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New Delhi, Dec 20 (GNS) Opposition INDIA bloc parties on Friday held a protest march from Vijay Chowk to the Parliament House demanding resignation of Home Minister Amit Shah for his alleged disparaging comments about Dalit icon B R Ambedkar. Participating in the march, Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said, "This government is scared to have a discussion on the Adani issue. It is scared of having any discussion. They know that their true sentiments for Ambedkar ji have come out. So, they are now scared of the Opposition because we are raising this issue. National interest is related to this matter. Our Constitution has been given by Ambedkar ji, people of this country and our freedom struggle. Such insult to him will not be tolerated by India.""They are so desperate that they are lodging false FIRs. Rahul ji can never push anyone. I am his sister, I know him.

He can never do such a thing. The country knows this too. The country is watching how desperate they are that they are lodging baseless FIRs...These are all distractions", she added.Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said Amit Shah must apologise for what he said about Ambedkar. "Babasaheb Ambedkar has been insulted in the Rajya Sabha by Shah. He must admit his guilt and apologise. We must go forward and only the Constitution drafted by Ambedkar can guide us in our forward march", Yadav said. Imran Pratapgarhi, Congress's Rajya Sabha MP, said, instead of atoning for the insult heaped upon Ambedkar, the BJP was trying to implicate Rahul in false cases. "Rahul is not someone who will get intimidated by the BJP's lowly tactics", Pratapgarhi said. Opposition parties, including the Congress, SP, DMK, JMM, CPI, CPI(M) and others, took part in the protest demonstration at Vijay Chowk this morning.Opposition leaders also boycotted the customary tea meeting with the Speaker of the Lok Sabha.



#### 7 dead, 35 hurt in Jaipur fire after trucks collide outside petrol pump

Jaipur, Dec 20 (GNS) A deadly collision involving a gas tanker and multiple vehicles turned a stretch of the Jaipur-Ajmer highway here into an inferno on Friday morning, killing seven people, injuring more than 35 and engulfing over 30 vehicles in flames as thick black smoke filled the sky.

Eyewitnesses reported spotting the flames from nearly a kilometre away as ambulances and fire brigade vehicles rushed towards the crash zone. A school van driver on his way to pick up students recounted with horror the sight of a man engulfed in flames.

Rajasthan health department officials told PTI that seven people died in the crash while more than 35 were injured.

Police said there are chances that some people could not get out of their vehicles and got burnt inside. The situation will become clear once all the vehicles are thoroughly checked, they said.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma and Health Minister Gajendra Singh Khimsar rushed to the SMS Hospital, where the injured were admitted. Sharma spoke to administration offi-

so that patients can be accommodated. Some people got primary treatment in nearby hospitals," he said.

The health minister said a 'green corridor' has been set up from the accident site to the SMS hospital.An official said a sleeper bus headed for Jaipur from Rajsamand was behind the gas tanker when the accident occurred. Efforts were underway to find the details about the passengers on board.

The burnt vehicles are being removed from the highway so that traffic movement can be resumed.CM Sharma, Governor Haribhau Bagade, and former chief minister Ashok Gehlot expressed their condolences for the loss of lives in the crash.

The station house officer of Bhankrota Manish Gupta said it was difficult to bring the fire under control initially."Fire brigade teams initially were unable to reach the vehicles that were burning. There are three petrol pumps in the area but fortunately, they are safe," he added.

More than 25 ambulances were used to shift the victims to the hospital.A nearly 300-metre busy stretch of the highway was affected by the accident, leading to a long queue of vehicles. Economic Persecution, Xenophobia against Indo-American Businessmen in Canada: Dr. Krishnan Suthanthiran Exposes Trudeau's Anti-Indian Policies

Religious Intolerance, economic bias and rising xenophobia against the Indian Diaspora in Canada



New Delhi: In a press conference on Saturday at the Press Club of India in New Delhi, Dr Krishnan Suthanthiran, Founder and President, TeamBest Global Companies called out the systemic challenges faced by Hindu businessmen in Canada. He accused the Justin Trudeau's administration of systemic discrimination and called for a global response to ensure equal and fair treatment of Indian origin people. "There is a rising trend of Xenophobia against the Indian Hindu Diaspora in Canada where Justice and dignity have not been privileges-they are fundamental rights," said Dr. Suthanthiran. "We must unite to confront systemic injustices wherever they arise." Dr. Suthanthiran started by describing his Indian roots and how Indian Diaspora was contributing to a more better world. He claimed he believed in accessible education and health care, that would enable his "Proud Indian Party" to make free education and quality health care to be afforded to every Indian citizen.He drew attention to his long-standing work in oncology and preventive medicine, calling for early detection and

treatment of diseases such as cancer, diabetes, and cardiac conditions. He is concerned about bureaucratic red tape and corruption in India but is optimistic about the country's ability to become a global leader in healthcare and manufacturing. Systemic discrimination faced by Hindu businessmen in Canada dominated the conference. Dr. Suthanthiran requested Prime Minister Trudeau's government to address systemic biases and build in inclusivity. He also requested international organizations to come together to ensure that every community has equality. "The attempt of 'economic persecution' of Indian-Origin Entrepreneurs and businessmen in Trudeau's Canada is now a matter of international concern. The world needs to act decisively against any kind of prejudice," Dr. Suthanthiran stated while urging resilience and collective efforts for upholding human rights around the world. His initiatives related to philanthropy range from the Best Food Foundation, Triple E (Education, Empowerment, and Equality) among others. These try to uplift the underdeveloped communities in the globe as a whole. Reemphasized his dedication to bringing on innovative medical devices coupled with affordability of healthcare technologies meant

cials and doctors and issued directions to ensure proper treatment was facilitated. He also visited the accident site and spoke to police officials.

In a post in Hindi on X, the chief minister said, "Deeply saddened to hear the news of casualties in the gas tanker fire incident on the Jaipur-Ajmer National Highway. As soon as the information about the incident came, I went to the SMS Hospital and directed the doctors there to provide immediate necessary medical facilities and take proper care of the injured." Jaipur Police Commissioner Biju George Joseph and other officials of the department were at the spot on the highway.

Khimsar told reporters that nearly half of the injured brought to the hospital were in very critical condition."All doctors, resident doctors and nursing staff were called in to manage the situation. Another ward has been opened Police officials said the fire engulfed some establishments along the highway but details of the actual losses are not yet clear. The school van driver told that the flames were visible from a kilometre away and there was panic and chaos on the highway.

"As I got closer to the spot, I saw people running in haste and shouting for help. I saw a man engulfed in flames. It was a frightening scene. Fire brigades and ambulances were there but it was difficult for them to reach the spot initially," he said.

A team from the district administration is present at the hospital to help the family members of the victims.The Jaipur Police has issued the helpline numbers 9166347551, 8764688431 and 7300363636 for people to get in touch for inquiries or relevant information. at making quality care accessible for all.

"The 21st century belongs to India," Dr. Suthanthiran declared. "Collectively we shall create a world for peaceful, progressive, and sharing prosperity."

About Dr. Krishnan Suthanthiran

Dr. Krishnan Suthanthiran, founder of TeamBest Global (TBG) Companies, has spent over five decades advancing oncology and global healthcare. Inspired by the loss of his father to cancer, he pursued a mechanical engineering degree in India, moved to Canada for further studies, and began his oncology career in the U.S.

He has founded several companies, invested in healthcare innovations, and launched initiatives, such as the Best Cure Foundation and Triple E, which focus on preventive care, clean water, and education, all of which are globally acknowledged for his commitment to equity, justice, and accessible healthcare to all.

#### Canada presented 'no evidence' in support of serious allegations: Govt

New Delhi, Dec 20 (GNS) Canada has presented "no evidence whatsoever" in support of the "serious allegations" it has chosen to level, the Centre informed the Lok Sabha on Friday when asked whether the Union government has taken note of the recent developments in criminal cases allegedly involving the Indian citizens in that country.

Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh in a written response also said "in addition, its public narrative on this issue appears to be in service of an anti-India separatist agenda"."Persisting with such a narrative can only be harmful for any stable bilateral relationship. Government has, therefore, repeatedly urged the Canadian authorities to take action against anti-India elements operating from their soil," he said.Congress MP Manish Tewari in his query asked whether the Union government has taken note of the recent developments in criminal cases allegedly involving the "Indian citizens/ officials in the United States and Canada", and if so, the impact these cases are likely to have on India's bilateral relations with these countries.He also asked whether the government has "engaged diplomatically" with the governments of the US and Canada to "address concerns" regarding these cases.

"Government is aware of the allegations about the involvement of the Indian nationals in purported acts or intent in the US and Canada. As part of ongoing security cooperation with the United States, certain inputs shared by the US side pertaining to the nexus between organised criminals, gun runners, terrorists and others that impinge on India's national security interests as well are being examined by a High-Level Enquiry Committee that has been constituted for this purpose," the minister said.

# President Murmu presents colours to defence Management College

Hyderabad, Dec.20 (NSS)In a landmark moment in the history of the College of Defence Management (CDM), Secunderabad, the President's Colours were awarded by Droupadi Murmu, to the institution on FridayThe momentous recognition marks a historic milestone for CDM, a premier defence institute dedicated to shaping senior leadership of the Indian Armed Forces. The presentation of President's Colours, the highest award to any defence institution, acknowledges the college's outstanding contributions to professional military education. The President also released the 'Special Day Cover' and a commemorative medallion to celebrate the occasion along with a revised edition of compilation Ancient Indian Strategic Thought titled 'Pearls of Ancient Indian Wisdom. The President expressed her happiness on women officers undergoing the learning at CDM. She also urged the defence forces to contribute towards the Self Reliance and Atmanirbharta initiative. She expressed the need for the forces to be updated on emerging disruptive warfare in multiple domains and empha-



sised that the role of CDM is crucial to keep the forces future ready. The President lauded CDM in developing strategic linkages with civilian academic institutions and international defence organisations, fostering a global perspective on security challenges. She also expressed that the senior strategic leadership will have important role in positioning India as a major player in international arena. The President interacted with the Participants Officers from friendly countries, attending the course at the CDM and wished them a fruitful and successful future. The President also inaugurated the monumental national flag at CDM, marking a significant moment in the institution's history. The flag, symbolizing India's strength, unity, and sovereignty, stands as a powerful reminder of the CDM's commitment to excellence in defence education. The award of the President's Colours not only acknowledges the institution's rich history, but also celebrates the dedication of its faculty, staff, and alumni who continue to uphold CDM's mission of developing the military leaders capable of navigating the complexities of contemporary global security.

# PARYAT VATIKA

#### EDITORIAL

Saturday, 21 December 2024 M parvatvatika@gmail.com

The rise of predatory State

Preserving individual rights and liberty in a security State is a challenge.

wo seminal events occurred during the first decade of the current millennium whose fallout continues to shape the political, ideological and economic trajectory of states across the world. Both were centred in the US, while still in its phase of unipolar ascendancy.

The first was the Twin Towers terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and the second was the financial and banking crisis of 2007-8, brought on by sub-prime mortgage meltdown.

The reverberations from these crises, which took place within just a few years of each other, continue to radiate across a world that has become densely knitted together through rapid and often poorly understood technological change.

Though the two events were not related, their consequences have become intertwined in ways that are not always apparent. It is important to reflect on these developments and draw lessons because India's own trajectory as an emerging power and the fate of its democratic polity are being altered by them.

The US response to 9/11 legitimised a significant curtailment of individual liberties and abridgement of democratic safeguards against encroachment by the State at the very heart of the liberal, democratic order.

Any State is inherently predatory, irrespective of the ideological persuasion of those who hold its reins, relentlessly seeking to expand its power and influence at the cost of its citizens.Authoritarianism is the default condition of a holder of State power, which is why in democracies there are institutional checks and balances against this natural propensity of a State towards aggrandisement of power.

The phrase 'eternal vigilance is the price of liberty' is not just a slogan. It is an indispensable responsibility of citizens in a democracy. What 9/11 did was to elevate security compulsions above the enjoyment of individual rights. States across the world were ready to follow the US example, confident that the 'war against terror' would provide a convenient protective shield.It has not taken long for States across the geographical, political and ideological spectrum to realise that the security argument can be a potent weapon to abridge civic rights, weaken institutional safeguards and escape scrutiny and accountability.

The security argument has been made even more potent by its association with notions of nationalism and patriotism, enabling political dispensations and cynical elites to wield power without responsibility. In the process, a citizenry fearful of its safety is becoming complicit in the abridgement of its own rights. Advances in technology are also providing States with much more efficient tools of surveillance and control. There is growing acceptance of the targeting of fellow citizens who have been branded a security threat by the State, often playing upon entrenched prejudices within society.

Jurisprudence in democracies permits State action against what are described as specific and concrete dangers. But when the rule of law becomes focused on protecting citizens, not only from such specific threats, but also from potential ones, 'every citizen is a potential risk'. The abridgement of his constitutional rights then becomes justified for his own good and for preventing potential threats to public order.

The persisting consequences of the economic crisis of 2007-8 are reinforcing the erosion of democratic principles. Free markets ensured economic prosperity and led naturally to liberal democracy, this was the mantra of the so-called Washington Consensus.Post the economic crisis, the Washington Consensus collapsed. Not only capitalism, but also liberal democracy associated with it became discredited. This enabled China to celebrate its model



of political authoritarianism and State capitalism and offer it as a winning formula to developing countries. This has a seductive appeal in a world where familiar anchors, ideological and political, have been shaken. This has served to reinforce the predatory power of the State already swelled by recourse to the security imperative. The emergence of 'strong and decisive leaders' is a symptom of this trend and may be described as 'dictator envy'.

The road is then open to what has been called a security State.We see these global trends beginning to be reflected in our own country. I drew attention to these dangers in the reasons advanced by the J&K Governor to prevent the formation of a government by a coalition of parties which was ready to prove its majority on the floor of the House.

One of the arguments used was the security imperative. There is a direct line between the Governor's actions then to the latest decisions on and continuing security lockdown in J&K. The recent passage of the Unlawful Activities Prevention (Amendment) Act will further add to the power of the State to act against any individual on mere apprehension of a terrorist

act. We may be sliding towards a situation where security imperatives, which only the state may define, can override democratic safeguards. The economic and business environment cannot be insulated from these trends.

It is too early to say how these trends will play out in the coming days. There are contradictions which lie at the heart of a security State. It must seek legitimacy by being seen as delivering enhanced security to citizens but its hold on power derives from overplaying security threats.

Similarly, its adoption of authoritarian methods must be seen as delivering enhanced economic benefits. Governance can improve only with greater accountability, which requires greater transparency. Both become casualties in such a State.In a democracy, outcomes cannot be separated from the means adopted to achieve them. Strong institutions exist and the rule of law prevails in a democracy to ensure that the choice of means conform to constitutional propriety and do not undermine civic rights. But it is citizens themselves who must uphold their rights. States rarely seek limits to their own power.

### A structural or cyclical slowdown?

The Indian economy is passing through a phase of economic slowdown, with the GDP growth registering one of the lowest rates of 5.8 per cent in the last quarter of FY19. The GDP growth rate for the first quarter of FY20 is feared to be lower than 5.8 per cent. While there is a consensus that the economy is slowing down, the debate is still going on whether the slowdown is structural or cyclical.In simple words, a cyclical economic slowdown is a part of the business cycle having its peaks and troughs. The economy will be moving in cycles with periods of peak performance followed by a downturn and then a trough of low activity. These are expected to be short-term problems that could be addressed with an adequate mix of fiscal and monetary policies.

On the other hand, sometimes the problems of the economy can go deeper, impeding the efficient and fair production of goods and services. In such a scenario, a monetary and fiscal stimulus won't be enough to revive the economy. Fixing such problems would require the government to undertake some structural policies. The best example in this regard would be the reforms that were carried out to address the crisis in 1991. Now, the question is whether the Indian economy requires structural policies or a stimulus package through monetary and fiscal policy. We can analyse the performance of various indicators that would help us in assessing whether the slowdown is cyclical or structural.

The economic growth of any country is driven by a virtuous cycle of savings, investment and exports. Of all the three, investment is considered to be the key driver of growth. To quote the Economic Survey (2019), investment, especially private investment, is the 'key driver' that drives demand, creates capacity, increases labour productivity, introduces new technology, allows creative destruction, and generates jobs.

The investment rate as measured by Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) as a per cent of GDP is showing a declining trend. GFCF as a per cent of GDP has declined from 34.3 per cent in 2011 to 28.8 per cent in 2018. Similarly, if we consider the GFCF in the private sector, it declined from 26.9 per cent in 2011 to 21.4 per cent in 2018. Likewise, the new investment projects that were announced in 2011 stood at 5,882, whereas it declined to 3,708 in 2018. On the other hand, the investment projects that were dropped off in 2011 were 945 and it increased to 2,142 in 2018.A similar declining trend is also evident in the case of gross domestic savings as a per cent of GDP. It declined from 32.7 per cent in 2011 to 29.3 per cent in 2018. During the same period, exports as a per cent of GDP also declined from 24.5 per cent to 19.6 per cent. Thus, the performance of all the three indicators considered to be the major ingredients of a growth story was not satisfactory. Another major area of concern that is also contributing to the declining savings in the economy is wage growth. The economy is experiencing a declining wage growth (both rural and urban wages). Rural wage growth has declined from 27.7 per cent in FY14 to less than 5 per cent in FY19. The corporate wages have also exhibited a single-digit growth in FY19 compared to a double-digit growth a few years back. The declining wages could also lead to a slowdown in consumption, which is what the economy is experiencing now. All the sectors, especially the auto sector, is passing through a crisis like situation due to the declining sales. The declining sales and piling inventories are forcing companies to cut down production. The cutting down of production can have repercussions in the job market. For instance, the unemployment rate was 5.6 per cent in July 2018, whereas in July 2019 it was 7.5 per cent.Further, the inflation rate in the economy has declined from 10.03 per cent in FY13 to 3.41 per cent in FY19. The low inflation rate would be a relief to the consumers, but a prolonged period of falling prices is not good news for the economy. Low inflation rate depicts weakening of demand that would discourage fresh investments and job creation. The slowdown in the economy was further aggravated by the NBFC crisis triggered by the IL&FS default. The NBFC crisis led to a liquidity crunch that further worsened the situation in the economy. Liquidity crisis negatively affected the companies that were plaguing with lower sales. For instance, according to the letter written by the SIAM to the Finance Ministry, 70 per cent of two-wheeler sales and 60 per cent of commercial vehicles sales are financed by the NBFCs. Considering the performance of the above indicators, it could be inferred that the slowdown in the economy is more than a cyclical one. The structural factors contributing to the slowdown is evident from the fact that the successive rate cuts by the Central Bank have not yielded the desired results. The limited fiscal space prevented the government from announcing any stimulus package in the budget. However, even if the government had gone for a fiscal stimulus it could have only a limited impact in addressing the present crisis.

# How Europe can save the Amazon

rench President Emmanuel Macron Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's condropped a bombshell recently: His office said France is opposed to the ratification of the European Union's (EU) latest big trade deal, with the Mercosur group of South American countries, because one of the group's members, Brazil,

temptuous attitude towards rainforest conservation, thrust into focus by reports of wildfires raging in the Amazon as deforestation has accelerated under Bolsonaro and the country's environmental agencies have become markedly

cause of Bolsonaro's attitude — and in any case, he'd rather not allow cheap Brazilian beef on the European market, where it'll be a threat to Irish farmers.

Even though European officials have dea commitment on the South Americans to follow their climate goals laid out in the 2016 Paris agreement and to avoid deforestation, it has been shown that more openness to trade increases deforestation rates in Brazil. So it's appropriate for Macron and other European leaders to reconsider the Mercosur trade agreement in response to Bolsonaro's behaviour. There's no need, however, to bury the deal altogether. There is a way to revise it so that it's still beneficial for the parties without hurting the Amazon. In 2017, the US Department of Agriculture put out a report on international trade and deforestation. The main idea of the study behind it was to figure out which products are the most deleterious to forests in different countries. In Mercosur members Brazil and Argentina, according to the report, beef and soybeans contribute the most to deforestation. As things stand, the deal's sustainability chapter relies on private initiatives to limit

these commodities' impact; it mentions the so-called soy moratorium in Brazil a voluntary pledge not to buy soy grown on recently deforested land in the Amazon (which led to increased deforestation fended the deal, saying it already imposed in Brazil's savannah, not covered by the moratorium). But under Bolsonaro, such

has shown a lack of commitment to preserving the Amazon rainforest.

The deal, reached in June by the European Commission after 20 years of negotiations, still needs to be approved by each EU member state and the European Parliament. It's a key part of the legacy of the outgoing commission, headed by Jean-Claude Juncker, the biggest deal the EU has ever struck in terms of tariffs eliminated (4 billion or Dh16.18 billion) a year, the first major trade agreement struck by Mercosur since it was formed in 1991.

It also sends a political message to a world rocked by US President Donald Trump's trade war with China: That the EU is still the major force behind free trade. But, if all of this is weighed against out-of-control deforestation in the Amazon, Macron is right and the agreement needs to be revised in a few specific ways that would make it work for, not against, climate goals.Macron is outraged about less active in trying to safeguard the jungle from illegal logging.

The far-right Brazilian leader has made no secret of prioritising agriculture over forest protection. His policies have led Germany to suspend the funding of conservation projects in Brazil; in response, Bolsonaro told German Chancellor Angela Merkel to "take your dough and reforest Germany, OK?"

That makes Merkel Macron's potential ally in blocking the Mercosur deal as it stands. The increasingly powerful Greens are the strongest rivals of Merkel's Christian Democratic Union party (and also potential coalition partners), and though the chancellor is strongly pro-trade, the optics of pushing for the deal's approval now would be politically unfavourable.

#### Paris agreement

The deal has other potential opponents, too. Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar has threatened to nix it beinitiatives aren't likely to be ef Environmental guarantees

The final edition of the trade deal should explicitly link trade quotas on forest-risk commodities, such as beef and soybeans, to keeping the forested area constant or even increasing it. It also should set up a reliable monitoring mechanism: Earlier this month, the head of the Brazilian institute that tracks deforestation was fired after Bolsonara called the institute's data "lies." "You have to understand that the Amazon is Brazil's, not yours," Bolsonaro told European journalists last month. Well, he needs to understand that the European market is the EU's to regulate as it sees fit. Increased sales to this lucrative market should only be possible against firm environmental guarantees. And if the Mercosur deal could wait for 20 years, it can certain wait some more while this matter is cleared up.

## India-Pak and law of diminishing returns

t is not only in the world of finance that imprudent fiscal policies set in motion the law of diminishing returns but equally so in the turbulent and unpredictable realm of geopolitics. Since its violent birth in August 1947 at India's Independence, Pakistan has consistently traversed a myopic, rabidly anti-India path which has been self-destructive.Pakistan has unsuccessfully waged conflicts against India in 1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999, besides fostering humongous terrorism in J&K and the rest of the Indian hinterland. Though all these actions have hardly brought any substantial beneficial spinoffs for Pakistan, the latter's persistent perfidy against India and its support of terrorism has brought it international denunciation as the 'fountainhead of global terror.' But will Pakistan ever learn that exporting terrorism and pursuing mere anti-India policies against its much larger neighbour will only remain for itself a highly unproductive zero-sum game? Pakistan today stands at the 

cusp of a total financial breakdown. If the Paris-based international anti-terrorism financial regulatory, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) blacklists it in October 2019, as is widely presumed, then Pakistan would be in financial jeopardy, with IMF loans and all international financial assistance to it being withdrawn. It is thus prudent for Pakistan to change tack and forsake export of terrorism to both India and Afghanistan for its own survival as a nation-state.Pakistan now feels that, thanks to the Indian Government revoking on August 5 this year the over 70-year-old Articles 370 and 35 A from J&K, it has been given an unexpected chance to revive disaffection and aggravate dissent among the people of the Kashmir Valley. Thus, it has gone overboard to internationalise the vexed J&K issue, even making its mentor, China, convene an informal meeting of the UNSC. Though the majority of the nations have dubbed the removal of the Articles as an internal matter of India, a few have

not been able to resist the temptation of advising India regarding ensuring human rights in the Kashmir Valley. US President Donald Trump has made condescending statements on Kashmir in recent weeks. Since the die has already been cast in J&K by the Indian Government's unprecedented step in abrogating the aforesaid Articles which conferred special status on the state of J&K, the nation has to be fully geared to absorb the ramifications of this more than a significant strategic decision, both internally and in the external dimension. First, there has to be total synergy between the MHA, MoD and the MEA in advising the PMO and subsequently issuing clearcut instructions to the J&K Governor as to the current course of action of the state administration and the security forces. Secondly, troops manning the International Border, Line of Control in J&K and the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL) in Ladakh have to ensure that no infiltration takes place from across and Pakistan's

mischief, including its propensity to indulge in ceasefire violations, will have to be more than adequately replied to. With many security restrictions still in place, by all accounts, the Centre's work to foster total normalcy in the Valley is cut out in the coming weeks. Additionally, right-wingers of the ruling dispensation must be strictly refrained from displaying triumphalism which creates a divide among the people of the Valley and the majority community in the Jammu region. In matters of supreme national interest, both the party in power and the Opposition have to be on the same page — in a vibrant democracy, differing perceptions are not anti-national by any stretch of imagination. Overall, the decision to revoke the special status of J&K also makes it imperative that the Centre displays the same courage and with alacrity removes all restrictions facing the common public. Anyway, stone-pelting and public protests, if they take place, will have to be managed with firmness.

# PARVAT VATIKA

## INTERNATIONAL

# 493 branches of APGVB merged with TGB

APGVB branches under the control
 of Hyderabad TGB Head Office from 1st Jan
 Revealed by Chairman K. Pratap Reddy

Warangal, 20 December : The Andhra Pradesh Grameen Vikas Bank (APGVB) is set to merge with Telangana Grameen Bank (TGB), with the integration of 493 APGVB branches under the control of the TGB Head Office in Hyderabad starting January 1, 2025. The announcement was made by APGVB

Chairman, K. Pratap Reddy, during a press conference in Hanumakonda on Friday. As part of the "One State, One RRB" initiative, the merger follows the orders of the Department of Financial Services of the Government of India. The merger process will temporarily affect banking services, with a shutdown of online banking, UPI, ATM, mobile banking, internet banking, and customer service centers from December 28 to 31 due to technical issues.Chairman Pratap Reddy urged customers to complete their transactions by December 27 to avoid any inconvenience. He further clarified that the combined bank's head office for Telangana will be based in Warangal, while the centralized office for the united Telugu states will be located in Hyderabad.Deputy General Manager Operations B. Dayakar, HO Manager Shashikant, and other officials were also present at the announcement event.



# People should use government medical facilities

► Hanumakonda District Medical and Health Officer Dr. A. Appiah

Warangal, 20 December : Dr. A. Appiah, the District Medical and Health Officer (DMHO) of Hanumakonda, emphasized the importance of using government medical facilities after inspecting the Primary Health Center in Gopalpur on Friday. During the inspection, Dr. Appiah congratulated the medical staff for the center's outstanding achievement of being selected twice for National Quality Standards Recognition (NQAS). He also directed the Medical Officer to maintain cleanliness on the premises, in collaboration with the Panchayat Secretary, by clearing unnecessary plants and grass. The DMHO then inspected the lab, pharmacy, ward rooms, and the surgical theater, and interacted with patients to under-



stand the quality of services being provided. He highlighted that the government is offering free medical treatment to around 1300 people, including 822 individuals with hypertension, 448 with diabetes, and 2 with cancer. Dr. Appiah encouraged the public to make full use of the medical services available at government facilities, stressing their role in ensuring the well-being of the community.Medical Officer Dr. Vijayender Reddy, AYUSH Medical Officer Ishwar, and other staff members of the Primary Health Center were present during the inspection.

## Good Samaritan 2024 Award to Hanoch Putra

- Hanoch Putra's services are appreciated
- ▶ Good News Mission Kenya representative Prof. Yohan Kim

Warangal, 20 December : Good Samaritan 2024 National Award was presented to Putra Hanoch, founder of J.S.S.W ministries from Rajahmundry Burma Colony by Good News Mission representative from Kenya prof. Yohan Kim was felicitated with a memento, medal and certificate at the Shelton Hotel. On this occasion, the Good Samaritan 2024 award program was held at Hotel Shelton on Friday under the auspices of global peace and cultural association. For three decades, JSS Ministries organized awareness programs, free medical camps and provided free medicines in both the Telugu states, made special efforts in serving the elderly, disabled and leprosy patients, along with social programs, provided essential items to



the poor in the context of Corona. Financial incentives are provided to many female students who cannot afford to pursue higher studies. She was selected for this award in recognition of her services by providing sewing training for the

upliftment of women and providing free sewing machines to strengthen the family financially. In the program P. Jacob Sundar, Cyril Richard, I. Kishore Kumar, Addanaki Raja, M. Ramesh, M. Vishal Prem and others participated.

#### Indiramma Indla mobile app survey should be completed

► Hanumakonda district in-charge collector Satya Sharada Devi

Warangal, 20 Deceber : In-charge District Collector Satya Sharada Devi has directed officials to complete the mobile app survey for Indiramma households by the end of this month. The survey, which aims to identify beneficiaries for land and house construction, was recently



# Christmas is about sharing the love of Christ

► Godfather Palsanraj Warangal, 20 December : This account beautifully captures the spirit of Christmas through the shared joy and fellowship in celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. Reverend Dr.



conducted in Christian Colony (Labor Colony) in Hanumakonda District, Atmakuru Mandal, and Akkampeta villages of Warangal Municipal. During the survey, the Collector emphasized that eligible beneficiaries must have their names listed on the ration card and Aadhaar card, as well as the required land for house construction. She instructed the survey officers to ensure that all beneficiary details are accurately entered into the mobile app. The Collector

also urged officials to take necessary steps to expedite the survey process and report any registration issues to higher authorities immediately. The survey team included Warangal and Hanumakonda District 2 BHK nodal officers Rajender, G. Ram Reddy, Tehsildar Jaganmohan Reddy, Mandal Development Officer Srinivas, and other survey staff. Sangala Palsanraj's emphasis on the love of Christ as the true essence of Christmas resonates deeply, reminding us of the season's focus on unity, love, and compassion. The gathering, which included the cutting of the Christmas cake and the unveiling of a new Christmas song, showcases the community's commitment to cherishing and spreading the message of hope and faith.Such celebrations highlight the importance of togetherness, as reflected in the tradition of

joint families and collective worship. Events like these not only honor the religious significance of Christmas but also bring people closer, fostering a sense of harmony and shared purpose. Reverend Immadi Clinton's continued efforts to organize prayer festivals since 2007 demonstrate the power of steadfast dedication to uplifting communities through faith. This truly encapsulates the joy and essence of the Christmas season.

#### Leadership of Divyangjan in society is most important- Pradeep Singh Malik

Parvat Vatika

Nuh, Mohit Saini. World Disability Day was celebrated by Caritas India social organization and Roop VK Jain Foundation. The program was organized at Bal Bhavan Community Center, Nuh. 200 Divyangjans participated in the program. The chief guest of the program was Additional Deputy Commissioner Pradeep Singh Malik. The program was started by lighting the lamp and Saraswati Vandana. Project Extension Associate Rajkumar welcomed all the guests and Divyangjans on behalf of Caritas India team. He told that World Disability Day is celebrated all over the world on 3 December. Its purpose is to include and participate in the society of Divyangjans. On this day, talented Divyangjans are honored at the national and state level. Roop VK Jain Foundation and Caritas India celebrate this program as Joy of Ability. The chief guest wished the Divyangjans on World Disability Day. He told that it is the responsibility of all of us that Divyangjans get equal participation in social, economic and political aspects. He told that Divyangjans are also a part of the society and all Divyangjans should always keep a goal in their life and focus on fulfilling it.



Many schemes of the government are being run for the rights of the disabled, you all should take advantage of them. Special guests were Dr. Sarabjit Thapar, Chief Medical Officer, Sundarlal Khatri, and special invited guests were Mahesh Malik DTO, Meena Thakur, social worker , Shaukeen Kotla, Antaram Sarpanch, Papij Sarpanch Rojkamev , Sarpanch Basai village , and all Chhaya Kar brothers. Gaurav Jain, Director of Roop VK Jain Foundation, congratulated all the disabled people who came to this program and told that he likes going to the programs of the disabled people the most. He and his entire organization have always stood with the disabled

people for their rights. And gradually they are working to empower the disabled people. Arvind Chaurasia, Akash Shukla and other colleagues from Roop Automobile Company came to the program. CMO Sarabjit Thapar told that if there is any problem in the Divyanka certificate, then the disabled people can meet him without any hindrance. In this program, blankets were distributed to 100 needy Divyangjans through Father Irudaya Kumar Manager Maria Mandir School. And assistive devices were given to eight Divyangjans. On this occasion, Rekha Dhankar, Seema, and Anju from Caritas India Team made the Divyangjans aware of their rights.

 Unannounced inspections at the IKP center on the orders of the Collector
 Due to differences in weight, the farmers raised an agitation and the Collector

#### ordered an inquiry

Peddapalli / Ramagiri, Dec 20: It is inevitable that the farmers who realized the difference in the weight at the Nagepalli IKP center of Ramagiri Mandal last week. Responding to the farmers' allegations, the Collector ordered an inquiry by the District Weights and Measures Department official on Friday. As part of the investi-

# Legal metrology officers raids on IKP centre



gation, the officer of the District Weights and Measures Department, who entered the field on Friday, placed a 20 kg weighing stone on the electronic fork and noticed that the weighing scale showed less than 700 grams. The legal metrology authorities confiscated these scales. Similarly,

the report of this investigation will be submitted to the collector and then the collector will take it Legal metrology officer Vishveshwar said. He was accompanied by TA Mailikharjun, officials of various departments, farmers, former public representatives and leaders of various political parties.

#### **AP Chief Secretary offers prayers**

Tirumala, Dec.20 (NSS): Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad along with his family members offered prayers to Sri Venkateswara Swamy in Tirumala on Friday.After darshan he was offered Vedaseervachanam by vedic pundits at Ranganayakula Mandapam followed by the presentation of a Laminated photo of Srivaru and Theertha Prasadams by Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary.District Collector Dr Venkateswar, Dist SP L Subbarayudu were present. TTD officials Deputy EOs Lokanatham, Bhaskar and others were also present.

#### SPORTS

# Ashwin's desire to evolve all the time made him stand out : Ravi Shastri

Melbourne, Dec 20 (GNS) Ravichandran Ashwin's constant drive to evolve and excel in his craft, coupled with his focus on selfimprovement rather than being concerned about the opponents made him stand out, says former India coach Ravi Shastri.

PARVAT VATIKA

The 38-year-old surprised the cricketing world by announcing his retirement in the middle of the Test series against Australia after the end of the third Test in Brisbane on Wednesday."What stands out for me was his wanting to evolve all the time. He wasn't the kind of guy satisfied as to where he started," Shastri said on 'The ICC Review'."For me it was his guile, wanting to excel in his craft and (especially) in the last two-three years the way he got the ball to the way, gave it a rip and got it to dip on the batsman with drift made him stand out," Shastri said.

Known for his relentless drive to develop his game, Ashwin consistently worked on new deliveries and refined his action, even in the later stages of his career."He wanted new tricks to be learned. He pursued it, practiced hard at it and continued to look for new things as his career progressed, to keep up with the times," Shastri said.

"His legacy will be of being a terrific match-winner, a fabulous record, 537 sticks. I mean anyone over 500 (in Test cricket) is special."Ashwin, who made his debut in 2011 against the West Indies, quickly cemented his place in India's Test side. He retired as India's second-highest wicket-taker with 765 scalps, including 537 in Tests.Ashwin and fellow spinner Ravindra Jadeja often bowled in tandem, leading India to numerous victories. Shastri felt the "spin twins" played a role in each other's success."And for him to do it in his span and the way he has done it, especially when it came to bowling in the last four or five years, I think in India, along with Jadeja, I think they were a terrific pair, the real spin twins.""They complemented each other well and they spurred each other on, so I would say a lot of Jadeja's wickets in the last five-six years have come because of Ashwin and vice-versa." Shastri



highlighted that Ashwin's nearly identical record against left and right handed batters -- 269 wickets against right-handers and 268 against left-handers-demonstrated just



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how versatile and effective the spinner was, regardless of the opponent or their playing style."You look at his record against righthanders, against left-handers, it's pretty much similar, you know, which says it all. It didn't matter to him who he was bowling against. He was up for it," he added

#### Konstas handed Boxing Day Test call-up as changes loom for Australia

▶ The 19-year-old opener is now in the frame for a debut in

Melbourne with Australia set to make changes to their struggling top order

Melbourne, Dec 20 (GNS) Nathan Mc-Sweeney has been dropped from Australia's squad for the final two Tests against India with 19-year-old opening batter Sam Konstas earning his first call as the home side shake up the top order amid their struggles against Jasprit Bumrah.

Konstas has been included on the back of a strong run of form since being overlooked at the start of the series it is not certain he will play on Boxing Day in Melbourne.

Josh Inglis, who has been the spare batter during the series to date, remains part of the squad and could be an option if the selectors want to get creative with indications from chair of selectors George Bailey that they are keen for a greater tempo from the top order. Allrounder Beau Webster is also retained in the 15-player group.

But as a specialist opener there is now a strong chance that Konstas will debut in front of a crowd of more than 90,000 at the MCG. If he does play, it would be just his 12th first-class match, making him the fourth-youngest debutant for Australia in men's Tests, although he has been marked out as a future international player since his junior days."First and fore-



are constantly getting new information as you guys are... It's clearly been

again to Beau's and Josh's, as the other batting options within that team, and

#### Afridi trumps Klaasen after Babar-**Rizwan stand sets up Pakistan**

Cape Town, Dec 20 (GNS) Pakistan turned in their best all-round ODI performance across all three series over the past six weeks, dismantling South Africa by 81 runs and sealing a third straight ODI series win.Shaheen Afridi sizzled with the ball after half-centuries from Mohammad Rizwan, Babar Azam and Kamran Ghulam helped Pakistan amass 329 in the second ODI in Cape Town.

South Africa never quite got partnerships going despite a heroic 74-ball 97 from Heinrich Klaasen. Afridi, however, got his mojo back, menacing at the top and lethal with the reverse swinging ball at the death, finishing with four wickets as South Africa were bowled out for 248.

South Africa began the chase in much the same way as they started off in the first innings in Paarl - with conviction and purpose. From the moment the returning Temba Bavuma flicked Afridi off his pads for four off the first ball, South Africa were up and running, routinely piercing the thickset infield to find the boundaries they needed to keep the asking rate in check. Afridi picked his moment to deliver perhaps his most impressive spell since picking up the injury two years ago that has

▶ Pakistan 329 all out (Rizwan 80, Babar 73, Maphaka 4-72) beat South Africa 247 all out (Klaasen 97, Shaheen 4-47, Naseem 3-37) by 82 runs



he found it in himself to bowl closer to the 140kph mark, angling his wrist position to take advantage of the reverse swing that suddenly appeared to be on offer. He fizzed

one past Miller, cutting him in half - or so we all thought; Afridi was

most, [want to] acknowledge that it's a a challenge at the top of the order for tough call on Nathan, particularly after both teams. Think Sam's method, his three Tests," Bailey told reporters. "We

style, is different to Nathan's, different

we think they provide the options of a different look and a different make-up for the XI come Boxing Day."

somewhat stalled his career. With the lights taking full effect and the contest balanced on a tightrope,

sure it had kissed the inside edge, and when they went upstairs, the technology bore him out.

#### Arsenal, Liverpool, Newcastle Advance to English League Cup Semis

New Delhi, Dec 20 (GNS) Arsenal, Newcastle and Liverpool advanced in the English League Cup on Wednesday to ensure a heavyweight lineup for the semifinals. Gabriel Jesus scored a hat trick — including a crucial second goal from an offside position — as Arsenal beat Crystal Palace 3-2 to reach the last four for the first time since the 2021-22 season. Liverpool kept alive its title defense by winning 2-1 at Southampton, with Darwin Nunez and Harvey Elliott the scorers in the first half for the leaders of the Premier League and Champions League.Newcastle defeated Brentford 3-1 mainly thanks to two first-half goals by Italy midfielder Sandro Tonali and progressed to the semifinals for the second time in three seasons. The Saudi-controlled club from the north east, which hasn't won a major trophy since 1955, lost in the League Cup final to Manchester United in 2023. United visits Tottenham on Thursday in the remaining quarterfinal match, guaranteeing that the semifinals will feature four of the biggest teams in the country. Jesus benefi ts from no VAR Jesus had previously only scored one goal in 20 appearances in all competitions this season — and that was also in the English League Cup at second-tier Preston in October.So the Brazil



striker's first hat trick for Arsenal came as something of a surprise, as did the standard of his finishing. There was luck for Jesus, too, as replays showed that he was offside when running through to score his goal that made it 2-1 in the 73rd minute at Emirates Stadium. However, there is no video review until the semifinals of the competition so the goal wasn't ruled out.Jesus, who had equalized in the 54th with an excellently taken chip over goalkeeper Dean Henderson, completed his hat trick in the 81st by running through unmarked and smashing a low strike past Henderson. That give his team

a two-goal cushion but former Arsenal striker Eddie Nketiah ensured a nervy finish by heading home a cross in the 85th to make it 3-1. Jean-Philippe Mateta had put Palace ahead in the fourth minute. Liverpool's unbeaten run Liverpool has now gone 20 games unbeaten within a single season in all competitions for the first time since 1996, according to Premier League stats supplier Opta. Things could hardly be going any better for Arne Slot, who fielded a weakened, heavily rotated team — featuring Japan midfielder Wataru Endo at center back — that still had too much for Southampton. Nunez particularly enjoyed his goal, which came after he had been jeered by Southampton fans for missing an early chance. After putting Liverpool ahead, he put his finger to his mouth in a "shush" gesture to the home crowd. Interim coach Simon Rusk took charge of Southampton, the last-place team in the Premier League, following the dismissal of manager Russell Martin on Sunday — hours after a 5-0 loss to Tottenham. Slot sat in the stands for the match at St. Mary's stadium as he was serving a touchline suspension after getting booked for the third time this season last weekend.

#### **Fighting victories** for Punjab Police, ASC

▶ Punjab Police and ASC Jalandhar registered come-from-behind victories on the fourth day of the Liberals hockey tournament at PPS Nabha.



Patiala, Dec 20 (GNS) Punjab Police and ASC Jalandhar registered come-frombehind victories on the fourth day of the Liberals hockey tournament at PPS Nabha. ASC edged out SAI Kurukshetra 3-2, while Punjab Police beat MSK Jarkhar Academy by the same margin. Hawks Rupnagar outplayed Himachal XI 4-0 and ITBP subdued Rail Coach Factory Kapurthala 3-1.

ASC converted a penalty corner in the 11th minute through Chandan Aind but SAI hit back with field goals from Munish Rana and Sunil in the 13th and 35th minutes. ASC equalised 2-2 in the 42nd minute before Sarin Edavalath found the winner in the final minute.

MSK Academy converted a PC in the 6th minute through Pawanpreet Singh. Punjab Police mounted pressure and went on a scoring spree with two penalty corner conversions by Pawandeep and Gurpreet in the 28th and 41st minutes. In the 45th minute Pawandeep got his second goal. MSK reduced the lead with a goal by Yudhvir Mall.

