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CM & DCM hail Sathya Sai Baba's model of humanitarian service



From Our Staff Reporter Puttaparthi, Nov., 19 : Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu addressing the centenary celebrations of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, in Puttaparthi on Wednesday. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday said the global footprint of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's charity and humanitarian services received acclaim from millions of people around the world. Mr. Naidu was addressing the birth centenary celebrations of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, at the Hillview Stadium in Puttaparthi. Mr. Naidu said Sathya Sai Baba's gesture of providing drinking water, healthcare and education to the poor and downtrodden sections cast a powerful impact on rural Andhra Pradesh and beyond.

Stating that the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust had implemented water projects covering nearly 1,600 villages, which continue to supply drinking water to around 30 lakh people, the Chief Minister said the central trust remained strategic in administering 102 educational institutions and several hospitals to serve the poor. "The central trust's reach now spans 200 centres in about 140 countries, supported by over seven lakh volunteers," Mr. Naidu said, adding that the Sathya Sai organisations always remained at the forefront of

humanitarian situations, acting faster than the governments, which make them a model relevant for contemporary welfare initiatives. Deputy Chief Minister K. Pawan Kalyan, in his address, observed that the Sathya Sai movement made its presence globally, with active communities in many countries. Referring to the central trust's drinking water initiative worth over several hundreds of crores, he said it reflected the "early versions of today's national schemes such as the Jal Jeevan Mission." He said that innumerable prominent individuals, including

sportspersons and civil servants, were fast getting connected to the eternal message of love enshrined in Baba's teachings.

Global destination Minister for IT and HRD N. Lokesh said that Puttaparthi had emerged as a global destination for spiritual engagement and community service. The educational and health institutions founded by Sathya Sai Baba remained accessible to the poor and needy from the rural and remote areas. He thanked the Central government for releasing the Rs.100 coin and postal stamps on the occasion of the centenary celebrations.

PM releases Rs.100 coin, postal stamps at Sathya Sai Baba Centenary in Puttaparthi

From Our Staff Reporter Puttaparthi, Nov., 19 : Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday released a Rs.100 commemorative coin and a set of postal stamps at the centenary celebrations of Sri Sathya Sai Baba in Prasanthi Nilayam here. Addressing a large gathering of devotees and students at the Hill View Stadium, the Prime Minister recalled the spiritual leader's decades of humanitarian service and legacy. Mr. Modi termed the centenary celebrations "a blessing for the nation", stating that Sathya Sai Baba's universal message of love, service, and harmony had influenced "millions across the globe." "Sathya Sai Baba's ideals of compassion, peace, and service should guide India's collective progress," the Prime Minister said. The Prime Minister said Baba's motto of "Love All, Serve All" had perfectly aligned with India's cultural ethos, ob-

erving that spiritual institutions founded by Baba would continue to fill gaps in rural development, healthcare, education, and disaster relief. Highlighting the charitable projects of Sri Sathya Sai Baba's organisations, Mr. Modi referred to medical services, drinking water projects spanning more than 3,000 km of pipelines, and massive relief efforts during the 2001 Bhuj earthquake in Gujarat. He underlined the financial assistance of Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust to girlchildren under the Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, which made a phenomenal contribution to the scheme's national footprint with over four crore accounts, with deposits exceeding Rs.3.25 lakh crore. Mr. Modi reiterated his call for "Vocal for Local", asserting that strengthening local economies was essential to achieving the government's Viksit Bharat vision. He called on the nation to support indigenous



products, highlighting the need and importance of self-reliance through broad public participation. Signaling support for traditional rural livelihoods, the Prime Minister distributed 100 Gir cows to economically weaker families through the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust. He said that the gesture aligned with the Central government's Rashtriya Gokul Mission, saying that similar initiatives in Varanasi had helped the region breed

more than 1,000 Gir cattle. Mr. Modi also referred to the growing presence of Indian cattle breeds abroad, including in Rwanda. Earlier, Mr. Modi arrived at Sri Sathya Sai International Airport here in the morning and reached Prashanti Nilayam campus by road. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, IT and HRD Minister Nara

Lokesh, and Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust Managing Trustee RJ Rathnakar were among the dignitaries who welcomed the Prime Minister. Before proceeding to the Hill View Stadium to participate in the Centenary celebrations, Mr. Modi offered prayers at Saibaba's Maha Samadhi in silence. The district police administration deployed a heavy police force across Puttaparthi amidst digital surveillance.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi feeds cow during the birth centenary celebrations of Sathya Sai Baba, in Puttaparthi

498 temples across state to get Rs 603 cr facelift

From Our Staff Reporter Nellore, Nov., 19 : Endowments Minister Anam Ramanarayana Reddy said that ever since the coalition government came to power, crores of rupees have been sanctioned for the renovation of ancient and historic temples in Andhra Pradesh. While only Rs.234 crore was sanctioned for the development of 210 temples in the last 15 years, the NDA government has spent Rs.221 crore to develop 288 temples in just 18 months. Addressing the media after a review meeting with Endowments Department officials, he said, "Our goal is to transform temples into

spiritual centres. The government is currently undertaking reconstruction works at 498 ancient temples across the State at a cost of Rs.603 crore. In SPSR Nellore district alone, renovation works at 58 temples are under way with an outlay of Rs.118.45 crore." During the meeting, the Minister reviewed ongoing refurbishment works in the district, the implementation of the 'Dhoopa Deepa Naivedyam' scheme, and the construction of village deity temples. He directed officials to protect the sanctity of temples and ensure that devotees have the op-



portunity to experience divinity. Responding to a question on measures to prevent incidents such as the Kasibugga temple stampede, Mr. Ramanarayana Reddy said that a commit-

tee has been constituted to ensure proper coordination between government authorities and private temples so that no difficulties arise during major festivals and fairs.

Maredumilli Once Again Shaken by the Sound of Gunfire



Alluri District Correspondent, Pen Power, November 19: The Maredumilli region in the Eastern Agency of Alluri district was once again shaken by heavy gunfire as police engaged in an encounter with Maoists. The eastern skies echoed with bullet sounds early Wednesday morning. At around 6 a.m. on Wednesday, seven Maoists were killed in an exchange of fire between police and Maoists near GM Valasa of Maredumilli mandal. Following Tuesday's encounter, security forces identified that a few Maoists had escaped. During combing operations on Wednesday morning, the police traced them in the GM Valasa forest area, leading to another round of firing. In this encounter, seven Maoists—including AOB (Andhra-Odisha Border) in-charge Jogarao and Protection Team Commander Jyothi—were killed. Fear and anxiety have gripped the public, who worry about what news they might wake up to each morning.

Coalition Government Committed to Farmers' Welfare: Minister Ramanaidu

Rajamahendravaram, Pen Power, Nov 19: The coalition government is working with the sole aim of farmers' welfare, said State Irrigation Minister and East Godavari District In-charge Minister Nimmala Ramanaidu. He participated in the distribution program of Annadatha Sukhibhava-PM Kisan held at Gauripatnam of Devarapalli mandal under the leadership of local MLA Maddipati Venkataraju. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said the government has launched several schemes for farmers and urged them to utilize them effectively. MLA Venkataraju said that the state can progress only when farmers prosper, add-



ing that the government aims to ensure a smile on every farmer's face by providing hassle-free support. A total of Rs.22 crore has been deposited into the accounts of 33,133 farmers belonging to four mandals

in the Gopalapuram constituency. Each farmer has received Rs.7,000 — Rs.5,000 from the state government and Rs.2,000 from the central government. District Collector Keerthi Chekuri announced that a

meeting focusing on farmers' welfare will be held soon. Leaders and workers of the coalition parties, officials, society presidents, and a large number of farmers participated in the program.



Seven Maoists Killed in an Encounter: Alluri District SP Amit Bardar

Alluri District Correspondent, Pen Power, November 19: Alluri district SP Amit Bardar stated that seven Maoists were killed in an encounter that took place on Wednesday morning in the Maredumilli forest

area of Alluri district. Speaking at a press conference held in Rampachodavaram on Wednesday, he said that as part of "Operation Sambhav," which has been underway for the past two days, a total of 13 Maoists have been

killed. Among those killed in Wednesday's encounter was Maoist key leader Jogarao alias Shankar, along with six others. He said that AP Police as well as CRPF forces participated in the operation. Due to unfavourable

conditions in Odisha and Chhattisgarh, Maoists had reportedly moved into Maredumilli mandal to use it as a shelter zone, he added. He explained that within Alluri district limits, except for one or two individuals,

Maoist presence is very minimal. The bodies of those killed in Tuesday's encounter will be handed over to their families after conducting post-mortem examinations in their presence. He also said that combing

operations will continue to flush out any remaining Maoists. SP Bardar reaffirmed that stringent security measures are being implemented to ensure that Maoists do not turn Alluri district into a shelter zone.

EDITORIAL

Cotton farmer in the center's shears

Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) is a commercial organization run by the Central Government that purchases cotton in the country and exports it to the needy countries. The policy followed by this organization has now become a disaster for cotton farmers in the country, especially in the Telugu states. Cotton is being cultivated in 43.29 lakh acres in Telangana. Its yield is estimated to be up to 24.70 lakh tons. Similarly, cotton is cultivated in 4.56 lakh hectares in Andhra Pradesh. It is estimated that about 8 lakh tons will be produced. The cotton crop has been severely damaged due to the recent heavy rains. The regulations imposed by CCI are now creating a desperate situation for farmers who have invested up to Rs. 40 thousand per acre. The CCI, which had said that it would purchase 12 quintals of cotton per acre in both states, announced that it would purchase only up to 7 quintals, which came as a shock to the farmers. In addition, it has imposed a rule that the moisture content should not exceed 12% to pay the support price of Rs. 8110. Cotton crops have been damaged in many places due to the harsh winter, the effects of snow, and the recent Monsoon storm.

The CCI regulations are burning the cotton farmers who are suffering due to these problems. Due to the cyclone and heavy rains, the yield per acre in both the states will not exceed 5 to 7 quintals, which is why the CCI is convincing them that the procurement has been reduced from 12 to 7 quintals per acre. The Central Textile Department officials have informed the Telangana government that the cotton purchase limit for this year has been fixed at 7 quintals per acre, considering the 10 percent increase in last year's yield. But what is the benefit of not purchasing according to that. However, district collectors estimate that cotton yield in many districts of Telangana state will be up to 11 quintals per acre. In this context, the Telangana state government is appealing to the center to extend the cotton purchase limit from 7 quintals to 11 quintals per acre. The state government is advising the district collectors to collect actual cotton yield figures district-wise in the state and send them to the center immediately.

Meanwhile, cotton purchase centers have also been set up very late. To sell cotton at CCI centers, one has to first register with the farmer service centers and then book it 24 hours in advance in the 'Kipas Kisan Slot' introduced by the center. Almost 70 percent of farmers in remote areas are not aware of this slot booking system. If there is any mistake in this booking system, the farmers have to turn back and leave. After paying the transportation costs and taking it to the purchase centers, when they are unable to purchase due to many rules and restrictions, they are left without a choice and are forced to sell it to private traders or brokers outside at Rs. 6400 per quintal. That is, if the minimum price per quintal is Rs. 8000, then what is the situation of that farmer if he gets only Rs. 6000. In such circumstances, cotton purchases are not taking place at all due to the closure of ginning mills in the state of Telangana. The division of ginning mills into categories such as L1 and L2 led to the closure of ginning mills.

Trade experts explain that the ongoing trade talks with the US are also affecting crops like cotton, corn and soybean. The Indian government has suddenly lifted the 11% tariff on US cotton imports. The lifting was initially only from last August to September, but has now been extended until December. Analysts cite this as the reason why the Cotton Corporation, which used to buy cotton without any restrictions and barriers in the past, is now saying that it will buy only 7 quintals. India is an agriculture-based country. About 70% of the rural population depends directly or indirectly on agriculture for a living. The agriculture sector accounts for 15% of the country's economy. Reports say that about 45.5% of the country's workforce is associated with agriculture.

Anti-farmer laws, high debt burden, inadequate government policies, corruption in subsidies, crop failure, and financial problems are all having a serious impact on farmer families. Studies explain that farmer suicides are happening due to these reasons. While 2,96,438 farmers committed suicide between 1995 and 2014, 1,00,474 farmers committed suicide in the nine years between 2014 and 2022. Statistics show that a total of 11,290 people, including farmers and workers, committed suicide in the agricultural sector in 2022. This means that this number is 6.6 percent of the total suicide victims in the country. Already, three cotton farmers in Telangana state have committed suicide due to the damage to their crops and the burden of debt. If the central government, which looks down on farmers, does not respond appropriately to this crisis and take preventive measures, there is a risk of repeating the horrific situations of suicides encountered in the past.

The 'Ten-Year Itch' in India-US Defence Relations

It's the ten-year itch again! India and the US signed a ten-year framework last month for the US-India 'Major Defence Partnership', signalling, as many in the media put it, "stable ties in the India-US defence sector". To watchers in the Indian strategic circuit, however, it is 'yawn-time' once again. Human memory may be short, but it is not so imbecile as to inhibit differentiation between historical experience and political hyperbole. In matters of national interests, no country is indispensable. This is especially true if one side of the pact is a superpower and the other has an acutely adverse power gradient. The India-US defence relationship can be analysed through four historical periods.

The Beginning Of The So-ter Friendship

In the 1950s, over-riding India's misgivings, the US brought Pakistan into its sphere of influence through the South East Asia Treaty Organisation and Central Treaty Organisation treaties; meant to oppose the spread of communism, the fact is that modern American arms like Patton tanks and F-86 Sabre and F-104 Starfighters were used by Pakistan against India in the 1965 and 1971 wars. India's attempts to get modern assets fructified - after the US refused to sell modern aircraft after the disastrous 1962 war with China - when the Soviet Union stepped in with the MiG-21 fighter, initiating a stable, dependable and long-term relationship with the USSR (and then Russia). The 1970s and '80s are coloured by the memory of the US Navy's 7th fleet, led by the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise entering the Bay of Bengal in support of Pakistan's debauchery in East Pakistan. It took a decade for the relations to stabilise and, come the 1990s, the Indian media and the political establishment went gaga over the 'Kicklighter proposal' of setting up an India-US defence technology group. This writer was doing his staff course in the US in 1992 and mentioned this in a paper as proof of an improvement in our defence relationship. "Who is Kicklighter?" asked the American officers (Admiral Kicklighter was the Commander of US Pacific Command)! The fact that India did not figure in the security and 'friendship' environment of US policymakers was driven home. Later events have only confirmed that.

Remember The Not-So-Great '90s?

India's friend, the Soviet Union, collapsed in the 1990s. But what stands out for New Delhi in that decade is the American-led wide-ranging, multi-sectorial sanctions following India's nuclear tests in 1998. The beginning of the 21st century started a thaw, with both countries calling each other 'natural allies' due to their democratic traditions. Many deals for transport aircraft and helicopters for the Indian Air Force (IAF), artillery guns for the Army and naval equipment were signed - and US defence companies made handsome monies through these contracts. The standout deal was the 2008 India-US nuclear agreement, but a simple question begs an answer: for all the brouhaha of those years, what extraordinary event has actually matured on ground from the nuclear deal that was termed 'pathbreaking'? And then came the 'India-US Defence Technology and Trade Initiative' (DTTI) of 2012, trumpeted as something that would cut bureaucracy and enhance cooperation in niche areas. Pushed by the US Under Secretary of Defence Ashton Carter, it was to enhance cooperation by overcoming impediments cre-

ated by the bureaucratic structures of the two countries. To do that, the nodal officers were high-ranking officials: the Secretary of Defence Production from India and the Under Secretary for Defence Acquisition for the US side. The giveaways, however, were the listed four 'pathfinder' technologies - chemical and biological warfare clothing, mobile hybrid power systems, hand-held UAVs and roll-on roll-off ISR modules for C-130J aircraft. These, in layman's terms, were chicken-feed compared to the promised cutting-edge technology.

Don't Fall For It

Later, seven working groups were formed under the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) - once again with media fanfare - but all have only resulted in numerous seminars, meetings and international travel for officials. In between, India was declared a Major Defence Partner in 2016, and in August 2018 was accorded Strategic Trade Authority Tier 1 (STA-1) status that, on paper, allowed US manufacturers to sell dual-use technology to New Delhi. The iCET (Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies) followed in 2022; the fact remains that the US (or for that matter, any country) would not part with critical technologies, despite all these acronyms-rich pacts and treaties being signed. And now comes the 'Major Defence Partnership'



agreement signed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Pete Hegseth, US Secretary of War. But this was followed immediately with US-China rapprochement through the Trump-Xi Jinping meeting in South Korea on October 30. Only people with a blinkered sense of history would not see the negative import for India of the US disaffirming China as being its "most consequential strategic competitor", as enunciated in its 2022 National Defense Strategy document. Pete Hegseth, after the Trump-Xi Jinping meeting, tweeted that "...peace, stability, and good relations are the best path for our two great and strong

countries. As President Trump said, his historic "G2 meeting" set the tone for everlasting peace and success for the U.S. and China."

Take A Hard Look

India's importance seen through the American strategic vision prism, thus, stays blurred, especially with the recent re-flowering of US-Pakistan relations, too. If any proof of American arm-twisting was needed, then one has to recollect the delay in the supply of F-404 engines for the Tejas aircraft programme - a tactic that started during the Biden administration and continued by the Trump presidency till recently. Hugs and personal equations

between leaders do not make a nation a country of consequence, as the powerful will pivot, cross-pivot and re-pivot at will, to guard their strategic interests. New Delhi must juggle the available monies with it and commit more to security-related priorities in the coming 2026 budget, whose planning would have begun by now. The truth needs to be faced head-on. Infusion of American technology as an enabler in the 'aatmanirbharta' (self-reliance) campaign is a non-starter; it was, and will always be, a crutch that can be removed at will by the incumbent in the White House. Indigenous R&D is the only way forward.

Modi In Tamil Nadu: A High-Voltage Start, But What About Past Baggage?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's roadshow in Coimbatore today may serve as the de facto launch of the National Democratic Alliance's (NDA) 2026 campaign in Tamil Nadu. But behind the optics lies a complicated electoral terrain that remains largely unchanged even after the NDA's recent victory in Bihar. Tamil Nadu continues to be one of the toughest frontiers for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the alliance arithmetic it depends on is more fragile than ever.

The biggest challenge comes from within the NDA fold. The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) - the BJP's principal partner and once the gateway to political relevance in the state - is still navigating deep internal fractures. The expulsions of VK Sasikala, O Panneerselvam and TTV Dinakaran have left the party divided. For the BJP, the exit of two of these leaders, both from the influential Thevar community and until recently part of the NDA, means losing what could have helped prevent a split in the AIADMK vote. The recent expulsion of veteran leader and western Tamil Nadu heavyweight KA Sengottaiyan adds another layer of uncertainty in a region that has traditionally been an AIADMK bastion.

Since Jayalalithaa's death, the AIADMK has lost three elections back to back - 2019, 2021 and 2024 - two of them in alliance with the BJP, reinforcing a perception that the national party is electorally isolating. The turbulence is not limited to



the AIADMK. The Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), another NDA constituent, is witnessing a serious tussle between founder Dr S Ramadoss and his son Dr Anbumani Ramadoss, raising the possibility of a split or competing factions contesting against each other. The Desiya Murpokku Dravida Kazhagam (DMDK), once an ally, has yet to clearly decide its direction.

Adding to the unpredictability is actor Vijay's Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), which will debut in 2026. Vijay has repeatedly described the BJP as his ideological opponent, ruling out any direct or indirect alliance. By extension, this rejects any AIADMK-BJP-TVK convergence. Some former NDA partners may explore an understanding with Vijay, who has suggested a willingness to share power - an attractive proposition for smaller

parties.

Coimbatore, where Modi is showcasing the BJP's strength today, is one of the few pockets where the party has a rooted presence. Vanathi Srinivasan's 2021 win over Kamal Haasan came here, but, crucially, with the AIADMK alliance.

The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), meanwhile, enters this phase from a position of continuity. Its alliance has remained intact through three consecutive election victories. The government is relying on its flagship welfare schemes - monthly Rs 1,000 assistance for women, free bus travel, and financial support for government-school college students - while projecting its faster double-digit economic growth. Politically, the DMK continues to target the BJP at the Centre on issues central to Tamil Nadu's identity and rights, such as alleged

financial discrimination, denial of NEET exemption, Hindi imposition, and delays over the Keeladi archaeological report. These themes have resonance in a state known for its strong linguistic and cultural positions.

In this backdrop, Modi's Coimbatore roadshow is significant not just for energising the cadre but for signalling whether the BJP is willing to recalibrate its approach in a state that has remained electorally elusive. Tamil Nadu's political grammar has historically resisted national narratives. Whether Modi adjusts his tone and outreach to match the state's sensibilities will determine whether today's spectacle will become the starting point of genuine momentum - or if it will remain a symbolic show of strength in a still-unfavourable terrain.'

Officials Told to Speed Up Development Works: Collector Dr. Vinod Kumar

Pen Power Bureau, Bapatla | November 19: District Collector Dr. Vinod Kumar reviewed ongoing development works with district and division-level officials on Wednesday. He emphasized that Bapatla district should achieve top position in development and warned officials against negligence. He directed that the Vadarevu-Chilakaluri National Highway (167A) be completed quickly. Contractors informed him that road works could be completed once the Chirala railway overbridge is finished. The Collector spoke with the Chief Engineer of Railways in Secunderabad and urged for speedy completion of the bridge. He instructed officials to expedite works on the Guntur-Nizampatnam National Highway, the 4.6 km Nidubrolu-Chandolu R&B road being built at a cost of ₹78 crore, and the Repalle-Nizampatnam and Chandolu-Nizampatnam road expansion works. He also ordered proposals for a four-lane road from Guntur to Bapatla via Nidubrolu with a bypass. Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, he directed fast-tracking the Suryalanka Beach development works and asked the Forest Department to examine clearances for boat parking at the Suryalanka



Nature Park. He stressed optimizing available resources to boost tourism in Bapatla. The Collector instructed the Water Resources Department to take up canal development works worth ₹11 crore, increase tourist inflow, and begin works for the Nizampatnam Integrated Aqua Park. He reviewed delays in the Fishing Harbour project and sought explanations for the halt in works. Officials from the Fisheries, R&B, Water Resources, and Tourism departments participated in the meeting.

Illegal Constructions to Be Demolished: Municipal Minister Narayana



Rajamahendravaram, Pen Power, November 19: Municipal Administration Minister P. Narayana announced that illegal constructions in cities and towns will be demolished. During a review meeting with public representatives and officials, he urged citizens to make good use of the LRS and BRS schemes introduced for public benefit. Several development proposals were discussed, including an 80-ft road between Bommuru and Saraswati Ghat costing Rs.100 crore, and an Outer Ring Road from

Madhurapudi to Kadiyam. The Minister said a detailed study by consultants is required. Narayana stated that completing kacha drains near multi-storey buildings across municipalities would need ₹29,000 crore. Priority areas with dense population will receive ₹5,000 crore over the next three years. Of the 862 km planned in the city, 180 km of drain works—estimated at ₹65-75 crore—will be taken up soon. He assured that 40 pending TDR bonds will be cleared within a month and that new TDR bonds will be issued within 21 days of land acquisition. He urged all municipalities to encourage applications for LRS and BRS. Officials have already started identifying and demolishing illegal structures under the supervision of the Municipal Director.

Coalition Govt Pro-Farmer: Palla Srinivasa Rao

Visakhapatnam, Nov 19 (Pen Power): Under the supervision of Agriculture Department officials, financial assistance under Annadatha Sukhibhava and PM-Kisan schemes was distributed at the Pedagantyada Tahsildar office. TDP State President and Gajuwaka MLA Palla Srinivasa Rao, BJP in-charge Karunam Reddy Narasinga Rao, DCCB Chairman Kona Tatar Rao, and local corporator Puli Lakshmi Bai handed over cheques worth Rs.34.54 lakh to 493 farmers. Speaking on the occasion, Palla said the coalition government is farmer-friendly, adding that Rs.3,135 crore has been directly credited to the accounts of 47 lakh farmers across the state. As per the election promise, each farmer is receiving Rs.20,000 per year, with the Centre contributing ₹6,000 and the State providing the remaining Rs.14,000, he said. BJP leader Narasinga Rao recalled that Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the PM-Kisan Samman Yojana on February 24, 2019, providing Rs.6,000 annually to every farmer. He added that on Thursday, the Prime



Minister transferred Rs.18,000 crore into the accounts of 9 crore farmers from Coimbatore, which they witnessed live. He also highlighted that farmers are receiving loans under the PM-Kisan Credit Card for fertilizers, tools, machinery, and tractors with flexible repayment options. Officials, local leaders, and farmers participated in the programme.

Training for Health Officials on Non-Communicable Diseases



Rajamahendravaram, Pen Power, November 19: Under the Andhra Pradesh government and National Health Mission, with technical support from Yaas Aid Innovation Foundation and Noor Aid, a new initiative called Partici-

patory Learning and Action (PLA) has been launched in East Godavari district to prevent and control non-communicable diseases (NCDs), said District Medical and Health Officer K. Venkateswara Rao. The program focuses on major NCDs such as hypertension, diabetes, oral cancer, breast cancer, and cervical cancer, and follows a community-based approach where health issues are identified through group meetings and solutions are developed by the community itself. Special training sessions are being conducted for ASHA workers, medical officers, ANMs, and health visitors. District Immunization Officer Dr. B. Sridevi, Public Health Officer Dr. Srivalli, NCD Program Officer Dr. Harichandra Prasad, and medical officers participated, along with representatives from Yaas Aid Innovation Foundation and Noor Health.

Pre-Test for 2027 Census Reviewed by Central Official Dr. V.V.L.N. Sharma

Paderu, Pen Power, November 19: Dr. V.V.L.N. Sharma, Deputy Registrar General (MAP), Ministry of Home Affairs, personally inspected the ongoing pre-test activities for the 2027 Census. He visited Nuthibanda village in Rinthada panchayat of G.K. Veedhi mandal and interacted with enumerators, supervisors, and local residents. He reviewed their understanding of questionnaires, enumeration methods, and challenges faced in the field. Dr. Sharma stated that the insights from the pre-test would help rectify gaps to ensure error-free enumeration during the main census. Later, in a special review meeting, he examined the map verification process along with Paderu RDO MVS Lokeshwar Rao, Tahsildar H. Annaji Rao, and survey officials. He stressed thorough verification of revenue village boundaries, habitation details, and geographical divisions to ensure no area is left out during the census. Calling mapping a critical component for census accuracy, Dr. Sharma emphasized that correct mapping of all administrative units and habitations is essential for reliable popu-



lation data. The visit is expected to strengthen groundwork and preparedness for the 2027 Census.

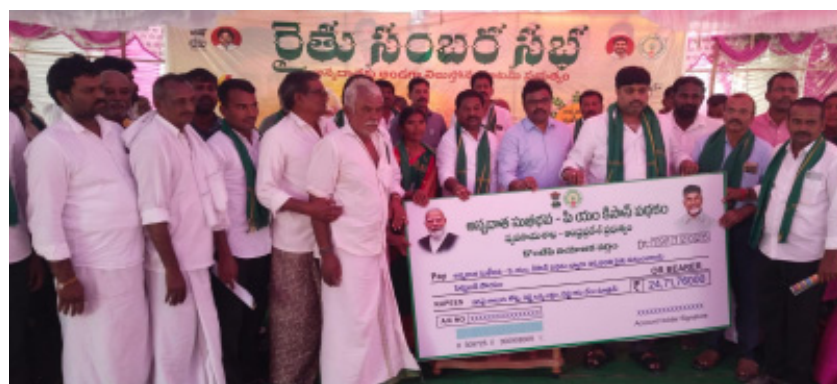
All Arrangements Completed for Margashira Masotsavam - Devotees' Convenience is the Priority: EO K. Shobharani

Visakhapatnam, Pen Power, Nov 19: All arrangements have been completed for the traditional Margashira Masotsavam to be held from November 21 to December 19 at Sri Kanaka Mahalakshmi Temple, Burujupeta, according to Temple EO K. Shobharani. Speaking at a press meet held at the Annprasa Bhavan, she said several development works were taken up based on the instructions of the District Collector and Police Commissioner. These include shifting the sampu near the prasadam counter, extending the arch gate, changes at the Ashirvachana Mandapam, laying CC roads, filling potholes, and cleaning drains. Special queue lines have been arranged to manage the crowd, with a separate route created to ensure VIP lines do not merge with general devotees. Live streaming arrangements are being made to provide timely information on darshan. The festival will begin on Nov 21 at 8:40 AM with Vedic rituals. Key events include Veda Sabha and Archaka Con-



ference on Dec 7, Rathotsavam on Dec 13 at 4 PM, Maha Annadanam on Dec 18 at 12 PM, followed by Sahasra Ghatbhishekam the same evening. Facilities such as shelters, shade structures, and drinking water have been set up for devotees. The EO appealed to devotees to cooperate with temple staff and volunteers for a peaceful darshan. Later, the festival poster was released in the presence of officials and committee members.

Development and Welfare Are the Government's Priorities: Minister Bala Veeranjaneya Swami



Ongole, Pen Power, Nov 19: State Social Welfare Minister Dr. Dola Bala Veeranjaneya Swami said that the government is committed to prioritizing development and welfare. He participated in the Annadata Sukhibhava funds distribution program held at Murrupudi mandal. Speaking

at the event, the minister said the government is taking strong measures for farmers' welfare, as farmers' prosperity leads to overall development. He noted that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan are giving high importance to farmer support. He urged farmers to adopt modern crop protection methods to achieve higher yields and improve their economic status. In Murrupudi mandal, Rs.4.98 crore was deposited in the first phase and Rs.5.30 crore in the second phase into the accounts of 7,920 farmers. Several officials, including State Maritime Board Chairman Damacharla Satyanarayana, Mandal Parishad President Vaka Venkat Reddy, and District Collector Rajababu, attended the programme.

120 kg Ganja Seized, Two Arrested in Chinturu

Our Correspondent - D.V.R.G.V. Ratnam
A.S.R. District In-charge

Chinturu, Pen Power, November 19: Acting on the instructions of SP Amit Bardar, Chinturu Sub-Division police seized 120 kg of ganja and arrested two persons. Under the supervision of SDPO B. Hemanth, CI Ch. Gopalakrishna and SIP. Ramesh conducted vehicle checks on Wednesday evening. A Bolero coming from Odisha to Andhra Pradesh was stopped at Errampeta-Motu road junction after police grew suspicious. During inspection, they found ganja cleverly hidden beneath tarpaulin bags. Police seized the contraband along with the vehicle. The arrested accused—Biswajit Mandal and Sudip Haldar—belong to the 71 Camp area of Malkangiri district. The



seized ganja is valued at around ₹6 lakh. A case has been registered and the accused were sent to remand.

"Impotent Rage": Ex Judges, Diplomats Slam Rahul Gandhi's 'Vote Chori' Pitch

New Delhi: A group of over 200 retired judges, bureaucrats, former Army officers, and diplomats has slammed the Congress and Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, for his serious allegations against the Election Commission under the main opposition party's 'vote chori' campaign. The group has put out an open letter saying the allegations are an "attempt to drape political frustration in the garb of institutional crisis". The 272 signatories to the letter include 16 retired judges, 123 former bureaucrats, 133 retired Army officers, and 14 former ambassadors. "We, the senior citizens of civil society, express our grave concern that India's democracy is under assault, not by force, but by a rising tide of venomous rhetoric directed toward its foundational institutions. Some political leaders, instead of offering genuine policy alternatives, resort to provocative but unsubstantiated accusations in their theatrical political strategy. After their attempts to tarnish the Indian Armed Forces by questioning their valour and accomplishments, and the Judiciary by questioning its fairness, Parliament, and its constitutional functionaries, now it is the turn of Election Commission of India to face systematic and conspiratorial attacks on its integrity and reputation," the open letter says. The Congress has accused the Election Commission of working in collusion with the ruling BJP to facilitate the alleged



vote fraud. The BJP and the poll body have trashed the allegations. Slamming Gandhi, the letter says he has repeatedly attacked the Election Commission and declared that he has proof that the Election Commission is involved in vote theft. The letter describes the Congress leader's "atom bomb" remarks as "unbelievably uncouth rhetoric". "Yet, despite such scathing accusations, there has been no formal complaint filed by him, along with the prescribed sworn affidavit, to escape his accountability for levelling unsubstantiated allegations and threatening public servants in performance of their duty," it says. "Moreover, several senior figures of Congress and other political parties, leftist NGOs, ideologically opinionated scholars, and a few attention seekers in other walks of life, have joined in with similarly blistering rhetoric against SIR, even declaring that the Commission has descended into complete shamelessness by acting like the 'B-team of the BJP'. Such fiery rhetoric may be emotionally powerful - but it collapses under scrutiny, because the ECI has publicly shared its SIR methodology, overseen verification by court-sanctioned means, removed ineligible names in a compliant manner, and added new eligible voters. This suggests that these accusations are an attempt to drape political frustration in the garb of institutional crisis," the statement says. The open letter says the

Congress leaders' behaviour reflects what might be called "impotent rage" - deep anger born of repeated electoral failure and frustration, without a concrete plan to reconnect with the people". "When political leaders lose touch with the aspirations of ordinary citizens, they lash out at institutions instead of rebuilding their credibility. Theatrics replace analysis. Public spectacle takes the place of public service. The irony is stark: when electoral outcomes are favourable in certain States where opposition-driven political parties form governments, criticism of the Election Commission disappears. When they are unfavourable in certain States, the Commission becomes the villain in every narrative. This selective outrage exposes opportunism, not conviction. It is a convenient deflection: to give the impression that loss is not a result of strategy, but conspiracy," it says. The letter refers to former Chief Election Commissioners TN Seshan and N Gopalaswami and says their unyielding leadership transformed the Election Commission into a formidable constitutional sentinel. "They did not court popularity. They did not chase headlines. They enforced the rules - fearlessly, impartially, relentlessly. Under them, the Commission gained moral and institutional teeth. It became a guardian, not a bystander... Now is the time for civil society and the citizens of India to stand firmly with the Election Commission, not out of flattery, but out of conviction. The society should demand that political actors stop undermining this vital institution with baseless allegations and theatrical denunciations. Instead, they should offer the public serious policy alternatives, meaningful reform ideas, and a national vision rooted in reality," the letter says.

DEEPIKA PADUKONE INDIRECTLY DIGS AT SPIRIT & KALKI 2?

Of late, Deepika Padukone has been in the news often for her controversial statements and decisions with respect to her upcoming films. A few months ago, she exited Sandeep Reddy Vanga and Prabhas's much-anticipated film Spirit due to a fallout with the director. Later, she also walked out of Kalki 2, after playing a pivotal role in the first instalment. After walking out of two big pan-India projects, Deepika now says that the Rs 500-600 crore films don't excite her anymore and added that empowering other talent excites her the most. Netizens are calling this a double standard from the actress, as she is making such statements after exiting the films and questioning why she signed them in the first place if she wasn't excited by such big-budget flicks.

Speaking in a recent interview with Harper's Bazaar India, Deepika stated that big-budget films don't excite her anymore and she now focuses on storytelling. "Because honestly, how much more fame, how much more success, how much more money? At this stage, it's not about that anymore. It's not about the ₹100-crore films, or even the ₹500-₹600 crore ones," she said.

She said that she and her team are now focusing on empowering talented actors, writers and directors and produce powerful storytelling. She stated that she feels more meaningful to her right now.

However, Deepika faced criticism for her statements on social media. Many netizens opined that if she wants to empower storytelling and is



not excited for big-budget films, why is she acting in Shah Rukh Khan's high-budget film King and Allu Arjun-Atlee's another pan-India

biggie? They also questioned if this is her formula, why she signed Spirit and Kalki in the first place and is changing her words now.



Meenakshi Turns Up Heat in Rose-Gold Glam

Meenakshi Chaudhary had a crazy-packed 2024 with six releases, but 2025 turned out pretty quiet for her. She showed up in just one film, Sankranthiki Vasthunam, playing ACP C. Meenakshi IPS opposite Venkatesh. Funny thing is, that one film alone beat the collections of most of her earlier movies and crossed 300 crores. And now 2026 has already started for her with Anaganaga Oka Raju with Naveen Polishetty, arriving for Sankranti. One movie already in January, rest of the year, let's see how she plays it out. But for now, her new pictures have taken over timelines. Meenakshi looks lovely in a rose-gold embroidered outfit that has this soft, wavy pattern all over it. The sleeveless top melts into those matching flared pants, making her look taller and super graceful. The fabric has a quiet shine, not too loud, just that gentle shimmer that catches light here and there. Her styling is simple. Loose curls, soft makeup, and those statement earrings. She threw on a few chunky gold bangles that matched the mood of the outfit. That's it. No overdoing. The whole look feels easy, clean, and very Meenakshi, pretty without trying too hard.

Germany 'Send Message' With 6-0 Slovakia Rout To Reach 2026 World Cup

Germany captain Joshua Kimmich said his side "wanted to send a message" with Monday's 6-0 thumping of Slovakia in Leipzig which sealed their progress to the 2026 World Cup. Leroy Sane struck twice and Nick Woltemade scored for the third straight Germany. The win put Germany through atop Group A and into next year's tournament in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Slovakia finished second and will go into a play-off. "Everyone wanted to send a message today. Everyone knew what was at stake," Kimmich told Germany's ZDF. "In Germany, we're not used to it being difficult to qualify -- that's why I'm very happy with how we played. Germany have laboured past underdog opponents in this campaign but were 4-0 up at half-time and humming in Leipzig. Woltemade continued his golden run with the opening goal after 18 minutes. Serge Gnabry added the second 11 minutes later. Under pressure Liverpool midfielder Florian Wirtz sparked to life late in the first half, laying on two goals



for Sane in five minutes. Ridle Baku and debutant Assan Ouedraogo scored in the second half. "We're relieved. It's a great moment," Woltemade said. "I'm playing, I'm scoring goals and I'm hopefully playing at the World Cup." "Tonight we showed the quality we have in this team. It was a pleasure," Woltemade, 23, added. Germany's win also

guarantees the four-time World Cup winners a high seeding that should protect them from an early clash with another of the tournament's big guns. "Every player played well today and worked like a dog," coach Julian Nagelsmann said. "We showed incredible team spirit and pushed ourselves on the pitch from the very beginning."

Fifth straight victory

The nature of Germany's fifth straight victory puts a glowing finish on a solid but unimpressive qualifying campaign. Germany have been efficient but rarely impressive and needed to avoid defeat on Monday to top their group and qualify directly. Slovakia had dominated Germany to win 2-0 in the reverse fixture, their first ever competitive victory over the European giants. Nagelsmann will be buoyed by the performance under pressure while several injured starters will make their way back in the coming months, including Kai Havertz, Jamal Musiala, Antonio Rudiger and Marc-Andre ter Stegen. The Germans helped quell the butterflies when Woltemade headed in to break through with 18 minutes gone. The strike meant the Newcastle striker had scored Germany's past four goals over three games. After Slovakia's Michal Duris forced a fingertip save from Germany's Oliver Baumann, Gnabry put the fans in party mood with 29 minutes gone, guiding the ball home to double Germany's lead.

At White House Dinner, Donald Trump Says His Son Respects Him More Now, Thanks To Cristiano Ronaldo

Soccer superstar Cristiano Ronaldo was at the White House on Tuesday as President Donald Trump hosted a glitzy dinner to honor Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. The soccer star was seated near the front of the East Room, not far from where the president and crown prince gave remarks to officials from both nations, along with major business leaders such as Apple CEO Tim Cook and Tesla founder Elon Musk. Trump, in his speech, made a point of recognizing Ronaldo, whom he said he introduced to his teenage son. Ronaldo has been the face of the Saudi soccer league since joining Saudi club Al-Nassr at the end of 2022 on a reported \$200 million-a-year contract. The 40-year-old Portuguese star signed a two-year extension in June with Al-Nassr, which is majority owned by the Saudi sovereign wealth fund that the crown prince chairs.

Trump thanked the athlete for attending. He said that his youngest son, Barron, is a "big



fan" of Ronaldo and the 19-year-old was impressed that he got to meet the soccer player. "Barron got to meet him. And I think he respects his father a little bit more, now, just the fact that I introduced you," Trump said. Prince Mohammed was visiting the White House for the first time since a period of diplomatic isolation began in 2018 after the killing of Washington Post journalist Jamal Khashoggi by Saudi agents in a consulate office in Istanbul. U.S. intelligence agencies determined that Prince

Mohammed likely directed the operation. He has denied involvement in the killing. It was a rare U.S. visit for Ronaldo, who hasn't played in the country since 2014. In 2017, German news magazine Der Spiegel reported that Ronaldo had years earlier paid \$375,000 in hush money to a woman who accused him of raping her at a Las Vegas hotel in 2009. Ronaldo's lawyers maintained the sex was consensual and no criminal charges ever were filed. Saudi Arabia will host the 2034 World Cup after

FIFA and its president, Gianni Infantino, shaped a fast-track bidding process two years ago that helped ensure there was no rival bid. Ronaldo promoted that bid, saying last December when the Saudi win was confirmed "after what I see, I'm more convinced that 2034 will be the best World Cup ever." Ronaldo is set to play at a record sixth edition of the World Cup next year after Portugal qualified Sunday for the tournament co-hosted by the U.S., Canada and Mexico. However, he likely will be banned by FIFA for Portugal's first game next June after getting his first red card last week in 23 seasons playing for the national team. Portugal will learn its World Cup opponents on Dec. 5 at the tournament draw, which Trump is set to attend at the Kennedy Center in Washington. Trump has closely aligned himself with the 2026 World Cup. In the Oval Office he has a copy of the golden trophy loaned to him by FIFA President Gianni Infantino.

Oscar Piastri Wins Australia's Top Sports Honour



Nine-time Grand Prix winner Oscar Piastri has won Australian sport's highest honour, the Don Award, with the Formula One star calling it a "massive

privilege". The 24-year-old has spring-boarded into the elite this year, igniting national pride as he bids to become Australia's third Formula One world champion after Jack Brabham and Alan Jones. He has a battle on his hands, losing the lead in the title race at last month's Mexico City Grand Prix and is now 24 points behind McLaren teammate Lando Norris with three races left. Piastri was recognised at the annual Sport Australia Hall Of Fame awards on Thursday night in his hometown

Melbourne, which honours the Australian athlete or team who most inspired the nation in the past 12 months. The Don Award is named after legendary Australian cricketer Donald Bradman. "Winning an award in the name of Sir Donald Bradman is a massive privilege," Piastri said. "Everyone in Australia knows exactly what he represented and the legacy he has in Australian sport, so it's not lost on me how major this award is. "It's always an amazing feeling to represent our country on the

world stage and do well for ourselves," he added. "Thank you to everyone that waves the flag and cheers me on at all the Grand Prix races around the world." Previous winners have included Ian Thorpe, Cathy Freeman, Adam Scott, Ashleigh Barty and the Australia women's football team. Seven-time world surfing champion Layne Beachley won the Dawn Award, named after swimming great Dawn Fraser and which recognises an individual, team or organisation that has changed sport for the better.

Sourav Ganguly's Honest Reply When Asked If Gautam Gambhir Should Be Sacked As Test Coach

The first Test between India and South Africa went firmly in favour of the tourists, who secured a 30-run victory to go 1-0 up in the series. While India were a batter short due to Shubman Gill's injury absence, the nature of the Eden Gardens pitch, many feel, played a significant role in the hosts' defeat. Sourav Ganguly, the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) president, has shared the SOP when it comes to preparation of pitches in India, narrating how the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) curators take

over the pitch four days before the start of the match. "No, no, I don't get involved at all," he told India Today when asked if his opinion and expertise were sought by the Indian team management before the nature of the pitch was finalised. "Curators from the BCCI come and take over the wickets four days before the Test match. We have our own curator (Sujan Mukherjee) as well, who's done exceptionally well for a long time. The requests are made, and you keep the requests. That's what it is. Ganguly had



no qualms in admitting that the nature of the pitch wasn't the 'greatest', saying the Indian team deserves a better surface to bat on. "It was not the greatest, I'll have to completely admit, and I think the top-order batting, the middle-order batting, you know, deserves a better cricketing surface.