a long time, but the authorities have yet to take any action," said the agitating villagers. "Today's accident could have been avoided if the officials had taken steps to regulate the sand transport vehicles."

Complaint against Jagan over alleged bribery in solar power deal

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

A fresh complaint has been lodged with the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) alleging bribery against former Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy during the tenure of the YSR Congress Party. The complaint, filed by Nallamothu Chakravarthy, founder of the Centre for Liberty, accuses Jagan Mohan Reddy of receiving a bribe of Rs 1,750 crore from the Adani Group in connection with a solar power deal.

The complaint calls for a thorough and impartial investigation into the alleged involvement of key figures, including the former CM, Gautam Adani, Chairman of the Adani Group, N Srikanth, former Energy Secretary, and Balineni Srinivasa Reddy, former Minister of Energy. Chakravarthy has also requested that any other individuals implicated during the investigation be thoroughly examined.

In his complaint, Chakravarthy highlighted the terms of

the Power Sale Agreement signed on December 1, 2021, between the Government of Andhra Pradesh and its distribution companies (DISCOMs) with the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI). The agreement stipulated the purchase of electricity at Rs 2.42 per kWh, with an additional trading margin of Rs 0.07 per kWh, for a period of 25 years. He pointed out that around the same time, the Gujarat government secured a similar deal at a much lower rate of Rs 1.99 per kWh, raising concerns about potential price manipulation.

Although no evidence of corruption was found at the time of the deal, new developments have prompted the fresh complaint. Chakravarthy referred to a recent filing by the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), which accused Gautam Adani and Adani Green of bribing former CM YS Jagan Mohan Reddy to secure favourable terms for the solar power deal.

PACK Prefab sets world record for fastest building construction

PNS ■ NELLORE

EPACK Prefab has set a new benchmark in the construction industry by building India's fastest structure in a record time of just 150 hours. This project, completed in Mambattu, Andhra Pradesh, showcases EPACK Prefab's commitment to innovative and rapid construction techniques.

This remarkable achievement has earned EPACK Prefab a place in the prestigious Golden Book of World Records. The building, spanning a total area of 151,000 square feet, was constructed entirely using advanced prefabrication and pre-engineered building (PEB) technology. EPACK Prefab meticulously planned each phase of construction to ensure rapid



progress. The primary structure was completed within 48 hours, the roofing by the 90th hour, and the cladding by the 120th hour, with the entire building fully functional within the set timeline.

Sanjay Singhania, Managing Director of EPACK Prefab, expressed his pride in the achievement, saying, "It is a great privilege for us to have constructed

India's fastest-built structure using PEB technology. Our goal with this project was not only to showcase PEB's potential for rapid construction but also to promote a sustainable approach that meets modern industrial needs. PEB is the future of construction, and we aim to set more industry benchmarks as PEB solutions gain wider acceptance."

Kadapa police question YSRCP activists linked to Varra case

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

Kadapa Police are questioning several persons linked to the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) in connection with a case involving social media activist Varra Ravinder Reddy. On Tuesday, Kadapa Cyber Crime Police interrogated YSRCP social media coordinators Sunitha Reddy, Niranjan Reddy, and Anand Reddy over allegations of circulating objectionable posts about party leaders. The trio was summoned to the police station for questioning on Monday.

The police have issued Section 41A notices to 15 individuals. Along with the coordinators, party members Vishnu vardhan Reddy, Narendra Reddy, and Sharath were also questioned as part of the investigation on Monday.

It may be recalled that a case was registered on December 8 at the Pulivendula Police Station against Varra Ravinder Reddy and others. The police are probing viral posts allegedly shared on social media, targeting leaders of the ruling party.



AP Chambers organises boat show in River Krishna

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry Federation (AP Chambers) organised a Boat Show on the river Krishna, which took place on Tuesday from Durga Ghat to Bhavani Island and back. Members of the AP Chambers Business Expo Committee participated in the boat ride, accompanied by two pilot boats provided by Amaravati Boating Club. During the event, the committee members unveiled posters

for the upcoming Business Expo 2024.

The Boat Show was organised to raise awareness about the Business Expo, scheduled to be held from November 29 to December 1, 2024, at SS Convention in Vijayawada.

The AP Chambers Expo Committee, including President P Bhaskara Rao, General Secretary B Raja Sekhar, and members Tarun Kakani, Gurjeet Singh Sahni, A Satyanarayana, G Radhika, D Aparna, and Suma Atluri, actively participated in the event.

Minister directs officials to purchase paddy at farmers' fields

PNS ■ MACHILIPATNAM

Minister for Civil Supplies Nadendla Manohar has instructed officials to take steps to purchase paddy directly from farmers at their agricultural fields.

Accompanied by officials, the Minister visited the Rythu Seva Kendra at Punadipadu village in Kankipadu mandal on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, he informed that 4.50 lakh metric tonnes of paddy had been purchased from farmers so far.

Addressing concerns over the impact of recent rains due to the depression, he directed officials to provide the necessary number of lorries and gunny bags to facilitate the



transportation of paddy to rice mills. He also called for the removal of any obstacles in the smooth transfer of paddy to the mills.

"Today, we reached a significant milestone, having purchased Rs 1,100 crore worth of paddy from farmers, with 93

per cent of this amount already credited to their bank accounts," the Minister stated. Nadendla Manohar emphasised the importance of protecting the interests of tenant farmers. Later, the Minister visited Balaji Rice Mill and interacted with farmers.

Recurring food poisoning incidents in TG schools sparks BRS outrage

PNS ■ HYDERABAD

With 40 students from the Maganoor Zilla Parishad High School in Narayanpet district were hospitalised after suffering from food poisoning on Tuesday, parents and BRS leaders have expressed outrage over the recurring cases of food contamination in government schools, accusing the State government of negligence.

Former minister Harish Rao lashed out at the State government, criticising its failure to address the alarming rise in food poisoning cases. "Within 10 days of 100 students falling ill, another food poisoning incident! How many more students must suffer or lose their lives before the government wakes up? The Chief Minister's assur-



ances of strict action against those responsible for serving contaminated food have proven to be hollow promises," he said.

MLC Kavitha also expressed her distress on social media, stating, "Just 24 hours after the tragic death of a tribal ashram school student, Shailaja, another incident of food poisoning has occurred in Maganoor. It is heart-wrenching to see children, who carry school bags for

a brighter future, cry in agony after eating contaminated food. This is a glaring failure of the Congress government, which remains unmoved despite recurring tragedies in our schools."

The BRS party issued an official statement condemning the incident, calling it a result of the Congress government's 'incompetence and negligence.' The statement highlighted that 20 students were transferred to Maktal Hospital after falling ill due to contaminated midday meals. "This is the third food poisoning case in just one week. The Congress government's apathy is putting the lives of underprivileged children at risk. How many more lives need to be lost for the government to take action?" the party questioned.



Constitution guarantees equal rights to all: SP

PNS ■ TIRUPATI

Superintendent of Police (SP) L Subba Rayudu emphasised the importance of unity and progress, stating that the Constitution guarantees equal fundamental rights to all citizens. The SP was speaking at a programme held on Tuesday to mark Constitution Day, commemorating the adoption of the Indian Constitution.

Paying tributes to Dr BR Ambedkar, the architect of the Constitution, SP Subba Rayudu garlanded his portrait during the event. He noted that the Constitution, which came into effect on November 26, 1949, remains a cornerstone of justice, equality, and liberty for all Indians.

In his address, the SP stressed the collective duty to uphold constitutional values, ensuring safety, respect, and

empowerment for every citizen. "As we celebrate this momentous occasion, let us reaffirm our commitment to protecting the rights and dignity of all. We will continue working tirelessly to maintain law and order, prevent crime, and foster peace and harmony," he said.

Recalling the journey towards independence and constitutional governance, the SP highlighted Dr Ambedkar's tireless efforts in drafting a Constitution that serves as a beacon of hope and progress. "Seventy-five years since its adoption, it is a matter of great pride to celebrate this day," he remarked.

The programme was attended by Additional SPs Ravi Manoharachary, Srinivasa Rao, Giridhar, and Ravindra Reddy, along with other officials.

Ambedkar statue vandalised



PNS ■ ELURU

Unidentified miscreants destroyed the statue of Dr. BR Ambedkar at Dwaraka Tirumala village on Tuesday.

Sub-inspector Sudhir said that some miscreants destroyed the statue of Ambedkar, located on the premises of the village panchayat office, in the wee hours. The police registered a case. A police team examined CCTV footage of the area to identify the miscreants.

75th National Constitution Day celebrated at Raj Bhavan

PNS ■ VIJAYAWADA

On the occasion of the 75th National Constitution Day, Governor of Andhra Pradesh, S Abdul Nazeer, paid floral tributes to Bharat Ratna Dr BR Ambedkar and the founding fathers of the Indian Constitution at the Durbar Hall in Raj Bhavan, here on Tuesday.

In his address, Governor Abdul Nazeer highlighted that the 75th National Constitution Day marks a significant milestone in the history of independent India. He said that the contributions of the Framers of the Indian Constitution would always be remembered for providing the noble principles that form the foundation of freedom, equality, and social harmony. The Governor emphasised that the Constitution outlines the national goals of democracy, secularism, socialism, and national inte-



gration, and defines the rights and duties of citizens. He also stated that the Fundamental Duties enjoin upon the citizens

of India to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity, and integrity of the country, live in a spirit of common brotherhood tran-

scending religious, linguistic, and regional diversities, renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women, foster scientific

temper, and preserve India's rich cultural heritage.

The event was attended by Sameera Nazeer, First Lady of Andhra Pradesh; Justices of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh; R. Mahaboob Basha, Chief Information Commissioner; Neelam Sawhney, State Election Commissioner; A.R. Anuradha, Chairperson of the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission; Neerabh Kumar Prasad, Chief Secretary; Ch. Dwaraka Tirumala Rao, Director General of Police; Dammalapati Srinivas, Advocate General; G. Anantha Ramu, Special Chief Secretary; Dr M. Hari Jawaharlal, Secretary to the Governor; Dr G Lakshminsha, Collector of NTR District; S.V. Raja Sekhara Babu, Commissioner of Police, NTR District; and other distinguished dignitaries.

ACROSS THE STATES



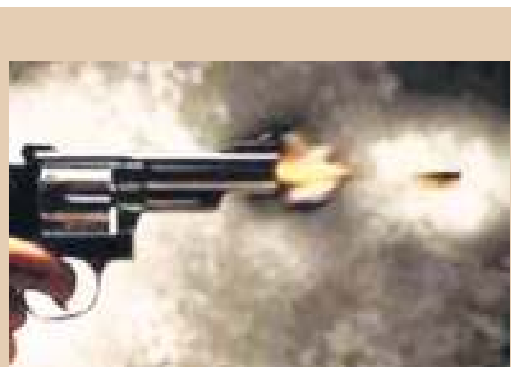
K'taka to implement Single Window System software

Karnataka Minister for Large and Medium Industries, M B Patil, on Tuesday set a December deadline for all relevant departments to adopt the newly developed Single Window System software, which is scheduled for launch in January 2025. The announcement was made during a meeting held at Vidhana Soudha. In a statement, Patil noted that current procedures related to project approvals, industrial plot allotments, and CA plot allotments in industrial areas are often complex and multi-staged, resulting in delays. The new software, developed by Microsoft, aims to streamline and simplify these processes. To expedite implementation, the Chief Secretary will soon convene a meeting, Patil said. He also assured that appropriate training would be provided to department staff to ensure effective use of the software. Patil emphasised that the Single Window System will eliminate the need for investors to approach multiple departments for approvals, providing a seamless process instead.



HC expresses concern over rising elephant deaths

The Orissa High Court on Tuesday expressed concern over the rise in elephant deaths across the state, particularly those caused by electrocution, emphasising the need for immediate and effective measures to protect the jumbos. Acting on a suo motu public interest petition, a division bench headed by Chief Justice C S Singh directed the state's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) to submit a comprehensive action plan within 10 days to mitigate the crisis. The PCCF informed the high court that since 2020, 85 elephants have died due to electrocution, with three such fatalities reported recently in the Sambalpur Nakati Deula range. The court has also instructed the PCCF to prepare a separate action plan in consultation with the power distribution company to prevent further such incidents.



'Accidental gunfire' kills ITBP jawan

An ITBP jawan hailing from Uttarakhand was killed in an "accidental" gunfire in Jharkhand's Dhanbad district on Tuesday, police said. The incident occurred at a camp in Binod Bihari Mahato College in Balipar, around 20 km from the district quarters town of Dhanbad. The jawan, identified as Sandeep Kumar, hailed from Rudra Prayag in Uttarakhand and had come to Jharkhand on assembly elections assignment. He was staying in the camp along with his battalion, they said. After hearing the sound of firing, his colleagues rushed to his room and found him unconscious with a bullet mark on the chest, said city SP Ajit Kumar. Kumar was immediately taken to a hospital where doctors declared him dead on arrival, he said. He said prima facie it appears that the jawan was killed in "accidental gunfire". "An investigation has been initiated to ascertain the actual reason of death," he said.

'COMMITTED TO BOOST GEOSPATIAL CAPABILITIES IN ASIA-PACIFIC'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh on Tuesday said India is deeply committed to strengthening geospatial capabilities in the Asia-Pacific to address the challenges of rapid urbanisation and environmental degradation. Addressing the inaugural session of the UN Global Geospatial Information Management-Asia Pacific Conference here, Singh said effective use of geospatial data can help ensure inclusive development, equitable access to resources, and sustainable growth for all. "By working together, we can share best practices, develop common standards, and support each other in addressing the unique challenges faced by our region -- be it rapid urbanisation, environmental degradation, or the

increasing frequency of natural disasters," Singh said. The UN-GGIM Asia-Pacific Conference on Geo-enabling Data Economy for Sustainable Development brought together leading experts, policymakers, and geospatial professionals from the Asia and the Pacific region. He said the Asia-Pacific region was home to diverse economies and cultures, and effective use of geospatial data can help ensure inclusive development, equitable access to resources, and sustainable growth for all. India is deeply committed to

strengthening the Asia-Pacific region's geospatial capabilities through UNGGIM-AP, Singh said. With 90 international delegates from 30 countries, along with 120 delegates from India, the conference provides a platform for sharing knowledge, discussing advancements in geospatial technology, and fostering collaboration between member nations and other regional committees of UN-GGIM. "To truly harness the power of geospatial data, it is essential that stakeholders -- governments, businesses, and civil society -- collaborate and invest

in the necessary infrastructure, and ensure that data is accessible and usable by all," Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology said. Karandikar said with the right approach, geo-enabling the data economy can play a central role in achieving the global sustainable development agenda and ensuring a better future for generations to come.



By working together, we can share best practices, develop common standards, and support each other in addressing the unique challenges faced by our region -- be it rapid urbanisation, environmental degradation, or the increasing frequency of natural disasters
JITENDRA SINGH
Science and Technology Minister



CENTRE'S NEGLIGENCE OF WAYANAD
Rahul, Priyanka to lead agitation in Parliament

PNS ■ WAYANAD/NEW DELHI
The Congress party will intensify its protests both inside and outside Parliament against this. "Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi will lead the agitation," Siddique told reporters in New Delhi. Both the ruling CPI(M)-led LDF and the opposition Congress-led UDF have been demanding the BJP-led union government to declare the landslide calamity as a national disaster and provide required assistance for the relief and rehabilitation of the survivors at the earliest. The state recently witnessed an intense political row following the Centre's recent letter to the state government stating that under the existing guidelines of SDRF and NDRF, there is no provision to declare any calamity a 'national disaster'. The disaster, which struck on July 30, devastated large parts of three villages -- P u n c h i r i m a t t a m , Chooralmala, and Mundakkai--along with sections of Attamala in Wayanad. As per the government, the deadly disaster claimed 231 lives, while 47 people are still missing.

'COVID was different': SC bemoans distribution of free ration

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Tuesday flagged the difficulties surrounding the distribution of freebies and said COVID times were different when distressed migrant workers were provided the relief. In a judgment on June 29, 2021, and subsequent orders, the top court passed a slew of directions to the authorities asking them to undertake welfare measures, including giving ration cards to all migrant workers, who were distressed during the COVID-19 pandemic, registered with the "e-Shram" portal. The portal was a comprehensive national database of unorganised workers launched by the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment with the primary aim to facilitate delivery of welfare benefits



and social security measures to unorganised sector workers across the country. On Tuesday, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan was informed by advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for an NGO seeking free ration for all the migrant workers, the court directed the Centre to provide free ration and ration cards to all those workers, who are registered on the portal. Justice Kant said, "Ration card is an important official document which is associated with the identity and entitlement of a person but the difficulties arise when we indulge in freebies. COVID time was something different but now, we have to look into it." Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, objected to Bhushan's

submission and argued the government was bound by the National Food Security Act of 2013 and whatever entitlement was statutorily provided would be given. He said there were certain NGOs who did not work on the ground during the pandemic and he could state on affidavit that the petitioner NGO was one among them. Bhushan said as the Centre relied on data from the 2011 census for migrant workers and hadn't conducted a census in 2021, actual figures were not available with it. "There is a jump in figures by at least 20 per cent and that is why this court had directed that despite the mandate of Food Security Act, the government can go beyond the ambit to provide relief to the migrant workers registered on e-shram portal," said Bhushan.

Deputy CM hints at Cabinet reshuffle in Karnataka

PNS ■ BENGALURU
Amid speculation that a Cabinet reshuffle was on cards, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Tuesday indicated about the possibility of such an exercise in the days ahead, as he noted that few ministers have been given a "message" about their term. Shivakumar, who is also the state Congress president, hinted about it, as he referred to the term of office of panchayat chairman being fixed to two years with a message that they will have to demit office after that, and a similar message being given to some ministers too. He, however, did not

elaborate further. But, his comments are being seen as an indication about possible reshuffle in the days ahead. "... before the President of India (while staking claim to form govt in 2004), she (Sonia Gandhi) said -- I don't want the prime minister post, and let an economist, a Sikh, Manmohan S i n g h become the prime minister, we have such history....we fix p a n c h a y a t chairman tenure for an year or

six months or two-and-half years, and when we have to make them vacate post after their tenure, (it is so difficult that) god should save us," Shivakumar said. Addressing the Constitution day event organised by the party here, he said, "Now we have fixed the tenure of the chairmans' to two years. We have given that message to some ministers too. I don't want to discuss it now..." Later, speaking to reporters, Shivakumar said he will be meeting party high command during his visit to Delhi later this week.



BJP IN NO HURRY TO ANNOUNCE CM CANDIDATE : SOURCES

PNS ■ MUMBAI
The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) would not rush into announcing its chief ministerial candidate until the distribution of portfolios in the new Maharashtra government is finalised, party sources said on Tuesday. The indications that the Mahayuti coalition's decision on who would become the next CM would be delayed emerged as the Governor on Tuesday morning asked Eknath Shinde to act as a caretaker chief minister after he tendered his resignation. Despite the BJP-Shiv Sena-NCP combine's landslide victory in the assembly elections, there is no consensus among the allies on who would occupy the top post. "The central leadership is in no hurry to name a candidate for the chief minister's post. We have secured a decisive mandate, and the priority now is to work out a comprehensive plan for government formation. That includes finalising ministerial portfolios and distribution of key posts such as district guardian ministers," a state BJP leader told PTI while requesting anonymity. The careful approach stems from the desire to avoid friction among the coalition partners, he said. Elaborating, another BJP insider cited the case of Mahendra Thorave, an MLA from Raigad district who had opposed the appointment of NCP's Aditi Tatkare as district guardian minister earlier this year, owing to the long-standing local rivalry. "We want to address such issues now, ensuring that everyone is on the same page before moving forward," he said. Shiv Sena won 132 seats, NCP 41 in the November 20 elections. The results were announced on November 23.

'Bring back ballot paper' Kharge calls for campaign

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Tuesday demanded the return of ballot paper and called for a concerted campaign on the scale of Bharat Jodo Yatra to create awareness about it. Speaking at the 'Samvidhan Rakshak Abhiyaan' function at Talkatora stadium, he said Prime minister Narendra Modi fears a caste census. He said Modi is afraid that if he allows a caste census then all sections of society will demand their share. Kharge also accused the BJP of not having any "constitution-



al integrity or federal character" and alleged that the party was undoing everything that BR Ambedkar and other members of the Constituent Assembly did through the Constitution. Referring to the Maharashtra Assembly polls, which the NDA

swept, Kharge alleged that billionaire businessman Gautam Adani had a lot to do with the election as his wealth was at stake. "We should all unite and move forward together and push them aside. I do not wish to speak about elections, but I would surely say the votes of all the poor and oppressed communities are going to waste. They should all demand voting by ballot paper," he said. "Let them keep EVMS with them. We don't want EVMS, we want voting on ballot paper. Then they will know what their position is and where they stand. "From our party, we

should start this campaign to make everyone aware that they should want ballot paper back. We will speak to other political parties also," Kharge said, urging Rahul Gandhi to launch a movement. "We should start a campaign like Bharat Jodo Yatra to bring back the ballot paper," he stressed. On the prime minister, he said, "PM Modi fears caste census as everyone will then demand their share and Modi will have to run away to Ahmedabad." If the prime minister really wants unity in the country, then he and the BJP should stop spreading hatred, he said.

What it took to frame India's Constitution

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
Debates over 167 days, 274 members, 36 lakh words -- that's what it took before the Constituent Assembly adopted the world's longest written constitution on this day in 1949. Every Article in the Constitution, which ran into 1.45 lakh words at the time, was debated by members of the Constituent Assembly. They sat for 11 sessions and 167 days over a period of two years, 11 months and 18 days to frame the Constitution. BR Ambedkar, regarded as the chief architect of the Constitution, was assisted by members of the drafting committee he chaired. India's first president Rajendra



Prasad was the first person to sign the document 75 years ago. It is the largest written constitution in the world and the first edition was neither printed nor typed -- it was handwritten and calligraphed in both Hindi and English. According to facts available on the

Lok Sabha website and analysis of Constituent Assembly debates by the think-tank PRS India, the Constitution's first copy was handwritten by Prem Behari Narain Raizada and published by him in Dehradun. Every page was decorated by artists from Shantiniketan, including Beohar Rammanohar Sinha and Nandalal Bose. It took two years, 11 months and 18 days to complete the final draft. At present, it contains 395 Articles and 12 Schedules. The Constitution has been amended 106 times so far. Approximately 36 lakh words were spoken during debates in the Constituent Assembly and two-

thirds of all deliberations were during the clause-by-clause discussions during the second reading. From November 1948 to October 1949, the Constituent Assembly met for clause-by-clause discussions on the draft Constitution. The members met for 101 days during this period. Fundamental Rights were included in Part III of the draft Constitution and discussed for 16 days. As much as 14 per cent of the total clause-by-clause discussions was dedicated to Fundamental Rights. Directive Principles of State Policy were included in Part IV and discussed for six days. Four per cent of the clause-by-clause discussion was dedicated to

Directive Principles. Provisions related to citizenship were included in Part II. Two per cent of the discussion was dedicated to this part. Six members spoke more than a lakh words, with Ambedkar contributing over 2.67 lakh words. India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, a member of the Constituent Assembly, spoke 73,804 words. The drafting committee scrutinised and revised the draft created by BN Rau, the constitutional advisor, and submitted it for consideration of the assembly. The drafting committee members frequently responded to comments made by other members during the discussion.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Yet another flashpoint

All stakeholders must demonstrate utmost restraint to prevent any escalation of communal tensions in Sambhal

The town of Sambhal in Uttar Pradesh has become the epicentre of intense communal tension following a violent confrontation over a court-mandated survey of the historic Shahi Jama Masjid. The incident, which unfolded on Sunday, has claimed three lives, injured numerous others and raised pressing concerns about the fragile communal harmony in the region. The Shahi Jama Masjid, situated in Chandausi, Sambhal, is a centuries-old structure recognised as a 'Monument of National Importance' by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Protected under the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act, 1904, the mosque became the subject of legal contention following a petition filed on November 19. The petitioners, a group of eight individuals including advocate Hari Shankar Jain and Mahant Rishiraj Giri, alleged that the mosque was built by demolishing a Shri Hari Har Temple in the 16th century under the orders of Mughal Emperor Babur. They claimed that the temple held immense religious significance for Hindus as the prophesied site of Lord Vishnu's Kalki avatar.



The petition sought ASI intervention and public access to the site, accusing the mosque administrators of obstructing entry and the ASI of negligence in protecting the monument. The legal dispute led the Court of Civil Judge (Senior Division) in Sambhal to order a survey of the mosque, with a report due by November 29. The initial survey on Tuesday was reportedly incomplete, prompting authorities to schedule a follow-up on Sunday. However, tensions escalated as the survey team arrived, resulting in a violent clash between opposing groups. The confrontation saw stone-pelting, arson and the deployment of security forces. Three lives were lost, and several were injured, including police officers and administrative personnel. The violence has since been condemned across the political spectrum, though it has also sparked a heated debate over the motivations behind the survey and its handling. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav accused the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of instigating communal divisions. BJP spokespersons, however, defended the legal process. The situation in Sambhal remains tense, with heightened security measures in place to prevent further unrest. But are we seeing a pattern here? Some politically motivated individuals deliberately file petitions raking up controversy where none exists. Communal tension ensues and some people and party backs up the claim and polarisation is complete for politicians to exploit the situation. We have had enough of communal violence and surely this one can be avoided as 'The Place of Worship (Special Provisions) Act, 1991' is clear that all places of religion must be preserved as they were at the time of independence. The Shahi Jama Masjid row reflects the broader challenges of navigating historical grievances, communal sensitivities and legal mandates in a pluralistic society. The need for restraint and dialogue among all stakeholders is crucial to restoring peace and preventing further loss of innocent lives.

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PICTALK



People buy groundnut during the inauguration of the 'Kadalekai Parishes', in Bengaluru

Prasar Bharati unveils WAVES app amid criticism and challenges

Prasar Bharati launched its much-anticipated app, WAVES touted as a strategic leap for India's national broadcaster

In a vibrant ceremony during the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa, Prasar Bharati unveiled its long-awaited app, WAVES. Marking a strategic step forward for India's national broadcaster, the launch was graced by Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.



However, the event's significance was overshadowed by the absence of central ministers, drawing criticism that this oversight represented a missed public relations opportunity. A Shift from OTT to App: A Branding Challenge Originally envisioned as an OTT platform, WAVES has undergone a rebranding as an app. This shift has sparked speculation that the change may be linked to limited new content. Critics have argued that the current branding does little to leverage Doordarshan's rich legacy, potentially alienating audiences, particularly in rural areas where Doordarshan's identity is deeply entrenched. Many users remain unclear about the relationship

between Prasar Bharati and Doordarshan, adding to the confusion about accessing the app. Delays and Controversies The WAVES launch comes after multiple postponements, with its original debut planned for August 15. These delays have raised questions about Prasar Bharati's preparedness to compete in the fast-paced digital media environment. Observers have highlighted internal issues, including allegations of favouritism and mismanagement. Notably, the consultancy hired to guide WAVES has faced criticism for lacking expertise in the OTT domain and allegedly sidelining experienced officials in key roles.

Adding to these challenges are unresolved trademark issues surrounding the name "WAVES," which could further complicate the app's rollout. Private broadcasters, wary of potential regulatory challenges, have shown reluctance to collaborate with the platform, dampening its industry reception. Content and Vision Despite the hurdles, WAVES aims to differentiate itself in the competitive Indian media landscape. Offering over 65 live channels and content in 12+ languages, the app seeks to combine nostalgia with fresh appeal. Iconic Doordarshan programmes like 'Ramayan' and 'Mahabharat' are set to feature alongside new productions such as 'Fauji 2.0.' WAVES also plans to support emerging talent by showcasing student films and works by National Creator Awardees. Operating on a revenue-sharing model, WAVES aspires to empower creators while ensuring the protection of intellectual property. However, stand-

ing out against global giants like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, known for their vast libraries and advanced technology, presents a formidable challenge. The Road Ahead The launch of WAVES is a critical juncture for Prasar Bharati, offering a chance to redefine public broadcasting in the digital era. However, success will hinge on resolving internal discord, addressing operational concerns, and crafting a user experience that resonates with audiences. While the launch at IFFI has created a momentary buzz, sustaining momentum will require robust strategies, consistent content quality, and a clear brand identity. As WAVES ventures into the competitive digital media space, its journey will be closely watched. For Prasar Bharati, the app represents both a bold opportunity and a test of its capacity to adapt and thrive in an evolving media ecosystem. (The writer is a journalist; views are personal)



AMIT KR ROY

K P Sharma Oli walks a tightrope on China

Will Oli's stance on the BRI and his decision to prioritise China over India define his political legacy or deepen Nepal's internal divides?



ASHOK K MEHTA

In Kathmandu, I observed that Nepal Prime Minister KP Oli's visit to China has become a hot potato in the chilly Kathmandu valley. The China visit is being portrayed by his Unified Marxist Leninist Party (UML)-led coalition government as a bold initiative by Oli to resolve the long-pending BRI Implementation plan. The BRI Framework Agreement 2017 signed by Nepal figured during the maiden visit of President Xi Jinping in 2019 when Xi announced NC Rs 60 bn in grants under BRI. Since 2008, China has announced NC Rs 80 bn in grants. It seems the government could not use the aid for projects under BRI due to some issues. Several delegations from both countries have interacted over the BRI Implementation plan for a long but the plan has not been signed. Oli last visited China in 2016 after the Indian blockade and signed several agreements including energy trade but almost none has materialised. China is insisting that BRI projects that were truncated at Beijing's request from 35 to 9 be under loan whereas Nepal, especially Nepali Congress, the senior coalition partner, wants them under grant. There were fears Oli might sign in to please the Chinese which resulted in considerable squabbling between them. A high-level task force of the two parties has been meeting to arrive at a consensus. Opposition lawmakers wanted all the agreements signed so far to be made public and discussed in Parliament and with civil society. At a UML meeting, Oli recently announced he would not sign BRI for the sake of coalition unity. Chinese envoy Chen Song who had been lobbying with lawmakers to sign the BRI plan has clarified that Chinese-built Pokhara airport would not be converted from loan to grant. Foreign Minister Arzu Rana is going to China on November 28 to prepare for Oli's visit with some plans on BRI. The other troubling issue was 'the first where - China or India' visit of Oli. Traditionally barring two exceptions - Prime Ministers Tanka Prasad Acharya and



Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) - all others on becoming PM have first gone to New Delhi. Prachanda had clarified that his was not a state visit to China but he had gone for the Beijing Olympics. India has not invited all PMs - like Madhav Nepal, Jhalanath Khanal, and Sushil Koirala - from both Left and Centre-Right parties but New Delhi has historically favoured Nepali Congress. Oli had said some pretty undiplomatic, even unkind things about India during his second term as PM after he had internationalised the Kalapani dispute and made it into a national issue. But later, Oli did work with India. Oli going to China without Beijing making any concession on BRI is cocking a snook at India. During the annual Kantipur Conclave in Kathmandu this month, he clarified that as a sovereign nation, a PM can visit any country first. He compared the 'first visit India or China conundrum' to visiting Nizamuddin or Ajmer Sharif first: which made little impact on the mainly Nepali audience, adding that his visit to China will not harm relations with India. For Nepal maintaining balance between India and China is a vital strategic mission that the founding father of Nepal,



OLI LAST VISITED CHINA IN 2016 AFTER THE INDIAN BLOCKADE AND SIGNED SEVERAL AGREEMENTS INCLUDING ENERGY TRADE BUT ALMOST NONE HAS MATERIALISED

Prithvi Narayan Shah had described as a yam between two boulders. Geography and social and cultural factors have favoured India. The de-throned Maoist leader and four-time PM Prachanda, Oli's erstwhile short-term partner, accused him in an interview with an Indian journalist who had come for the Kantipur Conclave, of playing the China card. UML was incensed by the allegation, demanding an apology from Prachanda. At the Kantipur Conclave, Prachanda informed the audience that he was happy he was no longer heading the government as he could atone for his party's mistakes and serve the people better. He clarified that with 32 seats, he had never sought power but others (NC and UML) had come to him to form the government. He asserted he had made a direct assault on corruption - the no 1 bane of Nepal - and put many corrupt leaders including members of his party, and those who had supported his government in jail. This included the newsmaker and former Home Minister, Rabi Lamichhane from the Rashtriya Swatantra Party who is at present in jail, being investigated for fraud. In Kathmandu, I discovered that Lamichhane has created a problem for the government

on which jail he should be lodged in, due to massive protests by his supporters. They took him to the Terai towns but not to his citadel in Chitwan and brought him back to Pokhara as they were unable to present him before a Kathmandu court to avoid creating law and order issues. Every other day there are massive traffic jams in Kathmandu over some issue or the other. Oli was cool about Rabi, saying at the Kantipur Conclave that he had 'once given Rabi a job (in Nepal much about his case. The parliamentary probe that was ordered on him as demanded by the Nepali Congress was at the behest of PM Prachanda and Rabi himself who was the Home Minister in the coalition government. He added: "let law take its course". Oli's China conundrum was grabbing headlines. By declaring he won't sign the BRI Implementation plan on Chinese terms for coalition unity he has taken the fizz out of the champagne that was to be popped after his visit. (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HISTORIC WIN AT PERTH

Madam — Apropos to the news headline "Team India rises like a phoenix at Perth" (November 26). Kudos to Team India! After the drubbing from the Kiwis in our own backyard 0-3, India dominated the first Test in Perth, crushing Australia by a massive 295 runs. Chasing a daunting 534, Australia crumbled for 238. This historic win marks India's largest victory by runs in Australia, surpassing their 222-run win in Melbourne in 1977. What is more redeeming is the way the Indian team played the 2nd innings. Not many teams have come back after being 150 all out on the first day, but this Indian team has time and again shown that it is built differently. Bumrah, leading in only his second Test, was left with a lot to do and fewer options to work with. While Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli and KL Rahul will be among the heroes with their solid second innings batting performances, it was the stand-in skipper Jasprit Bumrah's unbelievable skill set and self-belief during Australia's first innings rout that formed the cornerstone of India's win. Hope, after this Test, players should be retained based on their current performance, not on past achievements. The selection process should send a clear message that no player is above the team's performance standards. If a replacement player has excelled, they should be given priority and retained for their contributions. Senior players, regardless of their past glory, must earn their place back through demonstrated performance. This ensures that performance, consistency, and fairness drive the selection process, keeping the team competitive and motivated. Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

HOUSE ADJOURNED OVER ADANI

Madam — On the first day of the winter session, i.e., Monday, the House was adjourned due to the demand for a discussion on Adani. Now it does not seem that much work or meaningful discussion will be done in this session. Because of the kind of allegations that have been made against

SC rejects plea challenging Preamble



In a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court has dismissed a batch of petitions challenging the inclusion of the terms 'Socialist and Secular' in the Preamble to the Constitution as per the 42nd Amendment passed in 1976. The Preamble declares India a Sovereign, Socialist, Secular and Democratic republic. The objectives of the Preamble are to secure justice, liberty and equality for all citizens and promote fraternity to main-

tain the unity and integrity of the nation. The Preamble is considered the soul and spirit of the Constitution. It still plays an important role when there is ambiguity in Articles' provisions or when an interpretation of the Constitution becomes confusing.

The Preamble, which highlights guiding principles and some fundamental values of the bases of which the Indian Constitution was written, will become invalid and insignificant when important terms 'Sovereign, Socialist, Secular' are removed from the Preamble. Knowing the importance of the Preamble, in 1973, in the Kesavananda Bharati case, a 13-judge bench of the Supreme Court declared that the Preamble would be considered as part of the Constitution. In the 1995 Union Government vs LIC of India case, the Supreme Court once again held that Preamble is an integral part of the Constitution. P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

Gautam Adani and his entire team in America, it is obvious that the Opposition of the country will raise its voice on it. Now our Prime Minister wants to defeat every solid allegation through his electoral victory (Maharashtra). That is why when the House was not functioning on Monday, he told the Opposition that "those who have been rejected by the people are indulging in hooliganism in the House." Is this really so? Obviously, the people who are sitting in the Opposition are sitting there because they are in the minority. Does minority mean that they should not even talk about such a big stain on the country's reputation? Why does this government repeatedly stand in favour of Adani? Charge sheets have been filed in a New York court against Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani, his nephew Sagar Adani and six others. It is impossible to file a charge sheet there without proof. The US Securities and Exchange Commission has alleged that Gautam Adani and his associates paid a bribe of more than \$250 million, i.e., about two thousand crore rupees, for their renewable energy company in

India and hide this information from investors while raising capital in America. Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

SAMBHAL MOSQUE DISPUTE

Madam — The horrific incident that occurred in Sambhal highlights the authorities' alarming reaction, where, without conducting a proper hearing or trial, they initiated a survey within just two hours. The incident has spread a curtain of fear and horror across the country. The assertion of replacing a mosque with a temple is intensifying over time, threatening the diversity and unity of our nation. Mohan Bhagwat's statement should be taken into account: it is not right to dig beneath every mosque in search of a Shilving and claim it as a temple. Such actions are detrimental to the harmony of society. Early recognition can help us to take immediate measures to limit any damages. Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

**FIRST COLUMN**
LESSONS IN
HUMILITY AND FAITH

Are we ready to confront the truth of our smallness in the grand scheme of existence?



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Have we realised that we are intrinsically small souls? That we only play small roles, yes, of different levels, but always small. I will cite many examples to substantiate this fact in this article. The only big is God, who is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He controls everything. We shouldn't be surprised by the reality of us being small. What did we expect? There are billions of us and all interdependent.

We cannot exist without the support of others right from our birth. Ravana was puffed up because he thought that he was big, having defeated important entities. But he was made to bite the dust and he accepted that his highly bloated ego was his undoing. Hitler thought that he was big and was going to control the world. What happened? He committed suicide having realised his smallness. Nixon was President of the USA – a large and prosperous nation. He was forced to resign, because of his underhanded activities. Napoleon was similarly humiliated when he was banished from his country to live in Elba – an Italian island, away from his dear country France.

Smallness is only one of our handicaps; ignorance is another. Despite the vast knowledge Ravana possessed, he was ignorant like most of us; he ignored the reality of God. Only the most fortunate like



Sant Tulsidas transcend the barrier of ignorance. What will you call Kansa? He kept on trying to kill the child Krishna without realising that the Lord cannot be killed. Ultimately, Lord Krishna had to kill him. Duryodhana saw so much of Lord Krishna, but somehow it didn't sink in that the Lord was different; He was God. He saw how the Lord protected Draupadi from being disrobed; how Arjuna was protected by bringing back sunlight; and many such instances. His ignorance was quite deep-seated. What will you call persons, who outwardly pretend to be servants of God, but molest unsuspecting children?

Their depth of darkness, which engulfs their consciousness does not let them see that punishment is coming. Only after they are hit with severe punishments they realise that they are quite helpless really. Draupadi realised it and cried for the Lord's help, which the merciful Lord provided. Arjuna knew in his heart that he was enjoying the protection of the Lord. That is how he was able to triumph over very powerful adversaries. In the modern era, famous film stars have committed suicide.

We become very impressed by the fame they enjoy but little do we realise that they are just as helpless as we are. Wealthy people are no better when they are hit with mental trauma as a result of extraordinarily stressful events, which shatter their sense of security, making them feel insecure in this dangerous world we live in. Yes, this world is a place of misery (The Bhagavad-Geeta 8.15), as long as one does not take shelter from God. Both external and internal dangers exist. Demonic forces are out there to harm us in order to gain some pecuniary advantage like by stealing from us.

Then, one does not know what is in store due to our past sinful acts. The smart thing is to come under the protection of God. So, what do I do? Having done my duty, I try to leave it to my Lord. Believe me, He takes care of me better than I could have imagined. It sounds like a fairy tale, but I am one of millions, who are benefiting in the present and have benefited thus in the past.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

Realigning India's economic strategy



ATUL SEHGAL

Achieving the ambitious goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047 demands a decisive overhaul of current economic policies



The world is undergoing rapid political changes. With these geopolitical changes underway, it becomes imperative to relook at the current strategy for economic development to meet the declared target of achieving a developed nation status by 2047. It becomes necessary to realign and readjust the policy points with the changing circumstances. Countries become rich by producing and selling globally valuable and value-added products. India's share in global trade has to grow rapidly from the present mealy 1.8 per cent in goods exports and 2.8 per cent in goods imports. In the service sector too, India needs to enhance its share of delivered services upwards from the present 6 per cent. How will this happen? We need to take quantum measures and hard steps without caring for internal political expediency. Global political scenario may affect the choice of strategic steps but it can have, at best, limited effect if we as a nation are determined, focused and forthright.

Nothing can come in the way if we act united and our government performs its actions without fear or favour. The government's backtracking on the Agriculture and Farm Bills of 2019 was an unfortunate incident. Such incidents should not recur. The government buckled under the fake protests by agro market middlemen masquerading as farmers who created a false show of protests to put spokes in the wheel of the Bills and sabotage them. The government, under fear of burgeoning vandalism by anti-national elements to prevent the promulgation of Bills, backed by foreign enemy countries capitulated and rolled back the Bills. This should not have happened. The country paid a heavy price for this as agriculture is still the mainstay of India's economy. If only those important Bills had been passed, we would have witnessed an economic growth rate increase of at least 2 per cent over the existing. Let our government bring back those Bills at the earliest appropriate time to provide a vital booster to our economy. The other important area



THE GOVERNMENT BUCKLED UNDER THE FAKE PROTESTS BY AGRO MARKET MIDDLEMEN MASQUERADING AS FARMERS WHO CREATED A FALSE SHOW OF PROTESTS TO PUT SPOKES IN THE WHEEL OF THE BILLS AND SABOTAGE THEM

that needs the urgent attention of the government is the MSME sector which continues to lie stagnant. This sector is the prime driver of employment growth and needs steps to facilitate the establishment of new units and expansion of the existing ones. These steps are—bureaucratic reforms to cut red tape and reduce unnecessary regulatory compliances that engender corruption and impede growth. To boost Indigenous manufacturing and increase the share of manufacturing in the national GDP from 16 per cent (almost stagnant since 2015) to upwards of 20 per cent, rebooting the entire Make in India program is needed. The blueprint of this otherwise visionary plan was, alas, not implemented seriously.

Too much dependence on foreign capital and FDI was never forthcoming and efforts should have been made to utilise domestic capital. The central sector and state sector Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) should have taken the initiative in enhancing domestic manufacturing. Also, Make in India should have emphasised Make by India. Bureaucratic reforms, an increase in domestic manufacturing especially by PSUs by increasing import tariffs and further increasing fiscal concessions are some of the steps needed. Good work has been done in the area of defence and space in this context by encouraging and promoting startups.

This should be extended to other sectors of the economy. Value-added manufacturing in agriculture, food, healthcare and education will go a long way in boosting indigenous manufacturing and even exports. It is quite a pity that in spite of the wonderful success of the BJP government in the cleanup of the Banks, its benefit has not percolated to domestic manufacturing. Why out of the

100 smart cities conceived in 2014, only about 20 have seen the light of the day and that too partially? The establishment of special economic zones and specialised product production zones was blueprinted but its implementation has also got stuck in the legislative and bureaucratic quagmires. Bureaucratic reforms, I reiterate, are an emergent necessity. Large imports from China over the last ten years have indeed prevented the growth of MSMEs in the country. Many pre-existing factories faced closure and many manufacturers turned traders. India's exports to China in 2023-24 were USD 16.65 billion, while imports stood at USD 101.75 billion, leaving a trade deficit of more than USD 85 billion. Efforts were made by the ruling NDA government to contain Chinese imports. But most of the curtailment took place in lower-end consumer goods and less dent could be made in import of industrial goods. Irrespective of government policy, if our countrymen had decided to boycott Chinese goods that can be produced in India, we would have made a huge dent in Chinese imports and facilitated the growth of the domestic manufacturing industry. But this did not happen. The land acquisition Amendment Bill was presented in Parliament on 10 March 2015 but could not be passed due to opposition by non-BJP lawmakers in the Rajya Sabha where the ruling NDA lacked a clear majority in numbers. The opposition party MPs called the proposed amendments anti-farmer and anti-poor. The proposed amendments sought to remove requirements for approval from farmers to proceed with land acquisition under five broad categories of projects. Its passage continues to hang fire. It is the foundational base of the Make in India program. When will it be

passed? Political expediency has been truly the bane of our country and the main impediment to our fast-track economic progress. In the above context, it would be appropriate to mention that strongly nationalistic citizens can collectively create conditions conducive to the growth of the domestic industry. The economic resurgence of Germany and Japan post World War 2 are case in point. Though the USA lent economic support to these countries, their citizens were patriotically driven to establish their domestic manufacturing base and the countries developed into major industrial and economic powers in a period of barely two decades following their defeat and total devastation in 1945, the end year of the war. Both these countries lay stress on manufacturing, innovation and technology development. Their emphasis was on production and value-added exports. A similar strategy is needed. India has been the world's major economic power for millennia and in keeping with its inherent potential; it is capable of a long-term economic growth rate of 12 per cent.

For this to happen, the aforesaid steps brook no delay. In the destiny of nations, there are some phases when it becomes necessary to take bold steps in line with progressive principles of economic development rather than get bogged down by over-strategising and political expediency. Our revered political and economic scholar Chanakya had stated that Dharma (righteousness) should take precedence over everything else in governance and even strategy should be aligned with universal divine Dharma. We need to proceed further in our economic journey accordingly.

(The author is a management consultant based in New Delhi; views are personal)

Reaping our demographic dividend: Can skilling be the secret sauce?

With coordinated action, innovative strategies and a commitment to scalable skill development, India can emerge as a global economic and workforce leader

With a staggering 1.44 billion people 68 per cent of them between the ages of 15 and 64, India stands to gain from an immense, globally unmatched, demographic dividend that presents an unprecedented opportunity for economic growth amidst global challenges of declining birth rates and labour shortages. The vast labour force positions India to realise the government's vision of becoming the world's third-largest economy and the skills capital of the world.

This, coupled with the global shift towards diversifying talent supply chains – particularly to countries like India – can significantly enhance our geopolitical standing. East Asia offers compelling evidence of



ARUNESH SINGH

reaping the demographic dividend. UNFPA reported that Korea saw its per-capita gross domestic product grow about 2,200 per cent between 1950 and 2008, and Thailand's GDP grew 970 per cent. The pressing question now is whether India can fully capitalise on this demographic dividend, and can the skills ecosystem be the key to unlocking this potential. The

Challenge Effectively leveraging the demographic dividend requires addressing several critical challenges. The primary challenge is the need to create sufficient job opportunities to absorb the increasing number of young people entering the workforce.

Another key challenge is to bridge the 'skills gap' – the discrepancy between the skills that job seekers possess and the skills that employers require, thereby creating opportunities for meaningful employment. This must be achieved on a large scale as the country is already home to 103 million youth categorised as NEET (not in education, employment or training) and millions of youth enter working age annually. Crafting Scalable Solutions To leverage India's demograph-

ic dividend effectively, scalable solutions for skill development are imperative. This involves creating an ecosystem – support large-scale skill enhancement initiatives. Firstly, systemic change cannot occur in isolation; therefore, it is vital for government bodies and private companies to collaborate and pool resources, expertise and funding.

Therefore, fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs) is essential for expanding skill development initiatives. It is important to align training programs with market demands, focus on outcome-based skilling, leverage technology and design effective, replicable, and adaptable programs. This collaboration can significantly contribute to cre-



ating a more resilient and practical skill development ecosystem.

Several initiatives in the realm of skill development highlight the transformative impact of targeted training and strategic partnerships. One such initiative is Project AMBER, a unique public-private partnership (PPP) where each stakeholder—government, training partners, and the pri-

private sector (philanthropy)—contributes to the model. This initiative aims to enhance overall employment and retention outcomes by prioritising the quality of training, mentoring, and retention. Such initiatives not only help achieve success at an individual level but also lay the groundwork for broader systemic changes that can redefine the impact of the skilling ecosystem. Secondly, aligning skilling programs with market demand is crucial. Collaborating with businesses provides valuable input on course content which ensures that learners are trained on skill sets that are relevant for the industry. Employer feedback mechanisms enable continuous adjustments to training programs, which are in sync with

industry requirements. This approach addresses the skills gap by equipping learners with relevant skills, helping them adapt effectively to the workplace. Ultimately, this strategy offers a solution to talent scarcity and unemployment by bridging the gap between workforce skills and market demands.

To ensure training programmes remain dynamic, it's important to integrate data-driven insights to evaluate the progress of the trainees. Thirdly, focusing on outcome-based skilling is essential as it prioritises employment and retention rather than just training. Outcome-based skilling is an approach to training that focuses on achieving specific, measurable outcomes rather than merely completing a set

curriculum or an instructional programme.

Finally, with the right use of technology, we can design skill development programmes that are both effective and scalable and create significant impact. Technology can greatly expand the reach and accessibility of these programmes through online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and mobile-friendly resources, even in remote areas. At the same time, standardised models like 'train-the-trainer' programmes ensure that rapid expansion does not come at the cost of quality, maintaining consistency across different regions.

(The writer is CEO, Generation India Foundation with inputs from Sourabh Anand, views are personal)

Aishwarya Rai talks self-worth

Actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan recently posted a powerful video on social media emphasising the importance of self-value and strength during difficult times. In the video, Aishwarya emphasises the importance of advocating for oneself and refusing to let others dictate one's worth.

In the video, the actor says, "It's crucial to stand up for your worth. You must recognise your value and never let anyone else dictate it for you."

In a brief excerpt from a potential interview or conversation, the *Dhoom 2* star discusses the significance of self-care and self-esteem. She talks about street harassment, mentioning it openly. "How to deal with it? Avoid eye contact? No. Face the problem head-on. Hold your head high—feminine and feminist. My body, my worth. Never compromise your value. Never doubt yourself. Stand up for your worth. Don't blame your dress or your lipstick. Street harassment is never your fault," she said.

She captioned the post, "On this International Day for the elimination of violence against women, join @lorealparis's Stand Up against Street Harassment Training Program. We're all worth it (sic)."



Charlize Theron teams up with Christopher Nolan

Charlize Theron recently joined the talented ensemble of actors in Christopher Nolan's upcoming movie. Being part of a strong cast with Matt Damon, Tom Holland, Anne Hathaway, Zendaya, Lupita Nyong'o, and Robert Pattinson, this project has already created a lot of excitement.

Charlize Theron is currently working on a number of upcoming projects, such as a follow-up to the Netflix action movie *The Old Guard*, the thriller *Apex* and the Apple-produced heist film *Two for the Money*.

The upcoming movie, following Nolan's successful *Oppenheimer* film, will start filming in the first six months of 2025. Universal Pictures has disclosed that a theatrical debut is scheduled for July 17, 2026.



When Arjun Kapoor thought Parineeti would 'sink' his career

Arjun Kapoor, who previously faced criticism for his acting abilities, seems to be changing opinions with his role as the main villain in director Rohit Shetty's star-studded action film, *Singham Again*. In 2012, Arjun had his first film role, playing the main character in *Ishaqzaade*, a romantic action film directed by Habib Faisal and co-starring Parineeti Chopra. However, his career has been defined by a series of failures, with his most recent film *The Lady Killer* (2023) only making Rs 60,000 despite having a budget of Rs 45 crore.

Recently, the actor, the son of well-known producer Boney Kapoor and the late Mona Shourie, looked back on his career decisions as he began a new phase. He also expressed his initial doubts about casting Parineeti Chopra in his first film, *Ishaqzaade*, primarily due to her being overly chatty.

Stating that she did a terrific job in the film, he told, "I was very against her when the casting happened. I was like, 'Yeh bahut baat karti hai' (she talks a lot) and her readings were also bad. Parineeti Chopra does not like doing workshops and readings; she's a very spontaneous actor. Or perhaps she saves it for the sets."

"On the first day, I cracked some joke and she looked at me and said 'lol'. I was like, 'Can't you just laugh?' It's not a chat, right? Why are you saying 'lol' (laugh out loud)? Just laugh. I found her irritating since she talked in emojis. Then I thought she was not serious about it despite getting such a big movie. I had been waiting for six months for us to get Zoya (Parineeti's character) and when we finally did, Zoya was doing 'lol'. I was like, 'My career is over,' since this girl doesn't have any interest. She was already doing *Ladies vs Ricky Bahl*, so I thought she doesn't have anything at stake. (At that age) you just judge people, right? I was 24 and wanted to make a career here. I was thinking, 'she has just come... she previously worked at YRF, then did a film with Ranveer Singh and she feels that she has become a big star. What would she know about acting?'," he recalled.



INTERNATIONAL EMMY AWARDS: Winners announced, Vir Das hosts with humour and heart!

The night of November 25 in New York City was filled with wins and cheers at the 52nd International Emmy Awards. The ceremony, organised by the International Academy of Television Arts & Sciences (IATAS), celebrates the top TV shows created and broadcast internationally in 2023.

This year, the gala was presented by none other than actor-comedian Vir Das. Timothy Spall won the Best Actor award for his role in the British true crime TV show *The Sixth Commandment*. At the same time, model-actress Aokbab from Thailand won the Best Actress award for her role in the thriller drama *Hunger* on Netflix.

HERE IS THE LIST OF THE WINNERS:

Best Performance by an Actor: Timothy Spall - *The Sixth Commandment* (United Kingdom)

Best Performance by an Actress: Aokbab-Chutimon Chuengcharoensukying, *Hunger* (Thailand)

Drama Series: *Les Gouttes de Dieu (Drops of God)* (France)

Comedy: *División Palermo* (Argentina)

Documentary: *Otto Baxter: Not a F***ing Horror Story* (United Kingdom)

Arts Programming: *Pianoforte* (Poland)

Non-Scripted Entertainment: *Restaurant Misverstand* (Belgium)

Short-Form Series: *Punt de no retorn (Point of No Return)* (Spain)

Sports Documentary: *Brawn: The Impossible Formula 1 Story* (United Kingdom)

Telenovela: *La Promesa (The Vow)* (Spain)

TV Movie / Miniseries: *Liebes Kind (Dear Child)* (Germany)

Kids: Animation: *Tabby McTat* (United Kingdom)

Kids: Factual: *La Vida Secreta de tu Mente (The secret life of your mind)* (Mexico)

Kids: Live-Action: *En af Drengene (One of the Boys)* (Denmark)

Meanwhile, Vir Das spoke to the press before hosting the event. "We are all underdogs; we tell original stories and come from similar circumstances. So, try to focus on what we have in common; make fun of America a little bit—that should be the trick. I hope."



Sonic the Hedgehog 3 speeds into theatres on Jan 3, 2025

Three times the speed, three times the thrills and three times the fun—get ready to race into a whirlwind of action, humor, and high-speed adventure as *Sonic the Hedgehog 3* gears up to hit the big screen on January 3, 2025! Following the success of its predecessors, this third installment promises to up the ante with a thrilling new chapter in Sonic's saga as Sonic and his friends, Tails and Knuckles, gear up to face their greatest challenge yet! The movie teases the arrival of Shadow the Hedgehog, a fan-favourite character whose mysterious past and intense rivalry with Sonic will set the stage for an epic showdown. Expect jaw-dropping visuals, heart-pounding chases and the signature wit that has made Sonic a beloved icon!

The film is led by a stellar cast featuring Jim Carrey, Ben Schwartz, James Marsden, Tika Sumpter, Idris Elba, Keanu Reeves, Krysten Ritter, Lee Majdoub, Natasha Rothwell, Adam Pally, Shemar Moore, Colleen O'Shaughnessey, Alyla Browne and James Walk.

Directed by Jeff Fowler, the film continues to honor the spirit of the classic Sega games while delivering an experience for viewers of all ages. *Sonic the Hedgehog 3* is set to be a rollercoaster ride of speed, friendship, and heroics—get ready to experience action, heart, and high-speed thrills in the most epic chapter yet!

Produced by Neal H. Moritz, p.g.a., Toby Ascher, p.g.a., Toru Nakahara, Hitoshi Okuno and directed by Jeff Fowler, Paramount Pictures Presents this film in association with Sega Sammy Group.



FUN

ARCHIE



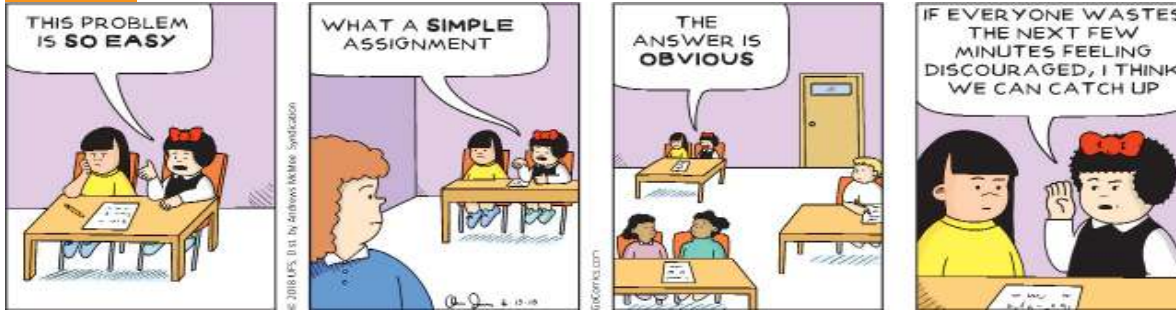
CALVIN AND HOBBS



GARFIELD



NANCY



GINGER MEGGS



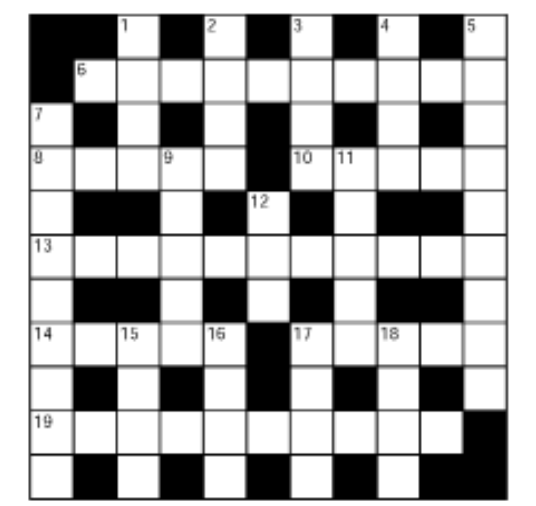
REALITY CHECK



SPEED BUMP



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 6 Snapshot
- 8 Bees make this
- 10 Exchanges for money
- 13 Make
- 14 Hair in ring shapes
- 17 Smashed to pieces
- 19 People who work in libraries
- 9 Of exactly the same size
- 11 Go in
- 12 A month
- 15 Bones in your chest
- 16 A line of sewing where cloth is joined
- 17 The edge around the top of a container
- 18 A noise made by a pig

DOWN

- 1 Part of your face
- 2 Don't go
- 3 Birds lay these
- 4 Many animals have one of these behind them
- 5 Spoke very quietly
- 7 A person in a laboratory mixes these together

SOLUTION



SUDOKU

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

Yesterday's solution

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

Rules

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

It's now 'sensationalism over substance':

DEEPA BHATIA ON LONG-FORM DOCUMENTARY EDITING



TEJAL SINHA
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In the realm of filmmaking, where stories have the power to transform and transcend, Deepa Bhatia is a masterful storyteller who is redefining the boundaries of creativity and social impact. With a career spanning over two decades, this visionary editor, producer and director has consistently pushed the envelope, leveraging her exceptional craft to bring to life narratives that are both deeply personal and universally relatable. From the intricacies of human emotion to the complexities of social justice, her films are an attestation to her unwavering commitment to amplifying marginalised voices and sparking meaningful dialogue.

As a leading figure in Bollywood, Bhatia has edited some of the industry's most commercially successful films, including *Taare Zameen Par*, *My Name is Khan*, *Rock On*, *Kai Po Che*, *Student of the Year* and *Raees*. Her projects are not just refined to these but also include the critically acclaimed films *Kedarnath*, *Drive* and the highly anticipated biopic on Sachin Tendulkar, *Sachin: A Billion Dreams*. With her hands on the pulse of contemporary storytelling, she continues to inspire audiences and push the boundaries of cinematic excellence. As a BAFTA Breakthrough 2024 participant, she is poised to take her creative vision to new heights, solidifying her position as a trailblazing filmmaker and a beacon of inspiration for generations to come.

This recognition marks a significant milestone in her career and we had the opportunity to discuss its impact on her future projects and aspirations.

Deepa's eyes light up as she discusses her selection for BAFTA Breakthrough 2024: "The word is so laden with meaning for me," says our guest for the day, who has been into editing for a long time, for about 25 years. She feels this recognition comes at a perfect time as she transitions into independent filmmaking. "First Act was my first baby step towards that. I'm writing my own film now. So, it's really given me a lot of strength, encouragement, hope and energy that yes, something's changed. Some kind of pattern has broken." Looking at her influences with the international exposure and opportunities, she's seen it coming from Britain like Gary Dollner's *Fleabag*. She hopes to engage with industry experts like



Jon Harris and Chris Smith to gain guidance and inspiration.

Her current project that she's writing at the moment is a period film set in India's pre-independence era, an adaptation of P Sainath's *The Last Heroes*. "Just imagine getting a conversation with Peter Morgan," she exclaims. "Oh my god!" As a woman in the industry, she's drawn to exploring specific issues and admires writers like Sharon Hogan in *Bad Sisters* and Sally Wainwright in *Happy Valentine*. "So, there are a whole lot of people that I would love to talk to to get some guidance, inspiration, more so since this is my first feature. Period projects are very difficult and in India, they often fall into a certain genre that is jingoistic and hyper-nationalist. I want to do something authentic and I'd love to have conversations with people who share my vision." The *Hawaa Hawaii* editor's admiration for the British film and television industry's writing is evident. Well, talking of *First Act*, the project has garnered critical acclaim and recognition. "My husband, Amol and I have been making films for children and we realised that the film industry's treatment of children is governed by parents and the industry's shortcomings in handling their well-being." She hopes to achieve a change in the industry's approach to working with children through the documentary's storytelling.

Looking at her journey, the *Fitoor* editor has worked on various genres, from feature films to documentaries. She shares her approach to editing across dif-



ferent forms. "Every project demands to be treated in a certain way. I listen to the material and navigate its unique requirements." She emphasises the importance of understanding the audience and finding the right balance for each narrative. There was something apart from the storytelling that *Taare Zameen Par* won our hearts and let's not forget, it was the editing. Kudos to the way Deepa had done it all! She further discusses the challenges of working with children in the film industry and the need for change. "Nothing has changed where children are concerned. It's the same exploitative cycle, being a star-driven industry." She highlights the importance of the industry looking inward and enforcing change on sets.

She approaches each project with honesty, aligning her editing style with the filmmaker's goals and aspirations. "Every project has an aspiration and the edit must align with that aspiration and with the call of the material," she explains. By mixing up genres and roles, Deepa avoids complacency and stays challenged, ensuring her work remains fresh and authentic.

When faced with creative and technical challenges, the *Drive* fame embraces discomfort and growth. While working on *Guests* (2009), a documentary film about the agrarian crisis and farm suicides in India, she was pushed out of her comfort zone. "I was a little out of my depth and I was afraid because I didn't know enough," she admits. However, by taking risks and facing her fears, she

grew both personally and professionally. Through her experiences, Bhatia emphasises the importance of taking risks and facing challenges head-on. "I always try to put myself into these situations so that I'm really taxed and challenged," she says. By doing so, she continues to evolve in her art, pushing boundaries and creating meaningful content. When asked about the future of long-form documentary editing, the *Raees* fame expresses concern about the industry's increasing focus on fast-paced content. "Downhill is what my answer is...the platforms are now more and more interested in certain kinds of sensational storytelling."

Also known for *Kai Po Che!* she believes that the film industry can benefit from innovation and change to support more inclusive and diverse voices. She emphasises the importance of including people from non-urban centers in teams and creating opportunities for young talent from far-flung areas.

Her experience with Instagram has led her to discover a new relationship with young people from remote areas, asking her editing questions and seeking mentorship. "I've become friends and a mentor to so many young people...trying to include people for whom this ecosystem is far away." She highlights the need for inclusivity and diversity in the film industry, encouraging others to do the same.

"If there's a way we can find ways to include them in our creative teams, in our production teams, I think that will take the narrative," she says. By including people from non-urban centers and providing opportunities for young talent, she believes that the industry can become more representative and diverse. She had also worked with an NGO on a project that empowered women to tell their own stories after the Gujarat earthquake. "We trained them to use the camera, to do interviews and I mentored them and they made their own film documenting the conditions in the villages," she recalls, highlighting the importance of technology in making storytelling more accessible and inclusive.

"Whatever you believe in, you go after that," says the *My Name is Khan* fame, as we head towards the end of the chat and as she shares her message for the aspiring filmmakers. By staying true to oneself and telling stories that matter, she believes that aspiring filmmakers can make a meaningful impact in the industry.

Behind every great film, there's a master storyteller and editor, who weaves magic with their craft. With a remarkable career spanning over two decades, Deepa Bhatia has left an indelible mark on Indian cinema, expertly editing, producing and directing some of the most iconic films in recent history, including *Taare Zameen Par*, *My Name is Khan*, *Rock On*, *Kai Po Che* and *Raees*. Now in this exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, she takes us on a journey into the heart of her creative process, revealing the secrets of her storytelling genius

'More authentic we are to our stories, farther they travel'

AARTI SREENATH
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Monisha Tyagarajan, not long ago, named a 2024 BAFTA Breakthrough honoree, stands at a pivotal moment in her career. Known for her work on globally resonant projects like *The Hunt for Veerappan*, the International Emmy-winning *Delhi Crime* and the Oscar-selected *The Glassworker*, she is using this prestigious recognition to amplify untold narratives and foster international collaborations.

"A lot of what I'm pursuing involves international collaborations and co-productions," she explains. Current ventures include a climate action documentary with Sarvnik Kaur, an animated series co-produced with Richa Chadha and Ali Fazal and the groundbreaking *The Glassworker*, a hand-drawn animation by Usman Riaz.

From the controversial *The Hunt for Veerappan* to *Delhi Crime*, she has consistently sought authenticity while navigating sensitive narratives. For *Veerappan*, she immersed herself in the forests where the notorious bandit once roamed, working with indigenous communities and experts like wildlife filmmakers Krupakar and Senani. "Every story we told had to honour its teller's truth," she says. The project was bolstered by extensive archival research and insights from lawyers, activists, and storytellers like Selvamani Selvaraj, the director.

Her approach to *Delhi Crime* was equally meticulous. "Richie Mehta's crystal-clear vision drove the narrative," she explains. She took on the logistical challenges of securing real locations, managing tight budgets and executing complex sequences like protest scenes, all while maintaining the story's emotional integrity.

"Emerging talents bring new voices to the forefront, but navigating this vast industry can be overwhelming," she notes. Programs like these provide the crucial support and guidance necessary to turn ideas into impactful realities.

As a creative producer, her projects often focus on underrepresented themes,

from gender and climate issues to wildlife and social constructs. "Stories have the power to shift perspectives, even subtly," she says. She carefully chooses projects that raise questions and foster dialogue, often inspired by filmmakers whose unique points of view challenge her own understanding.

Her mission is clear: to bring India's rich and diverse narratives to a global audience. "India's content landscape is a treasure trove of stories," she says. "Our diversity is unmatched and each project reveals a new layer of culture, geography, and lived experience."

Monisha recalls her time in the forests for *The Hunt for Veerappan* as transformative. "It was surreal to live amidst nature, meet indigenous communities and gain a new perspective on harmony with the wild," she reminisces.

Even in high-pressure situations, she prioritises authenticity. "When dealing with sensitive topics, cultivating empathy within the crew and stakeholders is key," she shares. Thorough research and trust-building ensure that her work remains true to its subjects.

Looking ahead, she is committed to expanding the global reach of Indian stories. "The more authentic we are to our stories, the farther they travel," she says. She also recognises the importance of tools like dubbing and subtitles in bridging cultural divides and making stories accessible to wider audiences.



With a portfolio that's a masterclass in innovative storytelling - from the pulse-pounding *The Hunt for Veerappan* to the Emmy-winning *Delhi Crime* and the Oscar-selected *The Glassworker* - Monisha is the driving force behind some of India's most groundbreaking narratives. Join us for an exclusive chat with *The Pioneer*, where she pulls back the curtain on her creative process, shares her passion for amplifying untold stories and reveals the secrets behind her innovative approach

FROM SCARS TO SMOOTH SKIN

Burns can damage multiple skin layers, leading to scars. These scars can cause discomfort, itching, tightness and more importantly, impact emotional well-being. In the last few decades, the aesthetic segment has seen tremendous advances in research and development. Burn injuries that were once considered fatal are now successfully treated. Scar appearance can vary; they can be flat, discolored, or sunken, depending on factors such as skin texture, the type of injury and an individual's age.

Here's a comprehensive guide to surgical and non-surgical treatments for burn scars. It is important to consult with a qualified dermatologist or plastic surgeon to identify which treatments will be most effective based on individual needs.

NON-SURGICAL BURN SCAR TREATMENTS

Non-surgical treatments are often the first line of treatment for mild to moderate burn scars. They aim to improve the appearance of scars, curb discomfort and recondition skin elasticity without invasive procedures.

Bio remodeling

Bio remodeling, also known as Profilllo, is a minimally-invasive treatment that involves minimal discomfort and little to no downtime. It utilises stabilized ultrapure hyaluronic acid to hydrate and rejuvenate the skin on a deeper level, thereby, encouraging natural tissue repair. Profilllo, unlike traditional dermal fillers, spreads evenly under the skin, promoting elasticity and helping scars become softer. For those whose burn scars are mildly textured or raised, this is a preferred technique, as it restores hydration, improves tissue quality and leaves the skin looking smoother.

Derma pen with PRP scar reduction

Microneedling using a derma pen, combined with Platelet-Rich Plasma (PRP) therapy, is another method for scar reduction. While the derma pen creates tiny punctures in the skin to promote natural healing, PRP, on the other side, accelerates tissue regeneration. It's minimally invasive and the dual approach assuages burn scars and improves their texture over time.

Steroid injections

For hypertrophic and keloid scars, steroid injections work well. It's a targeted treatment that requires multiple sessions, spaced a few weeks apart, but helps achieve the desired effect. By injecting corticosteroids directly into the scar tissue, inflammation is reduced and the scar becomes flatter and less noticeable.

SURGICAL BURN SCAR TREATMENTS

Surgical interventions provide a more definite success, especially when burn scars cause functional impairments or are resistant to non-surgical methods. These procedures focus on removing scar tissue and restoring the skin's natural appearance and mobility.

Microvascular therapy

Microvascular therapy is typically useful for scars that restrict movement or have poor blood supply. It involved reinking small blood vessels to restore circulation in scarred areas. The procedure promotes skin healing and to a large extent reduces the visibility of burn scars by improving vascular health.

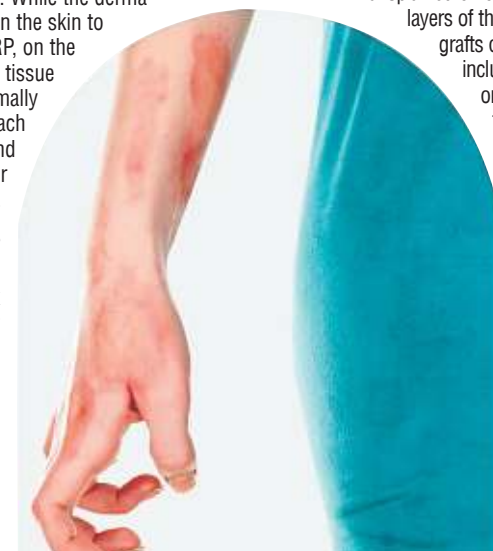
Flap surgery

Flap surgery is used for intense scars that involve extensive tissue loss. It is a more progressive procedure where healthy skin, along with underlying blood vessels, is transferred to the scarred area from a donor site. The transferred flap merges well with the surrounding skin, warranting both functional and aesthetic repair.

Skin grafting

Skin grafting is a familiar treatment to many. One of the most common surgical treatments for burn scars, it is effective for large scars. Here, healthy skin from another part of the body is transplanted onto the scarred area. It uses the top layers of the skin, also known as split-thickness grafts or full-thickness grafts, which is including the dermis, chosen depending on the scar's depth. The choice of treatment depends on factors and is to be decided by the expert and patient mutually. In some cases, a combination of surgical and non-surgical treatments is recommended to achieve optimal results. Whatever the treatment is, post-treatment care is a must for maintaining results and preventing complications. Regular follow-ups with your specialist will ensure the treatment progresses as expected.

(Dr. Shweta Sawalka Nangalia, dermatologist, cosmetologist and trichologist at Skin Glow Clinic.)



ICC board to meet on November 29 to finalise Champions Trophy schedule

PTI ■ DUBAI

The all-powerful board of the International Cricket Council will meet virtually on November 29 to finalise the much-delayed schedule of the Champions Trophy to be held in Pakistan in February-March next year. The cause of the delay has been India's refusal to play in Pakistan considering the tense relations between the two countries. India has not toured Pakistan since the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks. The BCCI wants the tournament to be played in a hybrid model with India games scheduled in a third country, preferably UAE, something that its Pakistani counterpart has not agreed to thus far. "The ICC board will meet on November 29 to discuss the Champions Trophy schedule," an ICC spokesperson told PTI on Tuesday. The crucial virtual meeting takes place two days before BCCI secretary Jay Shah takes over as ICC chairman on December 1.



He and other board members would be keen to resolve the matter before the new regime takes over. With the deadlock over the schedule and venue yet to be broken, questions have been raised against the current dispensation of the ICC

including chair Greg Barclay and CEO over why it did not resolve the issue earlier and left it for the 11th hour. With the Indian government firmly sticking to the status quo, Champions Trophy in a hybrid model with India games outside Pakistan is the

most likely option. Sources said that PCB will be offered financial incentives, over and above the hosting fees of USD 70 million, to agree to the hybrid model. A similar model was followed last year when India played their Asia Cup

matches in Sri Lanka while four group games were hosted by Pakistan. The PCB has spent millions of dollars to renovate stadiums in Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi for what will be its first ICC event since it co-hosted the 1996 World Cup. Major teams including England and Australia have toured Pakistan recently after years of isolation following the horrific attack on the Sri Lanka team bus in 2009. Since the ICC awarded Champions Trophy hosting rights to Pakistan in 2021, PCB has been facing constant pressure from the fans to host all the games in the country. PCB has also threatened that it won't send its national teams to India for future ICC events if the latter doesn't cross the border for Champions Trophy. Having said that, Pakistan toured India for the ODI World Cup last year, the team's first visit to the country in seven years. Both India and Pakistan only play each other in ICC events and Asia Cup.



Gukesh draws with Liren in second game of World Championship

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh bounced back to draw a largely uneventful second game against defending champion Ding Liren of China in the World Chess Championship here on Tuesday. Playing with black pieces, Gukesh made a comeback of sorts, having lost to Liren in the opener of the 14-game showdown, on Monday. It was a good recovery by Gukesh as Liren could do very little with his white pieces and had to share the point. "Draw with black in the world championship match is always nice and it's too early, we still have a long match," the Chennai-based GM said in the post-game press conference. "I think after I was surprised in the opening, I reacted pretty decently, and I didn't give him any chances. It was a solid game with black, which is nice," he added. If Monday was the day when nothing he did worked according to plan, Tuesday changed everything for Gukesh as he could not have asked for a better start. Liren did not press at all while Gukesh just followed the basics as the game ended in a draw via repetition soon after black had completed the 23rd turn. It was one of the quietest variation in the Italian opening as Liren probably did not want to rush things having grabbed a full point advantage in the first game

itself. It may be recalled that the Chinese had won the last world championship match against Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia after coming back from behind as many as three times. The 32-year-old said he was happy with how he performed in the second round. "In the first game I played something new in the opening and of course it requires a lot of memory. Today I also played not a common move (for me) 1.E4 and I prepared a lot," Liren said. "I think it will be a big fight tomorrow. He's a point down and he will have the white pieces, so I am ready for a fight," he added. Liren's fifth move, when he moved his Queen's knight, was indication enough about his peaceful intentions. There have been many top-level games that have ended in draws through this manoeuvre and this game was no exception. Gukesh just had to develop his pieces randomly and the game never really got off to a situation where it could be truly called complicated. Both the Bishops and the Queens were off the board early and what remained were a couple of Knights, the Rooks pair and eight pawns each for both players with hardly any real chances for a breakthrough. The draw was a just result but there was no denying that it was a morale-boosting moment for Gukesh who can

now look up to his next game with optimism with the slightly favourable colour in the game. In head-to-head encounters, Liren has a handsome three-point lead in Classical games and Team Gukesh will now be focused on bringing it down in the USD 2.5 million prize money championship. The 18-year-old Gukesh is the youngest ever challenger to the world crown and is looking to become the first Indian after the iconic Viswanathan Anand to win the title. "There is obviously some pressure for anyone playing in a World Championship; there is a lot of pressure. But I also see it as a privilege that I can represent so many people and my country," he said. "I am just focusing on one game at a time. Hopefully, things go my way," he added. The first player to reach 7.5 points among the two will claim the coveted crown in the USD 2.5 million prize money event. Anand, who has played a major role in shaping Gukesh's career, held the title five times in his illustrious career before Norwegian superstar Magnus Carlsen dethroned him in 2013. The Moves: 1.E4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Bc5 4.D3 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.A4 d6 7.0-0 h6 8.Be3 Be6 9.A5 Bxc4 10.Dxc4 0-0 11.Bxc5 dxc5 12.B3 Qxd1 13.Rfd1 Rd8 14.Rdcl Nd4 15.Ne1 Rd6 16.Kf1 g6 17.Rd1 Rfd8 18.F3 Kg7 19.Kf2 h5 20.Ne2 Nc6 21.Nc3 Nd4 22.Ne2 Nc6 23.Nc3 Nd4 game drawn.



My backstory always gives me confidence to tackle any situation: Yashasvi Jaiswal

PTI ■ PERTH

Brought up in penury, the sensational Yashasvi Jaiswal says he now uses the experience gained from those difficult days as ammunition to conquer the battles on and off the field. Jaiswal stamped his class with a masterful hundred in the first Test against Australia, and is poised to take over the mantle of being India's batting mainstay from the great Virat Kohli, who also made a century after a long time. Having moved to Mumbai from Uttar Pradesh's Bhopal at age 11 to train at Azad Maidan, Jaiswal lived in tents with the groundsman and sold paani puri at night to earn money for food. "It's something (his backstory) that always gives me confidence that I can come out of any situation. I always fight, I always look to fight, I want to be in the battle, I want to enjoy the

battle and I want to win the battle," Jaiswal said during a chat with Australian television broadcaster Mark Howard. The 22-year-old opener added, "So this is what it gives me and I am really blessed that I have this life, that can give me a lot of confidence, learnings about myself, how I can believe in me, and how I can go through with different emotions, different situation in my life. "So I think it's just incredible and I really want to thank god for where I am and what I am doing, and I am doing what I love, so I am just happy at the moment. I want to enjoy this with every ball." His journey to fame is a fascinating tale of a strong-willed man making his own destiny. His swashbuckling hundred more than made for the first-innings duck at Perth, where the five-match Test series began from November 22. Asked about his unusual

celebration after getting to the three-figure mark, Jaiswal said, "Yes, it was (an unusual) way to bring up the hundred. In my mind, I was like, I will do this or that, and then suddenly, something happened, and I was like, oh my god, what should I do. "So, I was like, okay, I will just celebrate, and I will enjoy this moment. I was blessed, I was grateful. I enjoyed it, this feeling will stay with me for a long time. "I give kisses to all my loved ones, all my fans who have supported me. I just wanted to give them my love with the kisses. He spoke to his family after the fine achievement. "I just called my family on whatsapp, getting everyone along and celebrate with them. My brother always talks to me about cricket." India won the first Test by a huge margin of 297 runs and the second match will be played in Adelaide from December 6.

Gambhir flies back home for 'personal emergency,' to rejoin in Adelaide

PTI ■ PERTH

India head coach Gautam Gambhir has flown back to India with his family due to "personal emergency" and is unlikely to be present during the two-day pink ball warm-up game in Canberra starting November 30. Gambhir, however, is slated to directly link up with the squad in Adelaide before the 'Pink Ball Test' starting December 6. It is understood that Gambhir has sought permission from BCCI brass with regards to his return. "He left with his family on early Tuesday morning for India. It is an unavoidable

personal emergency. He will be back in Adelaide before the start of the second Test match," a BCCI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity. The Indian team will leave for Canberra on Wednesday, November 27 where the entire team is expected to attend an official reception thrown in their honour by the Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. The two-day Pink ball match will give the Indian team a chance to get some game time under its belt. PMXI is a squad full of youngsters but India will get some good match practice with pacer Scott Boland expected to play the game.

Getting Venky was one of our main priorities, says Bravo

PTI ■ JEDDAH

Former West Indies all-rounder Dwayne Bravo, who is now the mentor of reigning champions Kolkata Knight Riders, has defended the team's strategy of "going all out" for Venkatesh Iyer to keep the "core" of the IPL championship-winning side intact. Seen as a potential captaincy candidate for KKR, Venkatesh's acquisition has sparked some criticism over why he wasn't retained if leadership was part of the team thinktank's plan for him. "Getting Venky (Venkatesh Iyer) was one of the main priorities for us, as you could see, we went all out for him," said Bravo, a four-time IPL winner at Chennai Super Kings. "It's good that we have 90 per

cent of the players from the championship-winning team. That in itself is a positive sign. "It's important to keep your core because when you have to build from scratch, it becomes complicated to make combinations and all." "We started planning while I was in Trinidad. We had come with a proper plan, the players we wanted to target," added Bravo, who will be in charge of all the franchises of the Knight Riders label in T20 leagues. At a staggering Rs 23.75 crore, the 29-year old Madhya Pradesh all-rounder, who has represented India in nine T20Is and two ODIs, emerged as the third most expensive player at the two-day IPL mega auction that concluded here on Monday. Only Rishabh Pant (Lucknow, Rs 27 crore) and Shreyas Iyer



(Punjab, Rs 26.75 crore) were ahead of Venkatesh on the list of most expensive players as he even eclipsed experienced Indian batter KL Rahul, a former Lucknow Super Giants captain, who was picked up by Delhi Capitals for Rs 14 crore. Bravo was also excited that KKR roped in fiery pacer Umran Malik.

"The pace at which he operates, I always admire him -- his work ethic, energy and all. Happy that we're able to nail him down." KKR CEO and MD Venky Mysore added: "The way the retention rules are set up, the RTM rules, the salary caps, marquee players, and the two-day auction -- this was definitely more demanding,

for sure. Quite nerve-racking because of the nuances. "The think tank's unanimous view was to maintain the structure, which we have done. In certain areas, we have also improved and upgraded. Hopefully, it will continue to work well." Mysore also highlighted the value Rovman Powell would bring to the Kolkata Knight Riders setup, emphasising his extensive experience and leadership qualities. "Rovman Powell, over the years, we have seen what he has done in the CPL, other leagues, and, of course, the IPL as well. He's highly experienced, leads West Indies -- that leadership experience, captaincy, and what he has achieved -- all of it put together makes him really, really special. Great to have him in the side."

Australia to retain squad for Adelaide Test, Marsh's fitness will be monitored: McDonald

PTI ■ PERTH

Australia will not make any change to the squad that took a 295-run hammering from India in the opening Border-Gavaskar Trophy Test here but there are some fitness concerns over all-rounder Mitchell Marsh's ability to bowl, coach and selector Andrew McDonald has said. Following the crushing loss, McDonald revealed that the team would land in Adelaide for the day-night second Test beginning December 6 earlier than planned to allow an additional net session. "The people in that change-room (for Perth Test) are the same people that will be in Adelaide," McDonald was quoted as saying by 'cricket.Com.Au'. "It (making changes) is always a consideration, wherever you go in the world

in terms of the personnel you pick for conditions." Marsh, who bowled just 17 overs in the first Test for a match haul of three wickets, has been dealing with "niggles" since the white-ball tour of England in September. Skipper Pat Cummins has already revealed that Marsh finished the first Test "a little bit sore." McDonald expressed satisfaction with Marsh's bowling performance in the first innings but said his fitness would be monitored closely moving forward. "Has he (Marsh) pulled up okay? We'll wait and see," McDonald said. "No, we didn't feel that (was a weakness). We knew that Mitch (Marsh) was slightly underdone coming in, but I thought the performance in the first innings was satisfactory."

Another player under scanner is top-order batter Marnus Labuschagne, who has struggled for form with an average of just 13.66 in his last 10 Test innings. However, McDonald said he has faith in Labuschagne's abilities, describing him as "the player we need" and urging him to rediscover his form. "That's an ongoing discussion and that ebbs and flows in players' careers, so at the moment he's in one of those patches and no doubt he'll be getting critiqued externally," McDonald said. "But internally we're really confident that, at his best, he's the player that we need." When asked if Labuschagne's struggles were due to a technical issue, McDonald responded: "It's always a combination of factors, isn't it, with the mindset?"



"There's some technical aspects to that also within the mindset play. So as I

said, we're really confident that he can turn that around."

The decision to ask debutant Nathan McSweeney to open the innings backfired as he

scored just 10 and 0 in his two innings. McSweeney had enjoyed success in first-class cricket, as had Beau Webster, but neither of them has the experience of being an opener. "I think there's been enough players banging down the door. I feel as though we've got some depth there if called upon," he said. "I think sometimes people look at the pure numbers of what's happening in Shield cricket, but it's sometimes hard to get a connection with the surfaces they're playing on. So we feel as though we've got ample players available if called upon." Despite the heavy defeat, McDonald said morale of the team was strong. "I think we've got to own it, and we've got to own that as coaches as well. So there will be a semblance of review around what we have done

and what we can learn from it," McDonald said. "But I think morale is pretty good. I think this team is really good at the highs and lows, it's quite a level team, so we'll be somewhere in the middle of that." The coach also stated that while a review of the performance would take place, the team's preparation had been sound, and they were focused on the challenges ahead. "We felt as though our planning going in (to Perth) was where we needed it to be. Execution in amongst that is always a question, but we were comfortable with the plans. "Clearly, the method with the batters and the way they've been challenged is always going to be a learning moving forward. So we've got some challenges, no doubt about that."

VIKRAM 'READY TO SHINE' WITH *ROTI KAPDA ROMANCE*

SURESH KAVIRAYANI
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IT'S NO CAKEWALK FOR ANYONE TO ENTER INTO TOLLYWOOD WITHOUT ANY CONNECTION. SO HAS IT BEEN FOR VIKRAM REDDY, WHO HAS NOW TURNED INTO A DIRECTOR WITH THE FILM *ROTI KAPDA ROMANCE*. AHEAD OF THE RELEASE, HE SHARES HIS JOURNEY AND STRUGGLES FROM BEING RAISED IN LB NAGAR BASTI TO DIRECTING THIS FILM

Every year, many debutant directors emerge with innovative ideas, some of whom achieve success while others continue to strive for it. Becoming a film director is no easy feat; it's a challenging journey. Vikram Reddy's journey is proof of this. Now, Reddy is eagerly awaiting the release of his upcoming film, *Roti Kapda Romance*, on November 28.

"I was born and raised in LB Nagar Basti," said Vikram, as he reminisced about his early days. At the tender age of four, he developed a passion for films, courtesy of his mother, who would watch new films every Friday with her friends. "She took me along and that's how I got introduced to films." His first film was the Balakrishna-starrer *Muddula Mavaya*. During his intermediate studies, Vikram saw a poster for the film *Chitram* and decided he wanted to become a director. This was around 2000. "I didn't know how to write a script or screenplay, but I started writing stories," Vikram said.

After completing his degree in B.Sc. Computers, he chose not to look for a job, as he wanted to pursue his dream of becoming a filmmaker. "I wanted to see a script and understand how it was written. One of my friend's acquaintances took me to Warangal, where the famous Surabhi theatre group was performing. Seeing my passion for films, the director of the play handed me a script and cautioned me about its importance, advising me not to lose it. That was the first time I saw a script and learned how to write one," he recalls.

After writing a few stories, he decided to work as an assistant director. However, he didn't have any connections in the film industry. "I tried to meet Krishna Vamsi for three years, but I couldn't even get a chance to see him. During that time, he made three films—*Chakram*, *Danger* and *Sri Anjaneyam*—but I couldn't get through him. The same thing happened with director V.V. Vinayak while he was working on *Bunny*," he shared. Despite these setbacks, he never lost his confidence.

Determined to meet Puri Jagannadh, he regularly went to his office and waited in front of the gate. "I couldn't get access to speak with him," he said. At that time, Puri Jagannadh was working on a film with his brother. After several months, the security staff noticed Vikram's persistence and informed him of the place where Puri Jagannadh would often rest.



Finally, Puri Jagannadh called Vikram and asked about him. "I want to join as your assistant," he told Puri. However, Puri gave him a stern lecture, saying that there were many aspiring directors like him in Krishna Nagar and advised him not to waste his time. From that moment, he decided not to pursue the role of an assistant director and instead set his sights on becoming an independent director. "I started watching films from various countries, including French, Korean and Iranian cinema, to learn about filmmaking, screenplays, editing and the overall craft. I immersed myself in world cinema for a few years and then began writing my own story," Vikram said. In 2013, he met producer Bekkem Venugopal and narrated the story of *Roti Kapda Romance* to him. "Discussions were ongoing and Venugopal suggested partnering with producer Dil Raju garu for the film. When I met Dil Raju, he asked me to make some changes to my story. While I was open to small adjustments, he wanted significant changes that I wasn't willing to make. So, he refused to produce the film," Vikram shared. Refusing Dil Raju, a prominent producer, was no small decision. Bekkem Venugopal cautioned Vikram and urged him to reconsider, but Vikram stood firm. "It took two and a half years of back and forth with Dil Raju during that time," he said.

Eventually, Vikram returned to Bekkem Venugopal and the project finally took off. "It was almost seven years of struggle to bring *Roti Kapda Romance* to life. It's like a baby to me," he said, recalling how his younger son was born during the film's development and is now seven years old. Over the years, Vikram sifted through nearly 1,500 to 1,600 profiles to cast the best actors for his film. "I chose whoever suited my characters best. The story revolves around eight characters—four boys and four girls—and explores their love stories, breakups and various emotions," he explained.

Releasing the film posed another set of challenges.

"We initially announced October 4 as the release date but postponed it to October 25 because many films were releasing around the same time. The satellite and OTT rights were bought by ETV Win and the distribution rights were also sold, so the release was not entirely in our control," he said.

The release date was later pushed to November 22, but even that was changed. "There were other releases on November 22 as well, and my distributor wanted a wider release, so it was postponed to November 28. I was frustrated because we had already spent a lot on promotions and pre-release events. The films released the previous week didn't perform well at the box office, but *Armaan* was still doing well."

Finally, *Roti Kapda Romance* is set to release on November 28. "We've secured good screens across the country and I'm confident the film will perform well," he said. He also revealed his ultimate goal. "I have many stories ready, but my dream is to direct Chiranjeevi and his son Ram Charan together in a film. I already have a story prepared for them and I will work tirelessly to achieve this goal," he concluded.



Fear all set to send chills down your spine on Dec 14

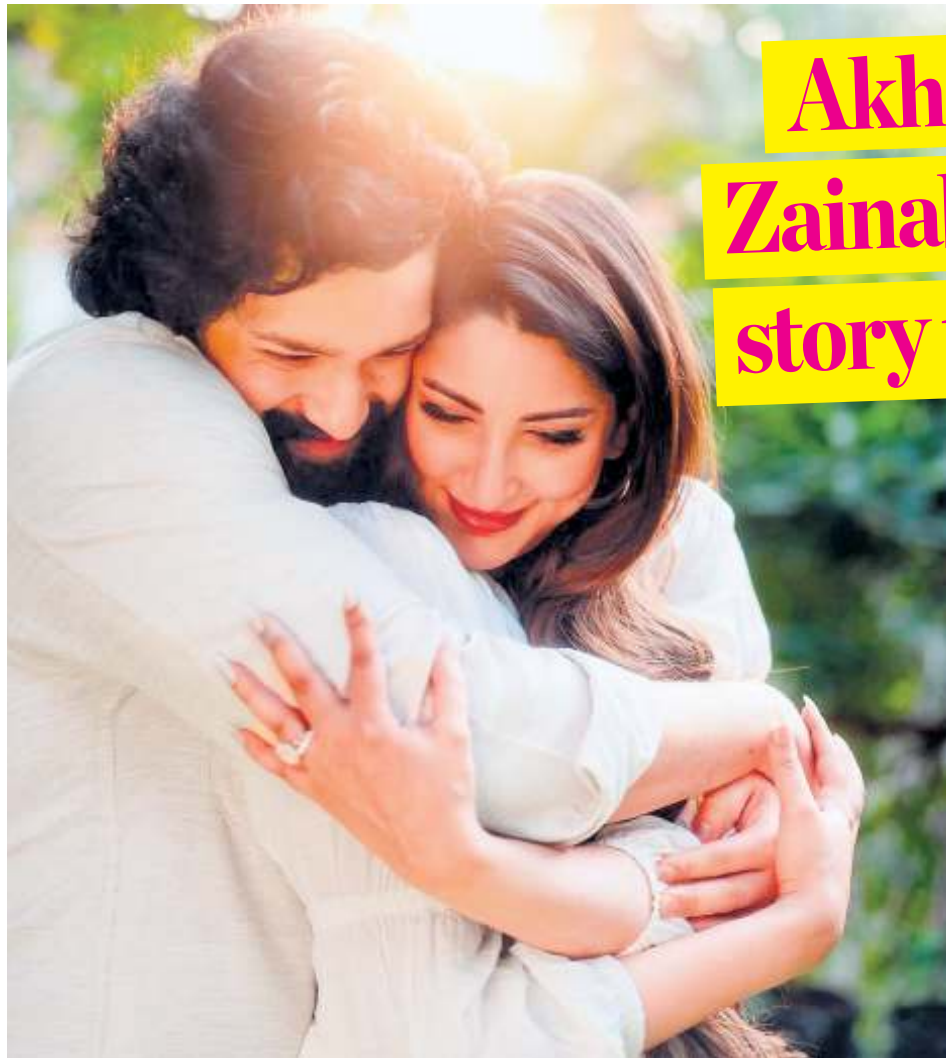
It's time for small films to hit the screens before the end of this year. Although *Pushpa 2* is releasing on December 5, many other small films are releasing before and after that big film. One of them is *Fear*, which is releasing on December 14.

Vedhika plays the main lead in the suspense thriller directed by Haritha Gogineni. The film is produced by Dr. Vanki Penchalayya and AR Abhi. *Fear* is set against a suspenseful thriller storyline and Arvind Krishna will appear in a special role. Before its release, *Fear*

had already set a remarkable record, winning over 70 awards at various prestigious international film festivals. On Tuesday, the makers officially announced that they plan to release the film on December 14.

The producer stated that the film will be released in all languages. He added that the teaser, released in Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam, has generated a good response. The film's achievement of winning over 70 awards at international film festivals has further fuelled excitement around its release, the producer said.

Akhil Akkineni and Zainab Ravdjee's love story takes new turn!



The Akkineni family has announced the engagement of their younger son, Akhil Akkineni, to Zainab Ravdjee, daughter of Zulfi Ravdjee. The engagement ceremony took place in an intimate gathering with close family members, marking the beginning of a beautiful new chapter in their lives.

Zainab Ravdjee is an accomplished artist who has spent her life between India, Dubai and London, bringing together her love for creativity and culture. The two met a couple of years ago, and their relationship has blossomed into a meaningful bond rooted in shared values and mutual respect.

The engagement ceremony was held at the Akkineni family home, a warm and

intimate setup reflecting the family's preference for privacy and heartfelt celebrations. While the wedding dates are yet to be finalised for sometime next year, the couple and their families are delighted to share this joyous milestone with their well-wishers.

On this special occasion, Nagarjuna Akkineni expressed his happiness, saying, "As a father, it brings me immense joy to see Akhil take this significant step in his life with Zainab, someone who complements him beautifully. Zainab's grace, warmth and artistic spirit have truly made her a wonderful addition to our family. We are overjoyed and look forward to celebrating this new journey with both families."



GADDAR'S LASTING LEGACY:

Ukku Satyagraham hits theatres on Nov 29

The popular poet, singer and activist who fought for Telangana statehood, Gaddar, acted in a film titled *Ukku Satyagraham*. Gummati Vittal Rao, popularly known as Gaddar, also fought against the privatisation of the Visakh Steel Plant. P Satya Reddy, the director and producer, made the film *Ukku Satyagraham* and announced that it will be released on November 29. The producer recalls Gaddar's contribution to the film. Gaddar, renowned for his activism and inspiring poetry, made significant contributions to the film. He sang three songs, performed in two, and acted in key message-driven scenes. Popular writers Goret Venkanna and Suddala Ashok Teja penned a few other songs, and the music was composed by Srikti. The producer stated that the film promises to be thought-provoking. He added that the film is deeply rooted in real-life struggles.

Former CBI Joint Director VV Lakshmi Narayana attended the event and said it is a good thing that Gaddar acted in this film. "I have seen some scenes and it is inspiring. Gaddar used to greet me as 'Lachchanna Etunnava'. He has infused his inspiration into this film. I hope that this film will be a huge success," said Lakshmi Narayana. Gaddar's daughter Vennela said that her father spent a lot of time on this movie. "His intention was that the steel plant should not be privatised," she said. She wished this movie a great success.

Telugu cinema loses a gem: Popular lyric writer Kulasekhar no more

Popular lyricist Kulasekhar passed away on Tuesday morning at Gandhi Hospital. His life was a tragic story of a talented individual who began his journey as a journalist and later became a renowned lyricist with many hit songs to his credit. He worked on nearly 100 films as a lyricist.



Kulasekhar started his career as a journalist in a popular Telugu daily. He later transitioned to lyric writing, making his debut with the film *Chitram*, directed by Teja and produced by Ramoji Rao. Kulasekhar collaborated with music director RP Patnaik on many films, becoming a sought-after lyricist in Tollywood. His notable works include *Jayam*, *Gharshana*, *Vasantham*, *Ramma! Chilakamma*, *Nuvvu Nenu*, *Mrugaraju*, *Subbu* and *Dadagiri*. Kulasekhar's life took a dramatic turn when he was diagnosed with kleptomania, a rare mental health disorder. In December 2013, he was arrested in Kakinada for stealing a silver crown from a temple. The next day, he attempted to return the crown, but it was found in his

bag, leading to his arrest. Kulasekhar admitted to the crime and was later sent to Rajahmundry for treatment.

After the incident, Kulasekhar's health declined and he distanced himself from the film industry, friends and family. On Tuesday, news broke that he had passed away at Gandhi Hospital, leaving the Telugu cinema industry in mourning.

Mahavatar Narsimha premieres at 55th IFFI

Marking a significant milestone in the history of Indian cinema, *Mahavatar Narsimha* had its world premiere at the prestigious 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI). This cinematic gem, directed by acclaimed filmmaker Ashwin Kumar, takes viewers on a spiritual and visually captivating journey and depicts the epic narratives of Lord Vishnu's third and fourth avatars, Varaha and Narsimha. Taking about the film at the 55th IFFI, the director expressed, "This is not just an animation film; it's a labour of love and a tribute to our rich cultural heritage. Drawing from the *Vishnu Purana*, *Narasimha Purana* and *Shrimad Bhagavat Purana*, we have stayed true to the original sources to present a story that resonates with all generations. I wanted to preserve these stories not as myths but as part of our collective history and consciousness."

The film shows the epic battle between the demon king Hiranyakashipu, who wants to exact revenge on Lord Vishnu and his son Prahlad, whose

unshakable faith forces the Lord to take on the form of Narsimha. With a cinematic experience that appeals to all age groups, *Mahavatar Narsimha* seeks to elevate the standard for Indian animation. This film took four and a half years to make, with lifelike animation and careful attention to detail. Ashwin Kumar addressed the notion that animation in India is mostly meant for young audiences, saying, "We wanted to challenge this perception and create a film for everyone. No one believed in our vision initially, but we've proven that Indian VFX and animation can be of world-class quality." Talking about how the film is just a part of his larger vision, the director added, "This is not just a movie, it's a legacy. Art that is rooted in research and depth resonates deeply and we are committed to upholding this standard in our future endeavours." *Mahavatar Narsimha* is directed by Ashwin Kumar. Produced By Shilpa Dhawan, Kushal Desai and Chaitanya Desai, the film has been made under the banner of Kleem Productions and Hombale Films.

